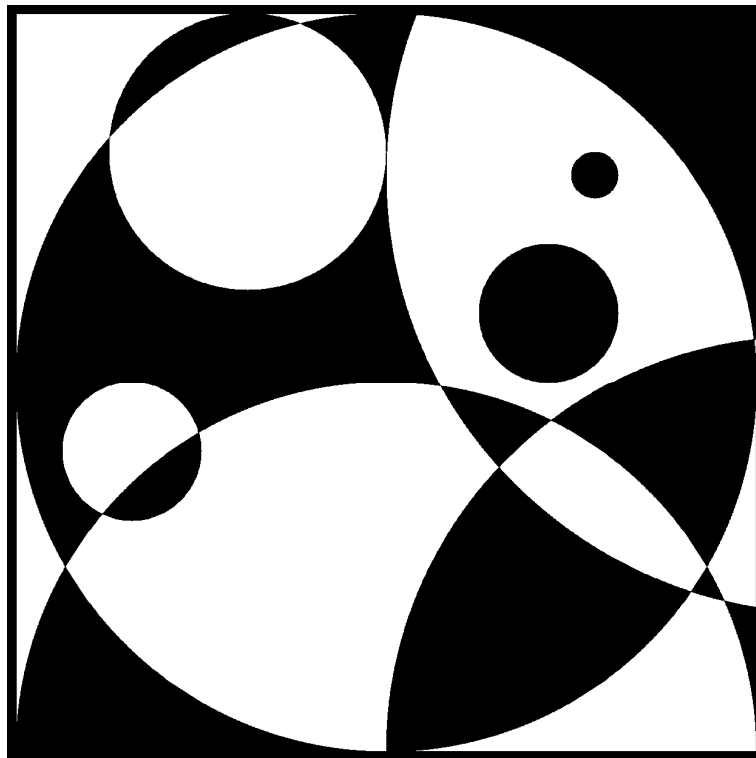


Sword and Magic: Adventures on Fomalhaut

fantasy role-playing game

by Gabor Lux



E.M.D.T. 2.-E

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In memoriam Pierre Menard

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I. Characters and basic rules

Standard Difficulty Classes: Checks for ability scores, and skills, as well as saving throws (except for spells) are rolled using **1d20 + modifiers** against one of the three standard Difficulty Classes:

- Average DC 12
- Hard DC 18
- Heroic DC 24

Most DCs are Average or Hard; Heroic is only used in extreme situations. An unmodified 20 is always a success; an unmodified 1 a failure. **Contests are played with opposed rolls: the side which first beats the opponent by 5 or more is victorious, while any other result is a draw.**

Ability scores

By default, ability scores are generated with the **4d6, drop lowest method**. The scores are assigned in order, but two sets can be chosen from, and for every 4th level, the character can increase a selected ability by one. Characters may elect to sell their soul to a chosen evil deity in exchange for +2 to any ability score. The deal is irrevocable, and the character may not thereafter be raised from the dead. Other costs should be set by the GM.

The abilities and the values they modify are as follows:

Strength (Str): melee attacks, melee and thrown damage.

Dexterity (Dex): initiative, Armour Class, ranged attacks and Reflex saving throws.

Constitution (Con): Hp per level and Fortitude saving throws.

Intelligence (Int): the number of starting skills, spell DCs and bonus spells for Magic-Users and Illusionists.

Wisdom (Wis): spell DCs and bonus spells for Cleric spells as well as Will saving throws.

Charisma (Cha): is a dump stat.

Ability score modifiers are **[Ability score/3]-3**. Spellcasters with above-average abilities receive bonus spells based on the table below.

Ability	+/-	Bonus spells
01-02	-3	-
03-05	-2	-
06-08	-1	-
09-11	+0	-
12-14	+1	1*1
15-17	+2	1*1, 1*2
18-20	+3	1*1, 1*2, 1*3

A character is incapacitated if an ability score reaches zero, and further loss is subtracted from Constitution. If a character's Con reaches zero, he or she is dead. Ability damage regenerates at a rate of **1/day**.

Races

Other than Terrans, all human races are subject to level limits. A character who reaches this limit must multiclass or suffer a 10% experience penalty for subsequent levels. A level limit of zero signifies the penalty applies right from the start.

Terrans: are normal men derived from a mixture of starfaring stock.

- They receive an extra skill at the start of the game.

Amazons: are descendants of gynarchic societies.

- Level limits: Fighter – , Cleric 5, Thief 0, Magic-User 0
- Two or more amazons fighting side by side receive two points of AC for the duration of the combat.

Cavemen: are primitives from savage lands.

- Ability scores: +1 Str, +1 Con, -1 Int, -1 Wis
- Level limits: Fighter – , Cleric 5, Thief 5, Magic-User 0

Etunians: are horse-nomads known for a thoroughly pragmatic disposition.

- Ability scores: +1 Con, -1 Wis
- Level limits: Fighter – , Cleric 5, Thief – , Magic-User 0
- One of their starting skills is always Riding.

Imperials: are purple-skinned schemers from a high-tech utopia and advocates of Mung, its ideology of human progress.

- Ability scores: +1 Int, -1 Con
- Level limits: Fighter 7, Cleric 5, Thief 5, Magic-User –

Northmen: are fair of hair and great of stature. They are commonly shunned for their violent reputation and supposed intellectual inferiority.

- Ability scores: +1 Str, -1 Wis
- Level limits: Fighter – , Cleric 7, Thief – , Magic-User 3
- One of their starting skills is always Sailing.

General advancement table – experience points and secondary values:

Level	XP	Atk*1	Atk*2/3	Atk*1/2	Save1	Save2
1.	0	+1	+0	+0	+2	+0
2.	2000	+2	+1	+1	+3	+0
3.	6000	+3	+2	+1	+3	+1
4.	12000	+4	+2	+2	+4	+1
5.	20000	+5	+3	+2	+4	+1
6.	30000	+6/+1	+4	+3	+5	+2
7.	42000	+7/+2	+4	+3	+5	+2
8.	56000	+8/+3	+5	+4	+6	+2
9.	72000	+9/+4	+6/+1	+4	+6	+3
10.	90000	+10/+5	+6/+1	+5	+7	+3
11.	110000	+10/+6/+1	+7/+2	+5	+7	+3
12.	132000	+10/+7/+2	+8/+3	+6	+8	+4
13.	156000	+10/+8/+3	+8/+3	+6	+8	+4
14.	182000	+10/+9/+4	+9/+4	+7	+9	+4
15.	210000	+10/+10/+5	+10/+5	+7	+9	+5
16.	240000	+10/+10/+6	+10/+5	+8	+10	+5
17.	272000	+10/+10/+7	+10/+6	+8	+10	+5
18.	306000	+10/+10/+8	+10/+7	+9	+10	+6
19.	342000	+10/+10/+9	+10/+7	+9	+10	+6
20.	380000	+10/+10/+10	+10/+8	+10	+10	+6

Experience: gaining every subsequent level needs an extra **[Current level * 2000]** XP

Attacks: the first column (Atk*1) is used by Fighter subclasses, the second (Atk*2/3) by Clerics and Thieves, the third (Atk*1/2) by Magic-Users and Illusionists. The maximal value of attack bonuses is +10 (not counting adjustments)

Saving throws: saves favourable to the character class advance by the Save1 column, or **[Level/2+2]**; others by the Save2 column, or **[Level/3]**. Like attacks, saves have a maximum of +10.



Levels and classes

At the start of a campaign, **characters generally start on the third level of experience**. In the setting implied in these rules, the first four levels are considered low, and are common among NPCs (e.g. untrained militias are 1st level Fighters, regular soldiers 2nd, veterans 3rd and elites 4th). Medium levels, from 5th to 9th, are rarer, although communities often have a few individual NPCs who have reached this power. High (10th to 15th) level characters are great heroes capable of epic deeds, and rare even in the setting as a whole. A 15th level character would be close in power to lesser gods.

Experience points are awarded for the following:

- defeating monsters and NPCs
- succeeding at challenges, problem-solving and survival
- treasure squandered in hedonistic excess with a ratio of **5 XP per gp value**.



Fighters: are divided into five subclasses.

- Attack bonus: **Level*1**
- Favourable saves: Fortitude
- Weapon use: any except exotic
- Armour use: any
- Hp: 1d10 per level, 3 per level over 9th
- Skills: 3

Subclasses:

- **Fighter:** +2 to damage with a selected weapon every odd level or learn the use of an exotic weapon. Double specialisation (+4 damage) is available starting with 9th level.
- **Archer:** an additional attack each round with bows, proficiency with composite bow types. May only wear light or medium armour.
- **Amazon:** may only wear chain shirts or lighter armour. They gain an AC bonus of 1/2 their level, and may apply either their Dexterity or Charisma bonus. They are exclusively women.
- **Sailor:** may apply either their Dexterity or Strength bonus to melee attacks. They may only wear light or medium armour, but receive an AC bonus of 1/3 their level while doing so. On 1st and every 3rd level, they may improve the critical range of a chosen weapon by one (e.g. longsword 19-20/*2 → 18-20/*2 → 17-20/*2).
- **Barbarian:** roll their Hp with 1d12 per level. They are conscious until -5 Hp, and receive a +1 bonus to all saving throws (10th level +2). They always start the game illiterate

Clerics: are militant dogmatics in their god's service

- Attack bonus: **Level*2/3**
- Favourable saves: Fortitude, Will
- Weapon use: blunt weapons, daggers, and/or as prescribed by their god.
- Armour use: any
- Hp: 1d8 per level, 2 per level over 9th
- Skills: 3

They have the following special abilities:

- **Spells:** per the table below
- **Spell conversion:** convert memorised spells to healing or inflicting damage, 1d8/spell level. The nature of this ability must be selected at the start of the campaign and may not be altered.
- **Turn or control undead:** this power is useable 1/day, 2/day from 5th, 3/day from 7th and 4/day from 9th level.

