

# Pits and Perils: Unearthed Secrets



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# Chapter I: Character Creation

## 10. Choose two Abilities

Ability	Actions
Strength	bend bars, lift gates, etc.
Intelligence	know legends, lore, etc.
Dexterity	climb walls, stealth, etc.
Wisdom	detect lies, find clues, etc.
Constitution	withstand adversity, etc.
Charisma	lead, persuade others, etc.

All characters can attempt anything but chosen abilities determine what the character excels at. Any actions falling under said attributes receive a +1 bonus to the roll.

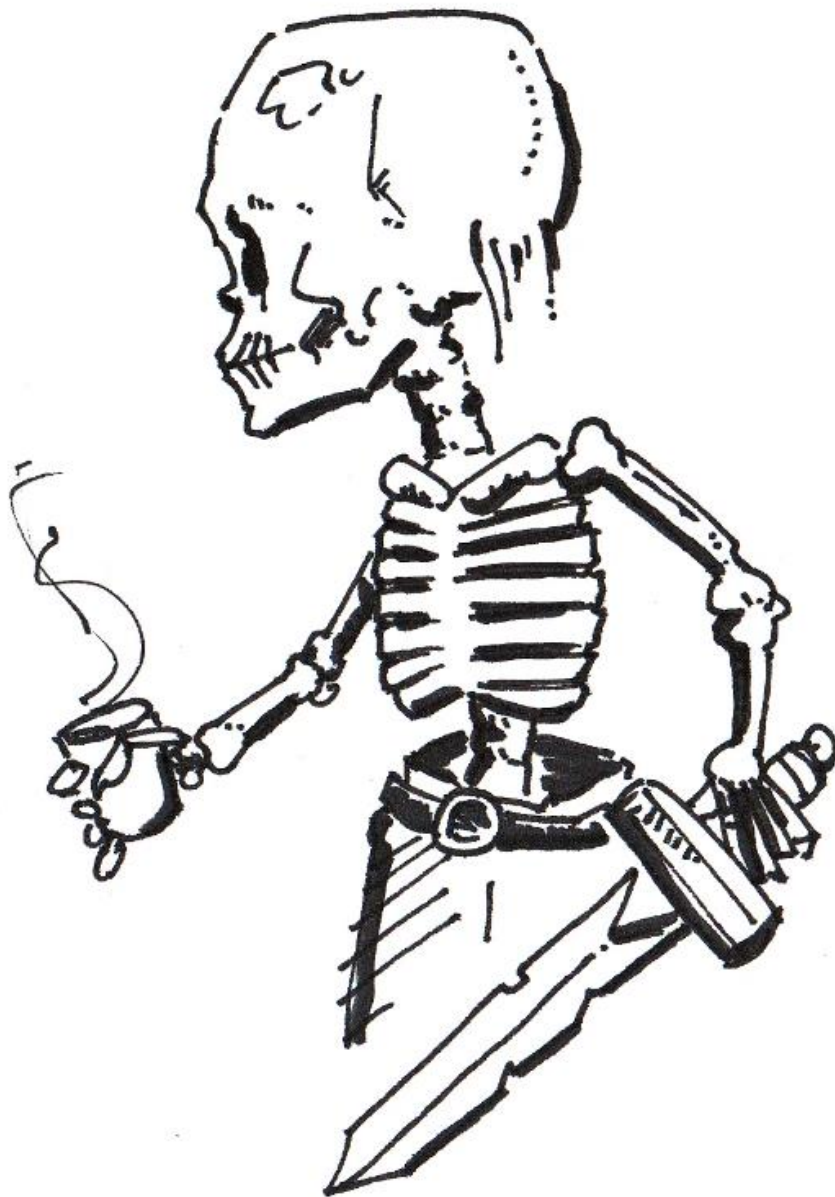
**STRENGTH** relates to physical prowess. All characters are strong to some extent, but only some characters are mighty. The character may attempt feats of great strength, like forcing open a stuck door, etc.

