


# SHADOW SWORD & SPELL



# RULEBOOK

**SHADOW, SWORD & SPELL 2E**

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# Shadow Sword & Spell

2ND EDITION

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Rogue Games, Inc., Publisher



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## DEDICATIONS

*To Ariana: your strength, your love, and your heart has saved me in more ways than you know. You are my rock, my protector, my muse, and one true love. I am still alive because of you. Saying I love you does not seem enough.*

*To Athena, Tricia, and Danni: you have been there for me in ways I never thought possible. You are more than friends, you are my sisters. There is no way I can express the depth of my love for each of you, and how much I appreciate you.*

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*Dedicated to the memory of Larry K. (1968-2015), Jay B. (1972-2015), and John W. (1982-2015). There are no words to express the emptiness I feel daily without you in my life. I know the roads we walked were ones of darkness, and I hope that in some way I was a light for you on our journey. I know you were a light for me. I wish you were still here. The struggle is over my brothers, and the demons we have faced are left for me to fight alone. I live every day in your memories, and strive to carry the torch for you.*



## CONTENTS

Chapter 1: A Primer .....	11	Chapter 3: Characters .....	47
What is Human-Centric, Pulp Fantasy? .....	12	Abilities .....	47
Setting.....	12	Vitality .....	48
For the Players.....	13	Sanity.....	50
For the Gamemaster.....	13	Initiative .....	50
12° .....	14	Actions.....	50
Playing the Game .....	14	Backgrounds .....	50
Rules Overview .....	14	Cultures.....	51
Tests .....	15	Modifiers .....	52
Hooks & Action Points .....	17	Choosing Skills.....	55
What's Next?.....	18	Action Points.....	56
Chapter 2: Rules.....	19	The Action Point Effect .....	56
Basics.....	20	Gain a Success .....	57
Ability.....	20	+1 Bonus.....	57
Skill & Spell Rank .....	21	“Editing” .....	57
Base Rank.....	22	Combat Usage.....	57
Skills .....	22	Change the Area .....	58
Ranks.....	22	Hooks.....	58
Challenges & Modifiers for Skill Tests .....	23	When to Invoke .....	61
So How Does This Work?.....	24	Creating Hooks .....	62
Action .....	25	“Bad” Hooks.....	63
Telling Time.....	25	Equal Opportunity Hooks .....	63
Initiative .....	25	Hook Examples.....	64
Surprise.....	26	Hooks in Play .....	64
Tactics .....	26	A Final Word on Hooks & Action Points .....	65
Actions.....	26	Experience Points .....	65
Rate of Fire .....	27	Finishing Touches .....	65
Range.....	28	Name .....	66
Movement.....	28	Age .....	66
Throwing.....	28	Gender .....	66
Personal Combat Basics .....	29	Chapter 4: Skills.....	67
Note on Combat.....	29	Skill List .....	68
Combat Complications .....	29	Acrobatics (Quickness).....	68
Damage .....	34	Alchemy (Wits).....	69
Shock.....	35	Animal Handling (Wits) .....	69
Melee Combat Damage .....	35	Astrology (Wits).....	69
Ranged Combat Damage.....	35	Athletics (Brawn, Untrained) .....	70
Unarmed Combat Damage.....	35	Bargain (Will, Untrained) .....	71
Other Types of Damage.....	36	Brawl (Brawn, Untrained).....	71
Healing.....	36	Bureaucracy (Wits, Untrained) .....	72
Avoiding Attacks.....	37	Defend (Brawn, Untrained) .....	72
Ability Tests .....	37	Diplomacy (Will, Untrained) .....	72
Armor .....	39	Divination (Wits).....	72
Shields .....	39	Dodge (Quickness, Untrained) .....	73
Defend .....	40	Empathy (Will, Untrained) .....	73
Dodge .....	40	Gaming (Wits, Untrained) .....	74
Carrying, Lifting, & Pushing.....	40	Heal (Wits).....	74
Fear & Sanity .....	40	Herbalist (Wits) .....	74
Fear.....	40	Intimidation (Will, Untrained) .....	74
Regaining Sanity .....	42	Investigation (Wits, Untrained).....	74
Disease .....	42	Language (Wits) .....	74
Poison .....	43	Lore (Wits).....	76
Herbalists & Poison .....	43	Magic (Will) .....	76
Option: Specific Poisons.....	44	Melee (Brawn, Untrained) .....	76
Drugs .....	45	Merchant (Wits).....	76
Types of Drugs .....	45	Observe (Wits, Untrained).....	76
Examples of Drugs.....	45	Performance (Will, Untrained).....	78

Physick (Wits).....	78	Step Three: Battle! .....	143
Profession (Wits).....	78	Step Four: Aftermath .....	144
Resist (Wits, Untrained) .....	79	Strongholds & Sieges .....	144
Ride (Quickness, Untrained) .....	79	Heroes & Units .....	144
Sense (Wits).....	79	Hooks.....	144
Shoot (Quickness, Untrained) .....	79	+5 ES Bonus .....	145
Socialize (Will, Untrained).....	79	Boost Quality by 1 Level.....	145
Stealth (Quickness, Untrained).....	80	Building Armies.....	145
Streetwise (Will, Untrained) .....	81	Combat Example .....	145
Study (Wits) .....	81	<b>Chapter 8: The Endgame .....</b>	<b>149</b>
Subterfuge (Quickness) .....	82	Am I Confusing What Endgame Means? .....	151
Survival (Wits).....	83	Followers .....	151
Tactics (Wits).....	83	Henchmen & Hirelings .....	151
Throw (Quickness, Untrained) .....	83	Group Resolve .....	153
Track (Wits).....	84	Monthly Resolve Check .....	153
<b>Chapter 5: Magical Arts .....</b>	<b>85</b>	Resolve's Ebb & Flow .....	154
The magic of Shadow, Sword & Spell.....	86	Domains .....	156
Categories of Spells .....	86	Building a Stronghold .....	157
Acquiring Spells.....	86	One Size Fits All? .....	158
Spell Ranks & Tests .....	87	Terrain & Resources .....	158
Using Spells .....	88	Resources.....	159
Time .....	88	Rulership .....	160
Attack Rolls .....	88	Population Change.....	160
Resistance.....	88	Resolve .....	160
Range.....	89	Monthly Resolve Check .....	161
Sanity Cost .....	89	The Economy.....	163
Maintaining Spells.....	89	Events .....	168
Spell Descriptions.....	89	The Life of a Merchant Prince or Princess.....	170
Common Spells .....	89	Trade.....	170
Arcane Spells .....	99	Supply & Demand .....	172
Alchemical Arts.....	110	Investing .....	173
<b>Chapter 6: Gear.....</b>	<b>117</b>	Thief & Criminal Gangs.....	176
Currency.....	118	Forming a Criminal Enterprise .....	176
Gold.....	118	What a gang does .....	177
Silver.....	118	Number of Criminal Enterprises.....	177
Brass .....	118	Keeping Everyone Happy.....	181
Copper .....	118	Income & Expense .....	184
Iron .....	118	<b>Chapter 9: Gamemastering.....</b>	<b>187</b>
Other Currency.....	119	What is "Pulp Fantasy?" .....	188
Starting Gear.....	119	Rogues – With Hearts of Gold .....	189
Weapons.....	119	(well, actually without) .....	189
Descriptions .....	121	One of a Kind.....	189
Armor .....	123	Things Man Was Not Meant to Know.....	190
Shields .....	124	Above All, Fun .....	191
Helmets.....	124	Politics & High Stakes .....	191
Barding .....	125	Political Campaigns .....	192
Equipment, Travel & Services.....	126	Villains & Adversaries .....	193
Land Travel.....	127	Power Base.....	193
Water Travel .....	128	Goals.....	194
Building & Construction.....	129	Motivation .....	194
Mercenaries .....	131	Je Ne Sais Quoi.....	194
Specialists .....	132	Wrap Up.....	195
<b>Chapter 7: Mass Combat .....</b>	<b>135</b>	Bringing It All Together .....	195
Basics.....	136	Nuts & Bolts of Villain Design.....	195
Armies.....	138	Assign Hook & Action Points.....	196
Unit Type .....	138	Awarding Experience Points .....	196
Unit Rating .....	138	Spending Experience Points .....	197
Quality .....	139	Raising Skill Ranks .....	198
Size .....	139	What About Raising Abilities? .....	198
Combat.....	139	The Cost of Skills & Spells .....	198
Step One: Tactics .....	140	<b>Chapter 10: Settings .....</b>	<b>199</b>
Step Two: Engagement Score.....	141	Setting Design .....	200

The World .....	202	Step 4: Purchase Skills with Skill Points .....	254
Atlantis .....	202	Step 5: Calculate Plasm, Taint or Vitality, as well as Initiative Rating & Actions .....	254
Barojostĕn .....	202	Step 6: Assign Hooks .....	254
Beidha .....	203	Step 7: Release the creature into the wild .....	254
Cal'athar .....	203	Creatures .....	254
Cathar .....	204	Creature Basics .....	255
City-States of Dōār̃n .....	204	Creatures Great & Small .....	256
The Hegemony .....	204	Infernal .....	256
Jungles of Moarn .....	205	Otherworldly .....	258
Karelia .....	205	Natural .....	264
Ku'Kku .....	205	Undead .....	291
The League of Cantons .....	205	References .....	303
The Merchant League .....	205	Designer Notes .....	313
Mū .....	206		
Nipur .....	206		
Nogoton .....	206		
Noricum .....	206		
The Shimmering Sands .....	207		
The Waste of Mictlan .....	207		
Geographic Features .....	207		
Thinking Smaller: The League of Merchants .....	209		
Cities .....	209		
Government & Politics .....	212		
Threats .....	212		
Daily Life .....	212		
Gods .....	215		
Ardud Lili .....	215		
Azathoth .....	215		
Buddhakupula .....	216		
Caim .....	216		
Chairoum .....	216		
Cthulhu .....	217		
Hastur .....	217		
Hazel .....	217		
Mog Ruiith .....	218		
Mulciber .....	218		
Nergal .....	218		
Nodens .....	218		
Nyarlathotep .....	219		
Nyogtha .....	219		
Qu'Tangles .....	219		
Set .....	220		
Shub-Niggurath .....	220		
Gods & Goddesses of The Merchant League .....	221		
Titles of Nobility & Governing .....	222		
Barojostĕn .....	222		
Beidha .....	223		
Cal'athar .....	223		
The Hegemony .....	223		
League of Cantons .....	223		
League of Merchants .....	223		
Nipur .....	223		
Nogoton .....	223		
Noricum .....	223		
The Shimmering Sands .....	224		
Chapter 11: Threats .....	225		
Common Threats .....	226		
Creature Design .....	238		
Creature Basics .....	238		
Step 1: Determine Power Level .....	239		
Step 2: Purchase Abilities with Creature Points .....	239		
Step 3: Purchase Traits with Traits Points .....	239		



# CHAPTER

# 1

## A PRIMER

**S**hadow, Sword & Spell is a human-centric, pulp fantasy game that draws its inspiration from the stories of pulp fantasy writers who wrote between 1930 and 1960 – Robert E. Howard, Fritz Leiber, Gardner Fox, Jack Vance, Fletcher Pratt, L. Sprague de Camp, and their contemporaries. **Shadow, Sword & Spell** provides you with the tools you need to create your own vision of the sword-and-sorcery genre.

## WHAT IS HUMAN-CENTRIC, PULP FANTASY?

Human-centric fantasy is a fantasy genre in which humans take the center stage. It is fantasy largely without the familiar races: elves, dwarves, and the like.

Of course, *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is more than just human centric fantasy; it is also pulp fantasy. Pulp fantasy, to put it simply, is a genre of fantasy that is low in magic, high in adventure, and big in ideas. It is grittier, as often you cannot tell the difference between the hero and the villain, and the drama is more internal and personal. You are given the options of playing pulp fantasy inspired by not only Robert E. Howard, but Clark Ashton Smith and H.P. Lovecraft. This is not to say this is a “Conan Game” or a “Dreamlands Game.” This is a game about tone and feeling. Horror and discovery. Secrets and mystery. It is about larger than life characters, vile villains, vast vistas, and nubile men and women in distress.

*Shadow, Sword & Spell* is your game.

Everything you need to know as both a player or Gamemaster is found in this book. This chapter tells you what to expect from the game, and explains the core mechanics and how it is used in the game.

After all the rules and options, little room is spent telling you what a game should not only *feel* like, but what you should do with it. As a player, you should know after reading this chapter what to expect from the world of *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. As a Gamemaster, you will have an idea of what you can do with the game, and know about the type of games you are able to run. This is your *amuse-bouche*, if you will. This one bite sets the table for what is to come. So without further ado, here is *Shadow, Sword & Spell*.

## SETTING

*Shadow, Sword & Spell* is set in a world laden with mysteries, eldritch magic, and plots. This is a world the characters are born, and survive if they are to make a name for themselves. The setting is filled with a smörgåsbord of cultures waxing and waning in power. Various kingdoms, city-states, and regions exist offering numerous challenges. Drawing inspiration from the writers influencing this genre, the world of *Shadow, Sword & Spell* offers numerous locations teeming with possibilities. This is a world awash in conflict, tinged with magic, and filled with danger.

The stronger you are, the more power you have, and this is evident by the world. Merchants work and scheme to gain more wealth. Nobles work and scheme to achieve power. Priests work and scheme to gain influence. Everyone has an agenda, and these agendas conflict. It is this conflict which often drags the characters into it, either willingly or unwillingly.

The world contains sun-blasted deserts, vine-shrouded jungles, ancient ruins with hidden secrets and more, and these offer endless possibilities. It is this world that GMs set their adventures in, and players strive to survive.

## FOR THE PLAYERS

Your character is a native of The World. They might be a thief, who due to their knack of picking pockets, makes a living in Gravina robbing all, while dodging the competing guilds. They might be a raider, who sells their sword to the highest bidder and fights for any or all as long as the silver continues flowing. They might even hail from the region of Cal'athar, and have an affinity for the forces of the arcane allowing them to work spells outside the scope of everyday life. In *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, you create a character who due to some event, some desire, has you thumb your nose at your lot in life, and you choose to live the way you want. Society holds no bonds for you, and you choose the life you want. Why should the wealthy alone be rich? Why should the baron own his own land? You want that, and more, and by Azathoth's Radiance, you shall!

As your character adventures and grows, they become stronger and influential. Over time, they begin acquiring not only the trappings of wealth, but power. Their influence and fame leads them to command armies, to rule a kingdom, to influence society — but let's not get ahead of ourselves — that is, if they survive it!!

## FOR THE GAMEMASTER

So what does the Gamemaster (GM) do? Pretty much everything.

Your job is harder than that of the players. While they create one character, it is your job to create a cast of thousands. This cast is designed to aid or harm the player characters. They serve to act as informants, enemies, victims, targets, and clients for the player characters. They react to, and against the characters. They pass along needed or obscure vital information. Besides this cast of thousands, it is your job to create the adventures in which your players participate. You devise the adventure goals, the opponents needed to be overcome, and the ramifications of succeeding or failing at the adventure.

You also act as the referee ensuring the rules are not so much followed, as understood. You decide when to enforce them, when to bend them, and when to apply them. More importantly, you keep everything in balance. This means that you make sure players have a chance to shine, and each know the risks and consequences of her character's actions.

Scared?

Don't be.

GM'ing is fun and rewarding. You know all the secrets, and you know all of the player characters' plots. Even though you know this, part of the fun of being a GM is seeing how events not only play out, but the players reactions. GM'ing has two rules, and these two rules are the key to not only *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, but to all roleplaying games. Knowing these rules make everything easier.

So what are these rules?

### Rule 1: Have fun.

Simple, I know, but truthfully, very important. If you are not having fun, neither are your players. For example, a player wants their character to perform numerous actions to succeed at a given task. Many of these actions are not covered by the rules, and play

is being slowed down by endless arguments over what “can” and “cannot” be done. This is not fun for you, and you can be assured it is not fun for the other players. In cases like this, let it go. Roll the dice, move the action along, do something, anything, rather than continue the disagreement.

### Rule 2: When in doubt, go with your gut.

To put it simply, when faced with a question, go with your first reaction. Why? It is usually the correct way to proceed. In the example above, if your gut tells you the actions your player wants to take has a **TN** 48, then go for it. Roll the dice and move along. *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is a game, and it only should be fun, but it **must** be fun. If the players do something unexpected, don’t panic. Roll with it and see what happens.

## 12°

Everything you need to know in order to play *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is found in this book. The basics found in this chapter allow you to quickly understand the game’s mechanical foundations. Of course, *Shadow, Sword & Spell* isn’t complex. Most of the rules are fairly straightforward and easy to remember. Nevertheless, there are a handful of occasions when multiple modifiers and special cases come into play. The more you understand the basics, the better prepared you’ll be to deal with these few exceptions.

### PLAYING THE GAME

In order to play *Shadow, Sword & Spell* you need a few things.

- First, two twelve-sided dice (D12). GMs might want to have a few more handy.
- A blank piece of paper (or a Character sheet) and a pencil.
- A willingness to have fun.

### RULES OVERVIEW

Action in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* isn’t *realistic*. It is not gritty. It’s meant to recreate the type of action you’re likely to read in books, see in comic books, or see in a movie or television show. Note: *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is not cartoonish or ridiculously over the top; the emphasis is on verisimilitude and plausibility not a strict reality simulation. The game’s rules, known as 12°, are designed to accommodate this style of play with ease. Action is about doing things in a flashy and larger-than-life way. It is one thing to say your character is fighting a pack of wolves, it’s another to say they are doing so while balancing on a crumbling wall of a famous ruin. Every action, regardless if your character is firing a crossbow, or intimidating a merchant, is handled the same way: roll the two d12s (2d12), and if the result is equal to or greater than the given Target Number (or **TN**), the action succeeds. Simple as that!



Your **TN** is a number your Gamemaster gives you that must meet or beat to succeed. For example, if your character wants to climb a wall in a raging storm. Your character has **12 Quickness** (which gives you a +2 bonus of all tests involving **Quickness**) and a *Athletics* skill of +8. Your Gamemaster says that this is going to be a *Challenging* test, and

thus it has a **TN 24**. Rolling 2d12 your result is 8 and 1, for a total of 9. Adding with your **Quickness** bonus and **Skill Rank** is equal to 19 (9 [die roll] +2 [ability bonus] + Athletics skill [+8]). Since 19 is less than the **TN** of **24** your character fails. As to what happens your GM describes it to you.

## Skill Test

**Governing Attribute Bonus + Rank in Skill + 2d12 ≥ Target Number (TN)**

## TESTS

All actions in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* are called tests. There are three types of tests — **ability**, **skill**, and **opposed** — that, depending on the situation, your Gamemaster always tells you which one you need to make with a roll of the dice.

### ABILITY TESTS

During the game situations arise calling upon the character to test themselves against situations. **Ability Tests** are used to determine the results. These tests are not tied to skills, but to your character's inherent Ability instead.

For example, your character is running from a ghoulish pack, and in order to escape from them, she dives into a nearby pond in order to lose her pursuers. How do you find out how long your character is able to hold her breath? With an **Ability Test**. **Ability Tests** are nothing more than a way for characters to see if they are capable of withstanding what life throws at them.

To make an **Ability Test** simply roll a 2d12 add or subtract the appropriate ability modifiers, and if your result is greater than or equal to a **TN 18** you succeed. Though the base **TN** for ability tests is 18, this **TN** is modified by the situation and modifiers your GM might impose. For more on **Ability Tests** refer to "Playing the Game" on page 14 for a much more in depth discussion.

### SKILL TESTS

The most common test in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* are **Skill Tests**. Most actions, from throwing a dagger to researching information on a demon, are handled by **Skill Tests**. Your **TN** is always assigned to you by your GM. In order to see if you succeed on a given test you roll 2d12, add to that the skills governing ability bonus, and your ranks in the skill. Like all tests if the result is equal to or greater than the **TN** you succeed.

For example, your character is tracking a group of cutthroats through a forest at night. Typically tracking is an Average (**TN 12**) challenge, but due to the situation your Gamemaster tells you this is going to be a Formidable (**TN 22**) challenge. Your character has **Wits 9**, and your Tracking is +10 (you have spent a lot on your Tracking skill). So your final total for this is roll is going to be +12 (+2 for the skill's governing ability bonus and +10 for ranks in Tracking). You roll 2d12 and get a 6 and 4, giving you a total of 10. Adding the two numbers together (12 + 10) gives you 22. Success!

#### WHAT ABOUT FRACTIONS?

Whenever you need to divide a result, **Ability**, or even **Degree of Success** by half, any fraction is rounded down. This is a universal rule for *Shadow, Sword & Spell*.

TABLE OF TARGET NUMBERS		
CHALLENGE	TARGET NUMBER (TN)	SITUATION ± FOR TESTS ★
Otherworldly	48	−9
Impossible	42	−8
Nearly Impossible	38	−7
Heroic	34	−6
Daring	30	−5
Reckless	26	−4
Formidable	22	−3
Challenging	18	−2
Difficult	14	−1
Standard	12	±0
Routine	10	+1
Easy	8	+2
Trivial	4	+4
Instinctive	2	+6

★ These situation modifiers do not increase or decrease the value of your **Ability**, or the **TN**. They simply come into play when you need to make an **Ability Test**.



OPPOSED TESTS

**Opposed Tests** are tests typically between two characters, occurring when your character competes against a “non-player” character (or NPC, the characters in the world played by the Gamemaster), or even another player’s character. **Opposed Tests** are necessary because the degree of your character’s success or failure determines how events unfold. Opposed tests require two or more parties to make a test: whoever rolls highest, but still beating the **TN**, succeeds against the other(s). **Opposed Tests** also come into play for some specific skills like *Stealth* as well as combat.

An example of an opposed Stealth test is hiding. Your character is trying to sneak into a warehouse near the docks. A guard keeps watch, who the Gamemaster says has a chance of noticing your character’s attempt. Your Gamemaster assigns a **TN** 18 for both your character and the guard. You need to make a Stealth test against the guard’s Observe test. Your character has Stealth +5, so you roll the dice and get a total of 14, for a total of 19—a success! The Gamemaster rolls for the guard (Observe +8), and rolls the dice getting a 4, for a total of 14—a failure. Your character easily sneaks into the warehouse, while the guard standing watch fails to notice anything. If, however, the Gamemaster had rolled a 22, that would have been a success higher than your roll of 19, resulting in the guard spotting you and calling out for you to halt and identify yourself (see Degrees below).

## SUCCESS & FAILURE

As long as you roll a number equal or greater to your Target Number, your character succeeds at her attempted action. Any time you roll lower than your **TN**, your character fails.

### DEGREES

As you might expect a game mechanic called **12°**, your character's degree of success is important. The degree of success is the amount you roll over your **Target Number (TN)**. For example, your character's **TN** is **10** and you roll a 14, your **Degree of Success** is 4. In combat, your degree of success is added to your weapon's base damage (for more on this see "Damage" on page 34).

Using the above example, if your character is fighting with a sword that has a base **Damage 5** and achieves **3 Degrees of Success**, he would deal 8 points of damage to his opponent.

In skill usage, **Degrees of Success** have a much more "impressionistic" meaning, in which the Gamemaster interprets or determines the particulars of what occurs. You might want to consider allowing the player or other players an opportunity to provide their suggestions on the particulars as well. Generally, **Degrees of Success** either indicate the time factor reduced for the task or an increase in its effectiveness. Returning to the above example, a task normally taking 10 rounds might take only 7 if you achieve **3 Degrees of Success**. Ultimately, the GM is the final arbiter of how **Degrees of Success** improve skill-based tasks, but it should always be an obvious improvement that increases with the more degrees a character achieves.

Just as there are **Degrees of Success**, there are also **Degrees of Failure**: the number by which your roll misses the **TN**. **Degrees of failure** work slightly differently than **Degrees of Success**, and are described in more detail later in the book.

### BONUS & PENALTIES

Depending on the situation, your character gains a bonus or penalty to tests. These modifiers change the results of the test, making it easier (or harder) for your character to achieve the desired result. This is important: bonuses and penalties are applied to the die roll, not added (or subtracted) directly to the **TN**.

## HOOKS & ACTION POINTS

While the Gamemaster's skill at creating and running interesting adventures is important, it is the players' characters and their actions that drive the game and its ongoing story. To help players create characters who are believable and compelling, *Shadow, Sword & Spell* uses **Hooks**: short phrases describing a facet or detail of a character's past history, personality, or their connections to the other characters, as well as the story and world at large.

For example, a character might have "Cthulhu's mark of vengeance," "Last surviving member of my tribe," or "Strength of a bear." As descriptive details of the character's nature, Hooks suggest storylines and plot elements that the Gamemaster weaves into adventures they craft—a character whose **Hook** is "Cthulhu's mark of vengeance" might find themselves in a very interesting situation when visiting a town full of extremely superstitious villagers.

**Hooks** are the means for the Gamemaster to give **Action Points** to players. **Action Points** are dramatic “currency” that players can spend for their characters to gain situational boons, such as bonuses to tests, free re-rolls, and other benefits. You earn **Action Points** by bringing your characters’ **Hooks** to bear or playing them up in an adventure, getting rewarded by the Gamemaster for good roleplaying if the use of the **Hook** advances the story in some way, or makes the game more fun and interesting for everyone. Your Gamemaster should encourage their players to use their **Hooks** to earn **Action Points**, although they can have no more than 10 at any given time – if you have them, spend them!

## WHAT’S NEXT?

Now that you know the basics of *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, you are ready to do battle with any and all threats! The following chapters are all the rules and options you and your group need to run and play your own *Shadow, Sword & Spell* games. These rules allow you to create the style of game you choose, with the freedom to ignore or use whatever works best for you to create the style of play you want.

This is your game. You have the tools your need. So, let’s go have some fun!



# CHAPTER

# 2

## RULES

**T**hrough your character you interact with the world of **Shadow, Sword & Spell**. What your character does, and how they do it, is governed by the **12°** System. This chapter shows you how to fight, perform, and act against your enemies in order to carve a place out for yourself in the annals of Fame, Fortune, and Legend!

# BASICS

Before you can run, you need to learn to walk. With that in mind a few definitions are in order

## ABILITY

**Abilities** are represented by a number measuring a character’s physical, mental, and spiritual traits. **Abilities** do not have ranks, but are simply a value or a score.

All characters are defined by five **Abilities**. **Abilities** range in numeric value from 1 to 24, with 7 being average for most.

**Abilities**, like many other game mechanics in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, have scores. These scores are used to measure your character against others. These scores also provide you a bonus to test if they are sufficiently high enough. *Shadow, Sword & Spell*’s five **Abilities** are: **Brawn**, **Quickness**, **Toughness**, **Wits**, and **Will**.

## BRAWN

**Brawn** measures how physically strong your character is. **Brawn** determines how much you lift, how far you throw, and how hard you hit. **Brawn** is the sheer amount of brute force your character has, which also affects your character’s physical build. The more **Brawn** your character has, the more muscle he has.

## QUICKNESS

**Quickness** measures how agile your character is, as well as her physical dexterity. It also is used to determine how fast your character’s reactions are. In combat, **Quickness** is used to determine when your character acts within a combat round.

## TOUGHNESS

**Toughness** measures how healthy your character is, and also acts as his endurance. **Toughness** is different from **Brawn**, because Toughness is not dependent on how physically strong your character is—a very weak character could have a lot of **Toughness** and vice versa.

## WITS

**Wits** measures your character’s capacity to think. Your character’s thought processes include memory, knowledge, and logical or basic reasoning. A character with a high **Wits** might have an infallible memory; one with little **Wits** might be very forgetful.

## WILL

**Will** measures the emotional strength and inner fortitude of your character. **Will** is important when your character comes into contact with horrific sights or creatures of the supernatural.

ABILITY BONUS	
ABILITY SCORE	MODIFIER
1	−6
2	−5
3	−4
4	−3
5	−2
6	−1
7 - 8	±0
9 - 11	+1
12 - 14	+2
15 - 17	+3
18 - 21	+4
22 - 23	+5
24	+6

## ABILITY BONUSES

The better – or worse – an ability is the easier, or harder, it is for a character to perform tests. To represent this all attributes gain a bonus or penalty depending on what it is. Note: these bonuses, or penalties, do not increase or lower the value of your character's **Ability**. They simply come into play when you need make certain tests, be it a skill test, magic use, or combat.

## VITALITY

**Vitality** in many ways, is a sixth attribute representing your character's ability to take and survive damage, whether physical, mental, or emotional. Whenever your character takes physical damage, he suffers a variety of mounting damage penalties, making it more difficult for him to act. Your character is either unconscious, or dying, if he runs out of **Vitality** in the course of a combat. Further information on **Vitality** and its relationship to damage is found starting on page 34.

## SANITY

**Sanity** tracks your character's mental well-being. This trait is sometimes even more important than your **Vitality**. Coming face-to-face with demons or undead wizards greatly affects you. **Sanity** comes into play if you're skilled in the art of magic. Some spells require spellcasters to call upon their **Sanity**: the more powerful the magic is, the more **Sanity** comes into play.

The more **Sanity** your character loses, the greater the risk you run of going insane. The rules for **Sanity** are found later in this book (see page 40).

## ACTIONS

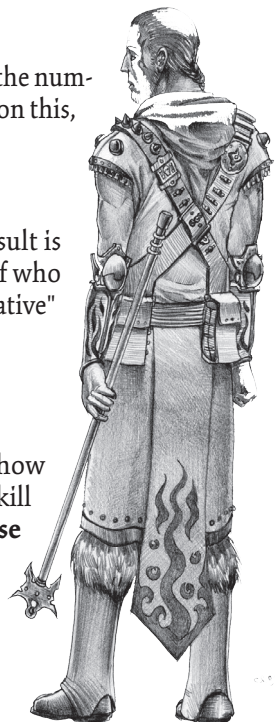
There is nothing mysterious as to what **Actions** are, they are the number of things a character is able to do in one round. For more on this, and how it works, refer to "Action" on page 25.

## INITIATIVE RATING

This is used in conjunction to a 2d12 roll and when the result is added to the **Initiative Rating (IR)** determines the order of who acts first to who acts last. For more on this topic refer to "Initiative" on page 25.

## SKILL & SPELL RANK

The term **Rank** is used with skills and magic, measuring how adept a character is with a particular skill or spell. When a skill is first purchased, it is said to have been purchased at the **Base Rank**. Skills are also associated with one of the five **Abilities**, which is referred to as the governing **Ability** for the skill. Magic is tied to one of two **Abilities**: **Wits** for Alchemy and **Will** for Spells.



## BASE RANK

**Base Rank** is defined as the starting rank of a skill (or spell), which is equal to +1. Do not automatically assume a **Base Rank** is always equal to +1, some backgrounds provide you a bonus to the **Base Rank** of a skill. In cases like this your base rank might be a +2.

For example, you buy Shoot, and you do so at +1, which is your **Base Rank** with this skill. Your character's background is Barbarian giving you a bonus **Rank** in Shoot of +1. As such your **Base Rank** is now +2. **Base Rank** only comes into play when you are buying the skills (or spells) for a newly created character, or when you buy a new skill (or spell) for a current character.

## LIMITS ON RANKS

A skill (or spell) cannot have more than 24 **Ranks**. That might seem a high number, but one look at the threats a character might face, as well as the difficulty of challenges, there is no certainty a character who has a +24 in a given skill and spell succeeds an *Otherworldly Test* (TN 48).

## SKILLS

Skills in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* define what your character knows: wielding a pike, scaling a wall, talking your way past a sentry, being able to differentiate between safe and dangerous herbs, sensing the user of magic, and so forth. Most skills are broad, covering several related areas of expertise. Thus, *Melee* covers all types of melee weaponry, from swords to lances, but *Profession* covers only one type of occupation (more on this below).

The philosophy at the heart of 12° is that characters have only a handful of skills in which they are truly formidable, and a number of skills in which they are of average proficiency.

There are two types of skills in the games: **Untrained** and **Trained**.

**Untrained** skills are usable by anyone without needing to spend skill points on them. **Trained** skills are only usable if skill points are spent to develop them.

**Base Rank** is defined as the starting **Rank** of a skill, which is always +1. As previously mentioned **Skill Tests** require you to meet or beat a **Target Number (TN)**. To test a skill you add, your ability bonus added (or subtracted) to the **Test** before rolling 2d12. Here is a quick way to remember how to make a test:

**Ability Bonuses (or penalty) + Skill Rank + 2d12 ≥ TN = Success**

Any character may use **Untrained Skills** at any time, but with a -4 modifier to the test. **Trained Skills** may only be used by those who have purchased **Skill Ranks** in them, therefore they never suffer the -4 **Untrained Modifier** to the test.

## RANKS

All skills are associated with one of the five character **Abilities** described above. The numerical value associated with a skill shows you how good you are with it. Whenever you buy a new skill you always buy it at its' base rank which is +1. Whenever you raise a skill by one rank you expend experience points to do so. Buying skills is easy, and all

skills cost 4 points for purchasing it at the **Base Rank**, and 2 points to raise by one **Rank**. The only time this is not the case, is with purchasing common and arcane spells and Alchemical Arts (see "Acquiring Spells" on page 86 for more details). Do not worry about buying skills just yet, that is covered starting on page 68.

All skills, as mentioned, are associated with one the 5 **Abilities**. Remember all **Abilities** gain a bonus based on its value. This bonus (or penalty if the ability is low) is always added (or subtracted) to your skill test. For example your character wants to throw a spear and has *Throw* +4 and **Quickness** 10 (+1 attribute bonus), this means she has a total of +5 when rolling a 2d12 while making a *Throw* test.

## CHALLENGES & MODIFIERS FOR SKILL TESTS

Every challenge a character faces is able to be defined using a single word such as *Impossible*, *Formidable*, *Difficult* or the like. Each situation has an associated **Target Number** used in determining how easy or difficult a test is going to be.

For example, walking up the stairs holding a sword is an Instinctive challenge and the risk of failure is minimal at best. Reversely, sliding down the banister firing a crossbow with one-hand, and then landing on your feet at the bottom of the stairs is a Heroic challenge, and the risk therefore is greater, hence the **TN** 34.

Sometimes situations arise making **Skill Tests** easier or more difficult. Modifiers come into play when the situation demands it, and the Gamemaster uses them to make tests easier or harder. Every skill listed in this book is modifiable, depending upon in-game situations, or if the Gamemaster thinks a modifier is applicable or necessary.

All of this is summed up in the following table, and this is the key to running *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. This table helps you figure out how difficult challenges are, and what type of modifiers you might impose on **Ability Tests** (see page 37 for more details).

TARGET NUMBERS			
CHALLENGE	TARGET NUMBER	SITUATION MODIFIER	EXAMPLE
Otherworldly	48	-9	Hit a target at long range in the dark
Impossible	42	-8	Swimming in a stormy sea
Nearly Impossible	38	-7	Track a war party in the rain
Heroic	34	-6	Leap across a 30' gap
Daring	30	-5	Slide down a sail using only a knife
Reckless	26	-4	Climb a cliff
Formidable	22	-3	Dive into water from a height greater than 10 feet
Challenging	18	-2	Swim in a rapid river
Difficult	14	-1	Climb the rigging of a sail
Standard	12	+0	Hear approaching horses
Routine	10	+1	Climb a rope
Easy	8	+2	Climb a ladder
Trivial	4	+4	Climb the stair
Instinctive	2	+6	Walking down a road

## SO HOW DOES THIS WORK?

Suppose your character is trying to intimidate a group of guards outside of Wall (see page 212 for more on this city). The Gamemaster asks you to make an *Intimidate* test. If your character is trying to intimidate them with a drawn sword in her hand, the GM might say that the *Intimidate* test is Standard thus is has a **TN 12**. In addition your character might be known for having a short temper, and this reputation is such that you GM says you get a +2 modifier to your test.

However, if the guard she is trying to *Intimidate* is part of a garrison of professional mercenaries, the GM might say the situation is *Challenging* giving you a **TN 18**, and assessing a -2 penalty due to the mercenaries surrounding your character.

**Important Reminder:** When modifying the difficulty of a **Skill Test**, the modifier always applies to the roll, not the **TN**.

## DEGREES OF SUCCESS

More often than not, skill rolls equal to or greater than your **Target Number** you succeed. For example, your character is making a *Dodge* test to avoid a thrown ale mug. His **Quickness** is 7 and his *Dodge* skill is +8, which are applied to the result of a 2d12. Your Gamemaster rules it is a *Challenging* test, and because of this the **TN is 18**. You get lucky and roll a 15, and adding it to the +8 giving you a final result of 23, beating the **TN** by **5 Degrees of Success!**

Beating a **TN** by 1 is usually no different from beating it by 10, except in combat, where the **Degree of Success** determines the damage done, the **Degree of Success** has no specific mechanical benefit. Nevertheless, the Gamemaster should often reward beating a **TN** by more significant amounts, as an acknowledgment that the character has performed exceptionally well. Rolling the **TN** you need, i.e., the **TN** is 12 and you roll a 12, your character still succeeds, but with **zero Degrees of Success**—it's still a success, but just barely!

In the end, it is up to you to decide what the appropriate benefit is. As a rule, **Degrees of Success** greater than 1 should be rewarded with, at minimum, some small in-game effect. In the example above, perhaps the skill the character executes the maneuver is observed by a group of farmers, who spread tales of this feat to a point where it is told reputedly spreading throughout the countryside, proclaiming the character's skill. This is but one possibility; no doubt you might come up with many more. The higher the **Degree of Success**, the greater the reward should be, but largely, such rewards should enhance the roleplaying experience and add to the overall story, rather than simply grant nothing but a mechanical game benefit.

### AUTOMATIC SUCCESSES

**Tests** represent attempts at performing difficult actions under stressful circumstances, with failure meaning the difference between life and death. Gamemasters preferring not to have players roll for everything their characters do, particularly *Routine* tasks (such as riding a horse to get from one place to another, or reading a wanted poster to find very basic information), simply state the character succeeds; no test required. Not only does this speed up play, but lets you and your players concentrate on the game at hand.

## DEGREES OF FAILURE

Just as there are **Degrees of Success**, there are also **Degrees of Failure**: the number by which your roll misses the **Target Number**. For example, if the **TN** is **12** and the result of your **Skill Test** is **5**, you have “achieved” **7 Degrees of Failure**. Except in a few circumstances (like **Opposed Tests**), **Degrees of Failure** mean little mechanically; failing by **10** is no different from failing by **1**. However, you might assess some additional penalty to a failed roll based on its **Degrees of Failure**, using the rules as a guideline (see below).

## ACTION

From running and fighting with a sword, escaping a reavers’ raiding party, to proclaiming your love to a merchant’s daughter, action is what puts these events in motion. Before getting into the mechanics of combat, keep in mind that when declaring your character’s actions in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, you should try to do it as if you were describing a scene in a movie.