- Hp: 1d4 per level, 1 per level over 9th
- Skills: 3

They have the following special abilities:

- **Spells:** per the table below. A beginning (third level) M-U's spellbook contains all zero level, five 1st level and two 2nd level spells.

Spell memorisation:

Level	0	1	2	3	4	5
1.	3	1				
2.	4	2				
3.	4	2	1			
4.	5	3	2			
5.	5	3	2	1		
6.	5	3	3	2		
7.	6	4	3	2	1	
8.	6	4	3	3	2	
9.	6	4	4	3	2	1
10.	6	4	4	3	3	2
11.	7	5	4	4	3	2
12.	7	5	4	4	3	3
13.	7	5	5	4	4	3
14.	7	5	5	4	4	3
15.	7	5	5	5	4	4
16.	8	6	5	5	4	4
17.	8	6	5	5	5	4
18.	8	6	6	5	5	4
19.	8	6	6	5	5	5
20.	8	6	6	6	5	5

Spell progression follows this formula: 1st level characters gain one 1st level spell, with another on 2nd level (1+1=2). The third 1st level spell is gained at the 4th level of experience (1+1+2=4), the fourth on the 7th (1+1+2+3=7) etc. Access to new spell levels opens up on odd levels (1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th). There are no spells above 5th level in the standard **Sword and Magic** ruleset.

Thieves: are masters of deceit and silent killing.

- Attack bonus: **Level*2/3**
- Favourable saves: Reflex
- Weapon use: daggers, slings, crossbows, shortbows and all one-handed swords
- Armour use: light
- Hp: 1d6 per level, 2 per level over 9th
- Skills: 7 (at least 4 of which must be thieffy)

They have the following special abilities:

- **Sneak attack:** usable when the character catches an opponent unaware (e.g. a backstab, surprise etc.). The attack inflicts +1d6 damage for every odd level, and may be used to inflict subdual damage with the right weapon.
- **Better initiative:** Thieves receive +4 on all initiative rolls.
- **Thief skills:** these reflect thieving abilities. As with other classes, Thieves may use all skills available to them even if untrained, but don't add their level if they do so. Thief skills include: Balance, Brew Poison, Climb, Disguise, Escape Artist, Find and Remove Traps, Hide, Listen, Open Locks, Pick Pockets, Read signs, Sneak, Spot

Multiclassing: Multiclassed characters add their modifier type abilities (Hp, saving throw and attack bonuses, total level and experience) together. Thieves also gain 4 extra thief skills, although these only count Thief levels. All class restrictions apply. A character may normally only have two classes, and it isn't possible to combine Fighter subclasses.

Magic-Users: are spellcasters typically characterised by a smug superiority complex and contempt for those with lesser mental abilities. The class also, includes the subclass of illusionists; hypnotists and clever manipulators who have a different spell list and don't understand M-U spells (or vice versa).

- Attack bonus: **Level*1/2**
- Favourable saves: Will
- Weapon use: daggers, staves, clubs and slings.
- Armour use: none

Skills

The number of character skills is as follows:

- Base: 3
- Intelligence bonus: -3 to +3
- Terrans: +1
- Thieves: +4 (thief skills only)

E.g. Yulames the Illusionist (base: 3, Int 17: +2, Terran: +1) would have 6 skills, while Ulzen Mir the Nomad (base: 3, Int 8: -1, Etunian: +0) would have 2.

The value of skills is [**Experience level + ability bonus**] with a maximum of [**10 + ability bonus**]. Skill checks are rolled against one of the standard DCs or in opposed rolls. Characters may use general skills as well as any skill available for their class even if they are untrained in them, but in that case, they only add their ability bonus to the skill check. It is possible to learn new skills through training during the campaign.

Skill list (general / *Thieves only* / **spellcasters only**):

Alchemy (Int)

Animal Training (Cha)

Appraise (Int)

Balance (Dex)

Brew Poison (Int)

Climb (Str)

Concentration (Wis)

Craft or Profession (Int or Dex)

Disguise (Cha)

Escape Artist (Dex)

Find and Remove Traps (Dex)

Find Tracks (Wis)

Forgery (Int)

Heal (Wis)

Hide (Dex)

Jump (Str)

Knowledge (Int) – History, **Magic**, Theology, Wilderness, Plants etc.

Listen (Wis)

Open Locks (Dex)

Perform (Cha)

Pick Pockets (Dex)

Read Signs (Int)

Ride (Dex)

Sail (Dex)

Sneak (Dex)

Spellcraft (Int)

Spot (Wis)

Stargazing (Wis)

Swim (Str)

Explanations and addendum for selected skills:

Animal Training (Cha): a character trained in the skill may try to pacify or befriend hostile animals.

Disguise (Cha, Thieves only): the skill check is rolled if the effectiveness of the disguise may fall into question.

Forgery (Int, Thieves only): the skill check is rolled if the effectiveness of the forgery may fall into question.

Heal (Wis): used immediately after combat, a successful check restores 1d4 Hp to a wounded character, 1d4+2 at DC 18 and 1d4+4 at DC 24.

Spellcraft (Int, spellcasters only): with a successful check (DC=saving throw DC), the character can identify spells being cast, magical effects etc.

Stargazing (Wis, spellcasters only): with a successful check at night, the character may determine hex-specific position on the world map or read the stars for an omen (vague hint from the GM).

Secondary values

Hit Points (Hp): If Hp falls to 0 point or under, the character falls unconscious. If it reaches -5, he or she dies. Unlike other variants, **Sword and Magic** does not use a bleeding/stabilisation rule by default. Player characters gain maximum Hp for their first level. Via natural regeneration, Hp is restored at a rate of **1 Hp/level/day**.

Armour Class (AC): Ascending value equal to [**10 + Dex bonus + armour + shield**].

Attack bonus: Value equal to [**Base + Str bonus**] for melee and [**Base + Dex bonus**] for ranged attacks. The Base value depends on class and experience level as per the General advancement table.

Saving Throws: Value equal to [**1d20 + Base + Ability bonus**].

- **Fortitude:** modified by Constitution.
- **Reflex:** modified by Dexterity.
- **Will:** modified by Wisdom

Saving throws, with the sole exception of spells, are rolled against one of the standard DCs.

Alignment: is a dump stat.

Equipment

Starting equipment: Regardless of level, character entering the campaign always start with 2d6*10 gp or equivalent equipment, and a weapon of choice.

Clerics also carry a holy symbol, Magic-Users and Illusionists a spellbook, and Thieves lockpicks. Anything else is subject to GM fiat.

Armour

Armour	Price	AC	Armour	Price	AC
<i>Light</i>			<i>Heavy</i>		
Quilted	4 gp	+1	Splint mail	200 gp	+6
Leather	5 gp	+2	Banded mail	250 gp	+6
Studded leather	15 gp	+3	Plate mail	400 gp	+7
Ring mail	20 gp	+3	Full plate	800 gp	+8
Chain shirt	50 gp	+4	<i>Shields</i>		
<i>Medium</i>			Small wooden	3 gp	+1
Scale mail	30 gp	+4	Small metal	9 gp	+1
Chain mail	75 gp	+5	Large wooden	7 gp	+2
Breast plate	100 gp	+5	Large metal	20 gp	+2

Light armour: they allow a maximum +3 Dexterity bonus.

Medium armour: they allow a maximum +2 Dexterity bonus, and have a -2 penalty to skills requiring mobility or manual dexterity.

Heavy armour: they allow a maximum +1 Dexterity bonus, and have a -4 penalty to skills requiring mobility or manual dexterity.

Weapons

Melee weapon	Price	Damage	Critical	Throwing range
Axe	6 gp	1d6	*3	10'
Battle axe	10 gp	1d8	*3	-
Battle axe, two-handed+	20 gp	1d12	*3	-
Club	-	1d6	*2	-
Dagger	2 gp	1d4	19-20/*2	10'
Falchion+	50 gp	2d4	18-20/*2	-
Halberd and other polearms+ ¹	10 gp	1d10	*3	-
Lance+ ¹	10 gp	1d8	*3	-
Mace or flail	8 gp	1d8	*2	-
Pick	5 gp	1d6	*4	-
Scimitar	15 gp	1d6	18-20/*2	-
Scythe+ (E)	18 gp	2d4	*4	-
Spear	5 gp	1d8	*2	20'
Staff	-	1d6	*2	-
Sword, bastard ² (E)	35 gp	1d10	19-20/*2	-
Sword, long	15 gp	1d8	19-20/*2	-
Sword, short	10 gp	1d6	19-20/*2	-
Sword, two-handed+	50 gp	2d6	19-20/*2	-
Trident	10 gp	1d8	*2	10'
Warhammer	12 gp	1d8	*3	-
Warhammer, two-handed+	25 gp	1d10	*3	-
Whip (E)	1 gp	1d3 + Indy stuff	*2	-
Fists ³	-	1d4	*2	-

+ Two-handed / (E) Exotic

¹Double damage if set against charging opponents

²May be employed two-handed as a standard weapon

³Subdual damage only

Ranged weapon	Price	Damage	Critical	Shooting range
Bow, short	30 gp	1d6	*3	60'
Bow, long	75 gp	1d8	*3	70'
Bow, composite ⁴ (E)	100 gp	1d8	*3	110'
Arrows (20)	1 gp			
Crossbow, light	35 gp	1d8	19-20/*2	80'
Crossbow, heavy	50 gp	1d10	19-20/*2	120'
Quarrels (10)	1 gp			
Dart	5 sp	1d4	*2	20'
Javelin	1 sp	1d6	*2	30'
Sling	-	1d4	*2	50'

⁴May add Strength bonus to damage

Two-handed weapons: *1.5 Strength bonus to damage

Ranged weapons: no Strength bonus to damage

Unskilled weapon use: -4 to attacks

Throwing/shooting range: -2 to attack per range increment (e.g. dagger 30' → -6)