**DEXTERITY** is a measure of speed, balance, and coordination. Fast characters can attempt to hide, sneak, and steal small objects, like a coin purse. However, this may not be possible in metal armor and/or shields.

**WISDOM** means empathy and intuition. Players must still rely on their own judgment. However, wise characters might notice things others miss, like fresh tracks or knowing when someone is lying to them.

**CONSTITUTION** indicates health and well-being. Hardy characters can hold their breath and swim rough waters, etc. The bonus of (+1) can apply to saving dice against things like disease and/or poison.

**CHARISMA** is charm and leadership ability. Players should always act out their personal interactions. However, leaders can attempt to influence others and even.



## 2. Choose Heritage

### Human

Humans are the most versatile and prominent race in the world.

- Gain +2 bonus xp per encounter
- Have no restrictions

### Dwarves

Dwarves are a race of short, stocky underground people. They stand 4' tall and live in the mountains, where they mine the earth and fashion items of exquisite beauty. Dwarves prize gold and tend to be greedy. In fact, gold is the reason most leave home in the first place. For all this, dwarves are lawful and value personal honor above all things. To outsiders, they appear stubborn. They possess the following traits;

- +1 to all Saving Dice
- +2 against all manmade traps
- Due to the Dwarves living underground, they can identify unsafe construction one-third of the time (1-2 in 1d6). This includes mechanical traps and natural hazards, like knowing when a ceiling might collapse
- See in Darkness (except magical light) out to 30' though torchlight negates this.
- They speak their own language and the tongue of Man
- Dwarves can only choose the Cleric, Shadow Guard, Fighter, or Barbarian Archetypes

## **Hill Dwarves**

Hill Dwarves stand 3' tall, being shorter than their cousins and not so greedy and violent. They have long since abandoned their mountain dwellings and possess the following traits;

- +1 to all Saving Dice
- +2 against disease or poison
- Their small size allows them to hide, even heavily armored, with only a 1 in 1d6 chance of detection if they remain perfectly still and make no noise
- Hill Dwarves can only choose the Cleric, Shadow Guard, Fighter, or Barbarian Archetypes

## **Elves**

Elves are a race of slender, graceful, forest dwellers. They stand 5' tall and have pointed ears. Elves are immortal, or nearly so, and they often seem detached from mortal concerns. In truth, their longevity gives them unique insight, and they are innately good and wise. Elves are usually neutral, but only because they can see the big picture. They possess the following traits;

- All elves cast spells as a 1<sup>st</sup> Level Magician, although spell duration and effect do not improve (Unless they are a Magician). They can either learn a new spell every third level or gain an additional spell point.
- They can identify the presence of magic one-third of the time (1-2 in 1d6) if within 30'.

- They speak their own language and the tongue of man, if the Referee allows it; they can communicate with woodland creatures as well.
- Elves can only choose the Fighter, Magician, or Necromancer Archetypes

## **Wood Elves**

Wood Elves are a shy and secretive race. They possess the following traits;

- Wood elves do not possess the innate magic of their kin; instead they are blessed with greater speed. They get +1 to all ranged attacks. In addition, they can they can fire a volley of arrows and split the damage between multiple targets in range.
- Elves are exceptionally good at hiding and moving undetected, they gain +1 to all Stealth related rolls every third level
- They speak their own language and the tongue of man, if the Referee allows it; they can communicate with woodland creatures as well.
- Wood Elves cannot can only choose the Fighter, Thief, or Corsair Archetypes



### 3. Class

All characters are considered ADVENTURERS and follow the below progression:

EXP	LVL	HP Total	SP/FP Total*
0	1	10	2/1
50	2	11	-
110	3	12	4/2
190	4	13	-
290	5	14	6/3
410	6	15	-
550	7	16	8/4
710	8	17	-
890	9	18	10/5
1090	10	19	-

\*Magicians/Clerics gain Spell or Faith points respectively if that archetype is chosen.