## TELLING TIME

Personal combat is divided into units of measurement called **Rounds**. A **Round** doesn’t correspond to any specific real world length of time. Instead, a **Round** is how long it takes for all characters in a situation to complete all available actions in the span of a few critical in-game seconds of time (assume 5 seconds per round, if you insist on quantifying it). Thus, a **Round** is an arbitrary unit for game convenience, instead of a realistic representation of time. It is intended to help you keep track of who does what, and when, during combat.

## INITIATIVE

Who acts first in a round is determined by their **Initiative Rating**. **Initiative Rating** is determined by the following formula:

$$D12 + [(Quickness + Wits) \div 2] \pm \text{modifiers} = \text{Initiative Rating}$$

Action continues throughout a round based on **Initiative Rating**, from highest to lowest. In the case of ties, the character with the highest **Quickness** acts first. Once the Initiative order is determined, it remains fixed until combat is over. The only exception is if you choose delay acting in a round until later than your **Initiative Rating** normally allows. Doing so, your **Initiative Rating** drops to the new, lower rating and stays there until combat ends.

Initiative is determined either on an individual basis or a “per side” basis. You might want every character, including NPCs, to roll individually for Initiative, or designate a single character per side in the conflict whose **Initiative Rating** determines who acts when. Typically, the character with the highest *Tactics* skill (see page 83) is the best person to designate for this task, but you should feel free to offer alternative suggestions. In general, individual Initiative works best with smaller numbers of combatants, while “per side” Initiative works best for large fights between many opponents.

## SURPRISE

Sometimes one side of a combat gains the element of surprise. Surprise typically happens as a result of ambushes, not noticing the arrival of something, and other stealthy means. Those surprising their opponents gain a free round of action. Once the free round is over, **Initiative** proceeds as per the normal rules.

## TACTICS

The *Tactics* skill (see, page 83) has an additional combat usage. At the beginning of each combat round, the character with the highest *Tactics* skill (or the one designated as the “leader,” in other words the character who is directing the actions of the other characters on her side), must make a *Tactics Test* (TN 18). As a benefit of the *Tactics* skill, that character is able to divide the **Degrees of Success** (if any) among the characters as bonuses to any test during that round, providing that the characters in question are in communication with her. This represents the leader’s direction of the combat through her command of tactics. No character may receive a bonus in this fashion greater than her own tactics rank or 1, whichever is greater. Likewise, no more than one-half of the character’s **Degrees of Success** may be given to any one single character.

For example, your character is leading an attack on a group of slavers in order to rescue slaves from their bondage. She has *Tactics* +7 and rolls a 18, giving her a total of 25, earning 7 degree of success. Three of her party members are up ahead preparing the ambush, and she decides to give three of them a +1 in order to aid in their Hide tests. Additionally she knows two of her party members are skilled archers, and she gives each of them a +1 bonus to their Shoot tests. Her last companion who is skilled in magic and has a spell they claim will aid them in the ambush, is given a +1 bonus. The last +1 bonus she saves for herself to improve her Melee skill so she can take out the leader quickly.

## ACTIONS

At the heart of combat are **Actions**. **Actions** control how much — or how little — your character is able to do in one round. The more actions you have, the more you are able to do. Conversely, the less actions you have the less you are able to do. To see how many actions you have is easy:

$$\text{Quickness} \div 3 = \text{Number of Actions (rounded down)}$$

For example, your character has **Quickness 6**, they would have **2 Actions** every round. If they have **Quickness 12**, then they would have **4 Actions** every round.

So what can you do in a round? Quite a bit honestly.

### INITIATIVE MODIFIERS

**Initiative Rating** is modifiable by a number of circumstances. Characters wandering into an ambush might rightly receive a penalty to their **Initiative Ratings**, while those laying a trap for their opponents might receive a bonus. Likewise, previous combat experience might modify **Initiative Ratings** as well.

With your **Actions** you are able to use them all for attacking opponents, of if you have three **Actions**, you are able to attack a total of three times every round. You could attack once, and use the remaining **Actions** for defense. Note, if using range weapons you need to take into account the **Rate of Fire** (see page 27). How you use your **Actions** on your turn in a round is entirely up to you. However, **Actions** do not carry over from one round to the next; they refresh at the start of every turn. For example, you have **Action 2**, and you only use one to fight an enemy, and you did not use your second one. That action does not carry over to your next round, you begin again with **Action 2**.

Besides combat, **Actions** are used to undertake specific skills, casting spells, rising from prone to standing, or really anything you want your character to do within the round.

Remember **Actions** are a set number, and you need to keep in balance how much damage you want to cause, and how much you want to avoid each round. If you choose to use all of your character's actions to fight, they might soon find themselves dead due to not knowing when to dodge an enemy's sword.



## RATE OF FIRE

All weapons classified as ranged, be it a long-bow, crossbow, or spear have a **Rate of Fire** (RoF). **Rate of Fire** defines how many times a weapon is able to be used in one round. This takes into account how easy or difficult it is to reload a weapon and used it again. The **Rate of Fire** is always based on how many actions it takes to reload and fire.

For example, bows have a RoF of 2/1, enabling your character to shoot 2 arrows per **Action** in a **Round**. If you have **Action 2**, then that means you can shoot 4 times in one round. If you have **Action 5** then you are able to shoot 10 times in one round. Note, that fire-reload-fire does not happen on the character's turn in the **Initiative** order, instead it slides down one place on the Initiative order.

For example your character has **Initiative 12**. On their turn, they shoot two arrows. On **Initiative 11**, they shoot another two arrows. As long as you have **Actions** (as well as enough arrows) you continue to shoot arrows until all of your **Actions** are used (that is if you choose, you might want to save some to dodge incoming attacks!).

RANGE

*Shadow, Sword & Spell* uses a simple system of ranges, dividing distance into categories: **Hand-to-Hand**, **Point Blank**, **Short**, **Medium**, and **Long**. Individual weapons include range listings following this pattern, allowing you to know when firing a crossbow incurs a bonus or a penalty due to range.

Note: Range is always listed in feet.

RANGE MODIFIERS		
RANGE	MEASUREMENT	MODIFIER
Hand-to-Hand	0 feet	—
Point Blank	5 feet	+1
Short	25 feet	+0
Medium	50 feet	−2
Long	75+ feet	−4

MOVEMENT

Movement is important in tactical situations such as combat. When it comes to other forms of movement, such as travel, Gamemasters should deal with it in any way they choose, i.e., whatever “speed of plot” may be dramatically appropriate for the particular adventure. *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is about fast-paced action, centering on tactical situations, and the rules are designed to allow for quick resolution and a broad-brush approach in describing how that action takes place. To reflect this, the rules governing movement are flexible, offering just enough definition and structure to keep things manageable.

A character, as well as a creature, engaged in combat is able to move a number of feet equal to 5 times the character’s **Quickness**, e.g., a character with **Quickness** 8 is able to move 40 feet per round. A character choosing to run moves a number of feet equal to 10 times their **Quickness**, e.g., a character with **Quickness** 8 is able to run 80 feet. A character who is running suffers a −2 **TN** to all actions they attempt.

THROWING

All throwable weapons have a listed effective range. For objects not designed to be thrown (such as rocks, mugs, small things), a character is able to throw said objects weighing no more than 1 lb. a distance of 5 feet for every point of her **Brawn** score. That distance is decreased by an appropriate factor if the weight of the thrown object is increased. Thus, an object weighing 2 lbs. can be thrown half that distance, a 4 lbs. object can be thrown one-quarter that distance, and so on.

RUNNING & WALKING		
QUICKNESS	WALK	RUN
1	5 feet	10 feet
2	10 feet	20 feet
3	15 feet	30 feet
4	20 feet	40 feet
5	25 feet	50 feet
6	30 feet	60 feet
7	35 feet	70 feet
8	40 feet	80 feet
9	45 feet	90 feet
10	50 feet	100 feet
11	55 feet	110 feet
12	60 feet	120 feet
13	65 feet	130 feet
14	70 feet	140 feet
15	75 feet	150 feet
16	80 feet	160 feet
17	85 feet	170 feet
18	90 feet	180 feet
19	95 feet	190 feet
20	100 feet	200 feet
21	105 feet	210 feet
22	110 feet	220 feet
23	115 feet	230 feet
24	120 feet	240 feet

## PERSONAL COMBAT BASICS

Personal combat, whether melee or ranged, is straightforward and proceeds in this fashion:

1. Choose the appropriate skill:
  - For firing ranged weapons, use **Shoot**.
  - For using thrown weapons, use **Throw**.
  - For hand-to-hand combat, use **Brawl**.
  - For armed combat, use **Melee**.
  - For creatures with gaze, breath or other long ranged attacks, use **Shoot**.
2. Roll 2d12
  - If the result is greater than or equal to a Target Number 18 (including any modifiers), you hit.
3. Determine Damage
  - Take note of the **Degrees of Success** in your roll to hit. Add this value by your weapon's base **Damage Value (DV)** to determine the **Vitality** damage you deal to your opponent. In the case of **0 Degrees of Success**, you treat damage as if it was **1 Degree of Success**.

### NOTE ON COMBAT

Combat in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is intended to be resolved quickly, in order to facilitate and encourage a more narrative structure: you creatively describe the setting in which the combat is occurring and actions that the characters are taking, drawing in **Hooks** whenever they fit the circumstances, always aiming at telling a rollicking, action-packed story. Furthermore, you should make sure situational modifiers—a sword-fight on rain-soaked ground or on a burning ship listing to one side—to, are used often, adding to the challenges that characters, both player and NPC alike, must face.

**12°** is designed to emulate the genre. Consider such characters as Kull, Conan, and Robin Hood: when these characters fight a lowly guard or thug, combat both starts and ends swiftly. Whereas fights against a weaker opponent should be resolved quickly with a dice roll or two, when characters fighting against equally matched (or greater) opponents, that combat should be challenging, likely involving several rounds and dice rolls.

### COMBAT COMPLICATIONS

How's that for alliteration?

Additional complications that come into play during combat such as armor, avoiding attacks through dodging, and various other modifiers. Keep in mind that all modifiers are cumulative, and the more things you do the easier or harder the **Test** is going to be. These are described below.

SCALING COMBAT DIFFICULTY

The default **Target Number** for all combat is **TN 18**. This **TN** is always static, but what is not static is the modifiers applied to the die roll. Remember the *Skill Test* is always equal to **Ability Bonus + Skill Rank**. This is modified on a situational basis.

For example, if you are shooting a crossbow, while badly wounded and in pitch darkness, that would be an Otherworldly challenge modifier with a -9 to the test.

As for the **TNs**, if you want your combat gritty, a **TN 18** is perfect for this. It makes combat a challenge and makes it a life or choice. If you do not want to make combat a large part of your games, and simply want it over and done with as quickly as possible, a **Target Number of 14** expedites battles.

In the end, it is your game. You know what you want your game to be. Decide for yourself. I trust you.

BULL RUSH

You are only able to bull rush a single opponent and they must be your size or smaller. Doing this requires a opposed **Brawn** test, with success having you push your opponent backward in a straight line out of **hand-to-hand combat**. With your opponent out of **hand-to-hand combat**, they are unable to engage in melee attacks until they close in again.

CALLED SHOTS

A called shot is an attempt to hit a specific area on a target, be it with a hand-held weapon, ranged weapon, or unarmed attack. Because this is harder to do than a normal shot, a called shot suffers a penalty. Penalties range anywhere between -1 to -4, depending on size, speed, and other factors pertaining to the target, as assessed by the Gamemaster. Called shots are most often used when trying to hit a particular part of an opponent's body. In such cases, the Gamemaster should use the following **Called Shots Table**, which lists the modifiers and effects of these called shots (the modifiers assume a human-sized target -

larger or smaller targets should be have their modifiers increased or decreased at the GM's discretion (see "Size" on page 250).

CALLED SHOTS		
TARGET'S BODY PART	MODIFIER	EFFECT
Abdomen	-3	+2 <b>Degrees of Success</b> for determine damage
Arm (Left/Right)	-4	Successful Quickness test at -2 or drop any held items
Chest	-3	+2 <b>Degrees of Success</b> for determine damage
Feet (Left/Right)	-4	-1 to Quickness and Quickness skill based tests
Head	-6	+4 <b>Degrees of Success</b> for determine damage ★
Leg (Left/Right)	-4	Movement reduced by a ¼
Shoulder (Left/Right)	-2	Successful Quickness test a -1 or drop any held items
Thighs (Left/Right)	-2	Movement reduced by ½
★ No damage if helmet is worn		

## CAREFUL AIM

With ranged attacks you may declare you're taking careful aim. In cases like this, the use all of your character's **Actions** for the entire round aiming at their intended target. While doing so they are unable to do anything else but aim, and if they are disturbed any benefits of the aiming is lost. Characters spending their whole round aiming, gain a +6 bonus to their first **Action** on the next round, and only the next round.

## CHARGE

Charging (whether on foot or mounted) is an all-out move and attack that allows you to move quickly into **hand-to-hand combat Range**. Additionally, charging negates the range modifiers (see "Range Modifiers" on page 28) due to the charging. Charging counts as an **Action**, and doing so gives a cumulative +1 bonus in the actual first round of combat depending on the distance spanned. Thus, a character charging from **short** to **hand-to-hand combat range** gains a +1, while charging from **long** to **hand-to-hand combat range** gains a +3. While charging you are unable to defend. On the next round after the charge, the you suffer a -2 penalty in that round of combat as you recover from their action.

## COVER

The easiest way to avoid being hit in combat is by getting behind cover. Cover is any type of physical barrier standing between your character's body and your opponent. There are three types of cover:

### *FULL COVER (-3)*

Full cover provides you nearly complete protection, making you extremely hard to hit. Examples of full cover would be being fired at from inside a building through a window, having an arrow shot at your character through dense trees, concealing yourself behind a wagon or wall, or crouching behind a large boulder.

### *PARTIAL COVER (-2)*

Partial cover provides you limited protection. Examples of partial cover would be hiding in tall grass, crouching behind a smaller boulder or a burned out wagon, or having an arrow shot fired at your character while she is behind a tree.

### *PRONE/MINIMAL COVER ( 1)*

Prone describes dropping to the ground and attempting to avoid being hit. Prone is considered a form of cover because not only is your field of vision altered, but you're much harder to hit due too standing up on the field of battle. Alternately, if you are immobilized or otherwise unable to act it is much easier to be hit, granting a +3 to anyone firing on them. Minimal cover is using flimsy types of objects as cover, such as shrubs, bushes, and haystacks.

## DARKNESS & OBSCURED VISION

Another form of combat modifier is visual impairment caused by magic, darkness, light of varying intensities, smoke or fog. Not being able to see your opponent makes it harder to hit them in combat. Darkness and other visual impairments incur the following **TN** penalties to both the attacker and the defender.

DARKNESS & LIGHT	
CONDITION	MODIFIER
Full Darkness	-3
Partial Darkness	-2
Thick Fog	-1
Dim Light	-1
Weak Light	-1
Smoke/Haze	-1
Bright Light	-2
Blinding Light	-3

“Darkness” should not be taken literally in every case. Other effects mimicking darkness or having similar consequences merit the same combat penalties. Such examples include being blind-folded, blinded, or hit in the eye.

DIRTY FIGHTING

From punching below the belt, to throwing dirt in your opponent’s eyes, dirty fighting is frowned upon by most. Still, those employing this tactic generally don’t care. Everything goes when fighting for you’re your life.

As an action you can choose to do one of the following, and the result is found in the table below. To perform a dirty trick, you give up that action, and your opponent is still able to defend. If they fail their defend attempt, they suffer the effects of the dirty tactic.

DIRTY FIGHTING MANEUVERS	
DIRTY TRICK	EFFECT
Blinding with sand or dirt	-4 to all tests for 2 rounds
Boxing Ears	Stun opponent for 1 round, -1 to all tests
Eye Gouge	Blinded 2 Rounds -1 to all tests
Groin Kick/Punch	Unable to act next Round
Tripping	Opponent knocked prone, unable to act for 2 rounds

DISARM

You are able to disarm one opponent of one weapon as an action. To do this requires a successful opposed **Quickness Test**. In the case of a tie (e.g., both succeed their **Quickness** test) compare the **Degrees of Success**; if your character’s is greater, then your opponent is disarmed. If your opponent’s **Degrees of Success** is greater, they keep their weapon.

ENTANGLE

Nets (typically 6’ to 9’ in diameter), as well as whips, are usable in combat. They are designed to knock your opponent off their feet, as well as entangle them, thus making it hard for them to move. Successfully hitting your target with a net requires them make a **Quickness Test**, with failure resulting in their losing their balance and falling to the ground. They remain entangled until they succeed at a **Quickness Test**. While entangled, they suffer a -2 to all **Tests** due to their loss of balance and lack of mobility.

FEINT

This maneuver allows you to bluff an opponent into thinking you are making an attack. This counts as an **Action** and a successful **Will Test** has your opponent suffer a -2 to **Defend** in the next round.

## HUG

This allows you to damage an opponent by squeezing or hugging them. To use this ability, you must make a successful **Brawn** test to grab your opponent. Those trapped can try to break free by making a successful opposed Brawn test. For every Round trapped in the hug or your grip, your opponent suffers a cumulative -1 to the test.

For example, if your opponent has been in the hug for **3 Rounds** they suffer a -3 to the test. The damage from this ability is equal to your **Brawn** + **Toughness**.

## SHIELD BASH

You are able to use a shield, or improvised object as a shield, as a makeshift weapon. To do this you must forgo the **Defend Bonus** of the shield that Round, and make a *Melee Test*. Success has you bashing your opponent, causing damage equal to your **Brawn**.

## SHIELD CHARGE

This maneuver is typically employed when you're moving into **hand-to-hand combat range**. A successful *Melee Test* has you quickly move in, using your shield, or whatever improvised object you're using as a shield, as a makeshift battering ram. The damage for this is equal to **Brawn Bonus** + **Degrees of Success**. If used in this manner, the shield cannot be used to aid in defense for 2 Rounds. The reason for this is simple: you need to reset yourself, and get back into a proper fighting style. Failing to use the shield as a ram, you suffer a -2 to all defenses for a number of rounds equal to the **Degrees of Failure**.

### OTHER TYPES OF COMBAT MODIFIERS

Besides the modifiers talked about in this chapter, there are other modifiers to take in mind while playing *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. These modifiers are self-explanatory, and are listed here for your convenience. If you want to make up additional modifiers, these also serve as a perfect example of the type of modifiers you can create for yourself.

Shooting weapon off-hand	-2
Shooting while walking	-2
Shooting from a moving vehicle, such as a wagon	-3
Shooting while on horseback	-2
Attacking with your off-hand	-2
Using a 2-handed weapon as a 1-handed weapon	-3
Attacking with a hand-held weapon on a charring horse	-3
Attacking while running	-1

## SIZE

The relative size of a target affects the difficulty of hitting it in combat. For every doubling of a target's size compared to that of the attacker, grant a +1 bonus; for every halving of a target's size compared to that of the attacker, impose a -1 penalty.

STEAL

You are able to steal an object from an opponent as an action as long as you have a free hand. You must indicate what object you want to take before the test made. To steal an item requires an opposed *Quickness Test*, with success having you grab the item. Depending on the location of the item, this *Quickness Test* has a penalty assessed to it.

STEALING	
ITEM LOCATION	PENALTY
Tucked in belt or boot	-1
Worn around neck	-2
Fastened (broach, hat, etc.)	-1
Sheathed	-2

TWO WEAPONS

You may attempt to use two one-handed weapons in combat (such as a dagger and axe). To do so you need to have at least 2 **Actions** a **Round**. You suffer a -1 penalty to your primary weapon and a -2 penalty to your secondary weapon. If you do not have at least 1 **Action**, then you're not able to use two weapons in combat. Additionally, you might not be able to defend yourself due to using both of your **Actions** for fighting in one round.

DAMAGE

**Successful** attacks not avoided (see "Avoiding Attacks" on page 37) inflict damage. Taking damage makes it harder for a character to perform actions, including those relating to combat. For every **10 Points** of **Vitality Damage** a character takes, he suffers a -1 to all tasks until healed, increasing by an additional -1 for each additional 5 points of **Vitality Damage** suffered.

DAMAGE PENALTY: TOO HARSH?

You might think the penalties assessed when yo suffer damage is to much. Any damage you take, regardless if it is from claw, tooth, or sword point, soon makes your ability to act greatly reduced. This may seem unfair.

True, it is not, but life is not fair.

The rule models the fact that in real life your ability to perform is reduced the more you are hurt. It is hard to act when you are loosing blood, or trying to keep your guts from spilling out of your body. Furthermore, no one taking a hit to the head is going to be in a position to be act normally.

You may not like this rule, which is fine. You are free to adjust the penalty to actions based on damage. So if **10 Damage** is not "right," have the penalty kick in at **15 Damage**, and for every additional **10 Damage** suffered add another -1.

If that is still not "right" for your game, have the penalty kick in at every ¼ of the character's total Vitality. Thus, if your character has a **Vitality** of **30**, then for every 7 points of **Damage** they take they suffer a -1 penalty for every ¼ their **Vitality** falls.

These are dials that are easy to turn as you see fit. As you might have read over and over again in this book, this is your game, so make it fit your view and style of play.

For example you have a **Vitality 35**. You take **15 Damage** and suffers a  $-2$  penalty. You take another **5 Damage** and suffer an additional  $-1$  for total of  $-3$ . This continues on until they are healed, or they are dead.

When you're reduced to 0 or less **Vitality**, you're unconscious and die in a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Toughness** unless you receive healing. A successful *Healing Test* is sufficient to stabilize a wounded character for 1 hour and prevent immediate death. However, if they do not receive proper healing, another *Healing Test* must be made each hour thereafter, with failure resulting in death

## SHOCK

Combat in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is fast and deadly, but some attacks are more devastating than others. Any time you take more damage from a single attack than the sum your **Toughness + Will**, you must make a **Will Test** or be overcome by shock. Shock has you is incapacitated and incapable of doing anything, including defending yourself, for a number of rounds equal to the **Degrees of Failure**.

## MELEE COMBAT DAMAGE

Melee combat deals damage according to the base damage of the weapon and the **Degrees of Success** achieved while attacking with it. The only difference is that the character's **Brawn** bonus is added to the final damage.

For example, you attack a pirate with your short sword achieving 8 **Degrees of Success**. Your sword's base **Damage** is 3, meaning the character deals 11 points of **Vitality Damage**. To this number you add your **Brawn** bonus of  $+1$ , meaning you deal a total of 12 points of **Damage** to the pirate.

## RANGED COMBAT DAMAGE

Ranged combat deals damage according to the base damage of the weapon and the **Degrees of Success** achieved while attacking with it. The only difference is that the characters **Quickness** bonus is added to the final damage.

**(Degrees of Success + Damage Value (DV)) + Quickness Bonus = Total Damage**

For example, you fire your crossbow at a guard, and hit with six **Degrees of Success**. A crossbow has a base **Damage** of 4, and your **Quickness** is 11 giving you a  $+12$ , so you deals 6 points of **Damage** to the guard!

## UNARMED COMBAT DAMAGE

Like melee damage, unarmed combat damage is handled in much the same way, however there is one difference and that is the **Damage Value**, which is always equal to

**0 Vitality** equals the Grave, food for the worms.

If you want to increase the risks combat, as well as emulate "real life," this option is for you. When you're reduced to **0 Vitality** you're dead.

Period.

R.I.P.

Why this option?

Well, maybe you should have thought twice about entering a fight with a barbarian war party with only a tree limb.

half your **Brawn**. As in armed combat, the **Degrees of Success** are added to the **DV** of the character.

The **DV** of a character?

Yes, all characters — be they creatures, NPCs and the like — cause damage equal to their **Brawn** ( $\frac{1}{2}$  Brawn if *Untrained* in *Brawl*).

So to figure out the total damage a character is able to cause using their fist, you add together the **Degrees of Success** with the characters **Brawn**. If you're skilled in *Brawl* you're able to use your skill ranks to increase this damage. If you're untrained in *Brawl*, you do not gain any bonus, instead you suffer a -4 to the final damage.

#### Trained in Brawl

**(Degrees of Success + DV [Brawn]) + Brawl Rank = Damage**

#### Untrained in Brawl

**(Degrees of Success + DV [ $\frac{1}{2}$  Brawn]) - 4 = Damage**

### OTHER TYPES OF DAMAGE

There are plenty of hazards in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* other than weapons and kicks to the heads that can inflict harm. A few of the most common damage-dealing hazards are described below.

#### DROWNING

You're able to hold your breath underwater for a number of rounds equal to your **Toughness**. For every round after that, you must make a **Toughness Test**. A **Failure** results in **1d12 points of Vitality Damage** every round thereafter until you're dead or able to breathe again. You do get to make another **Toughness Test** every **Round**, if you failed the first one, but it has a cumulative -1 penalty.

#### FALLING

Every 20 feet you fall (or fraction thereof, rounded down) causes **1d12 Damage**, and for every additional 20 feet you take an additional **1d12 Damage**. Thus, falling 60 feet results in you taking 3d12 damage. If you have the *Acrobatics* or *Athletics* skill and make a **Successful Skill Test**, allows you to reduce the **Damage** by **1d12**, meaning you take half **Damage**.

#### FIRE & SMOKE

Fire, like that of a small campfire, causes **4 points of Damage per Round** until put out. Fire also causes smoke, which obstructs vision, as well as making it difficult to breathe. Breathing in smoke, without any protection, causes you to lose one point of **Vitality per Round** until the smoke clears.

### HEALING

**Vitality** Damage can be healed except in extremely unusual cases. A short period of rest, followed by a **Successful Test** against the average of your character's **Vitality**

+ **Will** allowing you to recover the number of **Vitality** points equal to the **Degrees of Success** of the **Test**. A **Successful Heal Test** also heals a number of **Vitality** points equal to the **Degrees of Success** of the test, if you're resting while being treated. After this, you regain **Vitality** at a rate equal to the average of your **Toughness** + **Will** per day until fully healed.

## AVOIDING ATTACKS

### ABILITY TESTS

As mentioned on page 15, **Ability Tests** are used you come into situations posing a risk to survival. **Ability Tests**, then is a way to use your physical attributes (**Brawn**, **Quickness**, **Toughness**, **Wits** and **Will**) to avoid harm.

Making an ability test could not be any easier. Simply roll a **2d12** add your **Ability Bonus** as well as any modifiers applicable and if the result is greater than or equal to the **Target Number of 18** you succeed.

Every **Ability Test** is modified due to the nature of the challenge faced. This is done by assigning a modifier to your roll based on the nature of the challenge you are facing.

For example, your character is being poisoned by a powerful one, so your GM assigns a -4 to your roll. Conversely your character is being constricted by a small snake, and your GM might give you a +4 to your roll to wiggle yourself out.

So what attributes are used in a given situation? Look to the right.

### CHARM (WITS)

Spells or creature abilities attempting to charm a person.

#### ABILITY TEST MODIFIERS

TYPE OF CHALLENGE ★	D12 BONUS/PENALTY
Otherworldly	-9
Impossible	-8
Nearly Impossible	-7
Heroic	-6
Daring	-5
Reckless	-4
Formidable	-3
Challenging	-2
Difficult	-1
Standard	±0
Routine	+1
Easy	+2
Trivial	+4
Instinctive	+6

★ These Situation modifiers do not increase or decrease the value of your ability, or the TN. They simply come into play when you need to make an ability test.

#### ABILITY TESTS

ABILITY	TYPE
Brawn	Constriction, Paralysis
Quickness	Gazes, Magical Range Attacks, Traps
Toughness	Disease, Gaseous Attacks, Poison
Wits	Charms, Confusion, Illusions
Will	Fear, Mental Attacks, Psychological

CONFUSION (WITS)

This covers spells, creatures, drugs and other compounds designed to confuse an individual. The effects of confusion depends on the situation. If not stated, the effects of confusion on determining a character’s action are handled in the following ways.

Every round while confused roll a **d12**, and the result has the character do one of the following found in the table on the right.

<b>D12</b>	<b>ACTION ★</b>
1	Wander away <b>1 Round</b> unless stopped
2-6	Do nothing for <b>1 Round</b>
7-11	Attack nearest target for <b>1 Round</b> , friend or foe alike
12	Act normal for <b>1 Round</b>

★ Note, while confused, depending on the result, the character either uses all their actions, or none.

CONSTRICTION (BRAWN)

This covers such things as natural hazards like quicksand, mud, vines, magic, or creatures with the ability to grab and constrict someone. It also covers such things as hugs — in the case of a bear — as well as being bound by ropes, chains or the like.

DISEASE (TOUGHNESS)

See page 42 for the full rules on disease.

GASEOUS ATTACKS (TOUGHNESS)

This covers everything from poisonous gas clouds, the breath of specific creatures, poisonous fumes, or anything that once inhaled causes harm.

FEAR (WILL)

See page 40 for the full rules on fear.

GAZES (QUICKNESS)

Some creatures cause harm via their gaze. Anyone within range of such of an attack must make this ability each round a creature uses it. **Success** has them avoid the attack, while failure has them suffer from it.

ILLUSION (WITS)

This covers spells which create illusions that effect one or more senses. By successfully making the ability test, your are not fooled by the illusion.

MAGICAL RANGE ATTACKS (QUICKNESS)

Magical attacks of this type include spells producing objects having a range. Successfully making this test means you dodge the magical attack.

MENTAL ATTACKS (WILL)

These types of attacks range in scope from hypnotism, deafness, or anything that alters a person’s mind or five senses. These attacks cover both magic and creatures that have some form of mental attack abilities.

## PARALYSIS (BRAWN)

There are times either through magic, a creature's attack, natural occurrences and the like that you might become paralyzed. Unlike constriction, paralysis means a character is unable to move or react. While paralyzed your **Brawn** and **Quickness** is reduced to 0 while they suffer from the effects.

## POISON (TOUGHNESS)

See page 43 for full the rules on poison.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL (WILL)

Either through natural or supernatural means you suffer from an attack effecting their mental perception of reality. This is more than an illusion, this is a direct attack on a person's mind. Types of attacks range from thinking a room is engulfed in flames, the character is being attacked by hornets, or the like.

## TRAP (QUICKNESS)

Traps are anything from bear traps, spikes, a stake lined pit, bladed locks and the like. Every trap is different and when faced with multiple traps you need to make one ability test for each. In addition if a trap has a secondary effect, such as poison, you still must make an ability test for that.

# ARMOR

Wearing Armor is an effective means to protect yourself against damage from attacks. All armor has an **Armor Value (AV)**, which is a number representing how much damage the armor absorbs when you are attacked, and how much damage in total the armor can take before it is destroyed. Thus you are wearing chain mail (which has an **AV 35**). Any damage you take below **AV 35** is absorbed by the armor, and anything above this value passes on to you.

For example, you're hit by an attack from a longsword causing **10 points of damage**. The armor absorbs the **10 damage**. However, the armor takes **Damage** and the **AV** is now reduced to **25 AV**. The more **Damage** you take, the more the effectiveness of your armor reduces.

If your armor is reduced to **AV 0** then it is destroyed. If, however, your armor survives the rigors of the adventure you are undertaking you are able to have your armor repaired. The cost of this repair is equal to 2 SCs per point of **AV** restored. Thus, in the example above, your armor manages to only have taken **10 Damage**, it would cost you 20 SC to restore your chainmail to **AV 35**.

## SHIELDS

Unlike armor, shields make it harder for your opponent to hit you. Every shield has a **Defend Bonus**, which you apply to your *Defend Skill*. For example a Small Shield has **Defend +1**. Your character has a **Defend +8**, and using the shield it would give a **Defend +9**.

## SACRIFICING A SHIELD

Any time you take damage in combat you can opt to use your shield to absorb all of it. Doing so has you take no damage, but (you knew there was a but) the shield is destroyed and must be discarded. A destroyed shield is unable to be repaired and you need to buy a new one.

## DEFEND

This skill allows you to avoid melee attacks. This is a broad skill, in that it covers defensive moves such as parry, block, and deflect. Like all other skills, when you defend, it counts as one action. Making a successful defend test means that you deduct the **Degrees of Success** achieved on your defend test from your opponent's **Degrees of Success** on his attack. If this reduces your opponent's **Degrees of Success** to 0 or less, you have completely defended against the attack and take no damage whatsoever. If you want to defend against more than one melee attack, you must expend as many Actions as you have in a round to do so.

## DODGE

Ranged attacks, as well as hand-to-hand attacks, are avoided with a successful *Dodge Test*. As long as you have an action remaining in a given round, you may dodge an attack. Making a *Dodge Test* counts as an action. If the *Dodge Test* is successful, you may deduct the **Degrees of Success** achieved on your *Dodge Test* from your opponent's **Degrees of Success** on their attack. If this reduces your opponent's **Degrees of Success** to 0 or less, you have completely dodged the attack and take no damage whatsoever. If your character wants to dodge more than one ranged attack, you can expend more actions, provided your character has them.

## CARRYING, LIFTING, & PUSHING

How much you're able to move, whether by carrying, lifting or pushing, is a function of your **Brawn** score, as shown in the *Carrying, Lifting and Pushing Table*.

## FEAR & SANITY

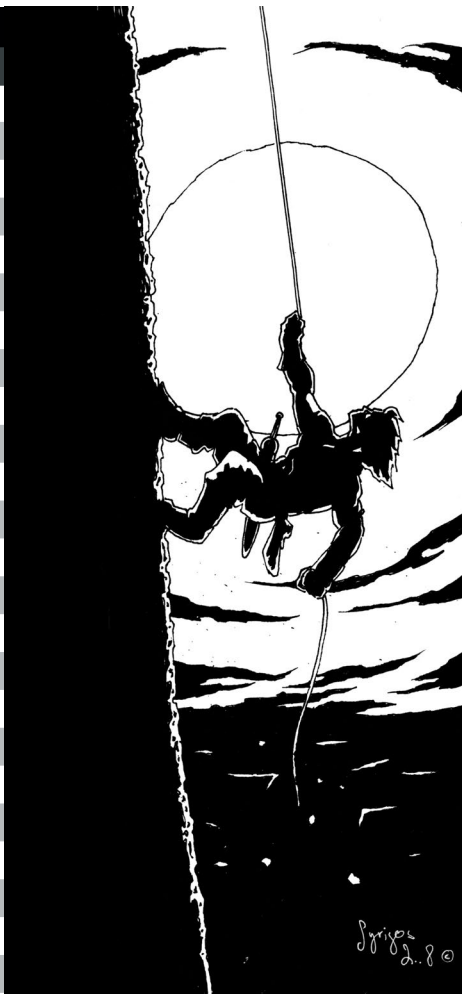
Fear is a commonplace experience, an everyday fact of life. Large crowds, sudden noises, nearly getting run down by a rapidly moving horse-drawn carriage, someone sneaking up on you unnoticed – all of these things cause fear, but once overcoming this initial shock, there are no lasting effects. The fear characters experience in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, however, is usually instilled by events and creatures not so mundane, where constant exposure wears down even the most stoic character. In *Shadow, Sword & Spell* fear is one of the tools that those who work the arcane arts or creatures whose very existence overwhelming your very mind.

## FEAR

Encountering scenes of grisly murders, tortured children, and the horrors of war are traumatic experiences for any character, but at least these can be rationalized as an unfortunate part of the human experience. Coming face-to-face with leathery-winged devils, deep

## CARRYING, LIFTING, &amp; PUSHING

BRAWN	CARRYING	LIFTING	PUSHING
1	2 lbs.	25 lbs.	20 lbs.
2	4 lbs.	45 lbs.	35 lbs.
3	6 lbs.	55 lbs.	50 lbs.
4	12 lbs.	75 lbs.	65 lbs.
5	20 lbs.	95 lbs.	80 lbs.
6	30 lbs.	115 lbs.	95 lbs.
7	40 lbs.	135 lbs.	120 lbs.
8	50 lbs.	155 lbs.	135 lbs.
9	60 lbs.	175 lbs.	150 lbs.
10	70 lbs.	195 lbs.	165 lbs.
11	80 lbs.	215 lbs.	180 lbs.
12	90 lbs.	235 lbs.	195 lbs.
13	100 lbs.	255 lbs.	220 lbs.
14	110 lbs.	275 lbs.	235 lbs.
15	120 lbs.	295 lbs.	250 lbs.
16	130 lbs.	315 lbs.	265 lbs.
17	140 lbs.	335 lbs.	280 lbs.
18	150 lbs.	355 lbs.	295 lbs.
19	160 lbs.	375 lbs.	320 lbs.
20	170 lbs.	395 lbs.	335 lbs.
21	180 lbs.	415 lbs.	350 lbs.
22	190 lbs.	435 lbs.	365 lbs.
23	200 lbs.	455 lbs.	380 lbs.
24	210 lbs.	475 lbs.	395 lbs.



ones, or rotting, undead minions shatters the sanity of even the most rational of person. When faced with supernatural creatures such as these, you need to make a **Fear Test**.

**Fear Tests** are handled like all **Ability Tests** (see page 40); you roll **2d12** and if it is greater than or equal to your Will then you resist. If your character fails his **Fear Test**, they are at a -2 to all **Test** for one full day.

Every time your character fails a **Fear Test** they loses number of **Sanity** equal to the **Degrees of Failure**.

For example, you're trapped in a collapsed cavern when you're confronted by an unmentionable horror. This traumatic experience is enough to force you to make a **Fear Test**, which you **Fail**. Not only are you penalized for a number of **Rounds**, you also lose a point of **Sanity**. Already down **9** points of **Sanity**, you deduct another one bringing you closer and closer to losing your **Sanity**.

## OPTION: RAGE

You can use your **Sanity** to enter a Berserker Rage. To do this declare you're spending all of your **Sanity**, and enter into this rage. Entering this state, your **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily raised by **2 Points** each, and your **Vitality** is temporarily increased by **15 Points**. Additionally, both your **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily lowered by **2 Points**. Rage lasts for a number of **Rounds** equal to your enraged character's base **Will** (not the temporarily reduced level). While in this state, you're immune to all **Fear**, and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the Rage state passes, your **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.

## OPTION: MENTAL DECAY

This option, which is found primarily in the works of Lovecraft and Smith, called Mental Decay, is one in which your **Sanity** does not reset. Every lost point of **Sanity** moves you closer and closer to the edge. Once out of Sanity Points, you become deranged.

## REGAINING SANITY

You are unable to boost your **Sanity** above its starting value. However, you are able to regain lost **Sanity** at a rate equal to your **Wits** per new day. If you had a bad encounter with a ghoul one morning, for example, you're not able to regain any **Sanity** until the next day after the battle. If you lose all your **Sanity**, you're unable to act until the next day, at which time you regain some of your **Sanity**. However, your **Sanity** total is permanently reduced by **1 Point**. Each time the you goes down to **0 Sanity**, your total is reduced by 1.

What happens when you reach **0 Sanity**? Your mind has snapped, and you are no longer a rational being. You live in a constant state rage, visions, and a detachment from what is real and what it fake. So gone are your mental faculties, you are unable to function in society — which is saying much due to the world you live in — and your character is out of play.