Miscellaneous equipment

Equipment	Price		
Acid	10 gp	Shovel	1 gp
Backpack	2 gp	Signet ring	8 gp
Barrel, small	2 gp	Signet wax	1 gp
Blanket	2 sp	Soap	5 sp
Bucket	5 sp	Tent	10 gp
Candle	1 sp	Torch	1 cp
Chain, 10'	10 gp	Vial	1 gp
Chalk	1 cp	Wineskin	1 gp
Chest, iron, small	9 gp		
Chest, iron, large	28 gp	Clothing	Price
Chest, wooden, small	2 gp	Clerical	5 gp
Chest, wooden, large	5 gp	Common	1 sp
Crowbar	2 gp	Craftsman's	1 gp
Grappling hook	1 gp	Noble	75 gp
Incense, stick	1 gp	Overlord's	200+ gp
Flask, ceramic	3 cp	Traveller's	1 gp
Flask, glass	2 gp	Warm	8 gp
Flint and steel	1 sp		
Holy water	25 gp	Services	Price
Ink	8 gp	Sea voyage, 100 stadion	1-3 gp
Kettle	5 sp	Ferry	3 sp
Lamp, oil, simple	1 sp	Lodgings, poor	2 sp
Lamp, oil, hooded	7 gp	Lodgings, average	5 sp
Lamp, oil, large	12 gp	Lodgings, good	2 gp
Lock, simple	20 gp	Mercenaries, 1 st level, 10 men	60 gp/month
Lock, complex	80 gp	Mercenaries, 2 nd level, 10 men	120 gp/month
Mirror	10 gp	Mercenaries, 3 rd level, 10 men	180 gp/ month
Nail	1 cp	Mercenaries, 4 th level, 10 men	240 gp/ month
Net, fisherman's	4 gp		
Oil, flask	1 gp	Animals	Price
Quarrel	2 gp	Bull, sacrificial	30 gp
Paper, sheet	4 sp	Camel	40 gp
Parchment, sheet	2 sp	Dog, war	25 gp
Perfume	5 gp	Dog, hunting	15 gp
Pick	5 gp	Falcon	40 gp
Pole, 10'	3 cp	Horse, draft and traveller's	30 gp
Rations, one day	5 sp	Horse, light war	150 gp
Rope, hemp, 50'	1 gp	Horse, heavy war	300 gp
Rope, silk, 50'	10 gp	Mule, donkey, pony	15 gp
Sack	1 sp	Pig	3 gp
Scroll case	5 gp		

Conveyances	Price
Barge or raft	50 gp
Boat, sailing	50 gp
Chariot	300 gp
Galley, small	3000 gp
Galley, large	6000 gp
Longship	1500 gp
Ship, fishing, small	75 gp
Ship, fishing, large	150 gp
Ship, merchant, small	2000 gp
Ship, merchant, large	4000 gp
Wagon	50 gp

Buildings¹	Price
Fortress, small	5000 gp
House, wood	200 gp
House, stone	500 gp
House, rich	5000 gp

Hut	50 gp
Manor, small	3000 gp
Tent, large	25 gp
Tomb, small	500 gp
Tomb, large	5000 gp
Tower	1000 gp
¹ Approximate values	

Specialist tools	Price
Alchemist's laboratory	500 gp
Holy symbol	25 gp
Hourglass	25 gp
Lockpicks	30 gp
Magnifying glass	100 gp
Scales	2 gp
Spellbook, empty	15 gp
Spyglass	1000 gp

Example character: Before the game, Akos rolls the following series for ability scores: 18, 15, 17, 12, 14, 8 and 14, 10, 14, 10, 9, 13. Since the first set is the luckier, with excellent physical scores, he decides for a Terran Fighter character – that extra skill will come in handy.

The new PC, named Charnan the Permanent Fiend on a sudden whim, receives two specialisations at 3rd level, one allowing him to use bastard swords one-handed, the other adding +2 to his damage with halberds.

By default, Charnan receives three skills, plus one for being a Terran and another for his 12 (+1) Intelligence; altogether five. The skills are as follows: Appraise (3+1), Ride (3+2), Sail (3+2), Spot (3+1), Swim (3+3).

The character's secondary values are as follows. His Hp is 10+2d10+3*2 (the latter from the Constitu-

tion bonus), altogether 23. He has 16 AC (base 10, +2 Dexterity, +4 chain shirt), melee attacks at 3+3 and ranged at 3+2. His saving throws, respectively are: Fortitude 3+2, Reflex 1+2, Will 1+1. Charnan's alignment – to be on the safe side – is Neutral. Finally, Akos rolls for Charnan's starting money (60 gp) and spends it all on modest travelling equipment.

After a short consultation with the GM, Charnan becomes the low-ranking, but doctrinally impeccable follower of Kang the Thousand-Eyed. Since Kang's cult is most of all remarkable for its boundless avarice, Charnan now has a basic motivation to become involved in hazardous but lucrative adventures. The GM tells the player what kind of sacrifices he is expected to contribute in a short while: a black bull within a month, three hundredweights of gold (300 gp) and 150 gp worth of scented oils and balms in another, also stating that in exchange, he can also hope for the favourable attention of Kang.

Charnan the Permanent Fiend, Fighter 3 (follower of Kang the Thousand-Eyed, Neutral)

Strength:	18	(+3)
Dexterity:	15	(+2)
Constitution:	17	(+2)
Intelligence:	12	(+1)
Wisdom:	14	(+1)
Charisma:	8	(-1)

Hp:	23
AC:	16 (+2 Dex, +4 chain shirt)
Attack:	+6 bastard sword 1d10+4 (19-20/*2) +5 throwing dagger 1d4+3 (19-20/*2)
Fortitude:	+5
Reflex:	+3
Will:	+2

Weapon specialisation: bastard sword proficient, halberd +2 damage

Skills:	Appraise	+4
	Ride	+5
	Sail	+5
	Spot	+4
	Swim	+6

Equipment: bastard sword, holy symbol, chain shirt, traveller's clothes (cloak), rations*6, blanket, backpack, dagger, torch*5, incense*1

Money: 1 gp, 7 sp, 5 cp

Experience: 6000 XP

Next level: 12000 XP

Notes: Charnan is a strong man of medium stature. He has thick, straight black hair and hanging moustaches. His clothing is simple and worn; he wears the symbol of Kang the Thousand-Eyed hidden under his chain shirt, and carries a dagger as well as a long, straight sword.

II. Combat

Combat is conducted in rounds, an indeterminate measure of time that encompasses up to one minute of action. In some cases, a round may represent shorter time spans – e.g. if Narg the knight must act swiftly to save his wounded and unconscious comrade from the sacrificial dagger of an evil cleric, it would be more prudent to use ten second rounds, while the clash of two armies is such a drawn out affair that a round may last ten minutes or more. For simplicity's sake, the number of actions a character can attempt in a round does not depend on its length. As combat is heavily abstracted, an attack roll may mean a swift thrust just as well as a series of feints and parries.

Combat procedure

1. Surprise
2. Initiative
3. Actions
 - 3.1 Movement
 - 3.2 Attacks
 - 3.3 Other combat manoeuvres
 - 3.4 Magic use
 - 3.5 Other actions
 - 3.6 Flight and pursuit

1. Surprise: if a group can get the drop on another, they can act freely for a full round and their opponents will be unable to counterattack. Once the surprise round ends, roll initiative normally.

2. Initiative: initiative rolls are made with **[1d20+Dex bonus]**. In melee, combatants can act in a decreasing order of initiative. Ties mean simultaneous action. Initiative values don't change during combat, except in case a major event significantly changes the rules of engagement – e.g. a spell causes a large cave-in, resulting in chaos and confusion on both sides. The following special cases apply:

- **Delay:** a character may elect to delay his actions until the end of the round if he has not acted yet.
- **Refocus:** by spending a round preparing for the next, a character may act first from then on.
- **Readied actions:** a character may specify various circumstances (e.g. „When I see movement, I blow the horn!“) and act once they are fulfilled – as long as the character has not already done so in the round. His initiative value will be identical to the other character's.

3. Actions:

3.1 Movement: characters may move as much in their round as it is sensible. If a character moves a lot, he may not strike more than once, even if he normally has multiple attacks.

3.2 Attacks: attacks are similar to skill checks where the DC is equal to the foe's AC.

Melee:

**[1d20+Attack bonus+Str bonus +/- Modifiers]
-vs- [opponent's AC]**

Ranged:

**[1d20+Attack bonus+Dex bonus +/- Modifiers]
-vs- [opponent's AC]**

If the roll is equal to or more than the opponent's AC, the attack is successful and damage is inflicted.

Special cases:

- Multiple attacks: higher level characters may attack multiple times – e.g. a 7th level Fighter with no other bonuses would attack with a +7 and +2 each round.
- Touch attacks: several spells, including rays fall into this category. Touches are rolled as ranged attacks, but the opponent's armour and shield doesn't offer protection.
- Critical hits: every weapon has a critical range – usually 20, but some weapons have a 19-20 or a 18-20 range. If an unmodified attack roll falls into this range, the hit is an automatic success and the attacker may roll again. If the second attack succeeds, double (or triple, depending on the weapon) damage is inflicted.
- Instant kills: if a critical hit comes up as a 20, the attacker may roll again. If the third roll hits, the victim is killed instantly.
- Critical failure: an unmodified attack roll of 1 is always a failure, which typically gives opponents a free attack or combat manoeuvre.
- Carryover damage: when fighting grouped opponents (e.g. 8 swordsmen), damage remaining after a killing blow is transferred to the next target.
- Subdual damage: a character may elect to deal nonlethal damage. This requires an appropriate weapon suitable for knockouts (like a club), or he suffers a -4 penalty. Subdual damage disappears after a short time (usually a few hours).
- Unskilled weapon use: a character who isn't skilled in the use of a weapon, or uses an object ill suited for combat, suffers a -4 penalty.