## 4. Choose Archetype

### Cleric

As fighting priests, clerics possess the following abilities:

- Wear full armor and shield
- Only wield blunt weapons (no bows)
- Perform miracles of Cure Disease, Heal, and Ally as the Magician spells of the same name. These cost Faith Points. Attempt to turn undead equal to their level
- At 7<sup>th</sup> level can attempt to resurrect the dead
- Can be a Monk Instead (No armor or shields, bare hands or quarterstaff only, can fight ambidextrously without have the Dexterity ability, Monks cannot turn undead or resurrect but at 3<sup>rd</sup> level they gain two attacks per round)

### Monk

Monks are individuals that have mastered the ancient and mystic arts of martial arts.

- Cannot wear armor or use shields
- Wield only bare hands or a quarterstaff with a +1 to damage
- At 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> levels, they gain +1 armor as their body hardens with mystical energy
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> level gain an addition attack

## Fighters

Fighters are men-at-arms.

- Wear full armor and shield
- Wield all weapons at +1 to attack dice
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> level gain an additional attack per turn and choose a combat maneuver (then an additional combat maneuver for every third level)

## Barbarians

- Wear leather armor
- Wield all weapons at +1 to attack dice
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> level gain an additional attack per turn and choose a combat maneuver (then an additional combat maneuver for every third level)
- Begin play knowing the Berserk Maneuver – resisting all magical attacks and adding +1 damage at maximum duration per level.

## Magicians

Magicians are powerful spell casters.

- Cannot wear armor or use shields
- Wield only a dagger or quarterstaff
- Cast spells by spending Spell Points, they begin knowing 4 spells and learn an additional spell every 3<sup>rd</sup> level.
- Use Staves and Wands
- At 7<sup>th</sup> level can craft magical items and brew potions

## Thieves

Thieves are scoundrels. They hide, sneak, and steal when the opportunity presents itself. However, their skills are in high demand, so they often join adventuring parties.

- Can only wear leather armor and can't use a shield. They can only fight with light weapons such as daggers, clubs, slings, and blowguns
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> level and every third level after they gain a +1 bonus to Stealth, Disable/Find traps, and pick pocket.
- Possesses the ability to attack for double damage (backstabbing) when they are behind their opponent or when they catch their opponent unawares.

## Corsair

These are daring pirates and highwaymen.

- Can only wear leather armor and can't use a shield. They can only fight with light weapons such as daggers, clubs, slings, swords, and blowguns
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> level gain an additional attack per turn
- Gain the use of the Dodge and Parry maneuvers

## 5. Choose Cosmic Bondage

- Law
- Chaos
- Neutral

## 6. Record Starting Gold and Equipment

All characters start with a backpack, bedroll, 1 weeks' worth of rations, and a single weapon of the player's choice. They also get 1d6×10 gold pegs (GP) to cover additional needs, like armor or a pack mule. Of course, players are free to pool their money for group purchases.



# Chapter II: New Heritages and Archetypes

## New Heritages

### **Ursine**

Ursines are a race of intelligence bears that are capable of speech and critical thinking. They appear as large normal bears with coats of varying shades of brown, grey, and black. They possess the following traits;

- +2 for all rolls involving scent
- +2 for all saves against poison and disease
- They cannot wield weapons and all armor has to be specially crafted which increases cost
- They speak their own language and the language of Man
- Ursines can only choose the Fighter or Barbarian Archetypes (they can make use of all combat maneuvers except those requiring a shield)



### **Drakes**

Drakes are distant cousins to the true dragons. Their independent nature and fondness for befriending other races sets them apart from their more aloof relatives. They have created their own society separate from other dragonkin but tend to share lands with their relatives. Drakes appear to be smaller versions of their giant relatives (at full grown, they are slightly larger than a horse drawn cart). They are winged, scaled, tailed, quadrupeds with great variations in color and frill/horn adornments.