Now the above might seem harsh, but if you think about it, how would a character with no sanity function within a group of adventures? Granted you can argue that anyone must not be sane to take up the life of adventure, but you still need to be in full control of your mental capabilities to survive. Yet — here it comes — this is your game. If you want to allow players playing characters without any **Sanity** nothing is stopping you. However, you must be prepared for a character whose actions have no rhyme or reason. One minute they might decide to attack the city guard, and the next, they might be running in terror from the sight of a chicken. If you and the players are up to the challenge go for it.

## DISEASE

Life is filled with untold danger. Danger hides behind every corner, in every leg of lamb, or flowing in every keg of ale, in the form of disease. In the world of *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, medical knowledge isn't enough to prevent diseases from spreading or curing them after study.

When faced with the potential to contract a **Disease**, you must make a **Toughness**

**Test**, with **Failure** having you become sick with the ailment and, unless otherwise noted, must roll **1d12** to determine how many days or hours the **Disease** lasts. Some of these **Diseases** are temporary in duration, and some are longer lasting. Succeeding the **Disease Test** grants you a +1 bonus when coming into contact with that **Disease** again.

For example, your character has just survived an encounter with a ghoul and due to this battle was scratched having a chance to contract Curse from the Grave (see page 295). Your **Toughness** is **7** and you roll **2d12**, and get **22**, success (remember all Ability Tests have a **TN 18**)! As a result you do not contract the disease, and additionally the next time you come into contact with it, you enjoy a +1 bonus to your disease test. Who says being an adventurer does not have its' advantages?

## POISON

Villains use poison to slow their enemies down, or to assassinate them. In a manner similar to that with known diseases, you're capable of developing immunities to these poisons by having successes in your **Poison Tests**. If you ingest a Poison or wish to determine the poison you're dealing with, an appropriate *Skill Test* (*Study (Botany)*, *Survival*, etc.) allows you to identify poison you're facing.

Poison is a standard in the pulp fantasy genre. Some writers are specific in their use and portrayal of poison (Lovecraft, Smith and even Moorcock provide good examples of this), which adds color and a sense of believability to the writing. Other writers, such as Howard, do not go into specifics, and instead rely on poison as a throwaway effect, mentioning the poison, and then moving on. Regardless of the type and style of fantasy the you wish to use, all poisons behave the same way.

### HERBALISTS & POISON

Creating poisons is seen as a crime by most upstanding people, but some herbalists are known to craft them either for their own use or for the use of others. If you are skilled in the *Herbalist* skill, you are able to distill natural poisons and it requires 8 hours per Rank of poison to brew one ounce of the poison (enough for one use). Upon the completion

#### POISON CREATION

RANK	MODIFIER	EFFECT
1	+0	-1 <b>Brawn</b> for victim, effect last for 4 hours
2	-1	-1 <b>Brawn</b> , -1 <b>Vitality</b> , effect last for 8 hours
3	-2	-1 <b>Brawn</b> , -1 <b>Vitality</b> , effect last for 12 hours, loses 12 <b>Vitality</b>
4	-3	-2 <b>Brawn</b> , effect last for 4 hours
5	-4	-2 <b>Brawn</b> , -2 <b>Vitality</b> , effect lasts for 8 hours
6	-5	-2 <b>Brawn</b> , -2 <b>Vitality</b> effect last for 12 hours, loses 24 <b>Vitality</b>

#### ANTIDOTE CREATION

RANK	MODIFIER	EFFECT
1	+0	Negates the effect of rank 1 Poison
2	-1	Negates the effect of rank 2 Poison
3	-2	Negates the effect of rank 3 Poison
4	-3	Negates the effect of rank 4 Poison
5	-4	Negates the effect of rank 5 Poison
6	-5	Negates the effect of rank 6 Poison

of this brewing process, the your character makes an *Herbalist Test*, with success leading to the distillation/creation of a poison, and failure resulting in the creation of a vile tasting liquid. Poisons retain their potency no matter how long they sit.

Besides creating poisons, you're able to create antidotes capable of negating the effects of poison regardless of strength (but it does not restore any **Vitality** lost due to the poison's effects). All Antidotes, regardless of **Rank**, automatically negate the effect of natural poisons. It takes 6 hours and a successful *Herbalists Test* to brew one ounce of an Antidote. If the roll is **failed**, the Antidote is actually a poison, and has the same potency as a **Rank 2** Poison. **Successfully** brewing an Antidote creates enough of the substance for one use. An **Antidote** does not lose its potency no matter how long it sits in its vial.

### OPTION: SPECIFIC POISONS

Poisons are kept streamlined for the purpose of gameplay. Some, however, might want to have poisons based on real-world versions of poisons.

#### HEMLOCK

Hemlock is a plant with a purple-spotted stem and fern-like leaves; its small, white flowers give off an unpleasant aroma. Found in the Jungles of Moarn, as well as both Nipur and Behidea, this plant is one of the favorite for those who wish to create poison. If poisoned with Hemlock, you must make an unmodified **Toughness Test**, with **Failure** having you lose the ability to heal for a number of days equal to the **Degrees of Failure**.

#### HELLEBORE

Hellebore flowers in the winter with large white, green or purplish flowers, and is known as the Winter Rose. The juice of this plant is extracted and is highly poisonous. Extracting the juice, and having it reduce over a low fire, creates a thick and highly lethal toxin. If poisoned with Hellebore, you must make an unmodified **Toughness Test** to see if the Hellebore has rendered him unconscious for a number of days equal to the **Degrees of Failure**, and draining all but one point of **Vitality**.

#### ARSENIC

Arsenic has been known since ancient times, but it was the League of Cantons discovered that by heating regular (a reddish naturally occurring mineral), created a substance known as white arsenic. If poisoned with arsenic, an odorless, colorless, poison, you experience a mild heart attack (a loss of **8 Vitality**), which weakens you for a number of days equal to the **Degrees of Failure** until recovering. During this time, you suffer a-1 to all **Quickness** and **Brawn**-related **Tests**.

#### CYANIDE

Cyanide is a poison created by cooking down bitter almonds and cherry laurel. One of the rarer poisons, cyanide is difficult to concoct because of the lethal fumes created during the cooking process. Although it is easy to recognize, cyanide is a deadly poison. Once ingested, your **Vitality** is reduced to zero after a number of hours equal to the **Degrees of Failure** you are healed.

## DRUGS

Like Poisons, Drugs come up quite a lot within the literature. The reason for this is that drugs are one of the substances which can affect changes to characters – either good or bad – allowing for the adventure’s plot and action you can either use or ignore. In fact, drugs are more appropriate to certain styles of pulp fantasy. For example, in Moorcock’s Elric stories drugs are used as a means of allowing characters to enter new realms of mental processing, permitting them to contact higher powers, as well as being able to sustain a person’s health due to sickness. Howard and Lovecraft were two writers who used drugs as devices to cause harm to the characters.

### TYPES OF DRUGS

Drugs can be broken down into four categories:

- **Enhancement:** Drugs which give the user a brief benefit that allows them to perform feats greater than most.
- **Harm:** Drugs used against another, to cause a person harm.
- **Control:** Drugs used to control others.
- **Addiction:** Drugs that allow the user to adapt to a specific situation.

All drugs have an advantage and a drawback. Advantages are simply what affect the drug has on an individual, while the drawback is the long term effect the drug has on a person. Every time a drug is used, you must make an **Opposed Test** against the **Drug’s Addiction**. **Failing the Test**, and you become addicted to the drug and always need to take the drug for a number of days equal to the **Degrees of Failure**.

Addiction to the drug has you always looking to take the drug. When you do not regularly take the drug you begin to withdraw from it, and this has you suffer s-2 all **Tests**, because you are unable to focus.

### EXAMPLES OF DRUGS

#### DEMON’S TOUCH

**Type:** Harm

**Addiction:** TN 12

Demon’s Touch is a drug favored by those seeking to cause harm to others from a distance. This fine black powder resembles pepper, and though somewhat bitter, tastes like it as well. Ingesting this powder causes you to immediately struck with a sense of being on fire. Your entire body feels inflamed, and see imaginary flames coming off your body. To resist this drug requires a successful **Toughness Test** against the drug’s **Addiction**. Failure causes the flames to last for **6 Rounds**, and cause you to suffer a -2 to all **Tests** for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Failure**. In addition you loose **1 point of Sanity** for each **Round**. When the drug wears off, you still suffer a -2 to all **Tests** for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.

## FLOWERS OF ETHER

**Type:** Enhancement**Addiction:** TN 14

Flowers of Ether is a drug favored by sorcerers, as it makes them more in tune with the forces of magic, and thus allows them to cast spells and work magic easier. Ingesting this drug requires you to burn the flowers and inhaling the fumes you gain a +4 bonus to all spellcasting Tests for a number of rounds equal to your **Will**. Once the effects of the drug wear off, you find yourself lethargic and casting magic extremely difficult. Due to this you suffer a -4 penalty to all tests for a number of rounds equal to your **Will**. Developing an addiction to this drug you find yourself needing the flowers more and more. Each time you use the drug the **Target Number** of the addiction raises by one point.

For example, you have used this drug six times, then the Addiction is **TN 20**. Once the test is failed, you become addicted to the flower, and find working magic difficult without it. Any magic worked, without ingesting the drug, has you suffer a -2 to their magic test, which is cumulative. For example, you character casts one spell, the penalty is -2, they cast a second, the penalty is -4, and so forth. As soon as you ingest this drug, the penalty goes away.

## GIFT OF LIFE

**Type:** Adaptation**Addiction:** TN 22

Gift of Life is a drug often used by warriors wanting an edge before battle. Ingesting this drug gives you an extra **15 Vitality** points for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Toughness**. This extra **Vitality** is only temporary, and allows you to carry on past the point of death. Once the drug wears off, you have **5 Rounds** to seek out medical aid, and heal the lost extra **Damage**. If you do not, and the lost extra **Vitality** takes you below **0 Vitality**, you die.

This is an addictive drug, and each time it is taken you must take an extra amount of the drug for it to have an effect. The typical dosage is one ounce, and each time you fail the **Addiction Test**, the amount of the dose goes up by 1 ounce.

## LILITH'S KISS

**Type:** Control**Addiction:** 6

This drug is a pale red liquid that can be added to anything. Once ingested, you must make an unmodified **Toughness Test**, with **Failure** causing you to be in a hypnotized state lasting for 1 hour. While in this state, you are able to be controlled by the first person you see, and perform tasks you might not otherwise be inclined to do. These tasks might include opening a locked vault, leaving a door open, and the like. As long as you are not asked to cause yourself harm, you perform the actions requested.

When the drug wears off, you fall into a deep sleep and unable to wake for a number of hours equal to your **Toughness**. Upon awakening, you have no memory of what you did.

# CHAPTER

# 3

## CHARACTERS

**C**haracters for **Shadow, Sword & Spell** are created in five simple steps:

- **Choose Abilities:** Divide **45 Ability points** among your character's five **Abilities** (**Brawn**, **Quickness**, **Toughness**, **Wits**, and **Will**).
- **Choose Background** and a **Modifier:** Your **Background** helps define your character, setting them on the path they were before undertaking a life of adventure. A **Modifier** is added to a **Background** in order to have your character stand out amongst the crowd.
- **Choose Skills:** You have **40 Skill Points** to purchase the skills your character knows.
- **Choose 2 (two) Hooks:** These are based on your character's background.
- Finishing touches.

### ABILITIES

All characters are defined by five **Abilities**. **Abilities** range in numeric value between 1 to 24, with 7 being average for most. The minimum a

character needs to have in an **Ability** is 4, and the maximum is 12. Note, having a high **Ability** might make you stand out in one area, but you are going to be weak in many others.

*Shadow, Sword & Spell* adventures call upon a wide range of skills—yes combat plays a role—and if your character is unbalanced the potential of your character having an impact is slight. You have **45 Ability Points** to divide amongst your character's **Abilities** during creation. Once the **Abilities** are set, they are unlikely to change over the course of play, so allocate them wisely!

For example, you create a new character and spend your 45 points like this:

Brawn 11

Quickness 10

Toughness 11

Wits 6

Will 6

Though your **Brawn**, **Quickness**, and **Toughness** grants you a +1 Ability bonus, the 6 **Wits** and **Will** provides no bonus, and in fact gives you a -1 penalty to the others. You might be skilled in *Shoot*—and deadly effective in hitting their target—but in situations requiring more than a keen eye and deadly aim you're going to be at a disadvantage. From resisting the effects of magic to not being able to function in polite society, life is going to be a challenge. Nothing prevents you from creating a character with one or even two high abilities, but know this: their chances of surviving the dangers of the world of *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is noticeably lower.

## VITALITY

Vitality is, in some ways, a sixth **Ability**, representing your ability to take damage of all types of physical damage. Unlike other **Abilities**, you determine **Vitality's** numerical value not by spending Attribute Points, but by a simple calculation:  $(((\text{Brawn} + \text{Toughness}) \div 2) \times 5)$ .

Thus, a character with 7 **Brawn** and 6 **Toughness**  $[(7 + 6 = 13) \div 2 = 6]$  has 30 Vitality.

Every time you take physical damage, you suffer a variety of mounting damage penalties, making it increasingly difficult to act. Your **Vitality** is represented by small circles on your character sheet (see the back of the book). Every time you lose **Vitality**, fill in the appropriate number of circles. When reaching 0 **Vitality** you are either unconscious or dying; depending on what your Gamemaster chooses for the lethality of the game. Further information on **Vitality** and how it relates to **Damage** is found in Chapter 1 (see page 34).

### WEAKER HEROES?

The base assumption with character creation in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is that the characters you create are a cut above the rest. By that, by their very nature, they are far better than the typical peasant. They are able to run faster, think better, and resist the rigors of life far better.

However, sometimes you might want to have a little more gritty feel to things. Instead of skilled individuals, you want those who have choosing to taken on this life of shadows, swords and spells (see what I did there?). In this case what you want are average individuals who through circumstances become adventurers.

To emulate this have characters be created with 36 **Ability Points** and 36 **Skill Points**. Doing this ratchets down the power level, but ratchets up the potential risk of death.

Doesn't that sound fun?



## SANITY

**Sanity** is generated by taking your **Will** and multiplying it by 5; this gives you your starting **Sanity** as well as the maximum number at which their **Sanity** refreshes. Like your **Vitality**, **Sanity** is represented on your character sheet by small circles. Every time you lose **Sanity**, fill in the appropriate number of circles.

The more **Sanity** you, the greater the risk you run of having your mental state of mind snap. Once your **Sanity** reaches zero, you fall into madness and can no longer function due to your broken mind (see "Fear & Sanity" on page 40).

## INITIATIVE

Who goes first in a round is determined by your **Initiative Rating**. **Initiative** is determined by the following formula, with the d12 being rolled with each combat, not at character creation:

$$D12 + [(Quickness + Wits) \div 2] \pm \text{modifiers} = \text{Initiative Rating}$$

**Initiative** is covered in depth in Chapter 1 (see page 25), but in the meantime, simply record the rating.

## ACTIONS

**Actions** control how much — or how little — you're able to do in one round. The more actions you have, the more you are able to do.

$$Quickness \div 3 = \text{Actions}$$

**Action** is covered in depth in Chapter 1 (see page 25), but in the meantime, simply record the rating.

## BACKGROUNDS

Pulp fantasy characters are a diverse lot, shaped not only by their exploits but also by their origins. That's why *Shadow, Sword & Spell* characters have a **Background** giving them a small set of bonuses (and, in some cases, penalties) that represent early and lasting societal and cultural influences.

Because of the wide range of possible options, **Backgrounds** consist of two parts: a *Culture* and a *Modifier*. Cultures include *Primitive*, *Barbarian*, *Civilized*, and *Advanced*. *Modifiers*, as their name implies, modify the *Culture* by adding a quality to it, such as "Decadent," "Nomadic," or "Southern." By associating one *Culture* and one *Modifier* together in various combinations, you have the potential of creating a multitude of **Backgrounds**, each possessing its own unique characteristics. Thus, you can create a Nomadic Barbarian Character who will have different bonuses and penalties compared to a Southern Barbarian Character.

This section describes four primary *Cultures* and many *Modifiers*. Other *Shadow, Sword & Spell* products include additional *Cultures* and/or *Modifiers*, but starting out you can make your own using the guidelines below.

## CULTURES

As noted above, there are four Cultures you can choose for your character. They are as follows.

### ADVANCED

An Advanced character belongs to a culture whose achievements far outstrip those of their contemporaries, both in scope and in magnificence. Advanced cultures may even possess magic and/or sciences otherwise unknown in the world. There are no historical examples of such cultures, but literary ones abound, such as Michael Moorcock's Melnibonéans or the Red Martians of Edgar Rice Burroughs.

- **Background Bonuses:** +1 Rank in Lore, +1 Rank in Study, Fluency in a language besides their Native Language, +1 Rank in Initiative bonus
- **Background Penalty:** -1 penalty when attempting socially-oriented Tests with members of "inferior" cultures, -1 Empathy, and a -1 Melee.

### BARBARIAN

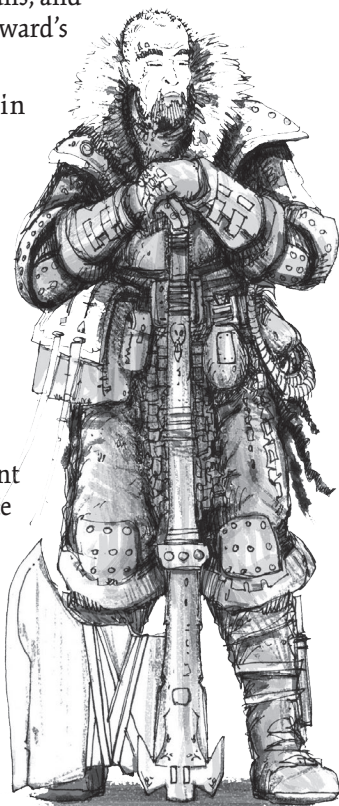
A Barbarian character belongs to a culture that lacks the large permanent settlements and organization of Civilized societies, but possesses many other advances, such as agriculture, metal-working, and, in some cases, literacy. Historical examples of Barbarian cultures include Celts, Huns, and Vikings. Literary examples include Robert E. Howard's Cimmerians and Tolkien's Rohirrim.

- **Background Bonuses:** +1 Rank in Athletics, +1 Rank in Melee
- **Background Penalty:** The ability to read and write is purchased as a separate skill from Language.

### CIVILIZED

A Civilized character belongs to a culture that possesses large permanent settlements, powerful central governments, and engages in large-scale civic engineering projects. Historical examples of Civilized cultures include imperial China, ancient Egypt, and the Romans. Literary examples include Robert E. Howard's Aquilonians and Fritz Leiber's Lankhmarites.

- **Background Bonuses:** +1 Rank in Bureaucracy, +1 Rank in Diplomacy, +1 Rank in a language besides their Native Language.
- **Background Penalty:** -1 Survival and -1 Subterfuge.



## PRIMITIVE

A Primitive character belongs to a pre-literate culture, lacking metal-working, large permanent settlements, and having no social structure larger than the family or clan. Generally, Primitive characters come from a hunter-gatherer background.

Historical examples of Primitive cultures include Australian aborigines, African bushmen, and many Pacific islanders. Literary examples include Robert E. Howard's Picts and Michael Moorcock's Yurits.

- **Background Bonuses:** +1 Rank in Athletics, +1 Rank in Stealth, +1 Rank in Survival
- **Background Penalty:** The ability to read and write is purchased as a separate skill from Language, -1 Streetwise, and -1 Diplomacy.

## MODIFIERS

The following is a small selection of *Modifiers* that you can apply to the four *Cultures* noted above. All *Modifiers* grant small bonuses and penalties to *Skill Tests*. Generally, this consists of either a single +2 bonus or two +1 bonuses. A greater number of bonuses are possible, but any bonuses above +2 (in aggregate) must be counter-balanced by a -1 penalty for each additional +1. Thus, a *Modifier* granting a +1 bonus to three different *Skill Tests* would also include a -1 penalty to three other *Skill Tests*.

With this in mind, you're free to create as many *Modifiers* as you want for your campaign. Here are a few examples to illustrate how it is done.

### ATLANTEAN

You hail from the mysterious southern kingdom known as Atlantis. What secrets you know would make others quake in fear.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Lore, +1 Sense, +1 Study (Emphasis of choice)
- **Penalty:** -1 Empathy, -2 Diplomacy

### BEIDHAN JADE WARRIOR

The warriors of Beidha are known for their skills, and one area that stands out the most is their versatility.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Defend, +1 Profession (Sailor), +1 Tactics
- **Penalty:** -2 Diplomacy, -1 Streetwise

### CATHARIAN BUREAUCRAT

It takes many individuals to insure that the great bureaucracy of Cathar runs smoothly.

- **Bonuses:** +3 Bureaucracy, +1 Diplomacy
- **Penalty:** -2 Brawl, -2 Melee

## CATHARIAN LEGIONNAIRE

The highest rung of Cathar society is the warrior. Dedicated to pursuits not only martial but artistic, Legionnaires are a dichotomy of violence and creators of great beauty.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Art (Emphasis of Choice), +1 Melee, +1 Performance (Emphasis of Choice), +1 Tactics
- **Penalty:** -2 Empathy, -1 Diplomacy, -1 Streetwise

## DECADENT

Your character's culture is in a state of decline.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Bureaucracy, +1 Streetwise
- **Penalty:** -1 Empathy, -1 Resist

## EASTERN

Your character's culture is located in the "mysterious East."

- **Bonuses:** +1 Bureaucracy, +1 Lore
- **Penalty:** -1 Diplomacy, -1 Socialize

## HAUGHTY

Your character's culture considers itself superior to others.

- **Bonuses:** +2 Intimidate
- **Penalty:** -1 Bargain, -1 Empathy

## MAGI

Magi are considered by many within Beidha to be the most educated and skilled in the sciences.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Lore, +1 Study (Mathematics), +1 Study (Religions)
- **Penalty:** -1 Brawl, -1 Defend, -1 Melee

## MERCANTILE

Your character's culture is renowned for its traders.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Bargain, +1 Diplomacy
- **Penalty:** -1 Melee, -1 Resit

## MARITIME

Your character's culture is a sea-going one.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Athletics, +1 Profession (Sailor)
- **Penalties:** -1 Diplomacy, -1 Stealth



## MARTIAL

Your character's culture holds warfare in high esteem.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Defend, +1 Melee, +1 Tactics
- **Penalties:** -2 Diplomacy, -1 Empathy

## MOUNTAINEER

The high alpine pastures, and the plentiful mountains of the League of Cantons has made many into sought after guides.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Athletics (Climbing), +1 Observe, +1 Survival (Mountains)
- **Penalty:** -1 Empathy, -1 Diplomacy, -1 Streetwise

## MYSTIC

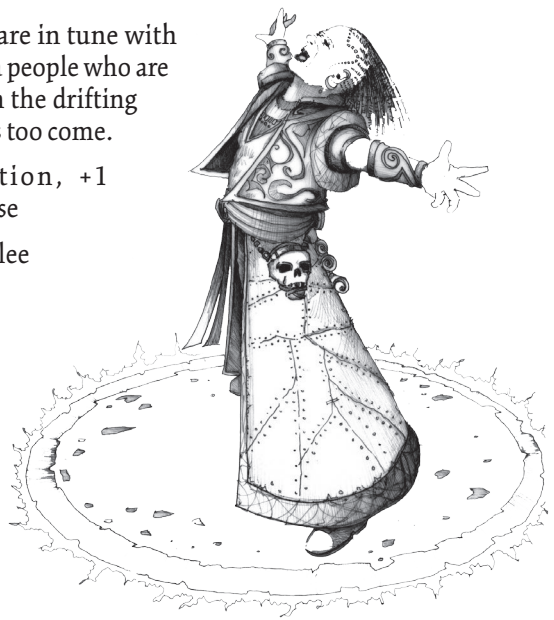
There are some in Nogoton who are in tune with the unseen and mystical. They are a people who are said to be able to read the future in the drifting clouds, and can tell when trouble is too come.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Divination, +1 Empathy, +1 Lore, +1 Sense
- **Penalty:** -2 Brawl, -2 Melee

## NOGOTON NAVIGATOR

Nogoton is known for their sailors, and for many their navigators are the most sought after.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Profession (Sailor), +2 Study (Navigation)
- **Penalty:** -1 Diplomacy, -2 Streetwise



## NOMADIC

Your character's culture has no permanent settlements.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Animal Handling, +1 Ride
- **Penalty:** -1 Diplomacy, -1 Resist

## NORTHERN

Your character's culture hails from the frozen North.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Survival, +1 Track
- **Penalty:** -2 Diplomacy

## PIOUS

Your character's culture is very devoted to the gods.

- **Bonuses:** +2 Study
- **Penalty:** -1 Intimidate, -1 Melee

## SAND DWELLER

Your character's culture is found in the desert of the Shimmering Sands.

- **Bonuses:** +2 Survival (Desert)
- **Penalty:** -1 Empathy, -1 Streetwise

## SCHOLARLY

Your Character's culture holds knowledge and scholarly pursuits in high esteem.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Diplomacy, +2 Study
- **Penalties:** -1 Brawl, -1 Defend, -1 Melee

## SORCEROUS

Your character's culture make regular use of magic.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Resist, +1 Study
- **Penalty:** -1 Diplomacy, -1 Socialize

## TOLERANT

Your character's culture is welcoming to outsiders.

- **Bonuses:** +1 Diplomacy, +1 Empathy
- **Penalty:** -1 Intimidate, -1 Streetwise

## WARRIOR OF THE NORTH

Your character' hails from Barojostên, and they are known for their ferocity in battle.

**Bonuses:** +1 Brawl, +1 Melee, +1 Survival (Tundra)

**Penalty:** -2 Diplomacy, -1 Empathy

# CHOOSING SKILLS

Once you have determined your **Abilities**, as well as chosen your **Background** it is time to buy your **Skills**. Like abilities you have a total of 40 points to buy your **Skills**.

All **Skills** are associated with one of the five **Abilities**. This is important because this determines the **Ability Bonus** you add to your **Skill Tests**.

Every time you buy a new **Skill** you do so at the **Base Rank**, or +1. To buy a skill at its' **Base Rank** costs you **4 points**. To raise a **Skill** by **one Rank** costs you **2 points per Rank**.

For example, you want your character to be able to shoot a crossbow. Since

you are buying it at the **Base Rank** your cost is 4 points. You want to make sure your character is good with a crossbow, so you buy 4 more ranks, which cost you a total of 8 points. At the end of the process your Shoot skill is +5 (which cost you a total of 12 of your 40 points). Finally since Shoot is associated with **Quickness**, you apply your **Quickness** bonus to all Shoot tests.

Some skills require you to pick an emphasis, which are indicated within their description. Since *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is designed not be complicated, the skill system is broad, loosely defined when dealing with specific skills. A good example of this is the *Profession* skill: instead of having a multitude of skills covering every conceivable profession, they are included under the general *Profession* skill. So if you want your character to be a blacksmith, they would have *Profession (Blacksmith)*.

For more on skills refer to page 67 for a more in-depth look at skills.

## ACTION POINTS

Every newly created player character starts with 5 (five) **Action Points**. You may spend as many Action Points as your character currently has to make a test.

You regain this pool of **Action Points** at the beginning of each game session provided they you used them in dramatic appropriate ways or ways that enhanced the fun and enjoyment of the game (in the Gamemaster's opinion). Additional points may be purchased with the Experience Points (see "Awarding Experience Points" on page 196) to increase that pool.

**Action Points** are very important to *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. Working hand-in-hand with **Hooks**(see below), **Action Points** allow you to effect game flow, and allow your characters to stand out. In addition major villains, specific NPCs, and specific creatures access to hooks, they also have access to **Action Points**. By allowing for this, it encourages you either as a player or Gamemaster to ramp up the action of the game.

*Shadow, Sword & Spell* is a game where the action is suppose to be fast, flowing and in short, cinematic. You are encouraged to describe action in descriptive ways, and by doing so, modifiers apply to tests. For some these rules are pretty straightforward. However, as I discover all the time, the relative freedom of *Shadow, Sword & Spell's* rules system makes the game more challenging then it needs to be. Additionally, **Action Points**, despite the name, really do not capture action as intended.

*Shadow, Sword & Spell* is all about action.

**Action Points** allow you, to influence events in the game in small but interesting ways. In addition invoking a **Action Points** takes place whenever you choose, and does not count as a action. Only one **Action Points** is usable during your turn, and you cannot invoke another until your next turn.

So what can you do with a **Action Point**? Read on.

### THE ACTION POINT EFFECT

Once invoking a **Action Point**, you typical then invoke one of your **Hooks** (see page 58). However there are a few more options to choose from that come in handy from time to time. They follow below.

## GAIN A SUCCESS

One way to improve the likelihood of success in a test is by using **Action Points**. As noted in Chapter 1, **Action Points** are a kind of dramatic “currency” you use to alter the Target Number of any skill roll. For each **Action Point** spent, you are able to lower the Target Number by one Rank (see “Ability Test Modifiers” on page 37). You do not need to spend the **Action Points** in advance; you can do so after the fact.

For example, you need to jump across a chasm in a raging storm, and your Gamemaster tells you this action has a **TN 26**. Grabbing the dice, you roll 14, a failure. Since the success of the test is important to your character’s survival, you decide to spend Action Points and lower the **TN** to 14, turning the failure into a success. To do this costs you a total of 3 Action Points.

In most cases **Action Points** generally are not used to improve the **TN** of another character’s test. However, you might consider allowing this if the player spending the **Action Points** can make a good argument for how they are helping them. To do that requires the use of **Hooks**, which are described below, along with several other uses of **Action Points**.

### +1 BONUS

The most basic use of **Action Points** is to grant a +1 bonus to the Target of any dice roll.

### “EDITING”

**Action Points** are usable in “editing” an adventure to introduce additional elements, provided that they don’t directly contradict anything that’s already been established by the Gamemaster or otherwise disrupt the flow of the story.

For example, you and your companions are drinking in a seedy tavern, when a pair of thugs enter intent on capturing them. You spend an **Action Point** to establish that the inn not only has a back exit, but that your table is conveniently located near it so that you and your friends can make a hasty retreat unseen by your pursuers. Unless the GM has specifically stated that there is either no back exit or that your table is located far from any exit, this is a perfectly legitimate use of an **Action Point**. If, however, you attempt to use an **Action Point** to say that the ceiling collapsed on the thugs just as they entered the inn, taking them out in the process, the GM would be well within her rights to refuse that edit.

### COMBAT USAGE

Sometimes when the chips are down, and your party’s life is at risk, you need to dig deep and do the impossible no matter how injured you appear. By invoking a **Action Point** you are able to regain **10 Vitality** once per adventure. You can use this to “heal” yourself, but it is better used if you suffer Damage reducing your **Vitality** to 0.

Another combat use for **Action Points** is using one to **Automatically Dodge one attack**. No matter how great your opponent’s **Degrees of Success** are, you managed to get out of the way in the nick of time.

Finally you can use a **Action Point** to regain a lost **Sanity** point due to a event, encounter or failed **Fear Test**.

## CHANGE THE AREA

Another useful use of **Action Points** is to change the surrounding area in such a way benefiting you, at the Gamemaster's discretion, of course. Some examples of how this might work:

- *How about we find a ladder laying on the ground nearby, and I can use it to climb over the wall?*
- *Its a good thing that rope was there so I could use it to trip up those bandits chasing me!*
- *I lure the rat closer to me so he chews the rope binding my wrists, that way I can escape.*

In general, you're encouraged to be fairly lenient with the use of **Action Points** in editing adventures, particularly it makes some connection to one of your Hooks. In the example above, if you have a **Hook** stating: *I have a knack to sense trouble and it has always served me well in making a hasty retreat*. You have established you always make sure you knows where multiple exits are when escaping from potentially dangerous situations. In this case your GM would have even less of a reason to deny his use of the **Action Point** to find a back exit.

## HOOKS

**Hooks** are facets and details that describe important elements of the your personality, background, or relationship to the world around you. They are short-hand ways of painting a detailed picture of yourself, aiding both you and the Gamemaster in not only how you're portrayed and how others relate to you. Additionally it also helps you to consider your role in the campaign. They are a device that both you and the Gamemaster use to enhance the game.

Gamemaster? Yes. Gamemasters are able to give **Hooks** to creatures and NPCs at their discretion.

**Hooks** are also the best way in which players can spend **Action Points** to give their characters an edge in the course of an adventure.

One of the most often asked question I get is this one: "How do I use hooks?"

For many, **Hooks** are considered unnecessary. After all, the function of a **Hook** is easily replicated through roleplaying and usage of action point. In truth, do you need a hook like, "I have looked into death's eyes, and I have seen my doom?" to get across your desire to cast a spell against a vampire?

You can easily state: "I cast *Burn* on the vampire, and to make sure I hit it, I am going to use a **Action Point**." It works. It is clear. More importantly, it moves the action of the game along. Here's the thing though, the simplicity of that declaration misses the point of a **Hook**.

A **Hook** is more than a sentence attached to a character (be it the player or a non-player character) that gives you a shorthand description of who a character is. A **Hook** is a means to aid you by textually placing a character firmly into the game world. A **Hook**

defines a way for you to not only exert control of a situation, but a means to integrate yourself into the events of the world.

I have been running *Shadow, Sword & Spell* in one form or another for years. For me, the way I approach the game is that the characters the players create are not that experienced in the world. Until the character encounters something outside of the ordinary, they have no concept of the things laying outside of mortal perceptions.

I try to ground my games into a more mundane feeling in order to make encounters with magic stand out. **Hooks** play into this in the following way: you start with only two **Hooks**.

By starting with two **Hooks**, these **Hooks** represent the pre-adventuring life of your character. They provide a character color, and portray something about them prior to their lives in game as adventurers.



**Hooks** can cover lost, hurt, forgotten loves and the like. Though some might consider them to be mundane, they are important in defining who a character is.

For example, I am creating a new character. I have been told the game is going to be centered around the fight against undead threats. However, my Gamemaster tells me that no character prior to the start of the game knows anything of substance about magic. As far as they are concerned, magic, zombies, and the like only exist in legends. As a result, neither of the first two hooks can be tied to magic.

Thinking about my character I decide I want him to be on the run: a former slave, hailing from The Saffron League (see page 213). Tired of the life of bondage, he escaped. Heading east to Garvnia, he managed to stay one step ahead of slave hunters. On the run, my character flees not only capture, but also needs to fit in with his new city.

Thinking about who he is, I need my two **Hooks** to capture this. I settle on the tone the hooks take. By tone, they need to get across hiding from his past, and the pain of his past he still carries with him. Struck with inspiration, I write the following:

- *The scars on my back are my history showing who I am.*
- *If they knew I am not free, my freedom would be no more.*

The **Hooks** then get across the fact my character is on the run. In addition I word them cryptically to get across my character's secret. That secret? He is an escaped slave.

The other three hooks are left undefined until my character begins his adventures. That way each new hook marks a key moment in his life. That moment is life-changing, leaving a mark that will resonate through his life.

In our first few adventures my character and his cohorts discover a rash of grave robberies in a small area of The Vintage (see page 205). As sell-swords newly arrived in the area, they are hired by a collation of winery owners to look into this. As they do so they have their first encounter with zombies. The encounter is a dangerous one, and nearly kills the character. Furthermore, the fact that the dead walk leaves a mark upon him. I decided this encounter is a perfect one for a new hook for my character. My Gamemaster agrees and I write:

- *When the dead do not stay dead, I must use my faith as my weapon.*

My character is deeply religious and I use this trait, as well as the zombie encounter, to make this event mean more.

As we continue our investigation we discover that grave robberies are the work of someone practicing necromancy. He is using the dead as tools to punish their enemies. The enemy, in this case, is the local wineries. In tracking the mage down, the encounter with him reveals to my character the world is not what he thought. There are those who summon powers beyond the scope of normal men. That power is magic. Once the threat of the mage is dealt with I decided this event calls for my fourth hook. I write the following:

- *Caim walks upon the Earth and works his malevolence through his thralls. Where my faith is my weapon, others use their god as theirs.*

I still have not created my fifth **Hook**, but I know there are more adventures to come.

Right now the four **Hooks** I do have not only show who my character is, but how the events in his life have left their mark upon him.

**Hooks**, therefore, are important not just mechanically (see page 64), but narratively as well. They help flesh a character out and help both you and your players to have their characters find their place within the narrative of the game world.

## WHEN TO INVOKE

You or the Gamemaster can play a **Hook**. You play a Hook when he feels it is relevant, and, if your GM agrees, you can spend an **Action Point** to gain a bonus relating to the Hook. Your GM plays a **Hook** when they feel it is relevant, and, if the other player agrees, the gains a free **Action Point** that they can either use immediately (if the situation the GM has created warrants it) or save it for later use, either with this **Hook** or another one.

**Hooks** can be played whenever either the player or the Gamemaster believes they are relevant to the current situation, and then both agree. As with the creation of Hooks, it is recommended that both players and GMs be very flexible in defining “relevant” in this context. After all, **Hooks** are intended to be used rather than sidestepped, and no one has any fun if everyone allows their use only in a very narrowly defined set of circumstances.

There is theoretically no restriction on how many **Hooks** (and thus how many **Action Points**) may be played in a given circumstance, but no **Hook** may be used more than once for the same situation.

Hooks are broken down into the following broad categories. These categories are:

- Educational
- Emotional
- Magical
- Metaphysical
- Physical
- Situational
- Supernatural

These seven categories cover a wide range of situations, and typically all action in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* falls into one of these categories. By looking at the **Hooks** you have, you easily are able to determine what category your **Hook** falls under. For example let’s look at the hooks found in the previous section, these **Hooks** are for my character. Next to each hook, I have indicated what category it falls under.

- *The scars on my back are my history showing who I am.* (**Emotional**)
- *If they knew I am not free, my freedom would be no more.* (**Emotional**)
- *When the dead do not stay dead, I must use my faith as my weapon.* (**Supernatural**)
- *Caim walks upon the Earth and works his malevolence through his thralls. Where my faith is my weapon, others use their god as theirs.* (**Metaphysical**)
- *There is no such thing as luck, we make our own luck.* (**Situational**)

Those **Hooks** fall into the broad categories within the parentheses. These **Hooks**, then, are tied to specific feelings. During a game, whenever a character faces a challenge that matches one of these categories, I invoke a hook fitting the situation.

For example, my character is in the middle of an encounter dealing with a wizard who has just summoned skeletons to protect her. My Gamemaster wants me to make a **Fear Test**, and I choose this moment to invoke a **Hook**. Which one? Some would think the *supernatural* hook is a good choice, but others might think a *metaphysical* one is the better choice. For me, fear is nothing more than an emotional response to a situation, so I choose to invoke one of my *emotional* hooks, specifically, “The scars upon my back are my history showing who I was.” My reasoning for this is simple: my character is a former slave. He has seen and experienced a lifetime of suffering. Facing a wizard who just summoned skeletons is nothing compared to the suffering he has experienced. Thus to combat the fear, he call upon the pains of his pasts.

As noted previously, bringing in a **Hook** gives **Action Points** greater utility, namely:

- The re-rolling of any test result, or granting a +2 bonus to a test.