3.3 Other combat manoeuvres (or “+5 manoeuvre”): this category encompasses actions like disarming, breaking an opponent's weapon, forcing him to retreat etc. In all cases, opposing attack rolls are made to reflect the fighting capability of both parties, and if one is at least 5 points higher than the other, the attempt succeeds. In the case of a spectacular fumble, the opponent may have turned the tables and put the character in danger! All other cases are a draw.

3.4 Magic use: no matter what, only one spell may be cast in a round. If the spellcaster is disturbed in the process (e.g. he is wounded before his turn), he must roll a Concentration check or lose focus. The difficulty of the check is usually **[10+Damage]** or standard.

3.5 Other actions: these include anything a reasonable competent person could accomplish under the round's time span. For example: retrieving and drinking a healing potion, trying to break down a wooden door or binding the wounds of an unconscious comrade.

3.6 Flight and pursuit: upon fleeing from battle (as opposed to organized withdrawal), opposed initiative checks are rolled. A success for the pursuers means they can make free attacks on their opponents; the fleeing characters must win one or more checks to finally shake off their enemies (e.g. one in crowded streets, but up to three on an open plain).



Special combat situations

Concealment and cover: depending on the quality of the obstacles or environment, defenders may gain an AC bonus against their opponents. Superior cover or total darkness/blindness is typically worth 4 AC, others slightly less.

Turning and controlling undead: clerics may be able to either turn away or control undead by presenting the symbol of their deity. The procedure is as follows:

- The cleric makes a **[1d20+Cha bonus]** check. This value is then applied to the standard ability bonus table. The plus or minus is the difference in hit dice of undead the cleric may affect at the time compared to his own level. For example, if the check's result is 14 and the cleric is fifth level in experience, then 5+1=6 HD undead are the most powerful the cleric is able to affect.
- **[2d6+level]** levels of undead may be turned away or controlled. The ability affects the least powerful undead first, then the next least powerful, etc. Turned undead flee from the sight of the cleric and do not approach him and his companions until they themselves are cornered or attacked. Evil clerics, on the other hand, are able to give commands to undead who obey appropriate for their ability and intelligence. There is no hard limit to the number of undead being controlled, although the more there are, the higher the chance they all break free.
- The two effects may be used to counter each other, such as a good cleric trying to dispel an evil one's control, or two evil clerics competing to convert a pack of wights.

Mass combat: the conflict between two armies is best modelled on a 1:5, 1:10 or even a 1:100 scale, with additional 1:1 units for extraordinary types (war elephants, army leaders and war machines).

- Rounds are usually 10 minutes long.
- Usual troop levels are: green troops or militias are 1st level, regulars 2nd, veterans and hardened combatants (some barbarians) 3rd, elites 4th. In normal circumstances, units cost **[Level*60 gp]** per month to maintain; archers and riders more, colonised units less etc.
- Armies are divided into homogenous **units** with 5, 10 or 100 men each. Units have

their own statistics, which largely correspond to individual soldiers except:

- Hp is the sum of all soldier Hps. An unit is battle-worthy until all hits are lost, in which case the troops are slain to the last man! (There is a 25% they survive on severely low Hp and minimal morale, but in this case, they are unable to fight until they recover.)
- Damage is multiplied by the number of soldiers in the unit.
- **Melee** is simultaneous; thus, initiative only decides which side can occupy a better position first or hinder another's progress.
- **Flight and pursuit** is as in regular combat.
- **Leaders** are 1:1 units („heroes”) who are either placed freely on the battlefield or assigned to an unit.
 - Freely moving leaders can attack, cast spells, challenge the heroes of other armies, etc.
 - Leaders assigned to units are able to raise the morale of troops if the unit does nothing in that round.
 - Leaders/heroes aren't slain in combat between units. If their unit is destroyed, they must flee (see the standard flight rules) and suffer 1d3+3 strikes in the process.
- **Morale:** morale is a value ranging from -3 to +3, affecting the actions of each unit and the army in general. The morale value is added to the unit's attack rolls. If morale falls under -3, the unit is routed and flees to the best of its ability. Only a leader may rally them to return to the fray. Beyond individual morale, the whole army has one – influenced by the general perception of the battle, the heroic deeds or defeat of the army commander (and even some forms of defeat may be morale-raising!), relief arriving, etc. The army morale also serves as an upper limit for unit morale.
- **Spells:** area-effect spells have a slightly reduced, degressively increasing effect due to troop distribution over terrain and other factors. Damage multipliers are as follows:

5 man unit:	*2
10 man unit:	*4
100 man unit:	*10

IV. Magic

Spells in **Sword and Magic** range from the 1st to the 5th level. Characters who are able to cast 5th level spells have reached the apex of magical power, although they continue to advance in the number of spells they can use each day.

Memorising and using spells: The number of memorised spells is uniform for all three classes, and depends on experience level with up to three bonus spells gained from ability scores. Eight hours of rest are needed for memorisation, which takes approximately 30 minutes.

Spellcasting needs basic mobility except those which are purely verbal (e.g. *command*). Some spells, marked with # on the spell lists, require valuable material components to cast.

If the character is wounded in the round before casting the spell, or the environment itself is problematic (e.g. casting from a galloping horse), a Concentration check is needed or the spell fizzles and is lost.

Defending against spells: Some harmful spells allow a saving throw, and even supposedly beneficial ones can be saved against if the character wants to. The DC of the save is **[10+spell level+Int bonus]** for Magic-Users and Illusionists and **[10+spell level+Wis bonus]** for Clerics. Every character can voluntarily forego a saving throw and allow a spell to automatically take effect. Some supernatural monsters (e.g. demons and high-level undead) have spell resistance, which is described in the Monsters and NPCs section.

Counterspells: A spell can be cancelled out during casting or over its duration with a spell that is of equal or higher level and of opposite effect; the same spell; or a successful *dispel magic*. Other modified effects are possible and up to GM fiat (e.g. *dust devil* vs. *cloudkill*)

Reversible spells: These spells, marked + on the spell lists, can be used for multiple, usually opposite purposes (e.g. *cure light wounds* vs. *cause light wounds*, but also *emotion* etc. All versions must be memorised separately.

Illusions: All illusions seem real to their subjects unless successfully saved against – e.g. an illusory sword is no less dangerous than a real one. If there is no reason to doubt the reality of the illusion, the intent to save must be openly declared. A character who successfully saves against an illusion gives +4 to the subsequent saving throws of his companions. **Characters killed with an illusion spell must roll a Fortitude save or die from shock.** If the save is successful, they return to 1 Hp. Examples of the capabilities of the standard illusion spells follow:

- *lesser illusion*: impassable grid made of smoke

- *improved illusion*: flaming staff – the flames inflict 2d4 on touch, touched opponent catches on fire unless a save is made
- *improved illusion*: “Summoning the Secondary Aura” – blocks melee attacks around illusionist and stuns attacker (loses further actions in round) unless a save is made
- *greater illusion*: 5 illusory tentacles, each attacks as 2 HD monster, damage 1d6, Hp 2 each, 5 rounds

Obtaining new spells: Clerics may memorise any spell on the standard list as long as they are powerful enough to cast them – other ones may be gained through pilgrimage or other methods.

Magic-Users and Illusionists have to find each new spell on their own and commit them to their spellbooks – stolen from their peers, transcribing magical scrolls, reading them from underground monoliths, finding them under the influence of expensive hallucinogenics, consultation with distant and dangerous gods etc.

Divine championship and patronage: Characters who decide to serve the gods may perform sacrifices, go on errands and otherwise further their cause; in exchange, they may benefit from the god's generosity. There are three basic tiers of involvement.

First, most temples practice simony, selling sacred items, healing and other spells, occasionally potions and other magic items to the wealthy. Few openly practiced doctrines demand more than a lip service to their tenets.

In the second case, the character turns directly to the god with a sacrifice. These usually have to be performed at a temple or holy place, and typically involve goods such as sacrificial bulls (30 gp), hundredweights of gold (100 gp), expensive incenses, human sacrifice etc. The more generous the sacrifice, the more likely the gesture is reciprocated. Boons may take the form of an oracle, one-use spells of the god's choice, the lifting of curses and so forth.

In the third case, which applies to Clerics as well as non-clerical characters who commit themselves to religious doctrines (divine champions), sacrifices and other services to the god are mandatory and regular, but the benefits are also more significant. Benefits come in the form of continuous guidance, extra one-use spells (typically clerical, but occasionally other types as well), magic items, followers and, very rarely, direct intervention on behalf of the character.

Example: Charnan the Permanent Fiend is a follower of the Chaotic Neutral god, Kang the Thousand-Eyed. Charnan suffers heavy wounds in an unfortunate encounter with a chimera, and after-

wards receives a curse which transforms his hands into bestial paws while looting an ancient grave. When he returns to the temple, he sacrifices five bulls and two hundredweights of gold on Kang's altar. This is sufficient to have his curse removed by the diligent priests, but as a further condition, Charnan is ordered to steal a valuable scroll from the summer villa of Moaster the Silver-Mouthed Mage.

Charnan is successful at this task, and as he had previously been generous with his contributions to the clergy, he receives a vision where Kang calls him into his service, which Charnan happily accepts. As a first boon, he receives two one-use *cure light wounds* spells, and the task to seek out and slay Remonger, a cleric who had forsaken the god and now lives in a mountain tower guarded by flying apes. To complete the task, Charnan receives a *potion of levitation*, which, according to Kang's guidance, will come useful in his quest.