- They are unable to wear armor, but their scales are hard as iron and provide a natural armor bonus to equal to plate mail (+3)
- They are unable to wield weapons, but their teeth and claws can inflict damage
- They can fly at 30'
- They possess a breath weapon (element of choice) that can damage all foes within range
- Drakes can only choose to the Fighter, Magician, or Necromancer Archetypes

## **Moon Folk**

The Moon Folk are a curious and far flung group of small humanoids that have the strange ability to turn into a house cat. They tend to possess cat like personality traits such as aloofness and curiosity. No one really knows their true origins but there are rumors of ancient Fae intervention or even the magic that creates a Magicians familiar gone wild.

- See in Darkness (except magical light) out to 30' though torchlight negates this
- They possess the luck of a cat. If any roll comes up double 1's (snake eyes) they can immediately reroll and must except the new result
- At will, the Moon Folk can transform into a normal house cat and back into their humanoid form. This transformation takes one turn to complete and their gear does not transform with them
- Moon Folk can only choose the Thief, Corsair, Magician, and Necromancer Archetypes

## New Archetypes

### **Necromancer**

Power corrupts but power over life and death corrupts absolutely.

Necromancers are Magicians who have discovered a way to rend the veil between our world and the spirit world as easily as one swat a cobweb out of their face. Most Necromancers are dark and twisted souls that follow their own ambitions or serve more powerful masters, but some Necromancers use their unique gifts for other purposes. These Necromancers are known as Animators and rumor has it that they ask the spirit for permission before they are forced into servitude. All Necromancers possess the following abilities:

- Cannot wear armor or use shields
- Wield only a dagger or quarterstaff
- Cast spells by spending Spell Points, they begin knowing 2 spells and learn an additional spell every 3<sup>rd</sup> level. One of their beginning spells is required to be Mort.
- At 2<sup>nd</sup> level and every even level afterward, the minions from the Mort spell gain a level
- Use Staves and Wands
- At 7<sup>th</sup> level can craft magical items and brew potions

### **Shadow Guards**

These dark beings were once Clerics, a Champion of the Gods. For reasons known only to them, they have fallen from grace and were able to wrestle some of their divine power free from when their Gods forsaken them, but that power is a twisted reflection of its former self. They travel the lands following their own ambitions. All Shadow Guards possess the following abilities;



- Wear full armor and shield
- Only wield bladed weapons (no bows)
- Perform miracles of Jinx, Bolt, and Mist as the Magician spells of the same name. These cost Faith Points.
- Attempt to control undead equal to their level
- 7<sup>th</sup> level gain access to the spell Mort



## **Chapter III: Additional Things**

### **Experience**

Instead of counting big numbers and doing a lot of math, 1-4 experience points are issued per encounter/completion of quest/social roleplay/etc.

### **Death**

Whatever final blow the character takes to reduce them to zero hits (if additional damage from the final blow would put them in negatives, they do not drop past zero hits) they fall unconscious are unable to act. Any further damage taken causes them to make an immediate saving throw modified by Constitution.1 On a failure they die and can be either resurrected or if the referee permits, make a deal with Death. If the roll succeeds, then are considered wounded and lose access to an attribute until healed of 1/4 hits. Further damage causes additional saves with the same results.

### **Bugbears**

Bugbears can hide under any bed regardless of size.

### **Red Shirts, Henchmen, Villains Foul, and Unspeakable Horrors**

Red Shirt level opponents are TN 7 and only have one hit. Henchmen level opponents are TN 7 and have 2-6 hits. Trained Combatants are TN 9 and have hits appropriate to their Hit Dice. Unspeakable Horrors are TN 12 and have hits appropriate to their power. All characters are considered Trained Combatants. Below is the table for quick reference:

Level	Attack	TN	Size *	Damage**	Hits
1-3 (Red Shirts)	+1	7	M	-	1
4-6 (Henchmen)	+2	7	M	-	2-6
7-9 (Trained Combatants)	+3	9	L	+1	Per Level
10-12 (Unspeakable Horrors)	+4	12	H	+2	Appropriate to their Power

\*Not always a factor, more for monstrous foes

\*\*Only applies to natural weapons such as teeth and claws

### Two-Weapon Fighting

Characters who wish to fight with two light weapons (or one light and one medium) gain +1 to hit.