## CREATING HOOKS

**Hooks**, by definition, are nonstandard. There is no grand list of **Hooks** that you can look at and select from. Each character and, therefore, each *Shadow, Sword & Spell* campaign have their own unique list of **Hooks**.

You should nevertheless take great care in choosing your character’s **Hooks**, since they are, in many ways, define your character far more than their **Abilities** and **Skills**. **Hooks** highlight aspects you think are important about your character, informing your Gamemaster about the kinds of plots and dramatic elements you and your fellow players want to see in adventures involving their characters.

So how do you create a **Hook**? Good question. Here is the advice I give my players when they create a hook.

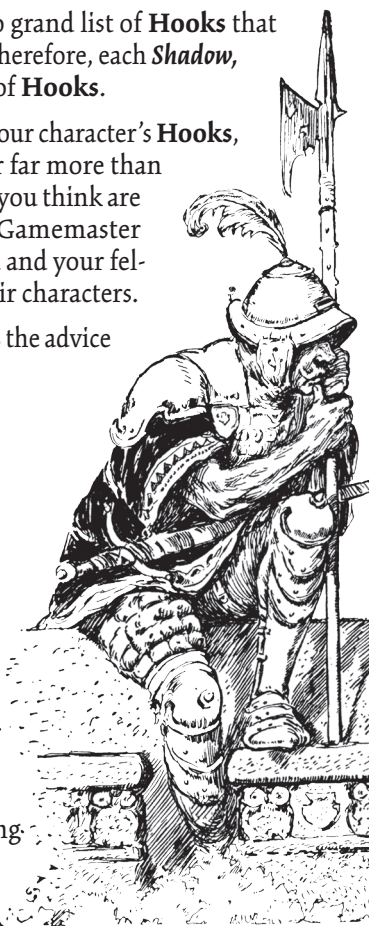
All hooks should answer the following:

- Who is the hook about?
- What caused this hook?
- Why is the cause of the hook important?
- How does the hook impact your character?
- When did the event happen which lead to the hook?

So how does this work? Easy and simply.

Remember **Hooks** are something describing an event whose impact was so great the effect still lingers; so great is this event that, in times of great need, calling upon the memory of it inspires you.

The first thing to consider creating a hook is



the “Who.” For the majority of all **Hooks**, the “who” is usually your character. However, it might be a loved one, an item, a event, or even an enemy. Once you have the “who” you need to know the “what.” There is always some action or event that is the crucible a hook is forged in. Did your character suffer a great loss, or did they do something so wrong that it left a mark? It is this “what” that informs the hook’s “why.” Why did the event leave a mark? Why did it change your life?

After the “why,” you then need to think of “how” this event affected you. Is this effect so great that it made you rethink your life? Did it make you consider ending it all and seek the cold embrace of death? It is the “how” which is your hook’s reason for creation. Finally, when did this event happen? The first time you fought in a battle? The first time you encountered the unexplainable? When you were a child and saw Barbarian war party kill your family? All of this helps in defining the **Hook**, which in turn defines your character.

The **death** [what] at my **village of Goodwine** [where] during the **Winter of Sorrows** [when], **showed** [how] me the **evil lurking in the heart’s** [why] of everyone.

The above example shows you the creation of the **Hook**. Each bolded word or words, has one of the questions next to it in brackets. By stringing the answers to the questions, you can quickly and effectively create a **Hook**.

### “BAD” HOOKS

There is no requirement that **Hooks** be “good” or positive. Some of the best **Hooks** are ones some you might consider negative or detrimental. This may seem counterintuitive, but again, remember why **Hooks** exist and what they do: they primarily define a character and tell you about the kinds of dramatic situations you find compelling. Furthermore, **Hooks** provides an occasion to spend **Action Points**. So, if you choose the seemingly negative “Suspicious of outsiders” as a **Hook**, it is as much a blessing as a curse. Sure, it means you behave standoffish to those not in your circle of trust, no doubt earning you enemies and landing you in trouble throughout the campaign—but that is a good thing! It is the stuff of good adventures and, just as importantly, provides opportunities for you to spend **Action Points** where appropriate.

It would be a mistake to think of **Hooks** as unambiguously positive traits; they are not. They are, however, unambiguously fun traits. They exist to reward you and your fellow players who flesh out their characters and give the Gamemaster the skeletons of interesting situations to throw at the character and his companions.

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY HOOKS

In the *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, hooks are not just for the player’s use, they are also used by the Gamemaster as well. **Hooks** are something defining others, be it a major villain, specific object, a known location, a specific creature, and even a specific animal. Giving hooks to these do two things. First, it helps make the game come alive by showing the events impacting the world around it. Second, this impact resonates with those touching this world.

ACTION POINT & HOOK AVAILABILITY		
ITEM	NUMBER OF HOOKS	ACTION POINT?
Specific location or place	1	No
Major villain	5	Yes
Specific Object	2	No
Specific NPC	4	Yes
Important NPC	3	No
Specific Creature	3	Yes
Specific Animal	2	Yes

The table above shows you the number of **Hooks** certain “things” have. These **Hooks** are created and invoked the same way as they are for characters. Also indicated in the table above, is which “thing” is able to use **Action Points**.

HOOK EXAMPLES

What follows are examples of **Hooks** that have appeared in various sessions of *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. These **Hooks** – much to my chagrin – have caused me much amusement and trouble in my games. This is not a bad thing, mind you: it is the curse of a Gamemaster to have players delight in constantly surprising them with their creativity, such as:

- *Growing up on the streets of Gravina, I learned early on never to turn my back on strangers.*
- *I am too old for this.*
- *May the touch of Hastur bring you peace.*
- *Die? I never die.*
- *Death is a game I refuse to play.*
- *Shall we dance the dance of blades? No? Shall we dance the dance of lovers well-met?*

HOOKS IN PLAY

When invoking a **Hook** one of two effects take place. These effects are:

- Invoking a **Hook** allows for any failed test to become a Success with 0 **Degrees of Success**.
- Invoking a **Hook** allows for a +2 to any one test.

One you invoke your **Hook** that **Hook** becomes unavailable for the rest of the game session.

One thing confusing and confounding many: when can you bring a **Hook** into play? There is no specific rule or strict guideline for this. If the situation—whether it is it a **Skill Test**, a social interaction, the casting of a spell, or combat—feels like the appropriate time, then play a **Hook**.

For example, say your character is fighting assassin sent on a mission to kill your close friend, and you believe you might be outmatched. You could play the **Hook** “Shall we dance the dance of the blades?” to help even the odds against your opponent, and by playing the Hook, you choose to give yourself a +2 bonus to the test.

**Hooks** give you the means to have your character stand out and have a dramatic impact on the game and the stories your group creates.

## A FINAL WORD ON HOOKS & ACTION POINTS

**Action Points** and **Hooks** are meta-game elements, which is to say, they are a game mechanic for you to take narrative control, even if in only a small way, to influence or change the game world of *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. Generally speaking, the outcome of events in the game is the result of your interaction between your character’s **Abilities** and skills and the GM’s adventure plots, with the all-important roll of the “2d12” dice to randomize the outcome. In a sense, many things happen in the course of the game independent of both the player’s and the GM’s desires, and the fun in playing a role-playing game is being surprised at how things unfold. Everyone playing is as much a watcher of the game as a participant in it.

**Action Points** and **Hooks**, though, gives everyone a chance to nudge the game in various ways, and influence dice rolls so that certain tests turn out well at the moment when you and your fellow players wishes them to do so. *Shadow, Sword & Spell* may be a game with plenty of random elements, but there is more to roleplaying than simply rolling the dice and reacting accordingly. Very few enjoy feeling as if they are impotent flotsam on the waves of Fate, particularly in a form of entertainment like roleplaying. That is why **Action Points** and **Hooks** exist: they are a tool for letting you to tailor the story of a campaigns to your wishes. Keeping these things in mind when it comes to meta-game elements aid you using them in a ways that add a great deal of fun and excitement to your *Shadow, Sword & Spell* games.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

As you complete adventures, you earn **Experience Points**. **Experience Points** are used to buy either ranks in existing skills, new skills, new ranks in spells or arts, or new spells or arts. See **Chapter 4** (see page 67) for more information about skills, and **Chapter 5** (see page 85) for more information on the magical arts.

## FINISHING TOUCHES

After selecting a **Background**, a **Modifier**, and your starting **Hooks**, you’re almost finished. You still need to choose a name, an age, and a gender for your character. It is also a good idea to have at least a basic back story for yourself, since this gives you a better sense of how to play your character in adventures and it provides Hooks for your Gamemaster to use in creating compelling scenarios. Of course, the first two **Hooks** you create already cover some of this, but more is always better when it comes to fleshing out your character.

## NAME

Your name is important, since it is something that sticks with you throughout many adventures, even as you learn new skills, take up new jobs, and acquire new equipment. There are lots of schools of thought regarding the “proper” way to name a character in a roleplaying game. In my own personal game of *Shadow, Sword & Spell* one of my longstanding players named his first character Bob the Warrior. His characters have died many times through the course of adventure, and currently he is playing Bob the Warrior XI. Truth be told, there is no right or wrong way to name a character. Provided you like the name and it suits the type and style of game your Gamemaster is running, whatever you choose is fine.

## AGE

Your age is also important. It is the equation of youth and inexperience and old age and wisdom. Consequently, think carefully about how you want to portray yourself and how you wish others to view you. Are you a hotshot young mage still wet behind the ears and aching to prove your worth? Or are you a hard-bitten soldier who has been on one too many campaigns and seen one too many friends die? There is no game mechanical benefit or penalty to being either young or old, but there are certainly roleplaying consequences to your choice.

## GENDER

Your gender matters less than your name or even age, but it’s still important. The rules of *Shadow, Sword & Spell* make no distinctions between gender, orientation, race or class. The implied setting of the game likewise assumes that there is no noteworthy distinction. That said, many fantasy settings, especially those inspiring this game, do treat gender differently, often to the detriment of women. This game does not follow that view. Play who you want and who you identify with. This game is about fun and big action.

You are free to also enjoy the challenges from “playing against type” or creating a rebel defying social conventions. Fortunately, such characters are very common in the pulp fantasies inspiring *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, and you are no less encouraged to emulate them than they cleave closely to the social norms of the setting. In the end, it’s up to you to decide who you are. The default assumption throughout this rulebook is that gender, sexual identity and sexual orientation is insignificant. You are free to be who you want to be. Period.

# CHAPTER

# 4

## SKILLS

**S**kills in **Shadow, Sword & Spell** define what you know, whether it's using a sword, being able to differentiate between dangerous herbs, scaling a wall, or avoiding a trap. Most skills are broad, covering several related areas of expertise. Thus, **Melee** covers all types of melee weaponry, from swords to axes, but **Profession** covers only one type of occupation (more on this below).

# SKILL LIST


Each skill entry includes the skill’s name, its associated or governing **Ability** (which determines the skill’s bonus), and if it usable untrained. In addition, the entries describe the skill’s scope and any samples or emphases. **Skills** with listed represents those with many different aspects of them, requiring a person to be skilled in at least one aspect of them. For example, *Divination* has numerous emphases listed under it, and you cannot hope to know each and every one, thus you specialize in an emphasis. **Skills** with emphases can be taken multiple times to learn a new emphasis.

Some **Skills**, in addition to emphasis, have tables providing examples of various usages of the **Skills** and either the **Target Number** or modifier applicable to the **Skill Test**.

## ACROBATICS (QUICKNESS)

Acrobatics is the skill of performing physical feats either at a great height or under adverse conditions that affect your innate sense of balance.

**Skill Usage:** Balancing, Contortion, Falling, Gymnastics, and Tumbling.

BALANCING TNS		SURFACE MODIFIER	
SURFACE WIDTH	TN ★	SURFACE SITUATION	MODIFIER ★
Less than 2 inches	22	Lightly Obstructed	-1
Between 2 and 6 inches	18	Somewhat Obstructed	-2
Between 7 and 12 inches	14	Extremely Obstructed	-3
★ Adjusted by the surface modifier below.		Fully Obstructed	-4
		Slippery	-2
		Somewhat Slippery	-3
		Extremely Slippery	-6
		Angled by 15 degrees	-2
		Angled by 30 degrees	-3
		Angled by 45 degrees	-4
		Angled by 60 degrees	-5
		Angled by 75 degrees	-6
★ These modifier are applied only to the roll and not the Target Number. In addition all of these modifiers can be combined. For example, balancing on a slippery slope angled at 75 degrees would have a -8 modifier to the test			

## ALCHEMY (WITS)

Alchemy is a magical art involving the creation of items of power. Though Alchemical Arts are bought with **Skill Points**, their purchase is different than that of skills. Alchemy is mentioned here only as a reminder that you are able to purchase one or more Alchemical Arts. For more on Alchemy, as well as buying Alchemical Arts, see **Chapter 5** starting on page 86.

**Emphasis:** various Alchemical Arts.

## ANIMAL HANDLING (WITS)

Animal Handling is the skill of caring for and training animals. What you are able to train an animal to do is found in the table below. In addition the amount of time it takes to train an animal one trick or task is equal to the **Degrees of Success**.

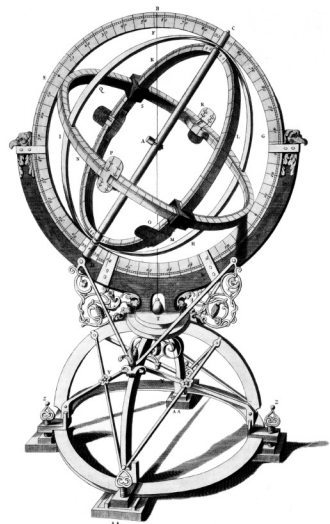
**Skill Usage:** Specific animals such as dog, horse, mule, ox, sheep or bear.

## ASTROLOGY (WITS)

Astrology allows you to research a person's background and birthright by plotting star charts based on some general knowledge about the person. Types of knowledge helpful to use is: odd physical features like birthmarks or tattoos, full name, birth/death time and date, etc. Unlike Divination, Astrology provides no clues to help you in determining what happens in the future, but gives you some symbolic insight into a person's personality and his past. This insight is translated by the character gaining a +1 bonus to all social skill test. Astrology charts can be drawn for yourself or any other character. Typically they don't provide more information than you might already know.

### ANIMAL TRAINING

ACTION OR TRICK	TN
Simply Handle a Animal	10
Calm a Animal	26
Raise an Animal	14
Teach Command: Attack	22
Teach Command: Come	14
Teach Command: Defend	22
Teach Command: Down	14
Teach Command: Fetch	10
Teach Command: Guard	22
Teach Command: Heel	14
Teach Command: Preform	18
Teach Command Seek	14
Teach Command: Track	14
Train for Task: Combat	22
Train for Task: Fighting	22
Train for Task: Guarding	22
Train for Task: Pulling	10
Train for Task: Riding	14





**ATHLETICS (BRAWN, UNTRAINED)**

Athletics is the skill of performing activities depending on your physical strength and endurance. Due to the variety of athletic pursuits this skill covers, the tables below help you figure out the **TN** for a given task. This is by no means exhaustive, but it does serve as a good example when coming up with **TNs** of your own.

**Skill Usage:** Climbing, Jumping, Running, Specific Sports, and Swimming.

CLIMBING	
EXAMPLE	TN
A slope, knotted rope with a vertical surface as a brace	2
A rope with a vertical surface as a brace, a knotted rope	4
A wall or cliff with numerous hand and foot holds or a ship's rigging	10
A wall or cliff with fewer hand holds or foot holds, pulling yourself up from a cliff's edge	14
A wall or cliff with narrow hand or foot holds and foot holds	18
A wall or cliff with small cracks providing small foot or hand holds	22
A rough wall such a stone or brick one, or a natural rock face	26
A overhang or ceiling with only hand holds	30

CLIMB TESTS MODIFIERS	
EXAMPLE	±
Climbing a chimney or two natural narrow vertical surfaces where you can brace between both	+2
Climbing a corner were two walls or surface meet	+1
Slippery surface	-4

LONG JUMP	
DISTANCE	TN ★
5 feet	4
10 feet	6
15 feet	10
20 feet	14
25 feet	22
30 feet	26

★ Assumes character has a 20-foot running start.  
If none, all **TNs** are double.

HIGH JUMP	
DISTANCE ★	TN ▼
1 foot	4
2 feet	6
3 feet	10
4 feet	14
5 feet	18
6 feet	22
7 feet	26
8 feet	30

★ This does not count for vertical reach.

▼ Assumes character has a 20 foot running start.  
If none, all **TNs** are double.

VERTICAL REACH	
SIZE ★	REACH
-6	1 inches
-5	2 inches
-4	3 inches
-3	4 inches
-2	5 inches
-1	6 inches
0	1 foot
1	6 feet
2	8 feet
3	32 feet
4	48 feet
5	64 feet
6	80 feet
7	96 feet
8	112 feet
9	128 feet
10	144 feet
11	160 feet
12	176 feet

★ For more on size see page 250.

SWIMMING	
WATER	TN ★
Calm	10
Rough	18
Stormy	22

★ If wearing armor while swimming the character suffers a -4 penalty to their test.

## BARGAIN (WILL, UNTRAINED)

Bargain is the skill of convincing others through deception.

**Skill Usage:** Bluff, Bribery, Charm, Fast Talk, and Hagglng.

## BRAWL (BRAWN, UNTRAINED)

Brawl is the skill of fighting without weapons.

**Skill Usage:** Boxing, Brawling, Dirty Fighting, Grappling, and Wrestling.

**BUREAUCRACY (WITS, UNTRAINED)**

Bureaucracy is the skill of understanding and manipulating organizations and power structures.

**Skill Usage:** Academic, Business, Church, Customs, Government, Legal, and Military.

**DEFEND (BRAWN, UNTRAINED)**

Defend is the skill you use when you want to protect yourself in combat.

**Skill Usage:** Block, Deflect, Disarm, and Parry.

**DIPLOMACY (WILL, UNTRAINED)**

Diplomacy is the skill of convincing others by swaying them to your point of view.

**Skill Usage:** Debate, Etiquette, Leadership, Negotiation, Persuasion, and Seduction.

**DIVINATION (WITS)**

Whether you read the lumps on someone's head, or leaves at the bottom of a cup, *Divination* is a skill used to divine the future to see if events tilt in your favor. There are several, different types of *Divination* existing in The World that you are able to learn. If you want to learn more than one form of *Divination* you need to buy this skill multiple times. Because future events are not irrevocable, the more successful you are at a *Divination* skill, the more clearly you understand your readings. While *Divination* is useful, it is not an exact science. Many forms of *Divination* are based on symbolism and allegory that can be interpreted in many different ways.

**Emphasis:** see below.

- *Ailuromancy:* By assessing your cat's behavior, you are able to predict the weather with some accuracy.
- *Alectryomancy:* After strewing grain in front of a rooster into the shapes of objects, letters or people, you confirm your path based on what the rooster decides to eat first.
- *Alomancy:* By dissolving salt crystals in a bowl of water and allow them to dry overnight, you're able to tell if you'll be lucky that day by the number of stars appearing in the bowl.
- *Augury:* By reading the flight patterns of birds, you are able to discern the success of social or group activities not war or combat related.
- *Belomancy:* By carving magical runes into a bow and shooting an arrow from it, you are able to tell if you're following a person in the correct direction. Your direction is confirmed depending upon where your arrow lands in relation to the target.
- *Carromancy:* After melting wax and dripping it into a bowl of ice-cold water, you are able to discern what type of threat you might be facing according to the shape formed by the wax.
- *Cartomancy:* By using a deck of cards you are able to see into the future for a

person. The cards correspond to suits, which also correspond to certain character's abilities. Depending on how the cards play out, you can assess a general direction of where you, or another person, should focus their attentions in the near future.

- *Catoptromancy*: By using a special looking glass you have the ability to force anyone chasing or hunting you to identify their physical appearance. The more successful this skill is for you, the clearer your enemy's face will be. Taking this skill, you are able to use any mirror-like surface or reflection to perform this kind of divination.
- *Melumpus*: An art many do not understand, melumpus revolves around studying people's moles, and their placement in relation to corresponding planets. By using melumpus, you're able to divine the true nature of a person. All attempts to use melumpus require a successful *Divination* test. **Success** allows you to know if a person is honest, a second **Successful Divination** test allows you to know if the same person is telling the truth. Failure has no effect and means you believe anything the person says, even if false. Melumpus only works while touching the person to be read, if you try to simply read their moles and other markings upon their skin visually, the *Divination* test has a -6 penalty.
- *Palmistry*: By holding a person's hand palm up, you are able to tread the lines on the palm. This reading tells you much about the person's personality as well as their motivations. The more skilled you are in *Palmistry*, the more you will be able to tell about a person's personality.
- *Stichomancy*: A favorite form of *Divination* among bibliophiles, you rely on stichomancy when you need a shove in the right direction. By closing your eyes, focusing on a "yes or no" question, you open any book to a random page and point. Although messages like this are cryptic they often give you insights into a problem. The more successful you are in this skill, the more on-target your messages will be.
- *Tasseomancy*: Whether you read tea leaves or coffee grounds, tasseomancy is used to perform a general reading for yourself or for another person. Your read shapes in the tea leaves or coffee grounds to divine a future applicable to the person who has drained their tea or coffee cup. The more successful this skill is, the less symbolic the images become.

## DODGE (QUICKNESS, UNTRAINED)

Dodge is the skill of avoiding ranged attacks.

## EMPATHY (WILL, UNTRAINED)

Empathy is the skill of reading and understanding other people's feelings and mental states. There are three forms Empathy takes within in a person: hunch, a sense or a feeling. These three states are applicable for any usage of the skill. Depending on what type of usage of the skill, a character gains a bonus to all social interaction tests.

**Skill Usage:** Body Language, Emotions, Intuition, Lies, and Motives.

EMPATHY TESTS		
USE	TN	BONUS
Hunch	18	+1
Feeling	22	+2
Sense	26	+3

**GAMING (WITS, UNTRAINED)**

Gaming is the skill of playing non-physical games of strategy and chance, including gambling.

**Skill Usage:** Specific games.

**HEAL (WITS)**

Heal is the skill of using natural remedies or knowledge of the body to heal wounds and treat injuries. For more information on Healing, refer to page 36.

**HERBALIST (WITS)**

From knowing the properties and differences between types of plants to the brewing of teas. Skilled in this skill allows you to know how to use plants for a variety of purposes.

**Skill Usage:** Antidote Making, Medicinal Use, Poison Making, and Tea Brewing.

**INTIMIDATION (WILL, UNTRAINED)**

Intimidation is the skill of convincing others through fear.

**Skill Usage:** Bluster, Interrogation, Orders, and Torture.

**INVESTIGATION (WITS, UNTRAINED)**

Investigation is the skill of finding clues and uncovering evidence.

**Skill Usage:** Criminal, Interview, Mysteries, Research, and Search.

**LANGUAGE (WITS)**

The Trade Tongue is the main language for most of those living on the continent — but your Character might know other languages as well. This Skill can be taken multiple times for additional languages, and may also be purchased for the purpose of gaining additional Ranks so as to be more fluent with their language of choice. Not all languages are available to read and write because some are only available in spoken form. All characters are fluent in one language, usually their Native Language. Fluency means that no Tests are needed when speaking, reading or writing in this language.

**Emphasis:** Individual languages.

LANGUAGES OF THE WORLD			
LANGUAGE	VERBAL	READ/WRITE	NOTE
Ancient	Yes	Yes	Rumors abound that this is the language of Atlantis and Ku'Kku. This language is popular among scholars, sages, and those who practice the magical arts.
Bargon	Yes	Yes	The language of Barojostên. The written form is runic base.
Beidhan – Commoner	Yes	No	The language of Beidha spoken by the lower class.
Beidhan – Courtly	Yes	Yes	The language of Beidha only used by the nobility.
Cal'athar	Yes	Yes	The language of Cal'athar.
Cantonin	Yes	Yes	The language of the League of Cantons.

LANGUAGES OF THE WORLD			
LANGUAGE	VERBAL	READ/WRITE	NOTE
Catharian	Yes	Yes	The language of Cathar.
Elder Tongue	Yes	Yes	No one knows where this language comes from, as it dates back to an ancient time. Those who know it, keep their knowledge a secret.
Imperial	Yes	Yes	The language of The City-States of Dôâr.
Karelian	Yes	Yes	The language of Karelia.
Old Tongue	Yes	Yes	The Language of The Merchant League, the League of Cantons, and The City States of Dôâr.
Nipuran	Yes	Yes	The language of Nipur.
Nogotian	Yes	Yes	The language of Nogoton.
Noric	Yes	Yes	The language of Noricum, the written form is runic base.
Runic	No	Yes	A written language based on runes and favored by barbarians.
Trader	Yes	Yes	The language of not only The Merchant League, but all traders and merchants.
Tribal	Yes	No	This is a catch-all for all of the tribes found not only in Moarn but other tribal groups as well. There is no way to catalogue all of the different versions of this language. There are no known written languages

MORAN TRIBAL LANGUAGES
Coastal Tribes
Eastern Tribes
Hill Folk
Lake Folk
Mountain People
Northern Jungles
River Folk
Southern Region

MERCHANT LEAGUE DIALECTS	
DIALECT	LOCATION
Amberian	Region of the Amber Petals including Fox Point
Canal	The City of Gravina
Coastal	Coastal cities of the League of Merchants
Daven	Davenport
Northie	Wall
The Cant	Bluff
Vint	The Vintage including Crossroads

DIALECTS

Some languages have dialects they are linguistic varieties differing in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Dialects are really just a sub-form of a language which are typically still comprehensible. Different speakers use their own local words for everyday objects or actions, or have a regional accent. These dialects are typically understood by native speakers, but for those who are not native speakers, they tend to be a little difficult to understand. The combination of differences in pronunciation and the use of local words may make some dialects almost unintelligible from one region to another.

Dialects come into play for languages such as Tribal and Trade Tongue. These languages, though sharing a common structure, have differences making them harder to understand.



**LORE (WITS)**

Lore is the skill combining your or readings in arcane texts, your gift for knowledge about demons, devils, and magic. Using this skill, you are able to identify different types of monsters, spells, magical cults, etc., as well as remember specific details about them. The type of information you try to find depends upon how easy or difficult the answer is. The table below shows the difficulty in asking specific question types.

**Emphasis:** Cults, demons, monsters, otherworldly, undead.

LORE DIFFICULTIES	
QUESTION DIFFICULTY	TN
Easily Answered Question	4
Basic Question	10
Difficult Question	14
Academic Question	18
Esoteric Question	26

**MAGIC (WILL)**

Magic is the skill covering both Common and Arcane spells. Though magic is bought with Skill Points, it is mentioned here to serve as a reminder you’re able to purchase this. For more on magic, as well as purchasing spells, see page 85.

**Emphasis:** various Common and Arcane spells.

**MELEE (BRAWN, UNTRAINED)**

Melee is the skill of fighting with a weapon.

**Skill Usage:** Sword, Spear, Hand Axe, etc.

**MERCHANT (WITS)**

From knowing how to buy and sell goods, to being able to judge the value of items, the Merchant skill allows you to make money from trade. (Note: If you have the Merchant skill and attempt to haggle with a character who has the Bargain skill you receive a bonus of +1 to the Merchant test due to being an expert at haggling, normal bargainers less so.)

**Skill Usage:** Appraisal, Contracts, Haggle, Supply & Demand, and Hawking.

**OBSERVE (WITS, UNTRAINED)**

Observe is the skill of being aware of your surroundings and noticing small details. Observe covers both listening and seeing.

**LISTENING**

TYPE OF SOUND	TN
A fight or skirmish	0
Conversation	2
Someone walking slowly at full truing to not make any noise	6
Person trying to walk slowly at half their movement	14
Person trying to walk slowly at a quarter of their movement	18
Whispering	22
Creature of person successfully using Stealth	22
Creature or spell which makes them invincible	30
A wild animal such as a wolf, cat, or bear stalking	22
Bird of prey gliding in for a kill	30

**LISTENING MODIFIERS**

CONDITION	MODIFIER
Through a door	+2
Through a wall, wood	+3
Through a wall, brick	+4
Through a window	+3
Over a running stream	+1
Over a running river	+2
Over rapids	+5
In a storm	+5
Through a distraction	+2

**OBSERVING**

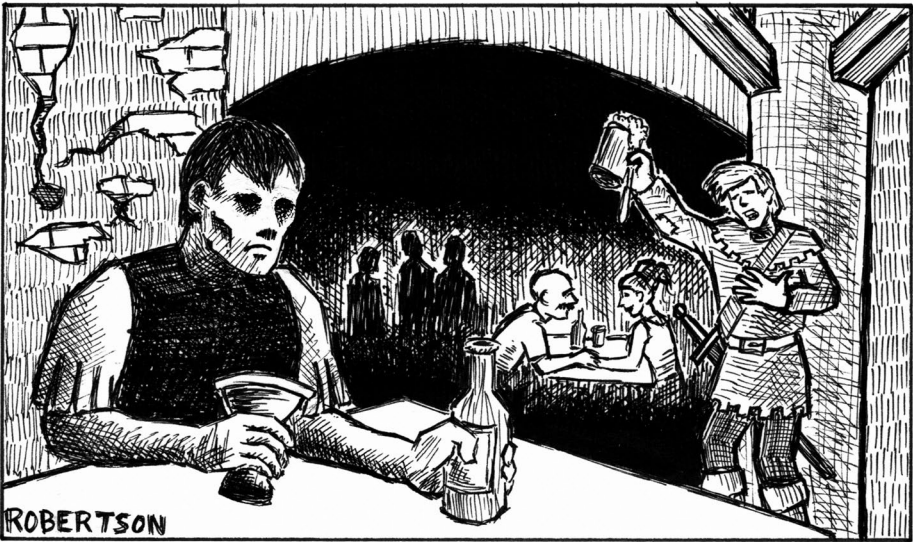
LOOKING FOR	TN
Search through a sack or chest	6
Ransack a room	10
Find concealed door	14
Find a secret door	18
Find a natural trap, such as a pit	10
Find a simple trap, like a snare	14
Find a mechanical trap, like a bear trap	18
Find a intricate trap specially designed for a purpose, such as a spring blade in a lock	22

**OBSERVING FOR FOOTPRINTS**

LOOK FOR FOOTPRINTS... ★	TN
... in the dirt	10
...in the mud	6
...in the sand	14
...in the snow	18
...during a rain storm	22
...during a snow storm	26
...on hard-packed ground	26
...on loose stone or gravel	18
...by river or stream bank	10
...on a beach	18
...near a lake or pond	14
...in a wetland	22
...in a swamp	26

★ This is only for finding footprints. For tracking them you need to use the Track skill.





**PERFORMANCE (WILL, UNTRAINED)**

Performance is the skill of entertaining people.

**Emphasis:** Acrobat, Acting, Clown, Contortionist, Dancing, Escape Artist, Fire-Eater, Jester, Juggler, Mimic, Mime, Oratory, Prestidigitator, Puppeteer, Singing, Specific Musical Instrument, Storyteller, Sword-Swallower, Tumbler.

TYPE OF PERFORMANCE		
PERFORMANCE	EARNINGS	TN
Routine or typical	2 SC = Degrees of Success	10
Enjoyable	2 SC = equal Degrees of Success +2	14
Great performance	3 SC = equal Degrees of Success +4	18
Emotional performance	5 SC = Degrees of Success +1	22
Memorable performance	6 SC = Degrees of Success +2	26
Extraordinary performance	10 SC = Degrees of Success +4	30
Virtuoso performance	15 SC = Degrees of Success +6	34

**PHYSICK (WITS)**

This is the skill allowing you to diagnose and treat physical ailments.

**Skill Usage:** Diagnosis, First Aid, General Medicine, Pathology, and Surgery.

**PROFESSION (WITS)**

Profession is the skill of being knowledgeable about a particular career or vocation.

**Emphasis:** Baker, Barber, Beekeeper, Boatman, Bookbinder, Bookkeeper, Butcher, Carpetmaker, Cheesemaker, Cook, Dyer, Farmer, Fisherman, Gardener, Jeweler, Joiner, Mason, Miller, Porter, Printer, Rope maker, Sailor, Scribe, Shepherd, Shoemaker.

**RESIST (WITS, UNTRAINED)**

Whether resisting someone finding you via magic, or foil a wizard trying to cast a spell on you, this skill allows you to resist not only a magical attack but also any other supernatural efforts to influence you.

**RIDE (QUICKNESS, UNTRAINED)**

You want to ride a horse? This is the skill for you.

**SENSE (WITS)**

Whether you want to simply identify a spellcaster or find out where a spell originated, this skill allows you to track magic's unique signature or auras. Any magic that has been cast, you are able to sense it.

**SHOOT (QUICKNESS, UNTRAINED)**

From firing a crossbow to creature effects involving the aiming and "shooting" something, this is the skill to use.

**Skill Usage:** Bow, Crossbow, Creature effects such as breath, gaze, etc.

**SOCIALIZE (WILL, UNTRAINED)**

Socialize helps you in interacting positively with other people in a social situation.

**Skill Usage:** Carousing, Formal Events, and State Dinners.

**RIDING ACTIONS**

TYPE	TN
Guide with knee	6
Stay mounted	6
Fight on horseback	10
Cover ★	14
Soft fall ▼	14
Leap	14
Spur	14
Control while fighting	22
Quick mount or dismount	22

★ Cover means you are able to slide to one side of your mount and use it as cover. While covering you are unable to do nothing but hold on. You are not able to fight. It costs 1 Action to slide to cover, and 1 Action to get out of cover.

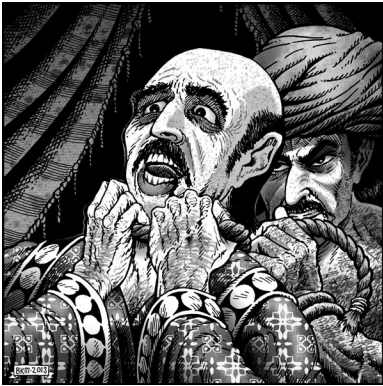
▼ A soft fall allows you to react to falling from the saddle and when you fall you are able to land without taking damage.



STEALTH (QUICKNESS, UNTRAINED)

Stealth is the skill of hiding oneself and moving without being seen. When using this skill to create disguises, there are two things to keep in mind: first, the type of disguise you’re going for; and second, how familiar people you are with who the disguise is supposed to be. Besides disguising yourself, this is the skill useful when you want to hide.

**Skill Usage:** Camouflage, Disguise, Hiding, Shadowing, and Sneaking.



DISGUISE	
TYPE OF DISGUISE	MODIFIER ★
Minor, superficial detail	+4
Disguised as different gender	–2
Disguised as different race	–2
Disguised as a different age	–2
Disguised as a different nationality	–2
★ These modifiers are cumulative, use any or all that apply.	

NOTICE DISGUISE	
FAMILIARITY WITH SUBJECT	MODIFIER
Recognize by appearance	+4
Friend or associates	+6
Close personal friend	+8
Intimate	+10

TYPE OF SUBTERFUGE	
SNEAKING	MODIFIER
Smooth surface	+1
Creaky (floor, roof beams, stairs)	–2
Noisy (scree, shallow or bog, undergrowth, rubble, running stream)	–4
Very noisy (thick undergrowth, deep snow, sand, gravel)	–6

HIDING & SHADOWING: SIZE	
SIZE MODIFIER ★	MODIFIER ▼
–6	+12
–5	+10
–4	+8
–3	+6
–2	+4
–1	+2
0	±0
1	–2
2	–4
3	–6
4	–8
5	–10
6	–12
7	–14
8	–16
9	–18
10	–20
11	–22
12	–24

★ For more on size see "Size" on page 250.

▼ It should be apparent from the table that anything greater than Size +6 is going to find it near impossible to either hide or shadow. Still, if something that big wants to try for it, there is always a chance they succeed... I cannot even type that with a straight face.

## STREETWISE (WILL, UNTRAINED)

Streetwise is the skill helping you when interacting with individuals engaged in illegal or quasi-legal activities.

**Skill Usage:** Contacts, Contraband, Haggling, and Scrounging.

## STUDY (WITS)

This skill addresses subjects of knowledge you might have learned, or are passionate about. This is a broad skill, with many subcategories covering specific areas of knowledge. This skill can be taken multiple times to learn general aspects of a subject so you can be a well-rounded person, or can be bought once to focus on a specific area of study. If wish to perform non-specialized research of any kind, but have at least one area of *Study* you have focused on, you perform a *Study* skill test at its **Base Rank**.

**Emphasis:** Anatomy, Astronomy, Botany, Chemistry, Demonology, History, Law, Mathematics, Mapping, Theology, Weather.



### TYPES OF QUESTION

THE CHALLENGE IS...	TN	EXAMPLE
Otherworldly	48	An answer to a question never asked
Impossible	42	A question requiring esoteric knowledge
Nearly Impossible	38	A question requiring a library of 100 or more books
Heroic	34	A question requiring a library of 40 or more books
Daring	30	A question requiring a library of 10 or more books
Reckless	26	A question requiring consultation with others
Formidable	22	A question requiring a college education to answer
Challenging	18	A question requiring a day to answer
Difficult	14	A question taking more than 12 hours to answer
Standard	12	A question that a well-read individual would know
Routine	10	A question a well-read individual would know
Easy	6	A topic requiring a quick book scan
Trivial	4	A topic of common knowledge
Instinctive	2	Something intuitively known

SUBTERFUGE (QUICKNESS)

Subterfuge is the skill of using your hands to engage in illicit activities.

**Skill Usage:** Escape Artist, Forgery, Pickpocket, and Sleight of Hand.

ESCAPE ARTISTRY	
TYPE RESTRAINT	TN
Rope	14
Net	18
Magical Means	22
Manacles	26
Leg Irons	26
Stocks	22
Confined Space	26

LOCK PICKING	
LOCK TYPE	TN
Poor Lock	10
Simple Lock	18
Average Lock	22
Good Lock	26
Complicated Lock	30
Amazing Lock	34

FORGERY	
TYPE OF DOCUMENT	MODIFIER
Document not known by the reader	+4
Somewhat known document by reader	±0
Document known to reader	-4
Handwriting not known by reader	-1
Reader is someday familiar to the handwriting	-3
Reader is intimately familial to the handwriting	-6
Reader is not familial with official documents	+2
Reader is very familial with official documents	-3
Documents forged in a foreign language	+4
Document forged in a foreign language reader understands	-4

Reader gives documents a quick glance	+1
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## SURVIVAL (WITS)

By being skilled in Survival you know how to use the hostile environment around them to their advantage. You can survive not only on the battlefield, but also in woods, grasslands, hills, deserts, swamps, or mountains. Once a day make a Survival test, and, if successful, you meet your basic needs and find food. Sustenance constitutes game, wild fruits, vegetables, nuts, and fresh water. To find food and shelter for others, you need to achieve one degree of success per each additional person. For example to find food and shelter for three additional people, you need to have at least three **Degrees of Success** or better on the *Survival Test*.