List of Cleric spells

0th level

Create water: creates 5 litres of water per level
Detect magic: detects the presence of magical auras
Detect poison: detects if the subject is poisonous or poisoned
Light: provides light of approximately torch strength
Purify food and water: makes food and water pure and harmless
Read magic: deciphers magical texts

1st level

Bless+: +1 attack to all companions, 6 rounds
Cause fear+: makes a 5th level or weaker subject flee in terror
Command: verbal command to a subject, save applicable from 5th level
Create holy water+#: sanctifies a vial of water; 25 gp silver dust
Cure light wounds+: heals 1d8+1 Hp/level
Detect evil+: detects the presence of evil beings, objects and magic
Detect undead: detects the presence of undead in the area
Protection from elements+: immunity to a selected elemental force, 10 Hp shield if magical or concentrated
Protection from evil+#: +2 AC and saves, keeps away supernatural monsters; holy water
Sanctuary: provides protection against attacks (Will save), but can't attack

2nd level

Augury#: divine omen about the likely consequences of an action or a small, cryptic hint with success rate of 70+1%/level; 25 gp incense
Cure moderate wounds+: heals 2d8+1 Hp/level
Detect charm+: detects if the subject is under charm spells or supernatural possession
Dust devil: minor elemental whirlwind, HD 2, AC 16, damage 1d4
Enthral: enthrals a crowd to listen to the character for an hour; may control them to an extent
Hold person+: paralyzes up to 3 humanoid opponents for 4+1 rounds/level; save at -1 if two targets, -2 if one
Reversion: prevents a selected subject from passing through an area, disperses magical missiles
Silence: negates sound in selected area
Slow poison: halts the effects of poison 1 hour/level
Spiritual weapon: magical weapon fights at caster's base attack value, 1 round/level, 1d8 damage
Undetectable alignment: masks alignment and allegiances, 1 day
Wyvern watch: guardian force attacks, Reflex save or paralysis 1 hour/level

3rd level

Animate dead: animates undead 2*level HD, may control unlimited numbers but only [10*level] safely; ; 1% cumulative for every HD beyond for undead to break free
Continual light+: creates a permanent light
Cure blindness/deafness+: both normal and magical varieties
Cure disease+: cures a disease
Cure serious wounds+: heals 3d8+1 Hp/level
Dispel magic: cancels spells and magical effects; check of [1d20+spellcaster level] -vs- [1d20+spellcaster level] for active, or [10+spellcaster level] for passive effects

Glyph of warding#: protective glyph causes 1d8/2 levels damage or triggers 3rd level or lower spell, activated by preset circumstances; 200 gp gem dust
Locate object+: locates a general or specific object
Prayer: +1 to companions', -1 to opponents' rolls; allows to hit 5/+1 DR monsters
Protective circle from evil+#: +2 AC and saves, keeps away supernatural monsters in holy water circle
Remove curse+: removes a weaker curse
Searing light: 1d8/two levels heat ray, 1d6/level vs. undead
Speak with dead: spirit of intact corpse responds to questions ½ level; save if hostile
Water breathing: allows breathing underwater 30 minutes/level
Wind wall: deflects gasses, breath weapons and projectiles

4th level

Control water: lower or raise the level of waters in extensive area
Cure critical wounds+: heals 4d8+1 Hp/level
Divination#: divine guidance, often ambiguous with success rate of 60+1%/level; 200 gp incense
Divine power: Cleric fights at Fighter ability, 18 Strength, +1 Hp/level
Exorcism: dispels the possession of objects and persons
Imbue with spell ability: transfers spells on a one-time basis to subject, who can cast them at Cleric's power; 1st to 2nd level character 1*1st, 3rd to 4th level characters 2*1, 5th+ level characters 2*1 and 1*2.
Neutralise poison+: dispels the effects of a poison
Send messages: dream messages or voices in the head to infinite distance, no save
Sticks to snakes: turns 1/level stick into snakes, 5%/level of deadly poison

5th level

Atonement: lifts the weight of a great sin
Commune: deity answers 1/level question with yes or no response
Dispel evil+: returns evil and summoned beings to their plane of origin
Finger of death: death spell, save or die, 3d8 damage on successful save
Flame strike: 6d8 damage divine fire
Raise dead: raises a subject from the dead to 1 Hp within 1 day/level; 10%/Con probability of success (max 90%)
Quest: sends a subject on a quest
Slave in stone: binds a powerful elemental spirit into a staff 1 round/level, +13 attack, 2d12+3 damage; hazardous to use
Travel to other planes: transports up to 8 subjects to another plane or the Underworld; no return guaranteed
True seeing: shows things as they genuinely are



List of Magic-User spells

0th level

Cantrips: minor magical effects 1 round/level
Dancing lights: dancing, minor wisps of light
Detect magic: detects the presence of magical auras
Detect poison: detects if the subject is poisonous or poisoned
Light: provides light of approximately torch strength
Read magic: deciphers magical texts

1st level

Burning hands: 2 Hp/level damage
Cause fear+: makes a 5th level or weaker subject flee in terror
Charm person: charms a humanoid subject with duration based on Intelligence; 01-02 3 months, 03-05 2 months, 06-08 1 month, 09-11 3 weeks, 12-14 2 weeks, 15-17 1 week, 18+ 1 day
Colour spray: renders 1d6 subjects unconscious for 2d4 rounds if lower level than spellcaster or blind 1d4 rounds if higher than spellcaster; save applicable from 5th level
Enlarge+: 20%/level enlargement on subject beings (max 200%, +1 Str per 20%, max 21) or objects (max 100%)
Feather fall: no casting time spell triggers feather fall; beware winds
Identify#: determines the magical functions of objects 1/level; **[1d20+spellcaster level+Int bonus]** check vs. DC 16; 100 gp pearl
Jump: leap 30' distances for 10 minute
Magic missile: 1d4+1 damage per missile striking unerringly, 1 missile/odd level

Protection from evil+#: +2 AC and saves, keeps away supernatural monsters; holy water
Shield: 18 AC vs. missiles, 16 AC vs. melee attacks, +1 save vs. spells, absorbs *magic missile*
Shocking grasp: 1d8+1 Hp/level damage on touch
Sleep: 2d4 levels worth of subjects fall asleep, save applicable from 5th level
Spider climb: walk on walls and ceilings
Tensor's floating disk: hovering disk carries 50 kg/level
Unseen servant: disembodied assistant
Ventriloquism: 1 minute/level

2nd level

Continual light+: creates a permanent light
Detect invisibility: detects the presence and location of invisible subjects
Detect thoughts: detects ongoing thought processes but not specific memories
Flaming sphere: 2d6 damage flaming ball, may be moved 30' round in straight direction, 1 round/level
Forget: 1 round/3 level erased from subject memory
Gust of wind: knocks over or blows away lighter opponents
Hypnotic pattern: entraps 2d4+1/level subjects for the duration of concentration
Invisibility: invisibility for 10 minutes/level; attack dispels
Knockspell: opens locked doors
Levitation: allows vertical movement in the air
Locate object+: locates a general or specific object
Magic mouth#: mouth speaks on preset conditions; 10 gp jade dust
Mel's acid arrow: 2d4 damage, 1 round for every odd level
Mirror image: creates 1d4+1/3 level false images
Ray of enfeeblement: 1d6+1/2 level Strength loss
Reversion: prevents a selected subject from passing through an area, disperses magical missiles
Spectral hand: disembodied hand allows object manipulation and to discharge touch spells
Strength: provides 18 Strength 10 minutes/level
Tahssa's uncontrollable hideous laughter: incapacitation 1 round/level
Web: entraps subjects in strong spider web, DC 18 Strength check to escape if caught

3rd level

Animate dead: animates undead 2*level HD, may control unlimited numbers but only [10*level] safely; 1% cumulative for every HD beyond for undead to break free
Clairvoyance/clairaudience: spell to observe distant locales
Dispel magic: cancels spells and magical effects; check of [1d20+spellcaster level] -vs- [1d20+spellcaster level] for active, or [10+spellcaster level] for passive effects
Explosive runes: 6d6 damage when read
Fireball: 1d6 Hp/level fiery explosion; conforms to constrained spaces and has physical force
Fly: 10 minutes/level+1d6*10 minutes
Gaseous form: allows subject to travel through small gaps while gaseous
Haste: 1/level subjects double movement and gain extra attack; ages 1 year
Hold person+: paralyzes up to 3 humanoid opponents for 4+1 rounds/level; save at -1 if two targets, -2 if one
Lesser illusion: images only
Lightning bolt: 1d6 Hp/level lightning bolt, reflected from surfaces
Mel's multiplied missiles: 1d4 Hp meteorites, 1/level; 1/round with other actions or 5/round with full commitment
Monster summoning I: 2d4 random low level monsters for 2+1/level rounds
Protection from normal missiles: deflects arrows, quarrels and other normal missile attacks
Protective circle from evil+#: +2 AC and saves, keeps away supernatural monsters in holy water circle
Sepia snake sigil#: trap hidden in text; save or paralysis for 1d4+1/level weeks; 200 gp amber dust
Slow: 1/level subjects move with ½ speed and lose extra attacks or attack at 2/3 rounds
Suggestion: verbal suggestion to influence actions 60+60 minutes/level
Tahssa's maddened tarantella: unwilling dance for 3d6 rounds, 1d3 Hp/round until dispelled or dead
Vampiric touch: 1d6 Hp/2 levels damage heals spellcaster; may exceed maximum Hp
Water breathing: allows breathing underwater 30 minutes/level
Wind wall: deflects gasses, breath weapons and projectiles
Yeloun's touch: strangles subject if save is failed; cumulative 10%/round of falling unconscious, but M-U also has cumulative 5%/round to suffer the same

4th level

Charm monsters: charm effective vs. any opponent; -4 to save when used on humanoids
Confusion: random actions for 2+1 round/level on 2d4 opponents; 1d10, 1 flee, 2-6 stand without movement, 7-8 attack nearest creature, 9-10 attack caster
Dimension door: teleportation within visual distance