### Two-Handed Weapons

These deal +1 damage.

### Dramatic Systems

#### All noncombat Actions (including saves)

Roll 2d6 + Modifiers vs. TN of 7

#### All Combat Actions

Roll 2d6 + Modifiers vs. TN of 7/9/12

- Result of 9-11 deals 1 Hit before bonus damage (if any)
- Result of 12 deals 2 Hits before bonus damage (if any). If fighting an Unspeakable Horror, a result of 12 only does 1 hit naturally.

## **Chapter IV: New Magical Items**

### **Sunblade**

The art of making these blades have been lost to time. Each one appears to be freshly pulled from a blacksmiths forge as the blades glow like molten iron. These blades can cut through the strongest stone and metals which allows them ignore armor. With each point of damage dealt the armors rating is permanently reduced by one until destroyed (magical armor gets a save).

### **Oblivion Belt**

This heavy old leather belt is adorned with chains that ends in vicious hooks. The wearer of this belt can will chains to shoot out of the shadows to attack anyone within sight. The wearer gains +1 to attack dice and the belt allows the wearer to attack twice with the chains regardless of Archetype or level.

### **Ring of Squeaks**

This ring allows the wearer to turn into a mouse and back again at will. All items are transformed a long with the wearer.

### **Gloves of Daggers**

These unassuming fingerless leather gloves allows the wearer to create an unlimited number of daggers.

### **Amulet of the Ghoul**

This allows the wearer to transform into a ghoul with all of the benefits.

## Chapter V: Judge Advice

### Players and their Characters

Pits and Perils is a roleplaying game about fantastical adventures in far off lands with a backdrop of medieval fantasy where anything is possible, but it is more than that. It is about creating stories at the table between the players and the Judge. It is about the interpersonal interactions between the characters and their world. It is about the questions and experiences that arise when dealing with human nature in unusual situations. It is about ethics, teamwork, love, and hard choices. All of this is the true soul of the game.

So, you have read all of this and you are probably thinking that sounds interesting but how can you bring out these aspects when it is common for players to show up with a character that has already been created with more stats than flavor.

The easiest way to accomplish this is for you to use the following techniques:

1. Character creation takes place at the table with everyone present from start to finish. Players should take turns first discussing their character concepts, discuss background information, discuss possible flaws, then each character should decide how they know some of the other characters - each character can have a maximum of two connections with their fellows - do not leave anyone out (this should be recorded on the character sheet), and finally each player should follow the character creation process in regards to mechanics.

2. During the game, the Judge should strive to create stories or encounters from the backgrounds of the characters, their connections, and what they want. At the end of every session the Judge should ask every player what their character wants to do and/or would be doing in their given situation. The Judge needs to use these answers to help shape the next session.
3. Let the characters go off and do their own thing. Do not warn them about impending dangers or try to railroad them into the session that was pre-designed. Characters tend to create their own situations and get themselves into plenty of trouble all on their own. Due to Pits and Perils being rules light, it is easy to create things on the fly.
4. After the first session, encourage the players to write up a backstory for their characters. Give them the following questions for help with this:
  - ✓ What does your character look like?
  - ✓ What was your character's family like?
  - ✓ What motivated your character to become an adventurer?
  - ✓ Does your character have any secrets?
  - ✓ Does your character have any love interests?
  - ✓ Are there any specific tragedies that have seriously impacted you character?
  - ✓ Where did or does your character live?
  - ✓ Does your character carry any good luck charms or have a trinket that has sentimental value?
  - ✓ What is your character's personality like?
  - ✓ What is your character afraid of?
  - ✓ Does your character have any enemies?

## The Golden Rule

If a character is supposed to be good at something and there is no need for drama or a chance of failure at something let them succeed at what they are good at without a dice roll. If a character has a strong backstory in regard to cooking, leatherworking, making rocking chairs or whatever, let the character succeed and be fully competent in the task. The thing to remember with any idea or action is that if there is no need for a chance of failure or other drama no dice need to be rolled, let the players role play it out



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