**Skill Usage:** Arctic, Desert, Forest, Jungle, Mountains, Ocean, Swamps and Tundra.

SURVIVAL ACTION	
TASK	TN
Deal with environment. Find enough food and water for one day for a number of people equal to <b>Degrees of Success</b> . You do not need any food or water to survive, and you are able to build a simple shelter.	14
At one with the environment. You are able to find a food and water source that can provide substance for one month for a number of people equal to <b>Degrees of Success</b> .	18
You know how to not get lost.	14
You are able to find and avoid natural hazards.	16
You are able to build a semi-permanent shelter that enables you to stay dry as well as warm.	22
You know how to pass without leaving any evidence of your passage.	30
You are able to predicate the weather up to 24 hours in advance.	26

## TACTICS (WITS)

Tactics is the skill of organizing and planning military operations.

**Skill Usage:** Artillery, Defense, Guerrilla Warfare, Siege, and Small Unit.

## THROW (QUICKNESS, UNTRAINED)

Throw is the skill allowing for the throwing of specific ranged weapons.

**Skill Usage:** Knife, Axe, Spear, etc.



TRACK (WITS)

Track is the skill allowing for the knowledge to read tracks and follow them.

TYPE OF SURFACE TRACKING ON	
SURFACE	TN
Very Soft Ground	6
Soft Ground	10
Firm Ground	14
Hard Ground	18
Hard Packed Ground	22
Shifting Ground, such as sand	26

TRACKING MODIFIERS	
CONDITION TYPE	MODIFIER
Group between 2 and 4	+2
Group between 5 and 9	+3
Group 10 or more	+4

SIZE ★	
-6	-6
-5	-5
-4	-4
-3	-3
-2	-2
-1	-1
0 to 1	±0
2 to 3	+2
4 to 5	+4
6 to 7	+6
8	+8
9	+9
10	+10
11	+11
12	+12
Every 24 hours since trail was made	-1 ▼
Each hour it rains since the trail was made	-1 ■
Fresh covering of snow	-6

TRACKING MODIFIERS	
CONDITION TYPE	MODIFIER
VISIBILITY	
Cloudy or overcast	-6
Moonlight	-4
Complete darkness (new moon)	-8
Mist or fog	-1
Rain or snow	-3
Party being tracked trying to cover their trail	-2

- ★ For more on size see "Size" on page 250.
- ▼ This penalty is cumulative, so if it has been 48 hours since the tracks were made the trackers suffers a -2 to the test.
- This penalty is cumulative, so if it has been raining for 3 hours since the tracks were made the trackers suffers a -3 to the test.

# CHAPTER

# 5

## MAGICAL ARTS

**I**n the world of **Shadow, Sword & Spell**, magic is real. For most, magic is beyond their comprehension. Practitioners of magic study and learn their arts in secret. While there is no nation with laws forbidding the practice of magic, many individual towns and tribes have unwritten laws about. You are a different type of person, however. For you as someone who seek a life of adventure, magic might be a calling you feel. Or, it might be something in

your blood, a birthright passed down from one generation to the next. Whatever leads you to the path of magic be forewarned, however, that it is a path fraught with risks.

## THE MAGIC OF SHADOW, SWORD & SPELL

There are two types of magic found in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*: spells and alchemy. Both allow you to work feats far beyond the scope of most.

### CATEGORIES OF SPELLS

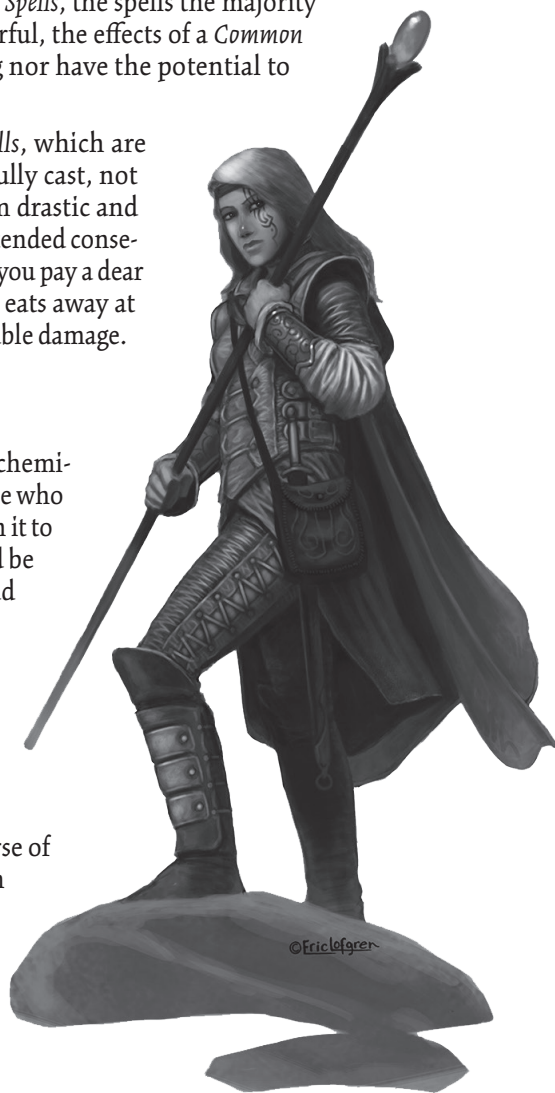
Spells are the magical feats that you and others perform to affect the world around you. Two categories of spells exist, and though the same rules set covers their use, each category differs in the amount of power called upon. The first category is *Common Spells*, the spells the majority of spellcasters learn. Though powerful, the effects of a *Common Spell* are generally not long-lasting nor have the potential to cause long lasting harm.

The second category is *Arcane Spells*, which are far more powerful. When successfully cast, not only is the potential for great harm drastic and long-lasting, but often there is unintended consequences. By dabbling in *Arcane Spells* you pay a dear cost: each casting slowly but surely eats away at your **Sanity**, and often with irrevocable damage.

### ACQUIRING SPELLS

When wanting to learn a spell or alchemical art, you first need to find someone who knows magic and who agrees to teach it to you. Asking the wrong person could be taken as a breach of etiquette or lead to some unfortunate events: being stalked by the authorities, a public execution, or a quick dispensing of all proceedings by a mob taking you on a one-way trip to the hanging tree. Successfully finding a master to apprentice under you will learn the arts over the course of several years. Some might learn from family members, their entire lineage stretching back over the centuries in devotion to and practice of the arts.

One benefit of learning magic



is that by seeking forbidden knowledge, become part of a select and elite group of individuals who have something in common: together, you risk your lives and their place in society by acquiring, learning, and practicing magical knowledge, ever seeking to expand upon the power they already possess and practice. Though there is a downside to learning magic, there is an upside: the ability to call upon powers beyond the means of most people.

Both you and NPCs gain spells by purchasing them with **Skill Points** (see page 55 for details). This is accomplished

on a case-by-case basis, with you and your Gamemaster working together to determine how you would have learned and/or discovered the spells. An old fortuneteller who dabbles in magic might have taught you a spell, or you might have learned from a mentor in the magical arts, or on your own from a book that you discovered in the false bottom of a trunk that has been in his family for decades or centuries—the story possibilities are endless, as long you and the Gamemaster both agree on what makes good game sense. The GM is the final arbiter of what works or does not, in how you purchase the spells you want, and the story behind or the method by which the acquisition of each, based upon their judgment and the nature of the campaign they are is running.

When buying a *Common* or *Arcane* spell, or *Alchemical Art*, you always purchase it at the **Base Rank**, which you remember is +1. So how much does it cost to buy individual spells and arts? Good question. The *Magical Cost Table* found above tells you.

## SPELL RANKS & TESTS

As is the case with **Skills**, **Spells** and **Arts** have **Ranks**. The **Base Rank** is always equal to +1, and each time you improve a spell or art, the **Rank** raises by +1. In addition, just like with **Skills**, **Spells** and **Arts** require you to perform a **Magic Test**, and if the test is equal to or greater than the **TN**, you succeed. How do you preform a **Magic Test**? As you would any other test.

### Ranks in Magic + Ability Bonus + 2d12 = Result

In the case of **Ability Bonuses** (see page 20), Alchemy is linked to a character's **Wits**, so you would use that bonus. Spells — both common and arcane — are linked to **Will** so you would use that bonus. **Ranks in Magic** is the **Ranks** you have in a specific **Art** or **Spell**. For example, *Burn* +5 and *Reveal* +3.

As for the **Target Numbers** in working magic, to cast a **Common Spell** the **Target Number** is **TN 14**. To cast an **Arcane Spell** the target number is **TN 18**. In the case of *Alchemical Arts*, the **Target Number** is different per which art, or aspect of an art is being worked. These **TNs** are listed in the description of the specific *Alchemical Arts*.

MAGICAL COSTS		
TYPE	INITIAL COST	IMPROVEMENT COST
Alchemical Art	8	3
Arcane Spell	5	4
Common Spell	4	2

## USING SPELLS

Unless otherwise stated in their descriptions, all spells use the following guidelines.

### TIME

Using magic is an act of will. Consequently, you call upon your ability to work magic through nothing more than intense concentration and mental focus. All spells require **two rounds** to cast, the first round to prepare the spell by summoning, gathering, and focusing magical energy, and the second round to unleash that force in the form of the spell. Note it does not matter how many **Actions** you have, casting spells is a time consuming process. While preparing to cast a spell, you are unable to take any other actions but prepare yourself for casting the spell. A spell cannot be prepared and unleashed in the same round. If you want to work it, you forsake any actions you might have in a given round to work your magic. Thus, if you want to cast *Burn*, it takes all of your **Actions** in the first round to prepare the spell, and in the second round, takes all of your **Actions** to unleash the spell.

### ATTACK ROLLS

Some spells require an **Attack** test to affect a target, particularly in the midst of **Combat**, and this requires a *Shoot Test* (see page 79 for more). It is advised that if you plan on using spells that have a range, you should buy a few ranks in Shoot to aid you. After all, it does not matter how powerful your Fire Bolt is, if you cannot hit your target what is the use? Spells requiring Attack tests are subject to the normal **Combat Modifiers** detailed in **Chapter 2** (see page 29).

### RESISTANCE

Any time a person (friend or foe) is the unwilling target of a *Common* or *Arcane Spell*, they can resist the attempt by making an unmodified **Will Test** against the caster's **Spell Test**. If your target's roll is successful, they somehow prevent the spell from taking place, or avoided or dodged the force unleashed at them, and suffer no effects. If they fail the test, they feel the brunt of the spell and whatever the intended effects are it holds true for anyone attempting to cast a spell on an enemy or trying to create a familiar. Just like in Combat, you and the other players are encouraged to descriptively narrate what happens when a spell succeeds or fails, keeping in mind the spells description and intended effect.

Spells affecting others can be **Resisted** through an opposed test that pitting your **Spell Rank** against their *Resist Skill*. This test functions exactly like any other opposed test, as detailed in **Chapter 1** (see page 16), but with the additional rules for opposed tests in Combat as described on "Avoiding Attacks" on page 37.

A spell's target might choose to forgo the *Resist* test willingly accepting the spell's effects. This choice must be made before they knows what spell's effect is! This assumes a certain level of trust between players, as well as the spell being cast is beneficial to the intended target. For example using *Cure Disease* (see page 92) to help someone suffering by *Curse of the Grave* (see page 295).

## RANGE

While scholars believe spells operate according to physical laws, many do so in ways defying explanation. For example, some spells affect targets anywhere you are able to see. However, using a spell against targets out of sight (or unfamiliar too) is still difficult, effectively limiting the range of most magic to somewhat familiar people and/or things in your line of sight. If a spell's description doesn't specify a **Range**, assume it can be cast if the target is within the caster's line of sight.

Specific limitations on the **Range** of spells are noted in their descriptions.

## SANITY COST

*Arcane Spells* are taxing to your **Sanity**, and have a **Sanity** cost associated with each. When casting the spell, regardless if the **Test succeeds** or **fails**, the spell's **Sanity** cost must be deducted from your **Sanity**.

## MAINTAINING SPELLS

Some spells can be maintained, that is to say their effects continue at the same level achieved by the initial casting of the spell. This requires you to continue concentrating on maintaining the spell's effects, requiring all of you **Actions** each round to do so.

Casting another spell while maintaining one or more spells is extremely difficult, and requires all **Magic Tests** to have a **TN 28**. Furthermore, any additional *Arcane Spell's* **Sanity** cost must be paid; if you do not have enough **Sanity** or **Vitality**, the spell cannot be maintained.

If distracted while maintaining spells you need to make an unmodified **Will Test**, with a -2 for each additional spell maintained after the first. Additional modifiers may apply for damage and other distracting conditions at the Gamemaster's discretion. A failed **Will Test** means you stop maintaining all the spells. Optionally, your GM may rule that you stop maintaining one spell for every two **Degrees of Failure** by which the **Will Test Failed** (rounding down). If you are unable to take any **Actions** (due to being shocked/stunned, for example) you cannot maintain spells.

## SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

Spells operate similarly to skills, with a few modifications. Spells cannot be used *Untrained*. A description of what the spells does follows, along with any rules for using the spell. If a spell requires a **Sanity** cost, requires maintenance, continued concentration, or mental contact, this is indicated.

## COMMON SPELLS

*Common Spells* are spells all mages learn when beginning their life upon the path of the sorcerous arts. For some, this is the limit to their devotion of magic's pursuit, and the desire to work more powerful spells is passed by for various reasons. *Common Spells* are powerful in their own right, and allow practitioners to perform feats most mortals only dream of. Regardless of culture or nation, all spells have similar characteristics, though they may not be known by the same name from place to place. This is important. Magic

is something affected by culture, and *Ball* might be known as “*Fury of the Elements*” in one locale, or known as “*Arrow of the Elements*” somewhere else. Though the same spell, the name of a spell provides a deeper meaning, and helps make it part of the game world. You and your other players are encouraged to think of new names for **Common Spells**. Doing so is very easy and adds color to your games!

## AWAKE

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Days equal to caster’s Will

**Performed On:** Self, Others

By performing this clever spell, the intended target is unable to fall asleep for a number of days equal to your **Will**. A person who cannot fall asleep is unable to replenish their **Vitality** without the use of magic, and also loses 2 **Sanity** every day they are unable to sleep. For each additional **Rank** in this spell the number of targets you can affect is increased by 1: having 4 **Ranks** in this spell, you are able to target 4 people. **Failure**, on the other hand, has repercussions for you: instead of causing a target to be unable to sleep, you suffer the effects.

## BAR

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

**Perform On:** Lock, Door, Gate

This spell allows you to lock any one mechanical lock, bar or by other locking mechanism of a door, gate or portal. No matter how hard a person tries to open it, the door does not budge. **Successfully** casting the spell causes one lock or door to permanently lock. The locking or barring lasts until you will it, but as long as you do not touch the lock after the spell is cast, the spell remains in effect. **Failing** to cast the spell results in the door or gate not being locked. The higher the **Rank** in this spell, makes it more difficult for others, such as those with the *Open* spell, to release the lock. For example, if the spell has 4 Ranks, then someone trying to pick the lock suffers a -4 penalty to their *Subterfuge Test* in trying to pick the lock.

## BURN

**Range:** Sight

**Duration:** Rounds equal to **Degrees of Success**

**Performed On:** Small Objects

Invoking the element of fire, you harness its power and cause a candle or torch to burn continually until the spell wears off. Regardless of weather, wind and the like, the object continues to burn and the flame does not go out. This spell can only be used on inanimate objects that fit in the palm of your hand and are already lit. If you fail to perform this simple spell, the object becomes temporarily useless – unable to light again for as many **Rounds** as the **Degrees of Failure** incurred.

**BALL/BOLT****Range:** 30 feet**Duration:** Instant**Performed On:** Objects, Others

This spell creates a ball or bolt of elemental force that, if successfully cast, allows you to hit targets within range. The damage a ball or bolt causes is equal to **10 Damage + Rank in Spell + Degrees of Success**.

For example, you cast the spell and hit your target. You have **Bolt +5** and **6 Degrees of Success** in the casting of the spell, thus the damage for the bolt is 11 Damage. Failing to cast the spell has no effect, it simply fizzles as you cast it.

You can choose to make the bolt or ball of any elemental type you desire. Buying this spell you cast one type of elemental ball or bolt. For every **2 Ranks** in this spell you can cast an additional ball or bolt of the same type or to add 10 feet to the **Range** of the spell. If you want to cast two different element bolts or balls you need to buy the spell again for that element.

**CAUSE GLOOM****Range:** Feet equal to Will**Duration:** Rounds equal to the **Degrees of Success****Performed On:** Others

**Successfully** casting this spell causes all within **Range** (friend and foe alike) to suffer

gloomy thoughts and depression. The effect of this is that all targets of the spell must make a **Will Test**, with **Failure** causing them to lose **Sanity** equal to your **Degrees of Success** in casting this spell, as well as suffering a -1 to all **Tests** for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Success**. Failure to cast the spell means the spell effects do not occur, while you lose **Sanity** equal to the **Degrees of Failure**, and suffer a -1 to all **Tests** for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.

## CONJURE ELEMENT

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Special

This simple spell is one most mages learn upon starting their walk down magic's path. This spell, once cast, produces one element. This element can be contained in a vessel or container of some sort, and in some cases, may serve as a light or heat source.

- *Fire* — A burst of magical flame which is useful in igniting a fire, or light a torch or a lamp. The number of **Rounds** this fire burns is equal to your **Degrees of Success**.
- *Air* — Creates a gentle breeze swirling around you for a number of **Rounds** equal to **Degrees of Success**. The breeze is strong enough to cool and refresh you, but it is not strong enough to put out open flames.
- *Water* — Summons one gallon of water, which can be stored in a bucket, flask, or other vessel.
- *Earth* — Summons a fist-sized rock.
- *Ether* — Summons a globe of light which sheds light in a 60-foot radius, and lasts for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Success**. This light floats above your head.

**Failing** to cast the spell means you failed to summon the element, and suffer **Vitality Damage** equal to your **Degrees of Failure**, and make you unable to cast spells for one day.

## CURE DISEASE

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Self, Others

This spell is one that many, who consider themselves to be healers, seek to learn. The reason for this is that mastery of this spell aids in the healing of those suffering from the effects of disease. When this spell is **Successfully** cast, and a person suffering from a disease is touched, the disease is automatically cured. Even though the disease is cured, any damage or **Ability Levels** the character has lost due to the disease is not healed, and these injuries must heal naturally. In addition, this spell only works on one disease, and if the target suffers from multiple diseases, the spell must be cast once for each type of disease. **Failing** to cast the spell means the disease is not cured, and results in you contracting the disease yourself.

## ELDRITCH TENDRIL

**Range:** 15 feet**Duration:** Rounds equal to the caster's **Degrees of Success** Performed**On:** Others

This spell creates a number of tendrils composed of magical force. **Successfully** casting this spell creates one magical tendril, which last for a number of Rounds equal to your **Degrees of Success**. Those trapped in the tendril(s) can try to break free by making a successful opposed **Brawn Test** against a TN 18. For every **Round** trapped by the tendrils, the opponent suffers a cumulative -1 to the **Test**. For example, if the opponent has been in the grasp for 3 Rounds they would suffer a -3 to the Test.

Damage from the grasp is equal to your **Will**, and an opponent in the tendril's grasp takes this damage each **Round** they are trapped. If you **Fail** to cast the spell, no tendrils are produced. Buying this spell at the base **Rank** allows you to create one tendril, while each additional **Rank** allows you to produce one additional tendril per **Rank**. Thus, you have **4 Ranks** in this spell you are able to produce four tendrils.



## FLOATING DISC

**Range:** Within 5 feet of the caster**Duration:** Rounds equal to the caster's **Will** × 2**Performed On:** Not Applicable

This spell creates a translucent disc of magical force capable of holding a number of pounds equal to 10 × your **Will**. **Successfully** casting this spell allows you to create the disc, which lasts for a number of **Rounds** equal to twice your **Will**. The disc can carry anything, as long as it does not exceed the maximum weight that can be carried. The disc floats 5 feet above the ground, and is always within arms reach of you. The disc follows your mental commands, and if you are light enough, you can ride the disc if you so choose. **Failure** to cast the spell results in the disc not being produced.

## FRIGHT

**Range:** Sight

**Duration:** Rounds equal to the caster's **Degrees of Success**

**Performed On:** Others

Successfully casting this spell causes one target to become afraid of you, forcing them to flee if at all possible and making them unable to attack or take any other **Actions** for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Success**. **Failure** to cast the spell has no effect other than affecting you, by that you suffer the effects. Each **Rank** in the spell above the first allows you to affect one additional target.

## GUARDIAN

**Range:** Sight

**Duration:** Permanent

**Performed On:** Animal

Sometimes you need servants to help you do the simplest of tasks, like watching out for enemies or carrying messages to an ally. Guardian is a spell that creates a temporary guardian. By summoning a guardian, you can instruct the animal to obey the simplest commands, such as Hunt, Fetch, or Carry, provided the animal is physically equipped to carry out his commands. If you bond with a squirrel, for example, you can command them to hunt, but the squirrel will bring back nuts — not venison.

Your animal guardian and the bond you share with it are directly related to how well you treat your guardian. Be kind, and your animal remains loyal and by your side, even defending you when you least expect it. The more you abuse your guardian, the more often it will resist your attempts to command it, and either attack you or eventually run away.

In order to summon an animal guardian, you need to have a bit of fur, feathers, or skin — anything from the animal you intend to summon. For example, wanting to summon a dog you must have a bit of dog fur in order to do so.

Failure of the spell results in the intended guardian attacking you. The more **Ranks** you have above the base the more animal guardians you can.

## HEALING

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Self, Others

This spell allows you to heal an individual (including yourself) of **Damage**. **Successfully** casting this spell allows you to heal a number of **Vitality** equal to your **Degrees of Success**. An individual cannot have their **Vitality** restored above their normal maximum level. **Failing** to cast this spell results in the caster causing an additional amount of **Vitality Damage** equal to the **Degrees of Failure**. Each **Rank** above the base allows you to heal one additional person.

## ILLUSION

**Range:** 10 feet x caster's Will

**Duration:** Rounds equal to **Degrees of Success**

**Performed On:** Others, Objects, Area

This spell allows you to create an illusion of something you have seen or are familiar with. Thus, if you have seen a dragon, you are able to cast the illusion of a dragon. If you have not seen a dragon, you cannot create an illusionary one. **Successfully** casting this spell, you create an illusion that behaves as if it were the real thing. The illusion lasts for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Success**. Failing to cast the spell means that no illusion is created, and you being knocked out for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Failure** as well as losing **Sanity** equal to the **Degrees of Failure**. Illusions can be disbelieved; to do so requires an **Opposed Test** between your **Will** and the **Wits** of the target. Those disbelieving the illusion are not affected by it.

Illusions affect the sense of sight, and thus, anyone seeing the illusion will think it is real. Illusions have no smell, taste, feel, or sound to them. They can "attack" targets, but the attacks cause no damage.

## LEAP

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Self, Others

**Successfully** casting this spell allows a target to leap horizontally or vertically a number of feet equal to twice your **Will**.

**Failing** to cast the spell means the spell does not work and the target smashes into the ground, and suffering damage equal to your **Will**.

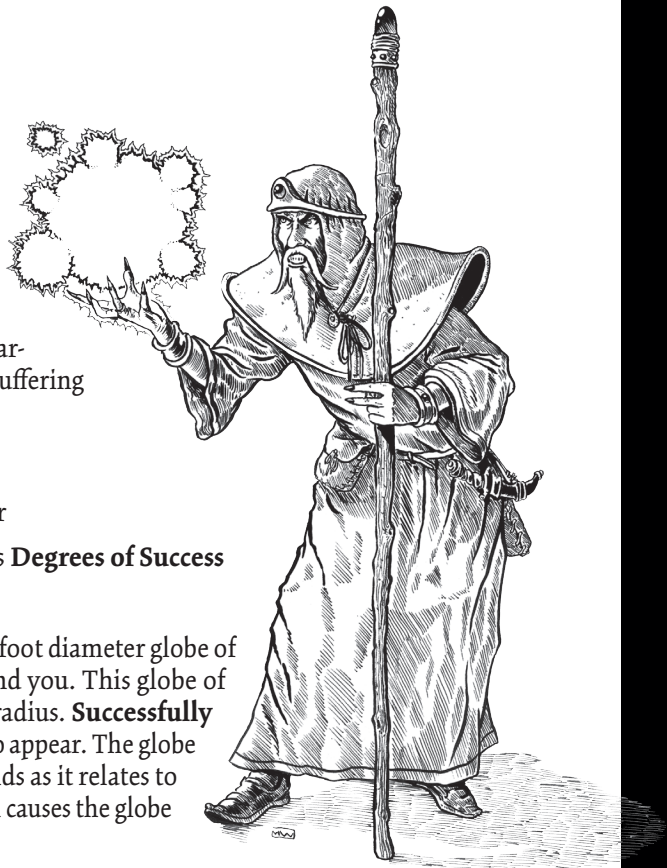
## MAGIC'S LUMINANCE

**Range:** Within 5 feet of the caster

**Duration:** Hours equal to caster's **Degrees of Success**

**Performed On:** Other

This simple spell creates a small 1-foot diameter globe of light which floats in the air around you. This globe of light sheds radiance in a 60-foot radius. **Successfully** casting this spell causes the globe to appear. The globe responds to your mental commands as it relates to movement. **Failing** to cast the spell causes the globe of light not to be conjured.



## OPEN

**Range:** Touch**Duration:** Instant**Performed On:** Locks, Barriers

This simple spell, if **Successfully** cast, opens any lock (including one that has *Bar* cast on it). **Failing** to cast the spell means that the lock does not open.

## PRODUCE ELEMENT

**Range:** 5 feet + **Degrees of Success****Duration:** Instant**Performed On:** Area equal to degrees

**Successfully** casting this spell produces one of the five elements in an area equal to the **Degrees of Success**. Learning this spell you are able to produce one element. For every **2 Ranks** in this spell, the you are able to produce an additional element. Depending on the element produced, the effects differ as follows:

- *Earth*: Produce stones, which cause **15 Damage + Degrees of Success** in damage and destroy any objects in the area. The stones remain and weigh a number of pounds equal to your **Will**.
- *Air*: A gust of wind, which strikes for **15 Damage + Degrees of Success**, and extinguishes any flames.
- *Fire*: Produces a burst of flame which causes **15 Damage + Degrees of Success** and ignites anything flammable. Any flammable material which the spell ignited, burns for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Will**.
- **Water**: Produces a deluge of water that strikes for **15 Damage + Degrees of Success**, as well as soaking all within the area. If water is cast into a large enough container the water produced is equal to a number of gallons equal to your **Will**.
- *Ether*: Creates a magical burst of light that causes **15 Damage + Degrees of Success**, and blinds all within the area for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Will**.

Failing to cast this spell produces the element but effects you and anyone 10-feet within range of you.

## PROTECTION

**Range:** Touch**Duration:** Rounds equal to **Degrees of Success****Performed On:** Self, Others

**Successfully** casting this spell covers you or a target of your choice with a form of magical armor protecting with an **AV 10**. For each additional Rank in the spell, the **AV** is increased by +5. Thus if you have **4 Ranks** in *Protection* it has an **AV** of 25.

## QUICKEN

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 1d12 Rounds

**Performed On:** Self, Others

One of the most popular spells a Spellcaster learns, *Quicken* grants extra speed. Upon casting this spell, you are able to run faster, dodge more easily, and swim more quickly. After casting this spell, you have the choice of either taking a mechanical bonus, or using it to get somewhere faster (movement is doubled). **Succeeding** at a **Magic Test** earns the caster a +3 to any movement-related Skill. **Failure** to cast the spell slows the target and burdens them with a -1 penalty to any movement-related skills. For every **4 Ranks** in the spell, the bonus is increase by a +1 to a maximum of +6.

## REFRESH

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Others

Successfully casting this spell allows you to restore some **Sanity** to anyone you touch equal to the **Degrees of Success**. For example, you **Successfully** cast this spell and get **5 Degrees of Success** you restore **5 Sanity** to the target. Individuals cannot have their Sanity restored above and beyond their **Sanity** cap. **Failure** to cast this spell means no individual has their **Sanity** restored, and you lose a number of **Sanity** equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.

## RESIST ELEMENTS

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Rounds equal to caster's Will

**Performed On:** Self, Others

**Successfully** casting this spell causes the target become repellent to the specific effects of one element. For example, you cast this spell to repel mud (*Element of Earth*) and doing so makes mud unable to touch the target, as well as allowing them to walk across it as if it were solid ground. Casting the spell to protect the target from hail (*Element of Water*) results in hail not touching the target, but the target still gets wet due to the effects of rain and water. While this spell is in effect, the specific element in question simply does not affect the target. The duration of this spell is a number of rounds equal to your **Will**. **Failing** to cast the spell results in the element in question not being repelled.

## SILENCE

**Range:** Feet equal to **Degrees of Success**

**Duration:** Rounds equal to **Degrees of Success**

**Performed On:** Self, Others, Object

A simple spell with numerous uses if perfect for more subtle acts of thievery. **Successfully**

casting this spell creates a zone where no sound can be heard or made. The radius is centered on the target, and is equal to the **Degrees of Success** in feet. In addition, if this spell is cast on a person, the zone of silence moves with the target. The silence lasts for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Success**. Anyone trapped within the zone suffers a -1 for each **Degree of Success** with a maximum of -6 to all **Tests** due to being unable to hear anything. Bear in mind that even though the zone is silent, those within the zone can still be seen, smelled, and/or touched — they simply make no noise. **Failure** to cast the spell causes no zone of silence to be created as well as causes you to be struck deaf for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Will + Degrees of Failure**. While deaf, you suffer a -1 per **Degrees of Failure** with a maximum of -6 due to their lack of hearing.

## SLEEP

**Range:** Feet equal to twice the caster's **Will**

**Duration:** Rounds equal to the caster's **Degrees of Success**

**Performed On:** Others

**Successfully** casting this spell allows you to put a number of targets to sleep. The number of targets affected is equal to one-half your **Will**. Each target must make an **Opposed Will Test** with **Failure** resulting in their falling asleep for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Degrees of Success**. **Failure** to cast this spell means no one is put to sleep, but puts you sleep. For every **Rank** above the first you have, you may put one additional target to sleep.

## STRIKE TRUE

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 1 attack until used (see below)

**Performed On:** Weapons

This spell allows you to imbue a weapon, enabling it to strike with more accuracy. You must touch one weapon while casting this spell, and **Success** has you giving the weapon a +1 bonus to hit a target. **Failure** to cast the spell means the weapon is not enchanted, and it suffers a -1 penalty to hit a single target. A weapon enchanted by *Strike True*, keeps the enchant until it is used, once used the enchantment goes away. For each additional **Rank** in this spell, you are able to increase the bonus by +1 to a maximum of +6.

## WARNING

**Range:** 50-foot radius + caster's **Will**

**Duration:** Hours equal to **Degrees of Success**

**Performed On:** Object

**Successfully** casting this spell on an object, means that anything passing within 5 feet of said object is noticed, as you feel a tingling sensation alerting you of this fact. **Failing** to cast the spell results in you suffering **6 Damage** every time something passes within 5 feet of the spot or object on which the spell was attempted.

## ARCANE SPELLS

### BANISH

**Range:** 10-foot radius around the caster

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Creature

**Sanity Cost:** 15

This spell banishes a summoned creature, be it **Otherworldly**, **Undead** or **Infernal** (see page 238). **Successfully** casting this spell forces the summoned creature in question to make an **Opposed Will Test** against your **Will**. If the creature fails the **Test**, it is dispelled and banished. If the spell is **Failed**, the creature is not banished, and is empowered, gaining a number of **Plasm** or **Taint** (see page 254) equal to twice the caster's **Degrees of Failure** plus their **Will** bonus.

### BRING FORTH ELEMENTAL

**Range:** Within circle

**Duration:** Rounds equal to **Degrees of Success**

**Performed On:** Elemental Object

**Sanity Cost:** 15

To cast this spell and summon an elemental, you must inscribe a circle on the ground and within it place a sacrifice. The sacrifice must be:

- *Earth* — A fist-sized piece of marble
- *Air* — An eagle feather
- *Water* — A pint of water
- *Fire* — A burning fire
- *Ether* — The mage sits in the circle

Once placed, you must not engage in movement or be disturbed while casting the spell. **Successfully** casting this spell allows you to summon an elemental that does the caster's bidding for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Success**. Depending on the sacrifice, only one type of elemental is summoned.

- *Earth* — Gnome
- *Air* — Sylph
- *Water* — Undine
- *Fire* — Salamander
- *Ether* — Will-o'-wisp

Failing to cast the spell has serious repercussions, namely an angry elemental spirit who seeks to attack you! The spirit remains in the physical world for a number of **Rounds** equal to the caster's **Degrees of Failure**, and remains focused solely on you.

CONTACT

**Range:** Within circle

**Duration:** Rounds equal to half the caster's **Will**

**Performed On:** Others

**Sanity Cost:** 22

This is a powerful spell in that it contacts an Elder God, and allows communion with, and seek advice from, this Elder God. This spell can be taken multiple times, allowing you to contact other Elder Gods. Thus you must take the spell separately for each Elder God.

To cast this spell requires much from you. First, you must fast for a period of 24 hours, and during that time meditate and prepare himself mentally and physically for the casting. During this time, you must inscribe the appropriate circle for the God you wish to contact, and this circle must be made from the appropriate components, or the spell will not work. In addition, you must know the summoning circle for the God in question; if you do not, you cannot contact the God. Once the circle is inscribed, you must chant for 10 Rounds, and in that time do nothing but chant. If the chanting is stopped for any reason, either by yourself or someone else, the spell automatically **Fails**. Once the chanting is over, and the **Spell Test** is **Successfully** made, the image of the God appears in front of you. You are then able to ask the God for advice, seek their aid, or ask for some boon. The God remains for a number of **Rounds** equal to half your **Will**. **Failing** to cast the spell has dire consequences. First, your **Sanity** permanently reduced by a number of points equal to their **Degrees of Failure**. In addition, the God, as per the *Curse* spell, curses you, the effects of which last until the God deems you learned your lesson.

THE ELDER GODS	
ELDER GOD	SUMMONING CIRCLE COMPONENT
Azathoth	Blood of a lizard
Cthulhu	Ink from a squid
Shub-Niggurath	Bile of a goat
Hastur	Blood of a rooster
Nodens	Blood of a raven
Nyarlahotep	Bile of an owl, blood of a hawk, and the eye of a cat
Nyogtha	Blood of a ram
Tsathoggua	The caster's blood
Yig	Blood of a snake
Yog-Sothoth	Blood of a squid and a rabbit



## CURSE

**Range:** Eyesight

**Duration:** Days equal to the caster's **Degrees of Success**

**Performed On:** Others

**Sanity Cost:** 10

*Curses* are the practice of using a spell to specifically cause harm to an enemy, object or place in some designated manner. As such, every *Curse* can only be resisted by a believer's **Will**. If you are skilled in the use of this spell are also able to break *Curses*. Coming across a *Cursed* person, place or object you can remove a *Curse* by successfully reversing the *Curse* and breaking it. There are three different types of *Curses* you are able to cast.

### PEOPLE

Examples of *Curses* against people are typically related to physical injury: breaking a leg, losing one's hearing, contracting a disease, growing warts, etc.. Most often, when a person is *Cursed*, the transmission of the attack is related to something personal to ensure success.

### PLACES

By desecrating a place, you leech the life out of a pasture, set a magical booby trap for others, or use it as a tool to make people lose hope. *Cursing* places is the most difficult type of spell, because the time it takes to prepare are a huge price to pay for, what some believe, is so little benefit.

### OBJECTS

The only types of objects that can be affected by *Curses* are conductive objects that effectively "transmit" a curse to someone else. Metal is the best conductor, while wood is the poorest. Knives, shovels, picks, necklaces, and sometimes even weapons are perfect for *cursing*.

*Cursing* Holy objects requires more spell components, but these can be taken from a temple or other sanctuary. Typically, the ingredients for desecrating Holy objects include blending various body parts into a stew related to the curse you want to store. For example, if you want to *Curse* someone with smallpox by

**Successfully** casting a *Curse*, the targeted person or place feels the brunt of what you intend and they suffer **Damage** equal to the **Degrees of Success**. In the case of a place or object the damage is reflected in a change of appearance such as all windows becoming broken, an item showing the signs of rust and the like. In addition the bearer of the *Curse* suffers -2 to all **Tests** for the duration of the *Curse*. In addition, for every **Rank** in this spell there is a cumulative -1 to a maximum of -6. An object that is *Cursed* is always *Cursed*, but forces the target to roll their **Will** to resist the *Curse*. **Failing to Resist** causes the person to suffer from the *Curse*. **Failure** to cast *Curse* results in you losing **Sanity** equal to the **Degrees of Failure**, and that the spell is botched so badly you suffer the *Curse's* effect.

## DESTROY THE DEAD

**Range:** 50 feet

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Undead

**Sanity Cost:** 10

This powerful spell instantly destroys a number of skeletons or zombies equal to your **Will** within 50 feet if successfully cast. This spell can be cast against other type of **Undead**, but it does not destroy them, instead it causes them harm. When the spell is cast, the **Undead** can **Resist**, and if **Failed**, they take damage equal to the caster's **Will**. Failing to cast the spell results in no **Undead** being destroyed, as well as you taking **Damage** equal to your **Degrees of Failure** as well as being struck blind for one day.

## DISPEL

**Range:** 10-foot radius around the of caster

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Others

**Sanity Cost:** 10

**Successfully** casting this spell, one magical effect within range is canceled out. **Failure** to cast the spell means the magic is not canceled out, and you to nullify your own ability to work magic for a number of days equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.

## ELEMENTAL HARMONY

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Rounds equal to the caster's **Will**

**Performed On:** Self, Others

**Sanity:** 8

The components for summoning and harnessing elemental spirits are: an object that signifies the human attribute, an object made from the element you're focusing on, and the elemental spirit's secret name. Examples of spell components are as follows:

- Earth (**Brawn**): Stone, crystal, plants, clay, sand
- Fire (**Toughness**): Volcanic glass, fire, soot, ash
- Water (**Will**): Spring water, holy water, lotus, water lilies
- Air (**Quickness**): Butterflies and other flying insects, incense, feathers
- Ether (**Wits**): Iron, copper, gold, silver, tin

When this spell is **Successfully** cast, the target of the spell takes on the traits of the intended element, and gains a +4 bonus to the associated **Ability** for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Will**. **Failure** to cast the spell indicates the target is not aligned with the element, in addition, you suffer damage equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.