Fear: incites panic in target area; deadly when combined with *hold* spells
Fire charm: enchanted fire enthralls subjects to stand still and implants a *suggestion* at -3 save
Fire shield+: protects from fire, reflects melee damage at double strength
Fire trap#: trap inflicts 1d4+2/level damage; 25 gp gold dust
Hallucinatory terrain: envelops an area in illusion
Ice storm: 5d6 damage in target area
Illusion wall: creates a permanent, insubstantial illusion wall
The imperfect preservation#: holds and places a person in magical stasis up to 5 years; no sustenance needed but doesn't prevent disease, poison or aging; *dispel magic* breaks; 500 gp opal
Magical weapon: turns weapons enchanted for the duration of a battle
Minor globe of invulnerability: cancels 3rd or lower level spells
Monster summoning II: 1d6 random medium level monsters for 3+1/level rounds
Polymorphisation+: turn self (20 minutes/level) or others (permanent) into a different being; others need Will save or conform into new personality in Int*1 days
Remove curse+: removes a weaker curse
Rory's mnemonic enhancement#: retrieve 3 levels of spells in any combination; reusable 100gp tablet
Shout: 5d6 damage and deafness in cone
Slave in stone: binds a powerful elemental spirit into a staff 1 round/level, +13 attack, 2d12+3 damage; hazardous to use
Wall of fire: 2d4 damage in 10', 1d6 damage in 20', 2d6+2 Hp/level when stepping through
Wall of ice: 15+2 Hp/level strong wall, 2 Hp/level damage when broken through
Wizard eye: invisible eye to explore the unknown

5th level

Conjure elemental#: conjures a 12th level elemental; needs great quantity of the element
Dreamsending+: sends a dream to a selected person at any distance; nightmares cause 1d10 damage and no recovery, no save
Feeblemind: destroys the subject's mind
Cloudkill: automatic death below 5th level; save or die otherwise
Cone of cold: 1d4+1 Hp/level damage
Contact other plane: contact foreign entities to learn secrets and spells
Distance distortion: permanently alters the dimensions of a locale with bound earth elemental
Extension: extends duration of 1st to 4th level spells by 50%
Hold monsters: paralyses up to 4 opponents for 1 round/level; save at -1 if three targets, -2 if two and -3 if one
Magic jar#: stores caster's mind in 5000 gp object and allows possession at will
Monster summoning II: 1d4 random high level monsters for 4+1/level rounds
Oolar's time: temporarily returns a corpse from the dead; 1 day/level, may be periodically renewed
Passwall: walk through walls
Quest: sends a subject on a quest
Rock to mud+: turns a stone surface or object into mud
Shadow conjuration: conjures 1/3 levels shadows that fight for the caster
Stone shape: moulds stone into the desired form
Telekinesis: move objects or creatures (no save) with force of will, 1st round 10', 2nd round 20', 3rd round 40', 4th round and afterwards 80'; may cause falling damage
Teleport: teleportation with margin of error
The terrible depth spell#: consigns target into 100 years of underground imprisonment; age at ¼ rate but save vs. insanity every 5th year; caster may summon subject three times and ask a question which allows him to walk free if truthfully answered; 3000 gp gem
Wall of iron: creates a permanent, if unstable iron wall
Wall of force: creates a transparent, impenetrable barrier
Wall of stone: creates a permanent stone wall



List of illusionist spells

0th level

Cantrips: minor magical effects 1 round/level
Dancing lights: dancing, minor wisps of light
Detect illusion: detects the presence of illusions
Light: provides light of approximately torch strength
Read magic: deciphers magical texts

1st level

Audible glamor: illusion of sounds with volume of four people per level
Change self: changes the character's appearance for 10 minutes/level
Colour spray: renders 1d6 subjects unconscious for 2d4 rounds if lower level than spellcaster or blind 1d4 rounds if higher than spellcaster; save applicable from 5th level
Detect invisibility: detects the presence and location of invisible subjects
Gaze reflection: reflects all spells and effects that work via eye contact
Hypnosis: hypnotises 1d6 subjects, allowing slow control and small suggestions
Lesser illusion: images only
Wall of fog: a wall composed of swirling mists obscures vision

2nd level

Blindness/deafness: inflicts permanent blindness or deafness
Detect magic: detects the presence of magical auras
Fog cloud#: creates fog cloud; assumes powers of drugs and airborne poisons
Hypnotic pattern: entraps 2d4+1/level subjects for the duration of concentration
Identify#: determines the magical functions of objects 1/level; **[1d20+spellcaster level+Int bonus]** check vs. DC 16; 200 gp incense inhaled in trance
Improved illusion: images and sounds
Invisibility: invisibility for 10 minutes/level; attack dispels
Magic mouth#: mouth speaks on preset conditions; 10 gp jade dust
Mirror image: creates 1d4+1/3 level false images
Misdirection: confuses detection spells with illusionist's desired results
Omar's regrettable mistake: a faulty but trendy illusionist spell lasting 6 days; target's eyes glow a faint blue and glass items shake in 20' radius; dogs flee from presence but cats are invariably attracted; inexplicably attracted to blue colour
Ventriloquism: 1 minute/level

3rd level

Continual light+: creates a permanent light
Dispel illusion: cancels illusion effects in area
Disperception: gives protection against all forms of detection on subject or area, 10 minutes/level
Fear: incites panic in target area; deadly when combined with *hold* spells
Greater illusion: images, sounds, heat and touch
Hallucinatory terrain: envelops an area in illusion
Illusion wall: creates a permanent, insubstantial illusion wall
Illusionary script#: script can only be deciphered by chosen subjects, otherwise *suggestion* to leave; 50 gp lead-based in
IOUN's stones: three orbiting stones grant protection for an hour: blue +1 saves, green +1 AC, yellow absorbs first spell directed at caster (20% spell is absorbed into stone and usable)
Paralysis: permanent paralysation until dispelled
Suggestion: verbal suggestion to influence actions 60+60 minutes/level
Ylam-Ylam's red spell: subject is filled with uncontrollable rage upon the sight of red

4th level

Confusion: random actions for 2+1 round/level; 1d10, 1 flee, 2-6 stand without movement, 7-8 attack nearest creature, 9-10 attack caster
Emotion+: fear as spell; hatred +2 on all rolls vs. target; hopelessness despondency and prone to surrender, rage +1 Hp per HD, +1 attack and damage but reckless
Improved invisibility: 4+1 rounds/level, allows attacks
Infusion: allows the transfer of characteristics, e.g. smell, taste, intelligence, alignment etc. of objects and beings into liquids
Lankwiler's greater crystallogenesis: creates field of sharp crystal blades, 2d4 damage per round while moving, 25% to reflect spells
Minor creation: allows the creation of desired mundane items 1 hour/level
The munificent eye: allows caster to transfer silver items into backpack on eye contact; has hazards
Phantasmal killer: vague form of greatest fears attacks as 4 HD monster 1 round/level; save or die if it hits, 3d6 damage if save is successful
Rainbow pattern: entraps 24 HD subjects for the duration of concentration and draws them towards moving pattern
Shadow monsters+: creates 1 HD/level of half-strength creatures; expensive incenses add to strength
Ylam-Ylam's chimes: subject rises into the air enthralled by ringing chimes; euphoric trance causes spell addiction

5th level

Contact other plane: contact foreign entities to learn secrets and spells

Dreamsending+: sends a dream to a selected person at any distance; nightmares cause 1d10 damage and no recovery, no save

Dreamspell#: illusionist may change reality in dream fuelled by 1000 gp perfumes and incense; the more desirable the results, the higher likelihood of being lost in own spell

Lankwiler's prismatic missile: missile strikes unerringly; random effect 1d8, 1 10 damage, 2 20 damage, 3 40 damage, 4 save or die from poison, 5 save or petrification, 6 save or go insane, 7 save or be sent to other plane, 8 two colours

Maze: entraps subject in extradimensional maze; Intelligence -02 2d4*10 min, 03-05 1d4*10 min, 06-08 5d4 min, 09-11 4d4 min, 12-14 3d4 min, 15-17 2d4 min, 18+ 1d4 min

Permanent illusion: a *greater illusion* spell with permanent effects

Programmed illusion: a *greater illusion* activated on predetermined conditions

Shadow conjuration: conjures 1/3 levels shadows that fight for the caster

Shadow door: door allows escape to close location

Shadow magic+: replicates Magic-User combat spells at ½ effectiveness

True seeing: shows things as they genuinely are



V. Gamemaster information

Monsters and NPCs

Monster statistics: A standard stat block for monsters includes the following information:

Name (number) [XP bonus]: the first two are self-explanatory. XP bonus, expressed as *, ** or ***, signifies the monster is worth more experience points than its hit dice. For example, a **Doppelganger*** has 4 HD, but it is counted as 5 HD for experience points; a **Vampire**** has 7 HD, but it is worth as much as a 9 HD monster. Some monsters, typically those which are physically powerful but less dangerous due to stupidity or some other significant weakness, may have penalties at -, -- or ---. For example, a **Triceratops---**, a 16 HD horror, is only worth 13 HD despite its deadly thagomiser.

Hit Dice: basically serves the same function as character level, except monsters all belong to the same class and calculate their secondary values accordingly:

- their base **Hp** is always 1d8/level
- like Fighters, their **Attack bonus** is equivalent to their HD
- their **Saving throws** are calculated based on HD, with **[HD/2+2]** for better and **[HD/3]** for worse saves. Most monsters save similar to Fighters, but an agile and weak one would save as a Thief, and a demon would use the better category for everything.
- HD is also used to calculate XP value

Some monsters' HD has a number added to it (e.g. 2+1, 3+2, 6+1, 5+3 etc.). This modifier functions as a bonus to all secondary values just like an ability score modifier would. For example, a **Living Statue** with 4+2 HD would have 4d8+8 Hp, attack at 2*+6

for 1d8+2 points with its fists, and have saving throws at +6/+3/+3. Considering the ability score scale, +3 (equivalent to 18s) should be reserved for particularly ferocious monsters, and a +4, the absolute maximum, should only be used for demi-gods and above. Naturally, this is a simplification, and a 6+3 HD **Minotaur** wouldn't have 18s in Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma.

Initiative: equivalent to HD bonus.

AC: is self-explanatory.

Attacks: are self-explanatory; the rate and damage of attacks is heavily dependent on physique, mass, agility etc. Unless stated otherwise, natural attacks have criticals at (20/*2).

Special abilities: specific types are explained below.

Saving throws: are calculated as above.

Ability scores: are only listed for important NPCs

Example monster and NPC stat blocks: These should serve as examples of variable levels of abstraction.

Assassin Vines (1d6): HD 4+2; AC 16; Atk +6 vines 1d6+2+grab; Spec strangle 2d6/round, immune to mind-affecting; +6/+3/+3.

Scorpions, Giant (1d4+1): HD 5; AC 15; Atk 2*+5 pincers 1d10 and +5 sting 1d6+poison (DC 12, 1d6 Con/1d6 Con); Spec poison, immune to mind-affecting; +4/+1/+1.

Crabs, Giant (2d6): HD 3+2; AC 18; Atk 2*+5 pincers 1d6+2; immune to mind-affecting, tasty; +5/+3/+3.

Zombies (3d8): HD 2+1; AC 12; Atk +3 slam 1d8+1; Spec always acts last in round, immune to mind-affecting; +4/+0/+1.

Meta-Droid (1d4)*: HD 8+2; AC 20; Atk +10 slam 1d12+2 or +10 laser 3d10+ (roll additional dice on 10s, 5/day); Spec immune to mind-affecting, ½ from cold, electricity and fire; +8/+4/+8.

[Some particularly powerful sentries have HD at 8+2 MAX, or 80 Hp. **The same technique can be used for “boss monsters” of other types – these should be extremely rare and reserved for special occasions.**]

Wraith (1):** HD 5; AC 17; Atk +5 touch 1d6 + 1d6 Con; Spec incorporeal, DR 5/+1; immune to cold and mind-affecting; +1/+4/+4.

Demon, Vulture (1d3)*: HD 8+1; AC 20; Atk 2*+9 claws 1d6+1 and +9 beak 1d8+1; Spec DR 5/+1, SR 12, immune to mind-affecting and electricity, ½ from acid, cold and fire, spellcasting as 3rd level M-U, conjure demon 1/day, 20% of 2d10 Lost Souls or another Vulture Demon; +7/+7/+7.

City Guards (1d4*5 or 2d4*5): Ftr 2+1; AC 16 (studded leather, large wooden shield, Dex); Atk +3 scimitar 1d6+3 or +3 halberd 1d10+3 [no shield]; +4/+1/+1.

Veterans (1d4*5 or 2d4*5): Ftr 3+1; AC 17 (chain shirt, large metal shield, Dex); Atk +4 longsword 1d8+3 or +4 halberd 1d10+3 [no shield] or +4 crossbow 1d8+2; +4/+2/+2.

Elites (1d4*5 or 2d4*5): Ftr 4+2; AC 19 (chain mail or breast plate, large metal shield, Dex); Atk +6 bastard sword 1d10+4 or +6 halberd 1d10+5 [no shield]; +6/+3/+3.

Thieves (1d6): Thf 3+1; Init +5; AC 13 (leather, Dex); Atk +3 scimitar 1d6+1 [+2d6 snk] or +3 thrown dagger 1d4+1 [+2d6 snk]; +2/+4/+2.

Ong the Gladiator: Fighter 7; AC 15 (large metal shield, Dex); Atk +9/+4 trident 1d8+2; +7/+5/+1; 16/18/15/8/8/8.
Hp 54

Megasthenes the Erudite: M-U 3/Thf 2; AC 10; Init +4; Atk +2 scimitar 1d6 [+1d6 snk] + poison II (DC 12, 2d6 Hp/2d6 Hp); +1/+4/+3; 2d6*10 gp, 5*poison II, 1*poison IV (DC 18, 4d6/4d6 Hp).
Spells: 0: 4, 1: 2, 2: 1; DC 10+LVL; 0: cantrips, dancing lights, detect magic, detect poison, light, read magic; 1: jump, sleep, spider climb, unseen servant, ventriloquism; 2: detect thoughts.
Hp 16

[Memorised spells underscored, others are in spell-book]

Multhran Ameer: Bbn 4+3; AC 16 (leather, Dex, *cloak*+1); Atk +7 bastard sword 1d10+4; +9/+6/+6; *cloak* +1, 600 gp golden helm with inset emerald.
Hp 36

Osamir ibn Lhade the Healer: Clr 6+2; DC 12 (Dex); Atk +6 decorative staff 1d6+3; +7/+4/+7; Lawful Good; *ring of mind-shielding*, 1d6*50 gp, chest of incense 1d6*250 gp.

Spells: 0: 5, 1: 4, 2: 4, 3: 2; DC 12+LVL; 0: purify food and water, light, read magic*3; 1: bless*2, sanctuary, protection from good###; 2: cure moderate wounds, augury#, reversion, spiritual weapon; 3: searing light*2.

Hp 46

[# signs next to spells symbolise material components]

Special monster abilities:

Poison: poison is listed as (**DC, primary effect/secondary effect**). Most poisons have secondary effects which have to be rolled for separately. Some common poison types are (DC 12, 2d6 Hp/2d6 Hp), (DC 12, 1d6 Con/1d6 Con) and (DC 18, 3d6 Hp/3d6 Hp), but effects can involve anything from a murderous frenzy to catatonia or hallucination, and methods of delivery can range from injury and ingestion to contact and airborne.

Disease: disease takes a form similar to poison, but effects occur at a slower rate: **slow** monthly, **normal** weekly, **virulent** daily and **acute** only once, but with thrice the effects. Without magic, three successful saves must be rolled in a row to shake off the effects of disease. A Healing check at 12 adds +2, at 18 +4, and at 24 +6 to the saves. For example, **crypt fever**, usually contracted from mass graves, is a normal disease with an Average DC (12), results in 1d6 Str loss on each failed save, and characters who die from it return as flesh-hungry zombies.

Damage Reduction (DR): supernatural protection from weapons listed as **DR [reduction]/[weapon]**. All damage from weapons is reduced by the first amount unless the monster is being hit by a weapon of sufficient enchantment or better. DR is almost always 5/+1 (-5 damage on each hit unless using +1 or better); 10/+2 is a rarity and 15/+3 is reserved for the most resilient monsters (in the **Sword and Magic: Monsters and Treasures** booklet, only iron golems had this level of protection).

Spell Resistance (SR): an alternate form of magical defence only found on supernatural monsters. SR is a fixed DC the spellcaster must beat with a **[1d20+spellcaster level]** roll. A failure means the spell is deflected by the opponent's aura of protection. SR has no effect against indirect spell effects: e.g. if a *wall of fire* sets a building aflame, the fires will burn the vampire within.

Energy Drain: some undead monsters drain life force from their victims, which takes the form of Constitution damage. Wights and Wraiths inflict 1d6 Con in addition to melee hits; the more powerful Spectres and Vampires inflict 2d4.

Experience

Experience point awards are based on the following table:

Level	XP
1-	25
1	50
2	100
3	150
4	250
5	400
6	650
7	1000
8	1500
9	2000
10+	3000+1000/level

Experience points are awarded for three types of accomplishments:

Defeating monsters and NPCs: the award is based on a monster's Hit Dice or an NPC's experience level, including any bonus due to extraordinary capabilities that would put them in a higher category. Defeating opponents by deceiving, capturing or (sometimes) avoiding them merits a full award.

Succeeding at challenges, problem-solving and survival: minor and major accomplishments, fulfilling preset or newly arising objectives, clever and

imaginative problem-solving should be rewarded by assigning an appropriate value from the table. Minor awards should be around Level 2-4 and be given liberally, major tasks 5-7, and really great deeds (such as escaping from a hostile dimension or overthrowing a wizard-tyrant) 8-10. Much of this XP is collective, but individual player ability – engagement and creative problem-solving – should also be rewarded, generally with lesser awards.

Treasure squandered in hedonistic excess: assuming the standard treasure values of **Sword and Magic**, where 1000 gp is considered to be a lot of money, a ratio of **5 XP per gp value** is suggested. Squandering may mean expensive drugs, lavish entertainment, fancy clothing, sponsoring gladiatorial games or anything that has no direct or indirect benefit for the character. Therefore, money spent to curry favour with the rich and powerful, sacrifices to the gods or bribes do not count, but alms to orphans and widows, or money spent on other acts of senseless altruism does, since these actions are ultimately just as ineffective and meaningless as extreme debauchery.

To keep things in perspective, a long campaign started with standard 3rd level characters and running 50-odd sessions ended with the only surviving PC from the original party at 12th level, and others from 8th to 11th.



Appendix I: Recommended media

Brackett, Leigh: *The Sword of Rhiannon*, *The Book of Skaith*, *Lorelei of the Red Mist* etc.

Dunsany, Lord: *The Gods of Pegana*.

Flash Gordon (movie; 1980 rock opera and old serials)

Howard, Robert E.: Kull, Solomon Kane and (if you must) Conan stories.

Lamb, Harold: *Wolf of the Steppes*; *Warriors of the Steppes*; *Riders of the Steppes*; *Swords of the Steppes*; *Swords from the West*; *Swords from the Desert*; *Swords from the Wastes*; *Swords from the Sea*. The stories in these collections are ranked among the best adventure fiction ever written.

Leiber, Fritz: *Ill Met in Lankmar* etc.

Leone, Sergio: *For a Fistful of Dollars*; *For a Few Dollars More*; *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (movies)

Lovecraft, Howard P.: *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*

Merritt, Abraham: *Dwellers in the Mirage*, *The Face in The Abyss*, *The Moon Pool*, *The Metal Monster*, *The Ship of Ishtar*.

Moore, Catherine Lucille: Jirel and Northwest Smith stories, esp. *Jirel Meets Magic*, *Black God's Kiss*, *Black Thirst*, *Scarlet Dream*.

Moran, Daniel Keys: *The Ring*.