ENCHANT

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Permanent

**Performed On:** Object

**Sanity Cost:** See below

This spell allows you to enchant an item, thus making it magical. This spell requires much, not only from the caster, but from the item that is to be enchanted. Successfully casting this spell grants a permanent bonus to the item enchanted that can be applied either to Combat, to Damage or to Skill use. For example, a dagger +1 would be a dagger that granting a +1 bonus to the *Melee* skill, a +1 to the DV or a +1 to be thrown. Enchanting a pair of boots helping the wearer move silently would provide a +1 bonus to *Stealth*. **Failure** to cast the spell means the item is not enchanted and instead is *Cursed* incurring a penalty instead of a bonus. In the example above, the dagger would have a -1 penalty to *Melee*. In order to enchant an item, you must have an appropriate item. For example, if you want to make an item that gives a bonus to *Hide* tests, it must be either a pair of boots, a cloak, or some such. **Sanity Costs** depend on the bonus the item will have.

ENCHANTMENT COST	
BONUS	SANITY COST
+1	3
+2	6
+3	9
+4	12
+5	15
+6	18

*Each additional +1 adds 3 extra Sanity to the cost, cumulative.*

EXORCISE

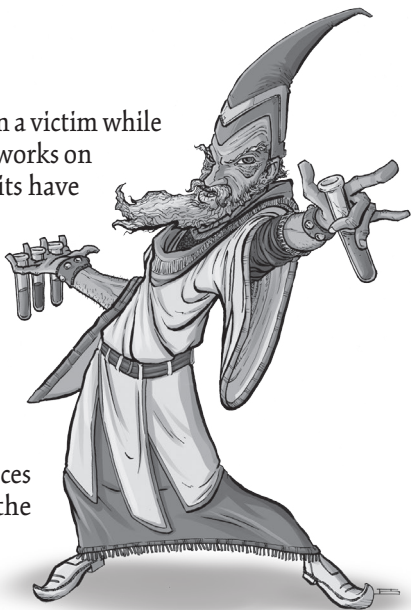
**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Others, Place

**Sanity Cost:** 12

Exorcise, simply put, is the laying of one's hands on a victim while chanting fervently to drive a spirit out. This spell works on houses, taverns, towers, and other buildings spirits have decided to haunt. **Successfully** casting this spell drives one ghost or spirit out of a specific person or place. In the case of a ghost or spirit choosing a particular location to haunt, that ghost or spirit is repelled from the location and cannot return. **Failing** to cast the spell indicates the ghost or spirit still possesses the person or place, and you are unable to attempt to excise the ghost ever again. In addition **Failure** has dire consequences for you: instead of repelling ghosts and spirits, the person or place acts as a beacon, causing the spirit or ghost in question to automatically possess you.



## GEAS

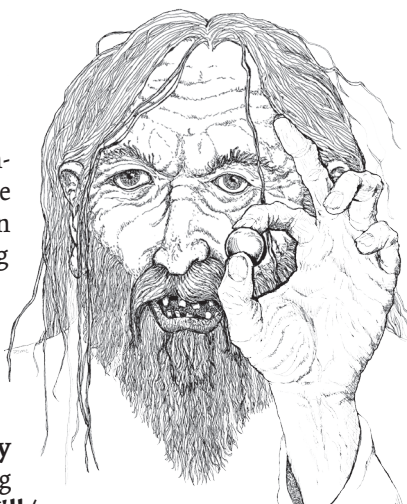
**Range:** 10 feet plus the caster's Will

**Duration:** See below

**Practiced On:** Others

**Sanity Cost:** 10

*Geas* is a very powerful spell allowing you to compel others to perform a specific task or undertake a quest. Such tasks might involve hunting down a specific creature, staying by your side and acting as a bodyguard until a destination is reached, or some other such task. In the case of a quest, as long as the quest does not entail the target of the *geas* to take undue risks, the target is compelled to undertake the task until it is completed or the terms of the quest are met. If **Successfully** cast, the target is able to **Resist** the spell, requiring an **Opposed Test** between you and the target's **Will** (or *Resist* skill). **Failing** to cast the spell indicates the target is not affected, and you are knocked unconscious for a number of days equal to the **Degrees of Failure**. You may cast this spell on more than one target for each **Rank** you have in this spell above the **Base Rank**. For example, you have *Geas* +3, you are able to cast this on three people.



5

## PLAGUE

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

**Performed On:** Others

**Sanity Cost:** 16

When this spell is **successfully** cast, and the target of the spell is touched, the victim is infected with the plague. The victim can resist this spell with a **Successful Resist** test, but **Failure** to do so has them contracting the disease and suffering a -2 penalty to their **Toughness** or *Resist* tests in fighting off the disease. **Failing** to cast the spell, you do not infect a victim, but you contract the disease yourself.

The disease is a very nasty one and the use number of days a person suffering from this is ill is 10 days. Those who are infected must make a **Toughness** test, with **Success** having them reduce the number of days they suffer by the **Degrees of Success**, **Failure** has them increase the number of days they are sick by the **Degrees of Failure**. While sick, the person loses **4 Vitality** each day, as well as **1 Sanity**. Every time the person loses a total of **12 Vitality** they must make a **Toughness** test, with **Failure** having them lose 1 point of their **Toughness**. Once the disease runs its course, and provided the person does not die from it, they begin regaining their lost **Vitality** and **Sanity** at the normal rate. However, due to the illness and the effects it has on the person, their **Toughness** (if it was reduced) is permanently reduced to its new level.

## PILLAR OF LIGHT

**Range:** caster**Duration:** Special**Performed On:** Self**Sanity Cost:** 5

This powerful spell summons a pillar of light that is centered on you, and any being looking at you is struck blind for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Success + Will bonus**. **Successfully** casting this spell provides a radius of effect for this light equal to 50 feet +10 feet per **Degrees of Success**. As long as you do not move, the light continues to shine. The light is as bright as daylight, and illuminates the area around you. In addition, the light causes damage to all **Infernal** creatures, equal to your **Degrees of Success**. **Failure** to cast the spell results in no light being summoned, and you being struck blind for one day and suffering damage equal to the **Degrees of Failure + Will bonus**.

## RAISE DEAD

**Range:** Caster**Duration:** Special**Performed On:** Nil**Sanity Cost:** 12/6

This necromantic spell allows you to summon Skeletons and Zombies, and you can summon a number of Skeletons or Zombies equal to your **Will**. These Skeletons and Zombies obey your commands, and remain animated for one full day. **Failure** to cast this spell means the Skeletons and Zombies are summoned but they attack you. To maintain this spell you must expend **6 Sanity** for each additional day you wish them to remain.

## SUMMON

**Range:** Within circle**Duration:** 1 Day**Performed On:** Others**Sanity Cost:** 10

This spell allows you to summon a **Mundane** or **Infernal** creature. As such, there are literally hundreds of summoning spells in existence for known creatures, and every one provides suggestions for sample ingredients. Thus, if you want to summon rats as well as cats, the spell needs to be purchased twice: once for summoning rats and once for summoning cats. **Successfully** casting this spell summons the animal. Once the animal or creature has performed its service, it returns to whence it came. **Failing** to cast the spell indicates you are unable to summon the creature as well as leave a magical trail so strong that you are more noticeable to all creatures and spirits and they gain a +1 bonus in all **Tests** against you for a number of days equal to your **Degrees of Failure**. For each additional **Rank** in this spell, the caster is able to summon an additional creature.



## TRANSFORMATION

**Range:** Touch**Duration:** Rounds equal to the caster's **Will****Performed On:** Self, Others**Sanity Cost:** 10 +1 per person transformed

This spell allows you to transform yourself, or another person, into the form of another living creature. For example, you can change a sailor into a pig, or can transform both yourself and your apprentice into birds. Any special abilities or immunities of the creature transformed into are not gained upon transformation, but physical abilities are. For example, your transform your friend into a Demon. The friend looks like a Demon, but is unable to cast **Spells**, use **Taint**, or any of the other abilities of Demons, but they do gain their physical strength (**Brawn** and **Toughness**). However, if you transform yourself into a trout, not only do you look like a trout, but you are able to swim and breathe underwater as well.

**Successfully** casting this spell transforms the caster and/or another person into another living thing for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Will**. **Failure** to cast the spell means that the spell transforms the target into a misshapen creature which causes them to lose not only a number of **Vitality** equal to your **Will**, but to also lose **Sanity** equal to your **Will** as well. The number of people you can transform is determined by your **Rank** in the spell.

## WARD

**Range:** Touch**Duration:** Until disturbed**Performed On:** Object, Location**Sanity Cost:** 5

A *Ward* is a magical rune or symbol of magical power placed on an object or location that acts as a form of protection. There are a number of *Wards* you are able to use, and this spell can be taken multiple times in order to learn these various *Wards*. Thus each *Ward* spell (i.e., *Ward (Blind)*, *Ward (Deaf)*, etc.) is a separate spell.

- *Blind*: **Successfully** placing this *Ward* causes the person disturbing it to be struck blind for a number of hours equal to your **Will**. **Failing** to cast this *Ward* results in the *ward* not being placed, and strikes you blind for a number of rounds equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.
- *Deaf*: **Successfully** placing this *Ward* causes the person disturbing it to be struck deaf for a number of hours equal to your **Will**. **Failing** to cast this *Ward* results in the *ward* not being placed, and strikes you deaf for a number of **rounds** equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.
- *Explosion*: **Successfully** placing this *Ward* results in all within 10 feet of the *Ward* suffering **20 Damage** from an explosion. Anything that the *Ward* is

placed on is destroyed by the explosion as well. **Failing** to cast the spell results in the ward not being placed, the *Ward* exploding immediately, causing you to suffer **20 Damage**.

- **Fire:** This rune, when placed, sets off a flame burst when the *Ward* is disturbed. **Successfully** casting this *Ward* results in a fire burst that causes **15 Damage**. Placed on an object which is combustible, the intense heat will consume the object. **Failing** to cast this spell results in the *Ward* not being placed, and suffer **15 Damage** as well as destroying the object upon which the *Ward* is placed.
- **Mute:** **Successfully** placing this *Ward* causes the person disturbing it to be struck mute for a number of hours equal to your **Will**. **Failing** to cast this spell results in you being struck mute for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.
- **Shock:** This rune, when placed, fills a 5-foot area with electricity. **Successfully** casting this *Ward* causes anyone within range of the *Ward* to suffer **15 Damage**. **Failing** to cast this *Ward* results you being shocked for **15 Damage**.
- **Stun:** **Successfully** placing this *Ward* causes a person who disturbs it to be paralyzed for a number of hours equal to your **Will**. **Failing** to cast this spell results you being stunned for a number of rounds equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.
- **Unmoving:** This *Ward* is usually placed on objects, such as statues and the like. **Successfully** placing the *Ward* causes the object to be permanently rooted to the spot in which it stands. This means that no matter how strong a person is or how much effort is expended, the object cannot be moved. **Failing** to cast this spell results you being rooted in place for a number of rounds equal to your **Degrees of Failure**.



BLIND



DEAF WARD



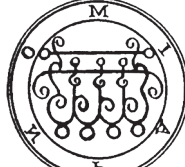
EXPLOSION WARD



FIRE WARD



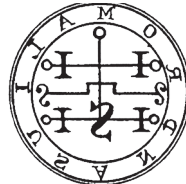
MUTE WARD



SHOCK WARD



STUN WARD



UNMOVING WARD

## THE WATER'S FOUNT

**Range:** Touch**Duration:** Rounds equal to **Degrees of Success** + **Will** bonus**Performed On:** Location**Sanity Cost:** 5

**Successfully** casting this spell and striking the ground, the caster summons a geyser of water reaching up to 100 feet in height, and gushes for a number of **Rounds** equal to your **Degrees of Success** plus **Will** bonus. The total amount of water the geyser gushes is equal to a number of gallons equal to  $10 \times$  your **Will**. Thus, you have **Will 10**, so 10 gallons of water gush in 1 **Round**. Anyone caught in the geyser suffers **12 Damage + Degrees of Success**. **Failing** to cast the spell results in the geyser not appearing, but causes your lungs to fill with water and you begin drowning (see page 36).

## ALCHEMICAL ARTS

The practice of Alchemy requires a lab that must include not only a furnace, but also the necessary tools to produce the works of this Art. Alchemists need bellows, tongs, numerous glass beakers, as well as vessels made from copper, tin, and iron, all of which are used for distillation. The cost to outfit a full lab is 25 SC. Besides the needed gear, Alchemists also require the ingredients to perform their work, which incurs even more costs. Some Alchemists use portable labs (a horse-drawn wagon). This incurs a -6 penalty when working the Alchemical Arts. This is due to the portable lab not being as easy to work with as compared with an Alchemist's personal lab. To keep things simple (which is one of the design goals at work in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*) only the effects of a successful alchemical creation are given. You are encouraged to come up with the ingredients, process and other colorful elements going into Alchemy as you choose.

It is worth noting that some Gamemasters might want to make **Alchemy Tests** in secret, rolling on the player's behalf, without letting them know if their efforts **Succeeded** or **Failed** until they what have made is actually used. This is perfectly acceptable, and it is up to the GM and players as to what they prefer. For me, in all the years I have run and played *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, I tend to not do these tests secretly, as I have other means at my disposal to surprise the players. As always this is your game, and you are free to tinker with it as much, or as little, as you want.

## ACIDS &amp; ALKALI CREATION

Acids are fluids that dissolve nearly any material, and cause great damage to living creatures. Alkalis neutralize acid, stopping it from dissolving and burning.

Acids and Alkalis are created on a scale of intensity measured by ranks. Skilled in this Art you can manufacture any acid or alkali of any strength, but to do so is difficult. The stronger the creation, the harder it is to create. In order to create an acid or alkali refer to the following table to find the associated **TN** you need to beat in order to succeed.

Alkalis are ranked in strength as is Acid, and work against Acids only equal to or less than the strength rank of the Alkali. For example, an *Alkali Rank 2* can neutralize a **Rank 1** or 2 *Acid*, but has no effect on *Acids Rank 3* or higher.

It takes 1 day to distill a half-pint of acid or alkalis (enough for one use), and it requires a **Successful Alchemy** (*Acid and Alkali Creation*) Test. A **success** results in the creation of the acid or alkali. **Failure** results in causing an accident such as the liquid suddenly boiling over or exploding, spraying you for 1d12 points of **Damage**.

ALCHEMICAL VITRIOL

*Alchemical Vitriol* is a highly unstable and powerful explosive. With the growing tensions in The World, many have put this knowledge of *Vitriol* creation to good use.

It takes 8 hours to produce one ounce of *Alchemical Vitriol*. Upon finishing, you must make an *Alchemy* (*Alchemical Vitriol*) Test, with **Success** indicating they have created one ounce (enough for one use) of *Alchemical Vitriol*. If **Failed**, the compound becomes unstable, exploding immediately per the intended strength of the explosive. Once created, *Alchemical Vitriol* is highly unstable, requiring overly careful handling, with a 50% chance it explodes if the bottle is shaken or dropped (roll a d12, and on a 6 or lower it explodes). Placing the vial of *Alchemical Vitriol* within a container of water helps to cushion it some, reducing the risk of explosion to 25% (roll a d12, and on a 3 or less, it explodes).

CREATE HOMUNCULUS

This Art allows you to create a Homunculus (see page 278), which serves as a tool for your work. It takes a total of 4 days to complete this art, and once the time is over you must make a *Alchemy* Test (**TN 22**), with **Success** having create a Homunculus loyal to you and follows your commands. **Failing** the test results in having no Homunculus created and cause you to lose all your **Sanity** due to creating such a disturbing “thing” that it effects your mind greatly. There is no limit to the number of homunculi you are able to create; all you need is the time.

CREATE MANTICORE

In some ways this art is similar to *Create Homunculus* but instead of creating something small you actually create a manticore (see page 281). It takes one week to preform this art, and during this time you must do nothing but work in your lab working toward your success. Once this time has passed, you must make an *Alchemy* Test (**TN 24**), with a success resulting in having an egg appear that hatches in one week’s time. This egg is roughly the size of a lion cub. At the end of the week the egg hatches and a living Manticore emerges. The Manticore follows your commands(a **Successful Animal Handling** test is required). **Failing** the *Alchemy* Test results in an egg forming, but when it hatches, the Manticore immediately attacks you.

ACID & ALKALI BREWING				
RANK	TN	DAMAGE	BURNING TIME	MATERIAL DISSOLVE
1	10	2	1 Round	1 ounce
2	12	3	2 Rounds	2 ounces
3	14	4	3 Rounds	3 ounces
4	18	5	4 Rounds	4 ounces
5	22	6	5 Rounds	5 ounces
6	26	7	6 Rounds	6 ounces

ALCHEMICAL VITRIOL		
RANK	TN	EFFECT
1	10	6 Damage in 10-foot radius
2	12	12 Damage in 20-foot radius
3	18	18 Damage in 30-foot radius
4	24	24 Damage in 40-foot radius
5	30	30 Damage in 50-foot Radius
5	36	36 Damage in 60-foot radius

## DISTILLATION

The most important Art for any Alchemist, and for some the only goal of the Art, is the process of *Distillation*. *Distillation* is the process used to discover the essence and nature of all life. It is with this Art that you break down living matter into a liquid, and through this liquid, take on the traits of living creatures. In short, it is the breaking down of an animal or living person, and creating an *Essence* that once drunk, gives the imbued target a specific trait for a period of time.

It takes a total of 4 days to create an *essence* of the animal, or person, you wish to distill the essence of. After the end of this time you make a *Alchemy Test* (TN 24) with **Success** having you create enough *Essence of...* The *Essence* is the one **Trait**, or **Skill**, of the living thing that has been distilled. Note that *Essences* are only made from the listed **Traits** of a creature. In order to take on this **Trait**, the *Essence* must be drunk. Once drunk, the effect lasts for a number of **Rounds** equal to the **Degrees of Success**. **Failing** the *Alchemy Test* means the *Essence* is not created but causes the still to explode, causing **12 Damage + Degrees of Failure**, and draining you of all his **Sanity** due to the horror witnessed.

So how does *Essence* work?

Let's say you want to create an *Essence of the Lion* and you want this *Essence* to give the imbiber claws. You add the body of one lion to the still, and work through the process. At the end of the requisite time, you create an *Essence of the Lion*, and once drunk, the drinker's hands transform into claws, resembling those of a lion. When distilling a human, the *Essence* created is either one of the **Skills** the person had, or the **Attribute** they have (say their



**Brawn**). For example, a warrior who is known for their skill with the sword could be distilled to create an *Essence* which when drunk, would give the drinker the *Melee* skill of the warrior.

## ELIXIR CREATION

Through the process of distillation and brewing, you are able to extract powerful *Essences* from minerals and organic compounds. This process enables them to produce powerful *Elixirs* to aid a person. A person can only drink one *Elixir* of the same type at a time, and drinking any more than one *Elixir* has dire effects. Drinking more than one *Elixir* reduces the character's **Vitality** to 0.

### ABILITY ELIXIR

**Ability Elixirs** raise one **Ability** for a short period of time. There are five types of this *Elixir*, and each one is associated with one **Ability**. Only by drinking the appropriate Elixir

can the Ability actually be raised. The Elixirs are: *Elixir of Brawn*, *Elixir of Quickness*, *Elixir of Toughness*, *Elixir of Wits*, and *Elixir of Will*. In order to get the benefit of the *Elixir*, the entire quantity of *Elixir* must be consumed.

**Ability Elixirs** are ranked in strength, with **Rank 1** being the weakest and **Rank 6** the strongest. It takes 6 hours to brew an *Ability Elixir*, and upon completion of the brewing process, you make an *Alchemy Test*, with **Success** indicating you **successfully** brewed the elixir. **Failure** results in the production of an inert, potentially harmful liquid. Instead of boosting the **Ability** it lowers is as well as causing **6 Damage**.

ABILITY ELIXIR			
RANK	TN	BONUS	DURATION
1	10	+1	Degrees of Success + 2 Rounds
2	12	+1	Degrees of Success + 4 Rounds
3	14	+2	Degrees of Success + 2 Rounds
4	18	+2	Degrees of Success + 4 Rounds
5	22	+3	Degrees of Success + 2 Rounds
6	26	+3	Degrees of Success + 4 Rounds

### BOOST ELIXIR

*Boost Elixirs* are simple liquids that sharpen your wits or focus, giving you a bonus to all tests made during the duration of the *Elixir*. A *Boost Elixir* takes 6 hours to brew, and at the end of the brewing process, there is enough produced for two uses.

*Boost Elixirs* have no various ranks of **Strength** making them stronger. **Success** on the **Alchemy Test** create an *elixir* that gives a +1 bonus to all **Tests** for a number of rounds equal to the **Degrees of Success**. Failure results in an *elixir* giving a -1 penalty to all **Tests** for a number of rounds equal to the **Degrees of Failure**.

### ELIXIR OF HEALTH

Elixirs of Health are powerful creations able to heal your wounds or cure sickness upon drinking. Though these *Elixirs* are powerful, they are not able to bring someone back from the dead. However, this might be a good Hook: “Although there are rumors of an ancient formula for a *Resurrection Elixir*...” (for more on Hooks, see page 58). It takes 12 hours and a **Successful Alchemy Test** to brew enough *Elixir* for one dose, about 6 ounces.

ELIXIR OF HEALTH		
RANK	TN	INCREASE
1	10	Restores 4 Vitality
2	12	Restores 8 Vitality
3	14	Restores 12 Vitality and 4 Sanity
4	18	Restores 16 Vitality
5	22	Restores 20 Vitality
6	26	Restores 24 Vitality and 8 Sanity

To get the effect of the *Elixir* the entire dose must be consumed. Freshness of the *Elixir* is important, due to the ingredients used. *Elixirs of Health* eventually lose their strength over time, dropping one rank of strength per increment of time equal to half the alchemist’s **Will** who brewed it. Thus, if the alchemist with **Will 8** brewed a **Rank 1 Elixir**, it becomes useless after 4 days, while a **Rank 4 Elixir** would drop down to a **Rank 3**, and four days later to **Rank 2**, and so on.

**Failing the Alchemy Test**, the creation is a poisonous and harms instead, of healing. For example, if the alchemist is brewing a **Rank 3 Elixir**, and **Fails** the roll, it will drain **12 Vitality**, instead of restoring it!

METALLURGY

One of the most important and practical skills in a alchemist’s repertoire is *Metallurgy*, and gives an advantage over others. Skill in this art allows you to not only create new metals, but also to strengthen existing ones. If versed in such skills as *Craft (Metalsmith)* or *Craft (Weaponsmith)*, you can transform these new alloys into items of value. If you are not skilled in such skills, you can sell this alloy for a nice profit. To create an alloy requires 8 hours and a **Successful Alchemy Test (TN 18)**, and this produces 1 pound of alloy. Any weapon crafted from this alloy gains a +1 bonus. Failure means you created a substance that grants a -1 bonus to any weapon crafted from it.

POISON CREATION

You known how to craft poisons either for your use or for others. Unlike natural poisons, *Alchemical Poisons* are powerful and often prove fatal. It takes 8 hours to brew one ounce of poison (enough for one use), and upon completion of this brewing process, a **Successful Alchemy Test** leads to the creation of a poison. **Failure** results in the poison turning into a gas and automatically affecting you, doing damage equivalent to what it would have done as a liquid.

Besides creating *Alchemical Poisons*, you can create an *Antidote*. A *Antidote* negates the effects of poison regardless of strength (but it does not restore any **Vitality** lost due to the poison). All *Antidotes*, regardless of **Rank**, automatically negate the effect of natural poisons (see page 43). It takes 6 hours and a **Successful Alchemy Test** to brew one ounce of an *Antidote*. **Failure**, the Antidote is actually a poison, and has the same potency as a **Rank 2** Poison. Successfully brewing an *Antidote* creates enough of the substance for one use. An Antidote does not lose its potency no matter how long it sits in its vial.

TRANSMUTATION

*Transmutation* is the conversion of one object into another. Though many think this means changing lead into gold, *Transmutation* is much more than that; it is the ability to transform an organic or inorganic material into another material. The downside of *Transmutation* is that the transformation is not permanent. Skilled in this Art you can

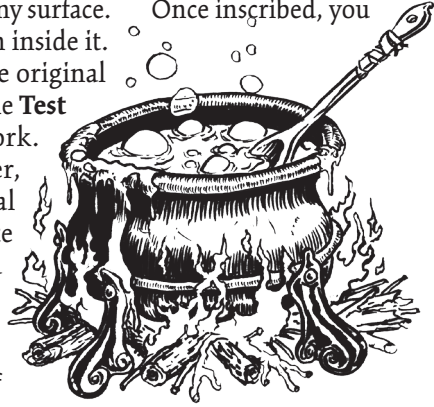
ALCHEMICAL POISON		
RANK	TN	INCREASE
1	10	-1 Brawn for 2 Rounds
2	12	-1 Brawn and -1 Toughness for 4 Rounds
3	14	-1 Brawn, -1 Toughness and 2 Damage for 6 Rounds
4	18	-2 Brawn for Rounds for 4 Rounds
5	22	-2 Brawn and -2 Toughness for 6 Rounds
6	26	-2 Brawn and -2 Toughness and 4 Damage for 8 Rounds

ALCHEMICAL POISON		
RANK	TN	INCREASE
1	10	Negates the effect of Rank 1 Alchemical Poison, or natural poison.
2	12	Negates the effect of Rank 2 Alchemical Poison, or natural poison.
3	14	Negates the effect of Rank 3 Alchemical Poison, or natural poison.
4	18	Negates the effect of Rank 4 Alchemical Poison, or natural poison.
5	22	Negates the effect of Rank 5 Alchemical Poison, or natural poison.
6	26	Negates the effect of Rank 6 Alchemical Poison, or natural poison.

work what some consider miracles. You can transmute an object into any shape you can think of. The only limit is your imagination.

Transmutation requires an object, a circle of transmutation, and 2 Rounds (1 to inscribe the circle and 1 to do the transmutation). You may do nothing during this time but concentrate on your art, and as a result all of your **Actions** for each **Round** goes into the transmutation. If you step away, or stop, the process automatically fails. The transmutation circle can be inscribed on any surface. Once inscribed, you place the material he wishes to transform inside it.

A **Successful Alchemy Test** transforms the original material into another material. **Failing the Test** means the transmutation does not work. Besides changing material into another, you can change the shape of the material as well, but this requires another, separate *Alchemical Test*. **Failing** this roll twists and warps the material, but it still maintains its properties.



For example, let's say you a pound of lead and wishes to transform it into a silver dagger. First you inscribe the circle, and then places the lead in the center. Making a Successful Alchemical Test, the lead transforms into silver. To have the silver take the shape of a dagger, you make another Alchemical Test, but Fail. The silver takes on a twisted, flat shape, and though it is still silver, it is not the shape you wanted.

6

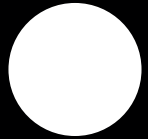
TRANSMUTATION		
RANK	TN	EFFECT
1	10	Transform any liquid into a solid; any solid into a liquid.
2	12	Transform any solid into a gas; any gas into a solid.
3	14	Transform any gas into a liquid; any liquid into a gas.
4	18	Transform any metal into another metal.
5	22	Transform any object into any shape; maximum size is a number of inches equal to the <b>Degrees of Success</b> .
6	26	Transform one element into its opposing element; Fire into Air, Earth into Water, Ether into Fire, Air, Earth or Water



# CHAPTER

# 6

## GEAR



**A**s the saying goes, money makes the world go around. Nowhere else is this saying more true than in a pulp fantasy game. Money is a prime motivator in pulp fantasy, no matter what and where the culture is or what shape the power structures of the world take. Money inspires merchants to acquire goods to sell. Money inspires the fool-hardy to risk all on a chance for a financial windfall.

Money is the primary reason many take to the life of adventure in the hopes of gaining enough wealth to live an easy life.

In *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, money is one of the main motives and guiding forces for adventures as well. Heroes are always searching to acquire more money, and it seems as much as they earn, they lose.

## CURRENCY

The basic unit of currency in *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is the silver coin. Silver is the most plentiful of the precious metals found in The World, and it is the one most people come into contact with on a daily basis. Though silver is the base unit of coinage, other metals are also used which allow for smaller denominations of coins.

### GOLD

The currency of the elite. When merchants, nobles, and wealthy need to deal in larger sums, gold is their choice. Gold coins are commonly known as Suns, but other regions refer to them as Stars and Plates. For *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, gold coins are abbreviated as GC.

EXCHANGE RATE	
1 Gold Crown	100 Silver Crowns
1 Silver Crown	50 Copper Crowns
1 Copper Crown	20 Brass Crowns
1 Bras Crown	15 Iron Crowns

### SILVER

The most plentiful of the precious metals found in The World, it is commonly used for coins. Silver coins are known most often as Moons throughout The World. For *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, silver coins are abbreviated as SC.

### BRASS

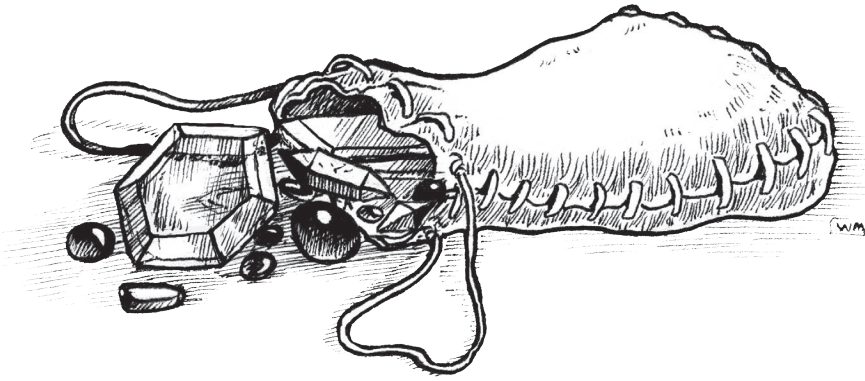
An alloy of copper and zinc, brass coins are gaining in popularity, and are often encountered in southern regions. Due to trade, they have slowly moved into the more civilized regions and are gaining in popularity. Commonly known as Thumbs, in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, brass coins are abbreviated as BC.

### COPPER

Developed by merchants and trade guilds as a means of preventing the clipping of silver coins. In the past, when a merchant was selling goods or services and the price was not equal to a full silver, the coin was clipped either in half or quarter. This created a problem with numerous bits of silver being collected, melted down, and then recast as new coinage. To alleviate this, copper coins were developed and have become widely accepted. Known commonly as the Bit, in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, copper coins are abbreviated as CC.

### IRON

The smallest unit of currency, iron coins are commonly found among the poor and the lower classes. Known commonly as the Dagger, in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, iron coins are abbreviated as IC.



## OTHER CURRENCY

For the most part, during your character's their daily lives, they only come into contact with the Silver Coin. Maybe, if they are lucky, they will see a Gold Coin, but for the most part, Silver, Copper, Brass, and Iron are the ones they see and commonly deal with. For the extremely wealthy, another type of "currency" is gems. Even Heroes, who engage in theft, occasionally earn gems as payment for their services. Merchants favor gems, due in large part to this allowing them to move large sums of money easily. Heroes lucky enough to get a gem or two soon understand their value, in that it allows them to live very well.

### GEM VALUES

1 Diamond	100 GC
1 Ruby	50 GC
1 Emerald	25 GC
1 Sapphire	15 GC

## STARTING GEAR

You begin the adventuring life with the following: one hand weapon or one ranged weapon, one set of suitable clothes, and 75 SC in wealth.

## WEAPONS

HAND WEAPONS							
NAME	DMG	MIN	D	R	ROF	SZ	COST
Ahir	5	—	—	—	—	—	16 SC
Axe, Battle	5	7 Brawn	-1	—	—	2H	7 SC
Axe, Hand	3	—	—	5/15/25	1/1	1H	2 SC
Blackjack	1	—	—	—	—	1H	2 SC
Broadsword	6	—	—	—	—	1H	15 SC
Cestus	1	—	—	—	—	1H	5 SC
Club	1	—	—	—	—	1H	1 SC
Cudgel	2	—	—	—	—	1H	20 BC
Dagger	1	—	—	2/4/6	1/1	1H	1 SC 15 BC

HAND WEAPONS							
NAME	DMG	MIN	D	R	ROF	SZ	COST
Falchion	7	—	—	—	—	1H	14 SC
Halberd	7	8 Brawn	-3	—	—	2H	25 SC
Knife	1	—	—	1/2/3	1/1	1H	1 SC
Kris	2	—	+1	—	—	1H	4 SC
Lance	5	8 Brawn	-2	—	—	2H	10 SC
Mace	3	—	—	—	—	1H	5 SC
Main Gauche	1	8 Quickness	+3	—	—	1H	20 SC
Maul	4	9 Brawn	-1	—	—	2H	7 SC
Morningstar	3	8 Quickness	—	—	—	1H	5 SC
Net	Spec	8 Quickness	+1	5	1/1	2H	4 SC
Pike	5	8 Brawn	-1	—	—	2H	3 SC
Poniard	2	—	—	—	—	1H	5 SC
Rapier	2	—	+2	—	—	2H	12 SC
Scimitar	5	—	—	—	—	1H	13 SC
Seax	2	—	—	—	—	1H	4 SC
Scythe	3	8 Quickness	-3	—	—	2H	7 SC
Staff	2	—	+1	—	—	2H	10 SC
Sword, Short	3	—	+1	—	—	1H	7 SC
Sword, Long	7	—	—	—	—	1H	10 SC
Sword, Two Handed	14	9 Brawn	-2	—	—	2H	15 SC
Warhammer	3	—	—	—	—	1H	5 SC

**Notes**

*Dmg:* The damage for the weapon damage

*Min:* The minimum ability you need to use the weapon. If you do not meet the minimum you are still able to use the weapon but suffer a -4 penalty.

*R:* Ranges are listed in feet for Small, Medium and Long Range

*RoF:* Rate of Fire tells you how many attacks you can make in one round.



RANGED WEAPONS							
NAME	DMG	MIN	D	R	ROF	SZ	COST
Blowgun	—	—	—	5/10/15	1/1	2H	3 SC
Blowgun Dart	1	—	—	—	—	—	5 IC each
Bow, Short	—	—	—	50/100/150	2/1	2H	25 SC
Bow, Long	—	9 Brawn	—	60/120/240	2/1	2H	50 SC
Arrow	2	—	—	—	—	—	10 BC each
Crossbow, Light	—	—	—	30/60/90	1/1	2H	30 SC
Crossbow, Heavy	—	9 Brawn	—	20/40/80	1/2	2H	60 SC
Bolt	3	—	—	—	—	—	1 CC each
Javelin	4	—	—	25/50/100	1/1	1H	1 SC
Sling	—	8 Quickness	—	25/50/75	1/1	1H	20 SC
Stone	1	—	—	—	—	—	5 IC each
Spear	3	—	+1	14/30/60	1/1	—	30 SC
Trident	2	—	+1	2/4/6	1/1	—	5 SC

#### Notes

*Dmg:* The damage for the weapon damage

*Min:* The minimum ability you need to use the weapon. If you do not meet the minimum you are still able to use the weapon but suffer a -4 penalty.

*R:* Ranges are listed in feet for Small, Medium and Long Range

*RoF:* Rate of Fire tells you how many attacks you can make in one round

## DESCRIPTIONS

**Ahir:** Found mainly in Beidha, this sword has a heavy, thick blade with a curve greater than a scimitar. The heavy blade allows the wielder to inflict deeper cuts on his opponents.

**Blackjack:** A blackjack is a small, leather club favored by muggers.

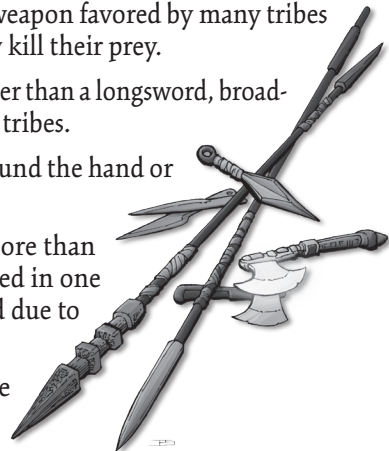
**Blowgun:** Blowguns are tubes 2'-4' in length which are breathed through at one end, and fire darts which are blown out of the other end. Darts do little damage on their own, but are often coated with poison. This is a weapon favored by many tribes as well as assassins, who look for a way to silently kill their prey.

**Broadsword:** Heavier, and with a blade a little wider than a longsword, broadswords tend to be favored by northern barbarian tribes.

**Cestus:** A spiked, metal gauntlet worn either around the hand or built into a glove.

**Club:** A club is a crude blunt weapon — little more than a roughly shaped piece of wood — that can be used in one hand. Unlike a cudgel, clubs tend to be weighted due to bands of iron welded around it.

**Cudgel:** A small club, usually carved from a tree root, or from a piece of wood with a rounded knot.



**Falchion:** This is a one-handed sword with a wide curved blade, resembling an oversized cleaver.

**Knife:** Unlike a dagger, a knife is designed to be used for cutting, slicing, and as a backup weapon. Unlike a dagger, which can be thrown, a knife is not as effective when used as a missile.

**Kris:** This dagger's blade is wavy and designed to cause more damage due to the weapon's jagged edge.

**Main Gauche:** This is a fencing dagger with a double edge and two parallel prongs jutting out from the handle which are designed to catch an opponent's sword.

**Maul:** This is a larger version of a warhammer, and is used two-handed. A heavy weapon, it is favored by those who are strong, who want to sacrifice speed for the ability to cause as much damage as possible.

**Net:** Nets designed to be used in combat, typically some 6' to 9' in diameter. They are designed to knock an opponent off their feet, as well as entangle them, thus making it hard for them to move. **Successfully** hitting a target with a net requires the target to make a **Quickness Test**, with failure resulting in their losing their balance and falling to the ground. They remain entangled until they succeed at a Quickness Test. While entangled, they suffer a -2 to all **Tests** due to their loss of balance and lack of mobility.

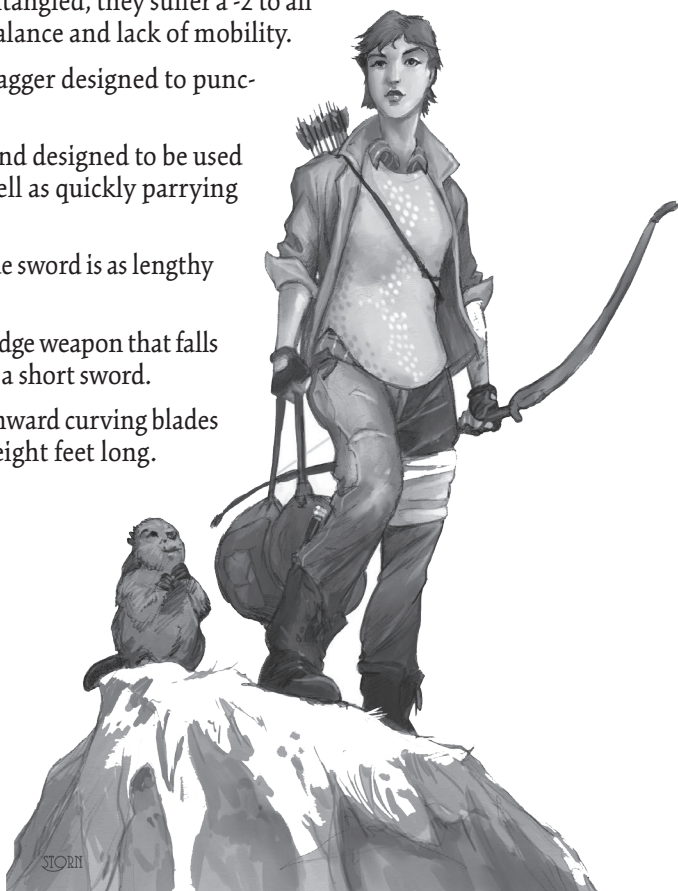
**Poniard:** A thin, bladed dagger designed to puncture armor.