Mundy, Talbot: *King -- of the Khyber Rifles*, *Tros of Samothrace*, *The Purple Pirate*.

Parsons, Dan: *Navero of the Correct and Unalterable Way* (campaign journal).

Raymond, Alex: *Mongo*, *Planet of Doom*, *Three Against Ming* etc. (comic strips)

Smith, Clark Ashton: short stories, esp. *The Tale of Satampra Zeiros*, *The Weird of Avoosl Wuthoqqan*, *The Seven Geases*, *The Charnel God*.

Strabo: *Geographica* (excellent background material)

Unreal (computer game)

Vance, Jack: *The Dying Earth*, *Eye of the Overworld*, *Cugel's Saga*, *Planet of Adventure*, *The Demon Princes* etc.

Wizardry VII.: *Crusaders of the Dark Savant* (computer game)

Zardoz (arthouse movie)

(Only titles available in English are listed)

Appendix II: Design notes

This section briefly outlines some of the design decisions and assumptions behind these rules, and provides a brief overview on the way they were used in our campaign.

Ability scores: Random generation and the fixed sequence of rolled scores ensures variety and the role of luck; however, the drop lowest method and the two series tend to result in competent player characters. Selling souls is provided as an option to realise short-term gains for long-term risk (no possibility of being raised; other consequences that may haunt the character through the campaign).

In comparison with d20 rules, the ability score bonus curve has been flattened. A score of 18 represents the boundaries of human potential; a 21, the realm of demigods and great heroes.

Races: The human subraces represent a broad variety of adventuring archetypes. Level limits, entirely impervious barriers before advancement in older editions, are used as an encouragement to multiclass, but may be transcended at a minor cost.

Levels: The demographics described on p. 4 establish the “implied setting” of these rules. These level divisions are “Bledsawian” in that there are a lot of low-level NPCs, but a party of 5th or 6th level characters can be considered relatively capable in human-inhabited areas. The following table has been used to generate levels for individual NPCs in most human settings.

NPC level by type	Avg.	Elite	Elite+
beginner (1)	01-35	01-20	01-10
regular (2)	36-60	21-50	11-25
veteran (3)	61-80	51-70	26-55
elite (4)	81-90	71-80	56-70
medium (1d4+4)	91-97	81-95	71-90
high (1d4+8)	98-00	96-00	91-00

The rules are relatively well balanced up to 8th or 9th level, where spellcasters start to gain an advantage over other classes, and PCs can expect to overcome most everything a GM can throw at them. Therefore, this is where most campaigns would be expected to be concluded.

Classes: Characters created with these rules tend to be more powerful than their equal-level counterparts in older editions (particularly on the low levels), but weaker than PCs in the d20 system, with a significantly flatter power curve.

Sword and Magic emphasises open-ended problem-solving, and assumes starting 3rd level player characters to be generally competent, well-rounded individuals who can not only stand their own in danger, but accomplish or at least have a shot at any task a competent adventurer might expect to face.

Skills: Characters can use all skills that would be available to their class (including general ones), effectively giving each PC a relatively broad set of

non-class abilities. The standard Difficulty Classes (which are also used for most saving throws) ensure Average checks are not particularly risky for trained characters, but may pose a problem for untrained ones. Hard checks are always a risk for the former and unlikely to succeed for the latter, and should only be used sparingly.

Combat: In contrast with exactly defined time units and d20's focus on precise grid-based movement, this system does not establish an exact “round” nor how much the combatants can move in them. This does not imply the GM should run combats in an entirely abstract manner as it is sometimes suggested; rather, it is recommended to keep the fronts moving, give players and opponents good mobility (of course, within the bounds of reason), and encourage the use of terrain for various escapades.

The general mechanic for +5 manoeuvres covers most special actions in combat (and replaces d20's feats), but other devices can also be used to spice things up: gaining or losing initiative, bonuses, penalties, skill checks and awarding extra attacks.

Unlike d20, where combat scenarios usually focus on a relatively limited number of powerful foes, **Sword and Magic** works really well with masses of low-level opponents, who can be dangerous even for mid- and sometimes high-level characters without strong armour or magical protection. 1 and 2 HD opponents are easily mowed down with single hits, while 3 HD usually gives enough Hp to prevent that.

Mass combat as a system has been found to be sufficient for small- and medium-scale battles, but tends to be slower-paced than regular combat. Many of the tricks on the battlefield can be extrapolated from the general combat rules or made up on the spot.

Magic and spells: Spells in **Sword and Magic** are limited to 5th level, which has removed a lot of complication from the system without destroying the allure of high-level magic. Practically, however, removing d20's “safety measures” and limitations from a number of low-level spells has been found to have a more significant impact on character effectiveness.

There has been no time to provide expansive descriptions for all spells on the lists; if someone wishes to use this system, most can already be found in other variants. It should be emphasised that a loose interpretation of spell capabilities allows them to be used in a larger variety of contexts, something I consider a positive thing.

Divine championship and patronage: This set of guidelines has been found to be an inexhaustible wellspring of adventure hooks, PC motivation and interesting rewards in multiple campaigns. The material and social benefits of religious affiliation also add context to characters and the entire campaign, while the machinations of petty and morally ambiguous gods brings them much closer to the adventures than in worlds where they are all-powerful but inaccessible and aloof.

Appendix III: Primer

Where the rest of the book's approach is general, this part is specific and highly subjective. Similar to **The Quick Primer for Old School Gaming** by Matthew J. Finch or **Philotomy's Musings**, it represents a possible take on running and playing old school games in a way we find rewarding in our campaigns. All that follows is unenforced opinion.

Imagination-driven simulation: At their heart, RPGs give us "what happens if" scenarios. Seeing the consequences of actions taken by imaginary characters in a made-up (but to a degree, internally consistent) context might be the original definition of "role-playing", predating its current meaning which tends to imply "role-assumption", some sort of identification with the imaginary characters and setting.

Sword and Magic advocates imaginative simulation: bold decision-making, and seeing its physical and moral implications in the game world. It is best to imagine an encounter, adventure or campaign as a system where every relevant action has its consequences, and there is a never-ending chain of causality as they are reintegrated into the campaign and the world: action → reaction → action → reaction etc. The end goal is player involvement: encounters should capture the group's imagination, encourage them to take action, and further their engagement not only with their specific situation, but the adventure and the overall campaign as well.

Since **Sword and Magic** is about fantastic adventures instead of simple, conventional realities, it is appropriate to have a bias towards larger than life events and use PC actions to generate instability and further conflict (in this respect, PCs can be seen as agents of change, even as Leigh Brackett's analogy for poison introduced into a living system). Still, the GM should interpret actions fairly and present mostly plausible consequences – within the context of a fantastic setting where not everything may be strictly logical.

Context through interaction: Many role-playing games dedicate considerable effort to the intricacies of fantasy worlds. **Sword and Magic's** suggested approach is to paint with broad strokes at the outset and let details emerge during the course of play.

As the characters come into contact with their environment (meaning the physical game world with its NPCs and monsters, but also its societies, ideologies and power structures), the process of interaction itself fills out a lot of the blank areas. The GM can extrapolate the details from a general idea or loose notes (e.g. a desert city implies the importance of its wells), or fit improvised/randomly generated detail into the world in a sensible way (e.g. a randomly generated pyramidal megastructure in a Hellenic town might imply prehistoric, fantastic or alien origins, which in turn could also influence how the locals view its presence). Through this process, the environment becomes more complex, action begins to involve more actors and interests, and the campaign develops further adventure hooks and contexts for interaction.

In this model, the game doesn't have strictly defined boundaries; what matters is maintaining a

semblance of internal consistency and an unbroken chain of causality. The world itself is open, continuous without absolute limits: if you go to the end of what 'is', it expands. Play may even extend into new forms of interaction with the imagined alternate reality. The method, if used well, can maintain a significant degree of internal consistency while avoiding the mass-production of irrelevant but time-consuming mundane detail.

Flow and fluidity: Many campaigns and systems, both old and new school ones, are unnecessarily strict in their procedures or interpretations of what characters can do and what forms of action are possible at all. This impedes the flow of play, and restricts the ideas that lead to the most interesting adventures.

As a GM, it is best to be generous with the rules and allow characters to try actions that may be logical from their perspective. In combat, but also in problem-solving and setting the direction of the campaign, loose boundaries encourage imaginative action and risk-taking. Adventures that are open-ended and lead smoothly into other adventures, and campaigns that emerge in an organic fashion, make for a good, memorable experience.

Fluidity is also encouraged by using sliding degrees of success and failure. While the threat of sudden and total failure (or success) can create welcome tension, it is often better to be more gradual: a character loosing footing on a treacherous mountainside might at first tumble down the slope for 2d6 damage; then on another failure, lose half the contents of his backpack; and only then plummet to his doom. The same principles apply to social encounters and confrontations – in fact, *especially* social encounters and confrontations.

Naturalism vs. surrealism: The preceding sections have advocated campaigns that are internally consistent and don't fall apart on a bit of scrutiny. Yet fantasy is also about things which are fanciful, strange and unexpected (in a way a *magic missile* or orc is no longer so to veteran players), and it is perhaps at its best where the fantastic details stand against a generally plausible backdrop. In the underworlds, wilderness areas, dreamlands and hostile planets of an imagined reality, fantasy and internal consistency are not mutually exclusive categories; rather, they are juxtaposed to create a sense of strangeness and wonder.

These elements of surrealism are typically best added through loose free association: in the ruined jungle temple of ape-worshippers, one might find not only storerooms and appropriately deteriorated mechanical traps, but also sacrificial chambers filled to the ceiling with skulls, magical mirrors that transform the characters' reflections into hostile simian monsters, an idol that can control minds and a tower between the past and the present where strange bargains can take place.

The goal is not to create something that is mundane and governed by strict natural logic, nor total unreality: rather, a synthesis where the former provides sufficient foundation to appreciate the weirdness of the latter.

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