**Rapier:** A sword flexible and designed to be used mainly for thrusting, as well as quickly parrying attacks.

**Scimitar:** This curving blade sword is as lengthy as a longsword.

**Seax:** This is a large single edge weapon that falls in size between a knife and a short sword.

**Scythe:** Scythes are long, inward curving blades mounted on a shaft six to eight feet long.



SIEGE AND ARTILLERY						
TYPE	CREW	DMG	BLAST	R	ROF	COST
Ballista, Light	1	4	–	10/20/30	1/10	2 GC
Ballista, Medium	2	5	–	10/20/30	1/16	3 GC
Ballista, Heavy	4	7	–	12/24/36	1/20	4 GC
Battering Ram	4 to 8	4	–	–/–/–	1/1	2 GC 50 SC
Catapult, Light	1	4	10'	–/–/30	1/10	2 GC 50 SC
Catapult, Medium	3	5	15'	–/–/35	1/16	3 GC 50 SC
Catapult, Heavy	5	6	20'	–/–/40	1/20	5 GC
Trebuchet	5	6	20'	–/–/50	1/20	7 GC 50 SC

#### Notes

*Crew:* How many are needed to use the weapon.

*DMG:* Damage for siege and artillery weapons are handled in the same way as all weapon damage: 2d12 + Artillery Rank + DV equal total damage.

*Blast:* All within that area suffer damage.

*Range:* Ranges are listed in feet for Long Range. Artillery weapons are not effective at any other range.

*RoF:* Rate of Fire tells you how many rounds it takes between attacks. 1/10 means it is one attack per ten rounds.

**Ballista:** A large crossbow which is mounted on a sturdy platform, and fires bolts the size of spears.

**Battering Ram:** A large heavy tree usually banded with iron, and used to break down wooden walls or doors.

**Catapult:** Catapults consists of a frame with a wooden pole that has a basket or bowl at one end. The pole is pulled back, and when released, fires a projectile at a target.

**Trebuchet:** A trebuchet is a long pole with a sling on one end and a heavy weight on the other. When the pole is pulled down, the sling is loaded, then it is released.

## ARMOR

**Breastplate:** A breastplate covers your front and your back and consists of metal plates

**Brigandine:** A cloth garment, typically canvas or leather, lined with small oblong steel plates that are riveted to the fabric.

**Chain:** Made with metal rings it hangs from the shoulders and protects both your front and back. The armor falls as far as your knees.

**Full Plate:** Encasing your entire body with heavy plates of armor, to aid in wearing it the armor is made up of different pieces and buckled to your body when worn. Unlike the majority of armor, Full Plate must be made to fit your body, and only your body.

ARMOR		
TYPE	AV	COST
Breastplate	10	15 SC
Brigandine	15	25 SC
Chain	35	40 SC
Full Plate	50	2 GC
Furs	25	25 SC
Leather	20	20 SC
Plate	45	60 SC
Quilt Armor	10	20 SC
Ring Armor	20	23 SC
Scale	30	30 SC
Studded	25	25 SC

**Furs:** Some animals have such thick hides that by curing them they offer a form of protection. Unlike leather armor, furs are lighter and have the look of the creature it was taken from.

**Leather:** By boiling leather in oil and working it over various forms, leather armor is a good form of protection if you want to travel light. Having a breastplate that covers your front and back, it also has reinforced shoulders. The rest of the armor is soft and supple allowing you to move easily.

**Plate:** A combination of chain and metal plates this is a good choice if you want more protection, but not the weight of full plate. The breastplate, shoulders, elbow guards, gauntlets, and greaves are made from metal, while chain attached to the breast plate hangs like a skirt protecting your waste and the back of your legs.

**Quilt:** Quilt armor consists of two layers of a thick heavy fabric with thick cotton sandwiched between them.

**Ring:** Constructed as a series of metallic rings sewn to a fabric or leather foundation, ring armor is often wrongly referred to as chain mail.

**Scale:** Consisting of a leather coat which hangs to your knees it has attached to it interlocking metal plates resembling a fish scale (but only bigger).

**Studded:** This is a more protective version of leather armor, and has small leather rings sewn across it that offer more protection against slashing weapons.

SHIELDS

**Buckler:** This is a small metal disc, no more than 2 feet in diameter. The shield is used as a parrying aid, and due to its size, the buckler gives a +1 bonus to Defend Tests. Because of its size, you can use a buckler in conjunction with a dagger, knife, poniard or kris.

**Kite:** Typically 6 feet tall, and is made out of wood reinforced with metal. The shield is large enough to allow to serve as barrier for others to shoot behind, or as a movable war capable of pushing your enemy back. Due to their large size you need a minimum of **Brawn 9** to use this.

**Shield:** Anything made from wood, metal, shell or a combination serves as a means of protection. Due to having your shield strapped to your opposite arm you are unable to use 2-handed and ranged weapons.

TYPE	DEFEND	COST
Buckler	+1	2 SC
Kite	+4	20 SC
Shield, Small	+1	6 SC
Shield, Medium	+2	10 SC
Shield, Large	+3	14 SC

HELMETS

**Animal:** Be it a lion, a tiger, or a bear (oh my) you can choose to wear their head as a helmet into battle. Besides looking rather kick ass, any hit to the head they take has the damage reduced by 2 points.

**Small:** Either a cap, or an open face construction, small helmets offer you some protection from head attacks. As a result

TYPE	COST
Animal	1 SC
Small	5 SC
Large	10 SC

it reduces the damage to the head by half. In addition it does not obstruct your view.

**Large:** Made from metal and totally encasing your head, the large helmet has two benefits for you. First it is the best protection you can find and nullifies any damage to the head. Second, it is intimidating. However, with only a slit in front of your eyes it makes your sight a challenge. As a result any **Tests** involving sight suffer a -1 penalty.

## BARDING

Barding is much like the armor worn by warriors, but it is designed to be worn by horses.

**Chain:** This type of barding is constructed out of small, interlocked metal rings which offer more flexible protection to a horse.

**Leather:** This type of barding is made from leather strips, sewn together to offer limited protection to a horse.

**Plate:** The heaviest type of barding, this is made out of small metal plates which are linked with chain. Very heavy, and only the strongest of horses can easily wear this.

**Scale:** Constructed from plates of leather with metal plates sewn to them, this offers better protection than leather barding.

TYPE	AV	COST
Chain	35	1 GC 50 SC
Leather	20	40 SC
Plate	45	5 GC
Scale	30	75 SC



EQUIPMENT, TRAVEL & SERVICES

GEAR	
ITEM	COST
Backpack	5 SC
Belt	2 CC
Walking Shoes	1 SC 6 CC
Boots, Plain	30 CC
Boots, Hard	5 SC
Boots, Riding	1 SC, 15 CC
Sandals	12 BC
Flask of Oil	2 SC
Cloak, Short	20 CC
Cloak, Long	5 SC
Clothes, Plain	20 CC
Clothes, Common	5 SC
Clothes, Fine	15 SC
Clothes, Wealthy	25+ SC
Jacket, Light	10 SC
Jacket, Heavy	20 SC
Loincloth	8 IC
Sleeping Shift	2 SC
Hammer	2 SC
Grappling Hook	25 SC
Hat, cap or hood	10 CC
Holy Symbol	25 SC
Iron Spike	5 BC
Iron Spikes (10)	2 CC
Lantern	10 SC
Mirror	5 SC

GEAR	
ITEM	COST
10' Pole	1 SC
Belt Pouch	10 CC
Quiver	1 SC
50' Rope	1 SC
Sack, Small	12 CC
Sack, Large	24 CC
Mapcase	10 SC 15 CC
Ink (1 oz.)	6+ SC
Quills (12)	15 CC
Parchment (5 sq. ft.)	4 SC
Paper (12 sheets)	11 CC
Mallet	30 CC
Wooden Stake	2 IC
Thieves Tools	1 GC
Flint & Steel	1 SC
Tinder Box	3 SC
Torch	10 BC
Candles (6)	2 CC, 10 IC
Water/Wineskin	1 SC
Sleeping Sack	16 SC
Bedroll, Light	8 SC
Bedroll, Heavy	12 SC
Blanket, Light	1+ SC
Blanket, Heavy	3+SC



## LAND TRAVEL

**Camel:** Camels are the primary mode of transportation for nomads of the deserts, residents of the oases, and other arid dry ares.

**Cart:** Carts are two-wheeled vehicles which are able to be pulled by one or two horses. As an option, carts can have a bench attached to allow for a driver.

**Horse, Draft:** Powerful horses, draft horses are known for their ability to not only carry heavy loads, but work with a team of such animals and pull heavy loads for long distances.

**Horse, Riding:** The most common horse.

**Horse, War:** Smaller than a draft horse, but larger than a riding horse, war horses are trained for combat.

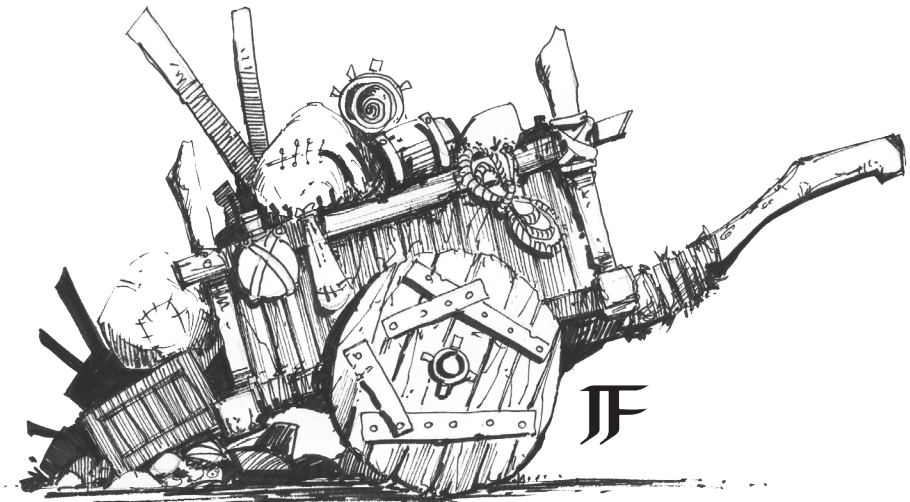
**Pony:** A young horse.

**Saddle and Tack:** Including a saddle, blanket, bridle, and reins, this is everything you need to ride a horse.

**Saddle Bags:** Nothing more than a pair of sacks sewn together and slung over a horse's saddle in order to distribute the weight evenly.

**Wagon:** A large four-wheeled vehicle, pulled by either a 2-horse team or a 4-horse team, wagons are used for transporting not only cargo, but can also be converted to carry passengers, as well as to serve as a mobile house.

TYPE	COST
Camel	1 GC
Cart, 1 Horse	4 GC
Cart, 2 Horses	8 GC
Horse, Draft	40 SC 18 CC
Horse, Riding	4 GC
Horse, War	25 GC
Pony	80 SC
Saddle and tack	25 SC
Saddle Bag	5 SC 20 IC
Wagon, 2 Horses	18 GC
Wagon, 4 Horses 250	24 GC



WATER TRAVEL

Ships and boats need a skilled crew to man them, while some need unskilled rowers as well. If more than five crew are required, there must be a captain, and if more than fifteen crew are required, not only must there be a captain, but there must be a first mate as well.

BOAT TYPE	COST	CREW	PASSENGERS	MILES/DAY
Barge	5 GC	2/8 Rowers	2	36
Canoe	30 SC	2	–	18
Caravel	300 GC	40	20	80
Galley	250 GC	10/50 Rowers	100	90
Longboat	150 GC	75	150	85
Outrigger	75 SC	1	–	18
Rowing Boat	1 GC	1	6	18
Skiff	1 GC	1	–	72
Sloop	30 GC	10	10	72

**Barge:** A flat-bottomed boat that has no sail, and that typically ranges between 20’-30’ long and 10’ wide, a barge is used not only for moving cargo, but can also serve as a ferry as well.

**Canoe:** This small boat is typically no more than 15 feet in length and 3 feet in width. Canoes are typically made from waterproof leather or cloth which is stretched over a wooden frame. Canoes can also be constructed from a dug out tree, as well as bark overlapping a wooden frame. Canoes have either one or two seats, and are meant to be used on rivers, swamps, lakes, and ponds.

**Caravel:** Either a two- or three-masted ship, caravels are typically 70 feet in length and about 20 feet wide. Caravels have two decks, as well as multiple levels at the fore and aft of the ship.

**Galley:** A galley is an ocean-going ship between 60’-100’ in length and 10’-15’ in width. Galleys are not only able to sail oceans, but are capable of sailing rivers that are wide enough to accommodate them.

**Longboat:** A longship is a single-masted boat between 60’-80’ in length and 10’-15’ in width. Longships are designed for trade as well as to move troops along rivers and coasts. The 75 crew normally act as both rowers and warriors. This boat is favored by the tribes in the north.

**Outrigger:** Nothing more than a canoe which has a hull running parallel with the boat attached to one side. Outriggers are able to have one or two hulls attached. A single-hull outrigger is perfectly suited for coastal waters, while two-hulled outriggers are able to brave the deepest oceans and seas.

**Rowing Boat:** A small boat no more than 20 feet in length and 5 feet in width, rowing boats are typically used to move people and goods between ship and shore. They are often used as lifeboats on larger vessels as well.

**Skiff:** A skiff is a single-masted boat between 15’-45’ in length and 5’-15’ in width.

Designed for lakes and coastal waters, they are also used from time to time for river travel. Skiffs are commonly used as fishing boats.

**Sloop:** A sloop is a one- or two-masted ocean going ship ranging between 60'-80' in length and 20'- 30' in width.

## BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION

Prices for buildings have the cost of the unskilled and/or semi-skilled labor required for building construction already included. Prices do not include the cost of hiring an architect, foremen, and engineers (all of whom are vital in the construction of any structure). It takes 5 GC/day to build a structure, as well as requiring the presence of one engineer. This cost is based on the assumption that construction takes place in a remote, yet accessible, location. If it is being built in an inaccessible place – a mountain top, the middle of a raging river, on an island only accessible at low tide – the cost is doubled. If building in a more civilized location – such as the edge of town or even in a town – the costs are half.

BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION	
ITEM	COST
Arrow Slit	10 SC
Barbican	370 GC
Battlement (50')	2 GC 50 SC/50-feet
Building, Stone	300 GC
Building, Wood	150 GC
Corridor, Dungeon	5 GC/20-feet
Door, Secret	Cost × 5
Door, Exterior (Iron/Stone)	1 GC
Door, Interior (Iron/Stone)	50 SC
Door, Interior (Reinforced)	25 SC
Door, Interior (Wood)	10 SC
Drawbridge	2 GC 50 SC
Floor, Flagstone	1 GC 25 SC/10-feet
Floor, Marble	1 GC 25 SC/10-feet
Floor, Tile	75 SC/10-feet
Floor, Wood	20 SC/10-feet
Gate, Wooden	10 GC
Gate, Metal	20 GC
Gatehouse	65 GC
Keep, Round	1000 GC
Keep, Square	750 GC
Moat, Filled	8 GC

BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION	
ITEM	COST
Moat, Unfilled	4 GC
Shutters, Window	1 SC 10 IP each
Staircase, Stone	10 GC 25 CC/10-feet
Staircase, Wood	50 SC 12 IC/10-feet
Tower, Bastion	9 GC
Tower, Round Large	300 GC
Tower, Round Small	150 GC
Trap Door	Cost × 2
Wall, Stone	50 GC/25-feet
Wall, Wood	10 GC/25-feet
Window, Barred	60 SC 15 CC each
Window, Open	10 SC each

### DESCRIPTIONS

**Arrow Slit:** A narrow window slit designed to let defenders shoot out whilst not exposing them to return fire.

**Barbican:** Two 30' × 20' towers that flank a 20' square gatehouse, with a built-in iron portcullis. This is a single unit.

**Battlement (50'):** This is 50' of crenelated wall with a parapet behind it. Price includes crenelations and parapet, not the wall that the battlement is on.

**Building, Stone:** This is a two-story stone building. Need to add windows, doors, stairs and flooring.

**Building, Wood:** A two-story wooden building. Need to add windows, doors, stairs and flooring.

**Corridor, Dungeon:** A 10' × 10' × 10' section excavated from rock. Depending on the depth of the dungeon – in multiples of 50' – digging a 10' × 10' × 10' section at a depth of 150' will cost triple the listed price.

**Door, Secret:** A door disguised and hidden so it is unnoticeable unless searched for. Must be added on to a existing door.

**Door, Exterior (Iron/Stone):** Measuring 7' in height and 6' in width, this is a heavy double door.

**Door, Interior (Iron/Stone):** Measuring 7' in height and 3' in width, this is a heavy double door.

**Door, Interior (Reinforced):** A wooden internal door reinforced with iron bands.

**Door, Interior (Wood):** A standard wooden internal door.

**Drawbridge:** A 10' wide, 20' long reinforced wooden bridge that is raised or lowered to allow access to a fortified area.

**Floor, Flagstone:** Section of floor covered in flagstones, measuring 10' × 10'.

**Floor, Marble:** Section of floor covered in marble, measuring 10' × 10'.

**Floor, Tile:** Section of floor covered in tiles, measuring 10' × 10'.

**Floor, Wood:** A floor covered in polished fitted wood, measuring 10' × 10'.

**Gate, Metal:** A 20' tall by 10' wide gate, suitable for putting in a stockade wall.

**Gate, Wooden:** A 20' tall by 10' wide gate, suitable for putting in a stockade wall.

**Gatehouse:** A 30' high building portcullis. Need to add windows, doors, stairs and flooring.

**Keep, Round:** A heavily reinforced area.

**Keep, Square:** A heavily reinforced area.

**Moat, Filled:** Nothing more than a wide canal with each section measuring 100' long, 10' deep and 20' wide. To surround a castle, keep or other structure sections need to be dug and linked together, otherwise, you simply have a trench. Monsters and alligators are not included in the price.

**Moat, Unfilled:** Nothing more than a wide canal with each section measuring 100' long, 10' deep and 20' wide. To surround a castle, keep or other structure, sections need to be dug and linked together, otherwise, you simply have a trench. Monsters and alligators are not included in the price.

**Shutters, Window:** Window shutters provide no defense, but do protect against bad weather.

**Staircase, Stone:** A stone staircase.

**Staircase, Wood:** A wooden staircase.

**Tower, Bastion:** A half-circle tower that measures 30' in height and 30' in diameter.

**Tower, Round Large:** A 30' tall, 30' in diameter round tower.

**Tower, Round Small:** A 30' tall, 20' in diameter round tower.

**Trap Door:** This is nothing more than a 5' × 5' section of floor with an opening mechanism allowing for anyone to drop through a hole in the floor. This is added to either a wood or stone door and is placed on the floor.

**Wall, Stone:** 100' in length, some 20' tall and 5' thick reinforced stone wall, with a walkway and battlements on the top.

**Wall, Wood:** 100' in length, some 20' tall and 5' thick reinforced wooden wall, with a walkway on the top.

**Window, Barred:** A 3' × 1' window with bars preventing anyone from entering.

**Window, Open:** A 3' × 1' open window.

## MERCENARIES

Unless noted, assume all mercenaries wear normal, standard clothing.

**Archer:** Armed with a short bow and sword, and wearing leather armor.

**Cavalry:** The typical cavalryman is armed with a sword and lance, and wears leather armor, while their horse sports leather barding. Other types of cavalry wear either plate or chain mail, while their horses wear either plate or chain barding.

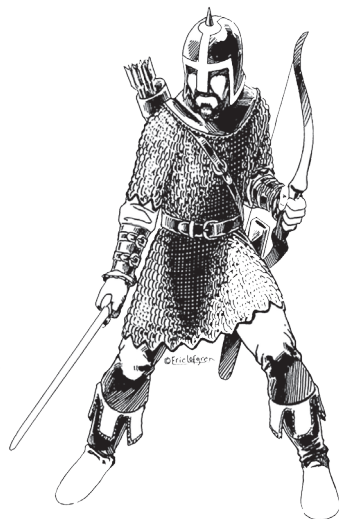
**Crossbowman:** Armed with a crossbow, they wear chain mail.

**Footman:** Armed with sword and shield, they often wear either chain or leather armor. They are often called Sell-swords by many as well.

**Longbowman:** Armed with longbow and a short sword, they typically wear breast plates.

**Militia:** Commoners armed with spears, and wearing a helmet.

MERCENARIES	
TYPE	COST/MONTH
Archer	5 SC/month
Cavalry	15 SC/month
Crossbowman	4 SC/month
Footman	3 SC/month
Longbowman	10 SC/month
Militiaman	1 SC/month



SPECIALISTS

HIRELINGS, SERVICES & SPECIALISTS	
TYPE	COST
Alchemist	6 GC/month
Animal Trainer	1 GC/month
Armorer	2 GC 30 SC/ month
Artillerist	7 GC/month
Bailiff	30 SC/month
Blacksmith	12 SC/month
Castellan	20 GC/month
Chamberlain	5 GC/month
Craftsman	1 GC/month
Engineer	7 GC 20 SC/month
Healer	1 GC/month
Herbalist	75 SC/month
Lawyer	2 GC/month
Magistrate	20 GC/month
Marshal	5 GC 30 SC 10 CC/month
Rower	20 SC/month
Sage	5 GC/month
Sailor	25 SC/month
Scribe	2 GC/month
Sheriff	80 SC 20 CC/month
Ship's Captain	2 GC 50 SC/month
Ship's Navigator	1 GC 25 SC/month
Sorcerer	5+ GC/month
Stableman	12 SC/month
Steward	1 GC/month
Warden	50 SC 35 CC 15 IC/month

**Animal Trainer:** Animal trainers domesticate and train animals.

**Armorer:** Armorers create and repair armor, and you need one for every 50 soldiers, regardless of whether the troops are con-scripted or mercenaries.

**Artillerist:** An artillerist is in charge of the placement, maintenance, and operation of siege weapons.

**Bailiff:** The Bailiff is an official looking

after a portion of an entire castle, making sure that the stronghold is in good repair.

**Blacksmith:** A blacksmith makes simple metal goods.

**Castellan:** A castellan oversees all military aspects of a stronghold.

**Chamberlain:** A person overseeing the management of a stronghold's cleaning and cooking staff.

**Craftsman:** This is a catch-all category, and covers such occupations as cobblers, coopers, bakers, candle makers, butchers, milliners, and so forth.

**Engineer:** An engineer oversees the design and construction of buildings, roads, bridges, and other large scale structures. One engineer is needed per 100,000 cost of a building project.

**Guard Captain:** A guard captain is in charge of not only the ruler's personal guard but the guarding of the entire stronghold.

**Healer:** Skilled in the art of medicine and healing, they are handy to have around when you have a bone to set, wound to heal or sickness to cure.

**Herald:** A herald makes announcements, and is also in charge of maintaining up-to-date news on the rulers of nearby lands.

**Herbalist:** Skilled in the art of plants and their use.

**Lawyer:** Someone skilled in the law, and serving as your legal representative in all legal matters.

**Magistrate:** In charge of administering all justice within a **Domain**, and also overseeing the common magistrates and sheriffs.

**Marshal:** A marshal oversees the recruiting and training of troops.

**Rower:** A rower is someone who rows in a galley.

**Sage:** A sage is someone who specializes in history and lore.

**Sailor:** Skilled in the operating and maintaining of ships and boats.

**Scribe:** Is in charge of book-keeping and accounts within a stronghold, in addition to the transcriptions and pen proclamations.

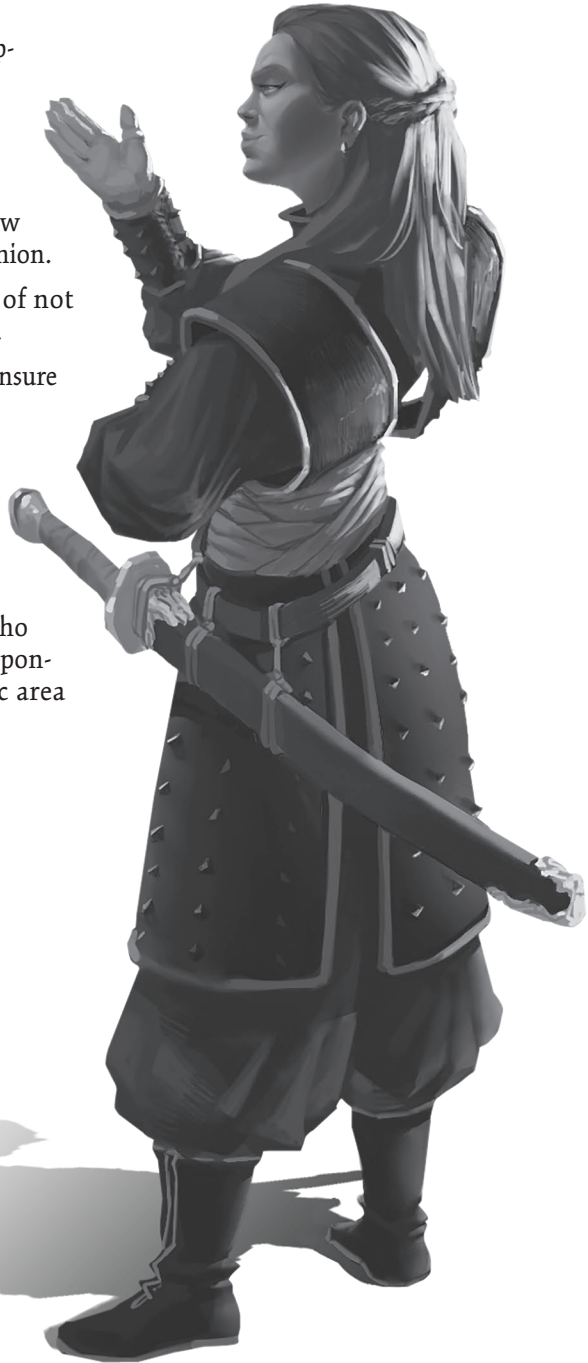
**Sheriff:** Responsible for law enforcement in an area of dominion.

**Ship's Captain:** Is in charge of not only a ship but the entire crew.

**Ship's Navigator:** Navigators ensure a ship does not get lost.

**Steward:** A steward oversees all household affairs, including housekeeping and maintaining food supplies.

**Warden:** A military advisor who reports to a castellan, and is responsible for defending a specific area within the **Domain**.





# CHAPTER

# 7

## MASS COMBAT

**A**s you grow in fame and prestige, eventually you come into contact with armies. The world of **Shadow, Sword & Spell** is a violent one, and various powers clash in battle. The rules governing Mass Combat are straightforward and allow you to quickly run mass combat on the table top. These rules cover small squads as well as large armies. These simple rules are designed to allow you, the Gamemaster and other players to fight out battles involving these armies quickly and easily.

## BASICS

This system is designed to be narrative in scope. Mass Combat is very complex, and typically involves miniatures, counters, and terrain, as well as a lot of time. This is not a knock against wargames and miniatures. Hell, growing up, wargames and miniature wargaming consumed a lot of my free time. However, for a roleplaying game, the needs are different. Often war, or a clash of armies, is just one small facet of an adventure. There isn't a need to have a detailed, drawn out battle. Instead, mass combat for *Shadow, Sword & Spell* has been reduced down to a few simple dice rolls. This system is designed to allow not only armies but small units to clash. It allows the you to deal with Mass Combat quickly and efficiently.



Before going into detail, it's important to note all armies have six basic elements. No matter the type of troops, these common elements quickly allow you to assess the strength or weakness of various troops. These elements are: **Unit Type**, **Unit Rating**, **Quality**, **Size**, **Engagement Rating**, and.

**Unit Type** is simply the type of unit with which one is dealing. The **Unit Type** can be infantry, cavalry, and the like.

**Unit Rating** is a simple stat taking into account a unit's training, skills, abilities, and the like. Over time, this stat can and does improve.

**Quality** is not only partially based on the **Unit Rating**, but takes into account the weapons, armor, mounts, and any other type of special abilities that the unit might have.



**Size** is a simple concept, and is mainly comes down to the number of soldiers found in the unit.

**Engagement Score** is the number used to determine if you win or lose a battle.

**Hooks** are, well, **Hooks**. They are similar to the individual **Hooks** you and others have.

Combat typically involves two armies declaring tactics, taking the calculated **Engagement Scores**, a few other factors, and then rolling 2d12. This result is added to the **Engagement Score**, and whichever side has the highest number, wins. Combat continues until one side is destroyed, retreats or surrenders.

With the basics out of the way, let's go into detail about how the system works.

## ARMIES

Armies are comprised of a number of units, ranging in size and type. Armies are controlled by you, as well as the other players. When armies take to the field, the army with the highest **Quality** chooses their opponent and this is followed by the next highest **Quality**, and so on. There is no limit to the number of units which can attack an opposing unit.

### UNIT TYPE

The **Unit Type** is a simple concept that serves as a brief description of what that unit is. The table below shows you the breakdown of the **Unit Types** found in the game.

UNIT RATING	
TYPE OF TROOP	RATING
Untrained	3
Poor	6
Below Average	9
Fair	12
Average	15
Good	18
Excellent	21
Elite	24

UNIT TYPE			
TYPE	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE	STARTING UNIT RATING
Infantry, Light	Poor offense, poor defense, cheap	Peasant militia	Below Average
Infantry, Medium	Good offense, good defense, average cost	Trained soldiers	Fair
Infantry, Heavy	Great offense, great defense, expensive	Knights on foot	Average
Mounted, Light	Good offense, poor defense, cheap	Barbarian Horsemen	Fair
Mounted, Medium	Good offense, good defense, average cost	Mounted soldiers	Fair
Mounted, Heavy	Great offense, great defense	Mounted knights	Average
Artillery, Light	Good offense, poor defense	Peasant Archers	Average
Artillery, Medium	Good offense, good defense	Trained Archers	Average
Artillery, Heavy	Great offense, good defense	Siege engines	Fair
Skirmishers, Foot	Good offense, poor defense, fast movement	Assassins, Scouts	Fair
Skirmishers, Mounted	Good offense, good defense, fast movement	Mounted Scouts	Fair
Creature, Large	Good offense, good defense, hard to control	Elephants	Fair

### UNIT RATING

**Unit Rating** is based on several factors: training, experience, and toughness. This rating ranges between *Untrained* and *Elite*.

So how is the **Unit Rating** decided? The Unit Rating table gives you the starting **Unit**

**Rating** for each type of unit. Each year a unit stays active and does not disband, it gains a new level to the **Rating**, up to the maximum of *Average*. The only way to raise a unit's **Rating** above an *Average* is through the actual engaging and winning of combat and battles. Each victory a unit wins causes their **Rating** to rise to the next level. Any time a unit is routed in battle, their **Rating** drops by a level.

## MIXING TROOPS

Sometimes two types of units need to be combined to form a much larger army. Sometimes new soldiers need to be added to a unit to replace those lost in battle. This merging of units or adding new soldiers to replace those lost in battle has an effect on the **Rating**, and actually adjusts it lower. Compare the two ratings of both units, and reduce the **Rating** by one rank based on the Rating of the unit with the higher value.

For example, you have a unit of 50 Heavy Infantry with a Rating of Good. You bolster this number with an additional 50 troops, whose Rating is Fair. Looking at the two ratings, you make the new unit's Rating Average.

## QUALITY

The **Quality** of a **Unit** is determined by the **Unit Rating** table. Each **Rating** has a **Quality** which is the starting total for a unit.

## SIZE

How many troops does the unit have? If you have the money to field that many troops, that is the size of the **Unit**.

## COMBAT

Combat is fast and simple. Before doing anything, you need to determine if any of the



sides in the combat is defending. Basically a side that is defending is waiting for the attackers to arrive. **Defending** pretty much covers anything from staffing a keep to holding the high ground. If no one side is **Defending**, then **Initiative** is determined. Each side rolls a d12, and the highest number wins. The winner decides which units they are attacking.

There are three steps all battles have in common: **Determine Tactics**, **Calculate Engagement Score**, and then **Battle!** (that is, roll the dice and decide the outcome!).

STEP ONE: TACTICS

Each side in a battle decides what their tactics will be for the battle in question. This is a single decision made for the entire army as a whole. This is done not only to make book-keeping easy, as well as the mass combat easier, but it takes into account the fact that each army’s units are working together to achieve a specific goal.

TACTICS						
TACTIC	ATTACK	SURROUND	HOLD	CHARGE	SNARE	RETREAT
Attack	+10 CA	+10 CA	—	-20 ES	+10 CA	+10 ES
Surround	-10 ES	—	+30 CA +20 ES	+10 CA	-10 CA	+10 ES
Hold	-10 CA	+20 CA	No Combat	+20 CA	+20 CA	No Combat
Charge	+20 CA	+10 ES	+10 CA +10 ES	+20 CA	+20 CA	+20 ES
Snare	+10 ES	-20 ES	-20 ES	+20 CA	—	-10 CA
Retreat	+20 CA	-10 CA	No Combat	+30 CA	-10 CA	No Combat

CA = Casualty  
ES = Engagement Score

TACTIC DESCRIPTIONS

ATTACK

This is pretty straightforward and the most effective, in which both sides attack each other. This is one of the better tactics to use against forces that are **Holding** or **Retreating**, but it is more risky against other types of tactics. However, no matter the risk, this is the most effective tactic to employ.

SURROUND

The army is attempting to surround the enemy from all sides, and means to pin them in. This is a tactic that is very effective against forces who are Holding.

HOLD

Like **Attack**, this is a straightforward tactic. The army is staying put, holding their ground, and waiting for the action to come to them. For armies that are staffing a fortification or manning a fort, this is pretty much the default tactic.

### CHARGE

One of the most deadly attacks. Charging allows you to attempt to overrun an opponent and get through their first line of defense. Charging is a tactic that has both a high risk and a high reward. The reward is that it can kill many troops. The risk is that it leaves the attacker open to a counter-attack.

### SNARE

This tactic is one when you are trying to lure the opponent into making an attack when they are not ready, or do not know the full scope of your forces. A snare is a classic bluff that is often employed against an opponent who might be unwilling to commit to an attack.

### RETREAT

Put simply, you are leaving the field of battle. Instead of fighting, your forces are more concerned with getting out of harm's way than fighting.

For the purposes of these rules, each side would write down their Tactic, and then each side declares their Tactic simultaneously. Once the Tactics are known, the **Tactics Table** should be used to see what effect the tactics play on the battle. The effect is one of several things: a modifier to the number of **Casualties**, a change in the **Engagement Score**, the fact that combat does not take place, or there is no effect.

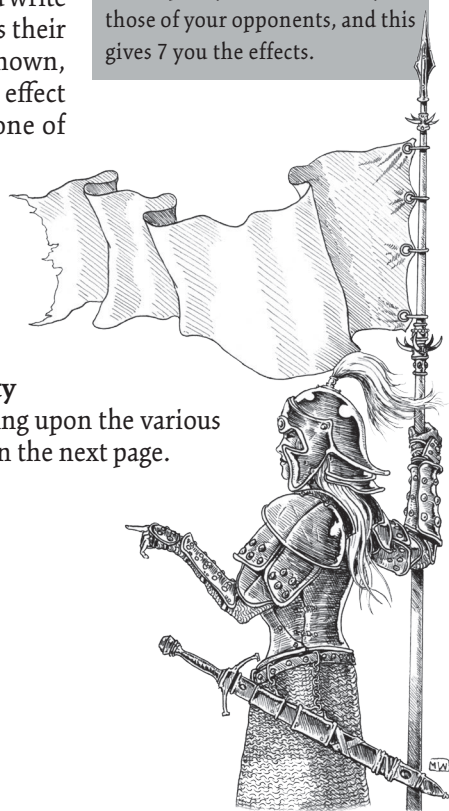
### STEP TWO: ENGAGEMENT SCORE

All armies have an **Engagement Score**, which is always equal to the **Army's Quality** (see above). This score rises and falls, depending upon the various conditions occurring as detailed in the table on the next page.

#### OPTION: ARMY TACTICS

This option allows each side of an Engagement to decide on a Unit level what the tactics are. This allows for one Unit to Charge, while another Evades, and so forth. This option allows for a little more strategy, although it does make the combat last longer, but it is a good option if you wish to run battles with a modicum more of choices, and with a little more complexity.

The following table lists the Tactics available, as well as the effect each of these Tactics has in combat. To use this table, you need to compare your Tactic(s) to your those of your opponents, and this gives 7 you the effects.



## ENGAGEMENT SCORE ADJUSTMENTS

SITUATION	ES CHANGE
Army outnumbered opponent less than 2 to 1	+1
Army outnumbered opponent 2 to 1	+2
Army outnumbered opponent 3 to 1	+3
Army outnumbered opponent 4 to 1	+4
Army outnumbered opponent 5 to 1	+5
Army outnumbered opponent 6 to 1	+6
Army outnumbered opponent 7 to 1	+7
Army outnumbered opponent 8 to 1	+8
Army outnumbered opponent 9 to 1	+9
Army outnumbered opponent 10 to 1	+10
Army outnumbered opponent 11 to 1	+11
Army outnumbered opponent 12 to 1	+12
Army outnumbered opponent 13 to 1	+13
Army outnumbered opponent 14 to 1	+14
Army outnumbered opponent 15 to 1 or greater	+15
Army is in the Domain of the Ruler	+3
Army has beaten the enemy before	+2
Unit Rating is two Ranks higher than opponent	+2
Attacker is springing an Ambush	+1
Allied force has been Routed	-5
Battle is at night	-2
Army has sun at their back	+2
Attacker besieging defender's Stronghold	+1/week
Siege Defender has no food	-1/week
Surprise attack by defender	+2
Mounted units fighting in woods, mountains, swamps or Stronghold	-4
Infantry fighting in swamp	-3
Archers fighting in woods or swamp	-2
Artillery fighting in swamp or woods	-5
Battle being fought in snow	-1
Battle being fought in the desert	-1
It is raining	-3
It is snowing	-6
Army is defending	+1

## ENGAGEMENT SCORE ADJUSTMENTS

SITUATION	ES CHANGE
Army has the high ground and is defending	+2
Defending a Stronghold	+4
Must cross shallow water	-1
Must cross deep water	-2
Defending a town	+2
Army has Medium Fatigue	-1
Army has Severe Fatigue	-3
Defending a narrow gap or pass	+4
Defending a Bridge	+5
Army has artillery	+3
Army is Retreating	-5
Army is Routed	-10
Army is advancing	+4
Unit is wearing no armor	-2
Unit is wearing leather armor	+2
Unit is wearing chain armor	+6
Unit is wearing plate armor	+12
Mounted unit attacking infantry	+2



## STEP THREE: BATTLE!

Once each side in a battle has calculated their final **Engagement Score**, each side rolls 2d12 and adds the result to the **Engagement Score**. Whoever has the highest total wins.

To determine the results of the battle, subtract the losing side's total from the winning side's total, and look at the result on Battle Result table. This table gives you the battle's effect on each side.

### RALLYING

Troops that have been routed are able to be rallied which has them regroup and no longer wanting to retreat from battle. You are able to rally any unit which is routed, and to do so requires a **Successful Diplomacy** test against a **Target Number** based on the number of troop a **Unit** lost.

**Success** in the rally test has the **Unit** no longer routed. It takes one turn for the **Unit**

RALLY TEST	
TROOPS LOST	TN
75%	32
50%	26
25%	22
15%	20
10%	18
5%	16

### BATTLE RESULT

ES DIFFERENCE	CASUALTIES	WINNER		CASUALTIES	LOSER	
		ACTION	FATIGUE		ACTION	FATIGUE
1-6	0	Hold	None	10	Hold	None
7-12	0	Hold	None	20	Hold	None
13-18	10	Hold	None	20	Retreat	Medium
19-24	10	Hold	None	30	Retreat	Medium
25-31	20	Retreat	Medium	40	Retreat	Medium
32-38 ★	0	Hold	None	30	Retreat	Medium
39-45	20	Advance	Medium	50	Retreat	Severe
46-52	30	Advance	Medium	60	Retreat	Severe
53-59	10	Advance	None	50	Retreat	Severe
60-66	0	Advance	None	30	Rout	Severe
67-73	10	Advance	None	70	Rout	Severe
74-80	10	Advance	None	70	Rout	Severe
81+	10	Advance	None	100	Rout	Severe

★ Maximum Result is winner's tactic was Hold

Casualties is the number of troops the army loses.

Action tells you the action that each Army takes as a result of the attack.

Hold: Army is standing their ground.

Retreat: The Army is leaving the field of battle. They are still able to attack.

Rout: Enemy is fleeing they are unable to counter attack.

Advance: Army is pressing the attack, and can continue to attack units who are retreating or that have been routed.

to regain their composure, and then on the following round they are able to once again enter into combat. Failing the **Rallying Test**, means the troops have not rallied and no matter how much effort is spent doing so, they refuse to get controlled of themselves and leave the field of battle.

STEP FOUR: AFTERMATH

Once each side has attacked, both sides note their casualties. The winner of the attack can decide if they want to continue fighting, and if so, the process begins again until one Army is completely destroyed or surrenders. If one side retreats from combat, then the battle is over. **Fatigue** plays a role as well, and depending on what level of **Fatigue** an Army has, their **ES** is adjusted:

- Medium Fatigue -3 ES
- Heavy Fatigue -6 ES
- Severe Fatigue -9 ES

STRONGHOLDS & SIEGES

Attacking or defending a Stronghold is handled in the same way as normal Mass Combat, with a few slight changes:

When figuring out the troop ratios in determining the Engagement Score, the defender has three times as many troops. This takes into account being within a Stronghold.

The defender takes only one-half the casualty total.

The defender ignores Retreat and Rout results.

Attackers wishing to lay siege can do so, and each week their Engagement Score is adjusted by +1. Defenders, when they run out of food, suffer not only a -1 adjustment to their Engagement Score each week, but also suffer double the number of casualties in combat.

Defenders are able to attack at anytime as long as their Tactic is not Hold. If the Defender does so, this gives them a one-time +2 Engagement Score bonus due to their launching the surprise attack.

HEROES & UNITS

Your Hero's Skills have a direct effect on a unit or the units they command. When a Hero commands a unit, her Tactics Skill raises the unit's ES by a number of points, as determined on Tactics ES Adjustment table.

In addition to the bonus to the Engagement Score, a Unit being led by a Hero is never Routed.

TACTICS ES ADJUSTMENT	
TACTICS SKILL	ES BONUS
1-3	+2
4-6	+4
7-9	+6
10-12	+8
13+	+10

HOOKS

Every unit has a **Hook**. **Hooks** are similar to the **Hooks** you have, but for **Units**, they

have the following effect. It should be noted that units do not have **Action Points**. Instead, they are able to invoke their **Hook** once per battle, and once invoked it cannot be used again during that conflict.

### **+5 ES BONUS**

By playing the **Unit's Hook**, the **Unit** can give themselves a **+5 ES Bonus** for the purposes of the combat. This bonus is only in effect for one **Engagement**; any follow-up combats due to pressing the attack do not receive the bonus.



### **BOOST QUALITY BY 1 LEVEL**

By playing the **Hook**, the **Unit** is able to raise their **Quality** for that combat by **1 Rank**.

## **BUILDING ARMIES**

So how do you build an army? With money.

To derive the cost of the Army, you simply find the cost of the soldier or mercenary type on the *Hireling, Services & Specialist Tables* found on page 132. In addition, you need to figure out the cost to arm the troops and provide them with armor and/or shields, and multiply that by the number of troops you want to purchase.

For example, you want to field a unit of 50 archers armed with longbows and short swords, and all wearing chainmail. Here is the cost breakdown.

Archer costs 5 SC

Chainmail is 40 SC

Longbow is 50 SC

20 Arrows is 8 CC

Shortsword is 7 SC

The total of this is 97 SC 8 CC.

Multiplying 97 SC 8 CC by 50 troops it costs you a total of 48 GC 58 SC to buy and field this unity. Remember, you must pay the monthly rates to keep the archers in your employ.

## **COMBAT EXAMPLE**

So, how does all of this work? Combat between Armies is easy, and once you go through

the process and run your first combat, the system will click, and you'll quickly be able to lead armies and take to the battlefield easily.

Hearing that a barbarian horde is approaching your **Domain**, have slowly built up an army in order to defend your holdings, as well as push back the threat of the impending fight. Having heard the reports for the past few months, your assembled forces are as follows:

Archers – Artillery, Medium (100), Quality Average, Unit Rating 15

Infantry – Medium (50 foot soldiers), Quality Fair, Unit Rating 12

Mounted – Medium (50), Quality Fair, Unit Rating 12

Your scouts report that the barbarians forces are the following:

Mounted – Light (100), Quality Fair, Unit Rating 12

Mounted – Skirmishes (50), Quality Good, Unit Rating 18

Mounted – Light (100), Quality Fair, Unit Rating 12

How do you determine how many men of a given type there are in a Unit? By buying them. You have spent a great deal of coin to outfit and assemble your forces. As for the Unit Rating, remember, this is set by the table found on page 138.

Assessing your situation you look to see what modifiers you have for your Unit Ratings. Since your forces are in your **Domain**, they each gain a +3. In addition, they are **Defending**, which gives them a +1 bonus. Finally, you have *Tactics* (+10), which confers a +8 to each unit's **Unit Rating**. The total bonuses thus equal +12. Thus your units now have the following final **Unit Ratings**:

Archers – Artillery, Medium (100), Quality Average, Unit Rating 27

Infantry – Medium (50 foot soldiers), Quality Fair, Unit Rating 24

Mounted – Medium (50), Quality Fair, Unit Rating 24

The Gamemaster assesses the situation to see what modifiers exist for their Unit Ratings. Since the barbarians' leader has *Tactics* (+4), the units now have the following Unit Ratings:

Mounted – Light (100), Quality Fair, Unit Rating 16

Mounted – Skirmishes (50), Quality Good, Unit Rating 22

Mounted – Light (100), Quality Fair, Unit Rating 16

Both sides declare their **Tactics**. You declare that your forces are attacking, while the Barbarians declare that they are **Attacking**. Since you're **Defending**, the Barbarians declare which units they are attacking. The breakdown is as follows, as well as any additional modifiers that these attacks have:

Mounted Skirmishers (+20 for being Skirmishers, +10 for outnumbering opponent 2 to 1), attack Infantry

Mounted – Light attacks Archers

Mounted – Light (+10 outnumbers opponent 2 to 1) attacks Mounted – Medium

Both sides, calculate their Engagement Score, which is determined by taking the Unit

Ratings and adding any Modifiers. The Engagement Scores are:

YOUR FORCES ES	BARBARIAN FORCES ES
YOUR FORCES ENGAGEMENT SCORE	BARBARIAN FORCES ENGAGEMENT SCORE
Archers Engagement Score 27	Mounted – Light Engagement Score 16
Infantry – Medium Engagement Score 24	Mounted Skirmishers Engagement Score 22
Mounted – Medium Engagement Score 24	Mounted – Light Engagement Score 16

Both sides now roll 2d12 for each Unit, and add that number to the Engagement Score. The results are compared and this is used to see which Unit wins. Here is the breakdown:

YOUR	2D12	TOTAL	DIFFERENCE	TOTAL	2D12	BARBARIAN ES
Archers ES 27	15	28	11 Tobará Winner	17	11	Mounted – Light ES 16
Infantry – Medium ES 24	3	24	4 Barbarian Winner	27	20	Mounted Skirmishers ES 22
Mounted – Medium ES 24	20	26	9 Tobará Winner	17	5	Mounted – Light ES 16

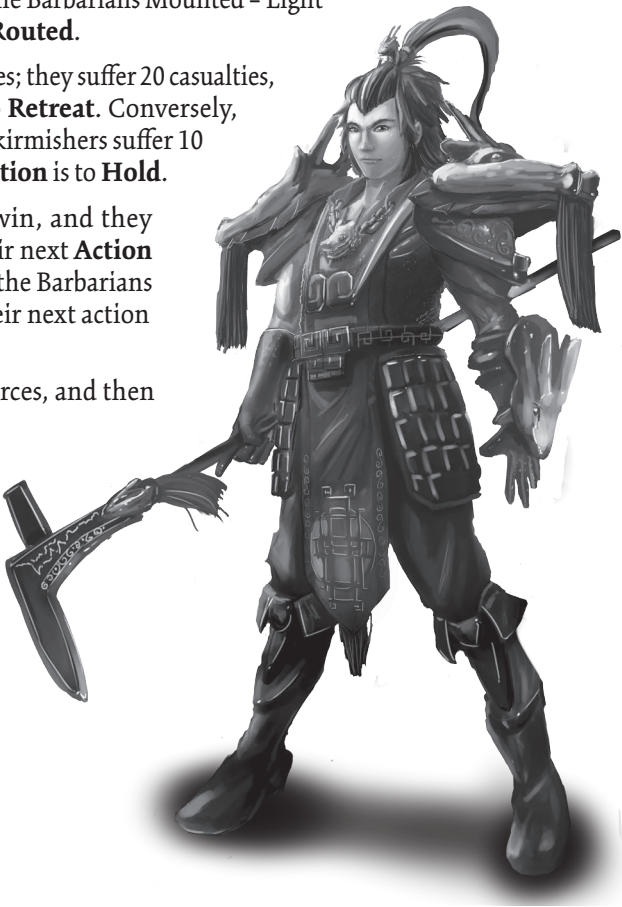
With the differences known and the winners and loses known, both sides refer to the **Battle Results Table** (see page 143) to see what the results are.

Archers win; they suffer no casualties, and their next **Action** is to **Advance**. Conversely the Barbarians Mounted – Light lose 30 horsemen and are **Routed**.

Your Infantry – Medium loses; they suffer 20 casualties, and their next **Action** is to **Retreat**. Conversely, the Barbarian’s Mounted Skirmishers suffer 10 casualties and their next **Action** is to **Hold**.

Your Mounted Medium win, and they suffer 30 casualties and their next **Action** is to **Advance**. Conversely, the Barbarians suffer 60 casualties, and their next action is to **Retreat**.

Both sides reassess their forces, and then decide what to do the next Round. Combat proceeds for two more Rounds, and during those Rounds, your forces suffer heavy casualties, but succeed in repelling the barbarian horde.





# CHAPTER

# 8

## THE ENDGAME

**A**s long as roleplaying games have existed, players and Gamemasters alike have searched for the endgame, or the culmination of the heroes' sagas. In RPGs, especially the fantasy genre, the concept of the endgame has been there since the hobby's beginnings. As you play your hero, they grow in ability, reputation, and influence in the game world. It's a natural desire for a player to want their character to

lead mercenary companies, to take control of merchant guilds, or even sit on a throne and rule a kingdom. Many attempts to define the endgame have occurred in many different games, with some of these attempts divorcing the slow build and growth of the hero, and instead focusing on the immediate. Two famous examples of this are TSR's *Birthright* setting, and Greg Stolze's *REIGN*. Both of these games focus on rulership and are great at what they set out to accomplish.

It has always been difficult, however, to find games that contain rules or advice centered on having your hero become someone who rules their own domains, heads up a particular order of knighthood, leads a thieves' guild, or... well, you get the point.

***Shadow, Sword & Spell*** builds upon itself in this regard. You create a character who has braved numerous dangers, made many enemies, and probably defeated or killed a few foes as well. The character has gone from being a nobody with little influence and prestige to someone who is now a figure of great renown or maybe even heinous infamy. They have survived innumerable challenges and ordeals, and have prospered well along the way.

Through their wits, guile, and fortitude, they have fought back the hordes of unholy terror. They have saved countless innocents from the bonds of slavery. They have discovered hidden treasures, long-forgotten tombs, and tomes of arcane knowledge. They may have even broken the hearts of many in their refusal to settle down. They have become heroes, outlaws, or even a major thorn in the side of the powers-that-be. Their experiences have prepared them for greatness, and now, they are ready to inscribe their name in the annals of history. The world will feel their justice. Their enemies will suffer their vengeance. Those who hold the power now will have no choice but to share or perhaps even cede it. They will be kings and queens, archpriests and priestesses, maybe even worshiped as gods and goddesses, and the dynasties and empires they found will endure for centuries.

***Shadow, Sword & Spell*** is a game influenced by "The Eldritch Three" – H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, and Robert E. Howard – and is also intended as an homage to them. This chapter, perhaps more than previous ones, is heavily influenced by Howard's *By This Axe I Rule* and the later stories of Conan as king. Howard, more than the others, had a firm grasp on the story possibilities offered by heroes who rule kingdoms. In his stories, even though the hero is a leader, they still have just as many dangers to face. The stakes become even higher when you have to fight to protect your throne.

"But I don't want to be king!" I hear you. There are rules here to allow you to run your own gang of thieves, sit at the throne of commerce, or even work power behind the throne.

What if you are not ready to run a game centered on politics? Have no fear. This chapter waits for you and its subtle, seductive song hangs in the background waiting for you to come back and partake in its delights. Take from it what you want, and ignore what you are not ready for. This this is your game after all, and make of it what you will.

## AM I CONFUSING WHAT ENDGAME MEANS?

The word *endgame* means something different for each player. It also has different connotations based on the type of game being played.

For many, *endgame*, is synonymous to the conclusion of a campaign, multi-part adventure, or an adventure path. These have clear beginnings, with each subsequent event, or major chapter, linking together to take you to an epic conclusion. In other words, the traditional Western pattern of drama and fiction.

Another way to look at the *endgame* is with board games, card games, and wargames. Through your actions you work to manipulate events that lead you to your victory. In Mayfair Games' *Settlers of Catan*, it's building up your settlements and cities to earn enough victory points to win. In classic poker, it's busting all the other players by taking all of their money. In GMT's *Twilight Struggle*, it's achieving certain victory conditions to beat your opponent by winning the Cold War. How you reach these endgames depends on your skill, luck, or matter of the rules.

For me—and *Shadow, Sword & Spell*—the endgame represents the road you take to become more powerful than you are. *Shadow, Sword & Spell*'s core philosophy is that your character begins with little to no experience, prestige, and skill. Through the course of your adventures you gain power, wealth, and prestige. Eventually you are no longer the lowly adventurer struggling to survive in a hard world. Instead you are a mover and shaker whose actions significantly affect the world around you. In short, you leave behind the hard times of struggle to enter a new phase where you have power to command, influence, or even initiate events. The *endgame*, therefore, is one where you move from a minor player to a major powerbroker.

## FOLLOWERS

### HENCHMEN & HIRELINGS

As your character gains experience and grows in power, your reputation grows as well. Because of this increased reputation, often you'll be asked to undertake missions or perform tasks that are too big for you and your companions. You might have your own goals, and in order to accomplish them, you need to hire extra help. Conversely, your reputation might have others seek you out in the hopes of joining your cause or swearing allegiance to their banner.

Henchmen and hirelings come from all walks of life, offering you access to skills that you might not have, or might not have the time or desire to use. Henchmen and hirelings are more than just tools, although many view them as nothing but. They are trusted confidants, loyal followers, or even well-respected friends.

### HENCHMEN

Exactly when you attract followers is left up to you and your GM. It is an organic outgrowth following on from play and deeds. A rough rule of thumb is that you begin attracting followers once you make a name for yourself. This can be done after numerous adventures, or after performing tasks that bring you prestige.

How many henchmen can you have? A number equal to your **Will** × 5, e.g., you have **Will 8**, which allows you to easily lead a group of henchmen numbering up to 40. Keep in mind that just because you can have henchmen, it doesn't mean you acquire them automatically. You must hire them, persuade them to join your cause, or have a reputation that attracts people to you, e.g.:

Growing up on the mean streets and canals of Gravina, Johanna the Black took to thieving in order to survive. As a young lass she became a pickpocket and eventually learned the skills enabling her to become a burglar. Over time, her reputation grew, and soon one, then two, partners in crime sought her out. Johanna, whose **Will** is **6**, soon found herself leading a gang of 30 thieves. To keep her band together, Johanna's player constantly seeks ways to keep them happy.

So, can you have more henchmen than your **Will** allows? Yes, but to do so requires the Hero to make a *Diplomacy*, *Tactics*, or *Intimidation* tests every time you wishes to have your henchmen undertake some task. This **Test** has a **Target Number** depending on how many henchman over the usual maximum total answering to you.

Now, there is another way to lead more henchmen, and that is by appointing your henchmen as sub-bosses, lieutenants, and the like. In cases such as these, your henchmen can carry out your orders through their henchmen.

LEADERSHIP TESTS	
# OVER WILL	TN
1-5	14
6-10	18
11-15	22
20-25	26
26-30	30
31+	34

After a few months, you begin to notice that your gang of thieves if beginning to get difficult to lead. To help you in the leading of the gang, you appointment three of your most trusted henchmen to serve as your lieutenants. Each of these new lieutenant have **Will 5**, which means that each lieutenant is able to lead 25 members of the gang. By doing this, you insure the gang stays healthy, as well as strong. Your lieutenants follow your orders, and in turn they insure the members answering to them, carry them out.

Note the number of henchmen you have is not the same as the number of families attached to your **Domain** (see page 160). Henchmen are a different beast when compared to ruling a kingdom. Think of henchmen as trusted agents, lieutenants, and people who have been with you as gained in power and infamy.

Unlike hirelings who get paid (see below), henchmen are not covered by a set pay rate. That does not mean that henchmen do not cost anything, or that they work out of gratitude. Henchmen need to be given a place to live, food to eat, and a chance to gain wealth via a percentage of the spoils. Not taking care of your henchmen will soon result in making your henchmen harder to lead, prone to leaving, or worse, on the edge of mutiny.

As a general rule of thumb, you can determine payment for henchmen with the tables found on pages 131 and 132 as a rough guideline for their pay rates.

## HIRELINGS

Hirelings are those loyal to you due to one fact: you're paying them. Hirelings work for you and perform jobs, and it cost a number of Silver Coins per day to employ them (see page 132).

## GROUP RESOLVE

Followers, henchmen and hirelings are collectively known as retainers, and they have **Retainer Resolve**, which is a measure of how happy or angry they are. **Retainer Resolve** covers both henchmen and hirelings as a means to keeping track of the morale of all retainers.

When forming your retainers the initial **Resolve** is equal to your **Will**  $\times 4$ , e.g., you have **Will 8**, so the starting **Retainer Resolve** is 32. This number rises and falls depending on how well or poorly you treat those around you. Whenever a **Resolve Check** is made, look up the current **Resolve Rating** on the **Resolve Level Table**, which indicates the new **Resolve**. Remember that although **Resolve** changes frequently, the **Resolve Level** only changes when a **Resolve Check** is made, even if the rating moves into a different range between checks.

### MONTHLY RESOLVE CHECK

At the start of each month you check the current **Resolve Rating** in order to determine the **Resolve Level** of the henchmen. This **Resolve Check** may also be required as a result of certain actions taken by you (i.e., how angry they might get when you cancel an expected holiday), or as a result of a disaster striking the group (i.e., an unsuccessful fight leads to the death of a beloved follower).

So how do you check **Retainer Resolve**? Simply see what the current number is, by finding it on **Resolve Level Table**. For example, your retainers have a current **Resolve** of 21. Looking at the table, you see that 21 means they are *Unsteady*—this is your current **Retainer Resolve**.

RETAINER RESOLVE	
RESOLVE	RESOLVE LEVEL
1	Turbulent
2 to 7	Belligerent
8 to 13	Rebellious
14 to 19	Defiant
20 to 25	Unsteady
26 to 34	Average
32 to 37	Steady
38 to 43	Healthy
44 to 49	Prosperous
50 to 55	Thriving
56+	Ideal

#### AVERAGE

The group is running smoothly. There are no special conditions or effects.

#### BELLIGERENT

A -2 penalty is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**. In addition, a *Diplomacy Test* (TN 28) is always required when you order the retainers to do something.

#### DEFIANT

A -1 penalty is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**. In addition, a *Diplomacy Test* [TN 18] is always required when ordering the retainers to do something.

HEALTHY

A +1 bonus is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**. In addition any tests the retained undertake have a +1 bonus.

IDEAL

A +2 bonus is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**. In addition, any tests the retainers undertake have a +3 bonus.

PROSPEROUS

A +1 bonus is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**. In addition any tests the retainers undertake have a +1 bonus.

Rebellious

A -1 penalty is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**. In addition a *Diplomacy Test* [TN 26] is always required when the Hero orders the Retainers to do something

STEADY

A +1 bonus is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**.

THRIVING

A +2 bonus is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**. In addition, any tests the retainers undertake have a +2 bonus.

TURBULENT

A -2 penalty is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**. In addition a *Diplomacy Test* [TN 26] is always required when you order them to do something.

UNSTEADY

A -1 penalty is applied to the **Retainer Resolve**.

RESOLVE’S EBB & FLOW

Depending on how you treat your retainers, their **Resolve** ebbs and flows with their circumstances. This ebb and flow is based on your actions, as well as your own circumstances.

EVENT DESCRIPTIONS

CHARACTER DIPLOMACY

The better the character’s *Diplomacy* skill, the easier it is for them to keep everyone happy.

EVENTS	
ACTION	RESOLVE ±
Character <i>Diplomacy</i> between 1-6	+1
Character <i>Diplomacy</i> between 7-12	+2
Character <i>Diplomacy</i> between 13-19	+3
Character <i>Diplomacy</i> between 20+	+4
Death of a Retainer	-2
Each day no pay	-1
Each day off	+1
Each meal missed	-1
Extra pay	+1
Forced to do something against their will	-3
Forced to work on “their day off”	-3
Gift	+5
Promotion	+5
Sickness	-2
Sickness in family	-1
Suffer defeat	-3
Suffer defeat with ¼ casualties	-6
Suffer defeat with ½ casualties	-9
Suffer defeat with ¾ casualties	-12
Victory, Minor	+3
Victory Major	+7
Victory, Decisive	+10

*DEATH OF A RETAINER*

Death comes to all, but when a Retainer dies due to either violence or natural causes, it still hits everyone hard.

*EACH DAY NO PAY*

Most Retainers are loyal, but loyalty only goes so far if there is no pay. As soon as pay is received, the morale stops dropping.

*EACH MEAL MISSED*

Regular meals are important. Retainers do not like missing one, and each one missed drops their Resolve more and more.

*EACH DAY OFF*

Call it a holiday, celebration, or the like; if a day off work happens, then everyone is happy.

*EXTRA PAY*

Raising the salary, awarding a bonus; after all, everyone likes more money.

*FORCED TO DO SOMETHING AGAINST THEIR WILL*

This is a broad category which covers such acts as a forced march, doing a job that is beneath one's status, and the like.

*FORCED TO WORK A HOLIDAY*

From religious observances to traditional celebrations, most do not like working unless they have to. Most holidays are considered to be either days of partial or no work. Being made to work a full day, or worse, longer than normal hours, affects the Resolve.

*GIFT*

A new cloak, a new mount, even a new sword; everyone likes gifts.

*PROMOTION*

Be it a cook becoming a head chef or a soldier promoted to sergeant, a promotion is always a good thing.

*SICKNESS*

Being sick is never fun, but when someone cannot work due to illness or worse, and still needs to work despite the illness, this affects morale.

*SICKNESS IN FAMILY*

Unlike themselves being sick, when someone is sick in the henchman's family, this is a situation where many find working is very difficult.

*SUFFER DEFEAT*

From a barroom brawl to a skirmish with bandits, losing stinks.

## DOMAINS

### *SUFFER DEFEAT WITH $\frac{1}{4}$ CASUALTIES*

This is the same as suffering a defeat, but there are a minimum of 1d12 casualties.

### *SUFFER DEFEAT WITH $\frac{1}{2}$ CASUALTIES*

Not only did you lose, but you lost half of your men. Maybe you should hire a better general.

### *SUFFER DEFEAT WITH $\frac{3}{4}$ CASUALTIES*

You lost and lost big. It is time to rethink your military tactics and outlook.

### *VICTORY, MINOR*

Winning a skirmish or competition, because everyone likes to win.

### *VICTORY, MAJOR*

Not only did you win, but you beat the odds.

### *VICTORY, DECISIVE*

You beat the impossible.

## DOMAINS

Heroes eventually draw attention from the rulers of nations because of their great deeds. Because of this, they may be granted titles of nobility and grants of land. This



will, of course, vary from campaign to campaign, depending on your preferences. In addition, it is entirely possible for you to find an unsettled area, claim it, and carve your own domain from it.

The area of land ruled by you is called a **Domain**. This applies whether you are granted a title by a ruler, or if you strike out on your own to simply claim land and assume your own title. A single **Domain** consists of a stronghold and all the surrounding land that can be protected by the stronghold. If you have more than one stronghold (except in the case of it being a garrison), then each one, with its surrounding lands, is considered a separate dominion.

The following sections assume you are awarded a **Domain** by a ruler. This ruler gives you land to manage and rule, but it is not free from obligation. You still must swear allegiance to the ruler, still have obligations to meet and, from time to time, send troops or money to support the entire kingdom of which the character's Domain is a part.

### ***BUILDING A STRONGHOLD***

No **Domain** operates without a stronghold of some type, which administers the **Domain** as well as being a place of refuge and safety for you. Usually, a **Domain** consists of a single fief, with a stronghold located in the center so that no point within the **Domain** is too far away for easy access.

**Domains** range in size from 12 miles in radius up to 24 miles. The only requirement is that you should be able to reach any part of your **Domain** within a day's travel. If you wish for your **Domain** to be larger, then additional strongholds must be built to protect the additional portions of land, e.g.:

You wish to enlarge your domain, and see that there is enough land bordering your domain you can claim. You do so and stake out a 24-mile radius border from the center of your new domain. In order to manage this new territory, you build a stronghold from which your new holdings can be managed.

You now have two domains, and from either of your two strongholds you're able to manage and lead them both. You might decide to appoint a loyal henchman as your lieutenant and give them stewardship of the new domain, so that you don't have to constantly travel between the two. The domain's resources are worked by the lieutenant, but any actions they wish to take must be approved by you. Conversely, you can decide what actions this domain takes and have your lieutenant execute your orders.

So what is a stronghold? Any structure, be it a manor house, keep, castle, or tower that serves as the central hub of activity for the **Domain**. From this stronghold, you govern ensuring your citizens are not only protected, but that they remain productive for the enrichment of the **Domain**.

In order to build a stronghold, the surrounding area needs to be cleared of all threats. Once the area is cleared, the stronghold may be designed and built. The costs for building a stronghold can be found starting on page 129.

ONE SIZE FITS ALL?

The rules for **Domains** are “one-size-fits-all.” The key assumption is that a kingdom consists of one ruler having a whole bunch of little domains with a series of strongholds. A king and/or a queen (or an emperor and/or empress) rules this kingdom, and you are one of the many smaller domains that comprise it. The reason for this assumption is simple: it is easier. There are numerous styles of government that exist, and to cover them all would make these rules needlessly complex. So what do you do if you want to set up a system falling outside of this assumption? Use the rules as a baseline, and adjust the perspective, e.g.:

You want to have something like a republic. Your domain is a manor, and is part of a series of manors making up a ruling council. The manor is part of a region, which in turn elects a representative to represent the region in a Ruling Council.

TERRAIN & RESOURCES

To determine the resources available to a **Domain**, the terrain needs to be determined. Each **Domain** is classified as being either **Civilized**, **Borderlands**, or **Wilderness**,

DOMAIN CLASSIFICATION				
TERRAIN CLASSIFICATION	WITHIN 144 MILES OF A CITY	MORE THAN 144 MILES FROM A CITY	WITHIN 72 MILES OF A CIVILIZED DOMAIN	NOT NEAR A CITY OR CIVILIZED DOMAIN
Coastal	Civilized	Civilized	Borderland	Wilderness
Barren Lands	Borderlands	Wilderness	Wilderness	Wilderness
Clear ★	Civilized	Borderlands	Borderlands	Wilderness
Desert ▼	Borderlands	Wilderness	Wilderness	Wilderness
Forest	Civilized	Civilized	Borderland	Wilderness
Grasslands	Civilized	Borderlands	Borderlands	Wilderness
Hills	Civilized	Borderlands	Borderlands	Wilderness
Jungle	Borderlands	Wilderness	Wilderness	Wilderness
Mountains	Borderlands	Wilderness	Wilderness	Wilderness
River	Civilized	Civilized	Borderland	Wilderness
Settled	Civilized	Civilized	Borderlands	Wilderness
Swamp	Borderlands	Wilderness	Wilderness	Wilderness
Tundra	Wilderness	Wilderness	Borderlands	Borderlands

★ Strongholds of this type can become Settled if populated by anyone.

▼ Strongholds containing oases are considered to be Civilized.

according to the material found in the *Domain Classification* table. Other civilized **Domains** do not necessarily need to belong to the same **Domain** or even the same country. As long as some form of trade links exist, it is considered civilized.

A **Domain's** level of civilization sets two things in place. First, it gives you the number of families that settle once the stronghold is built. Second, it determines the total number of families the Domain is capable of sustaining.

RESOURCE TYPE	
D12	TYPE
1-4	Animal
5-8	Plant
9-11	Mineral
12	Special

Terrain classified as *Clear*, *Forest*, *Grassland*, or *Hills* whose population is greater than 1,000 families is also classified as *Settled*. In addition, if the **Domain** drops below a population of 1,000 families total, it loses the *Settled* classification and immediately reverts back to its original Terrain Classification, e.g.:

You have built your Domain in a Grassland. The Domain is not located near a major city, so the Domain's initial Civilization is Wilderness. Due to your hard work, and reputation as a fair ruler, your Domain's population is 1,250 families. These factors mean the Terrain is now considered Settled. After a brutal winter that sees not only sickness but also a band of marauders attack, the population drops to 950 families. As a result of this, the Terrain is no longer considered Settled, and reverts back to the initial designation of Grasslands.

## RESOURCES

Regardless of the **Domain's** history or terrain classification, all Domains have between one and six Resources exploitable to generate income. To determine the number of Resources, roll a d12 and consult the following table.

Once the number of **Resources** are determined, the next step is to figure out the type of **Resources** found. In *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, there are three types of **Resources**: Animal, Plant, and Mineral. However, the form these **Resources** take is left up to you. As for **Special**, it is something falling outside of the other three types. The details are left up to you to sort out, but whatever it is should not be overly powerful or overly valuable. Examples of special resources could be a hot spring known for its healing properties, or an area of land mages flock to due to ley lines or magical energy somehow pooled in the land.

NUMBER OF RESOURCES	
D12	RESOURCES
1-2	1
3-4	2
5-6	3
7-8	4
9-10	5
11-12	6

**Example:** Your Domain has 3 Resources. Rolling for the type, you roll 2, 9, and 11, which gives you 1 Animal and 2 Mineral Resources. After talking with your GM, you decide the Animal Resource takes the form of wild sheep that graze in the Domain's ample grasslands. These sheep can be used for multiple products, like wool, meat, and sheepskins, representing one of the 3 Resources available. As for the two Mineral Resources, you suggest gold and diamonds. The Gamemaster, feeling that this is far too much wealth, rules instead of that marble and flint, still valuables commodities, are found in the Domain.

RULERSHIP

Unlike combat, ruling employs a different time scale and frame. This scale uses not only months and years, but depending on certain events, even days. Why? It makes it easier. A side benefit of this scale is that it is easier to slip in lots more narratives to the act of ruling. In addition, this allows the Gamemaster to structure adventures fitting within the month-to-month life of a Domain, while still allowing for adventures. Specifically, changes to population and economy are dealt with monthly, and the **Resolve** of the **Domain's** population can be handled yearly.

To keep things easier, as well as make the game a bit more streamlined, calendars are left up to you decide. Even within **The World** material (see page 202), years and dates are not provided. This is not an example of me being lazy or purposefully vague, this is done to make things easier. In my own games I've employed dating techniques influenced by the real world calendar. Doing this makes the passage of time simpler, and allows my players to not have to memorize different months, seasons, and the like. It is easier to use a month, such as May, then it is to use a month known as Spring-Turn, Hammer Fell, and the like. In the end, this is your game, and if you want to create a different calendar, or use different months, go for it.

POPULATION CHANGE

Every month, the number of families in a **Domain** fluctuates for a number of reasons. To keep the mechanics simple, population changes are handled with a single check. For each **Domain**, the change in population is based on the current population.

What if the **Domain** has a large population? The small ebbs and flows have no effect, and are considered to be irrelevant in comparisons to normal population growth.

So how does this work? Here's an example:

Your Domain initially began as Wilderness, attracting 1d12 x 50 families as the first settlers. You rolled a d12, and got a 7, so 350 families settled. After a month, you check the population growth, and rolled 18 on 2d12, which gives you a 10% increase, or 30 new families.

RESOLVE

Each **Domain** has **Domain Resolve**, which represents the general state of contentment (or discontent) of the whole **Domain**. Just as it is with **Retainers** (see page 153), a single **Resolve Test** made for the entire **Domain**.

POPULATION CHANGE		
2D12	POPULATION CHANGE	RESOLVE ADJUSTMENT
2	-40%	-10
3	-35%	-9
4	-30%	-8
5	-25%	-7
6	-20%	-6
7	-15%	-5
8	-10%	-4
9	-5%	-3
10	-3%	-2
11	-1%	-1
12	0%	0
13	1%	1
14	3%	2
15	5%	3
16	10%	4
17	15%	5
18	20%	6
19	25%	7
20	30%	8
21	35%	9
22	40%	10
23	45%	11
24	50%	12

When establishing your **Domain**, the initial **Domain Resolve** is equal to your **Will**  $\times$  4. Besides **Resolve**, **Domains** have a **Resolve Level** that is based on this rating, and periodically a **Resolve Check** needs to be made. Whenever a **Resolve Check** is made, look up the current **Resolve Rating** on the table below, which indicates the new **Resolve**. Remember, although **Resolve** changes frequently, the **Resolve Level** only changes when a **Resolve Check** is made, even if the rating moves into a different range between checks.

### MONTHLY RESOLVE CHECK

At the start of the month, you need to check the current **Resolve Rating** in order to determine the **Resolve Level** of the **Domain**. This **Resolve Check** may also be required as a result of certain actions taken by you (such as not observing an holiday) or as a result of a disaster striking the dominion.

Descriptions of the various **Resolve Levels** and their effects on the **Domain** are given below.

RESOLVE LEVEL	
RESOLVE	RESOLVE LEVEL
1	Turbulent
2 to 7	Belligerent
8 to 13	Rebellious
14 to 19	Defiant
20 to 25	Unsteady
26 to 35	Average
32 to 37	Steady
38 to 43	Healthy
44 to 49	Prosperous
50 to 55	Thriving
56+	Ideal



## AVERAGE

The **Domain** is running smoothly, and there are no special conditions or effects.

## BELLIGERENT

If the **Domain** has fewer troops than one-half the number of families, half the families will form a peasant militia (providing an average of 2 troops per family). In addition, the following conditions exist within the **Domain**:

- 25% of normal service income can be collected in areas without a peasant militia, but none can be collected in areas with a peasant militia.
- A quarter of the normal resource income can be collected in areas without a peasant militia, but none can be collected in areas with a peasant militia.
- A -1 penalty is applied to the **Domain Resolve**.
- All trade caravans and traveling officials are attacked by bandits.
- Any of the **Domain's** troops moving or deploying within the Domain will be attacked by peasant militia, deserters, bandits, or enemy agents.
- There is a chance that an enemy state will provide the peasant militia with military support and other types of aid.

## DEFIANT

In **Domains** with fewer troops than one-third of the number of families, half the families will form a peasant militia (providing an average of 3 troops per family). However, these militia will not attack unless provoked. In addition:

- No taxes can be collected.
- 50% of normal service income can be collected in areas without a peasant militia, but only a third can be collected in areas with a peasant militia.
- 50% of the normal resource income can be collected in areas without a peasant militia, but only a third can be collected in areas with a peasant militia.

## HEALTHY

The **Domain's** income is 10% greater than normal. Additionally, there is a chance that enemy agents working in the **Domain** are exposed.

## IDEAL

All income is 10% greater than normal. In addition, there is a 50% chance that any enemy agents working in the **Domain** are exposed (roll a d12 and if the result is even, the enemy agent(s) are found). If a random check indicates a disaster occurs, there is a chance that it will not happen. A +10 bonus is applied to the **Domain Resolve**, and the Resolve cannot drop below 56 before the next **Resolve Check**.

## PROSPEROUS

All income is 10% greater than normal. There is a 50% chance that enemy agents working in the **Domain** will be exposed (roll a d12 and if the result is even, the enemy agent(s) are found). If a random check indicates that a disaster occurs, it does not happen.

## REBELLIOUS

The **Domain** has fewer troops than one-third of the number of the total of families, and half of the families form a peasant militia (providing an average of 2 troops per family). This militia will not attack unless provoked. In addition, the following effects take place:

- No taxes can be collected.
- Only 30% of normal service income can be collected in areas without a peasant militia, but only 25% can be collected in areas with a peasant militia.
- A -1 penalty is applied to the **Domain Resolve**.

## STEADY

There is a chance that enemy agents working in the **Domain** will be exposed here is a chance that enemy agents working in the **Domain** will be exposed (roll a d12 and if the result is even, the enemy agent(s) are found).

## THRIVING

All **Domain** income is 10% greater than normal. In addition, roll a d12, and if the result is even, one enemy agent working in the **Domain** is exposed. If a random check indicates that a disaster will occur during the coming year, roll a d12, and if the result is 1, 2 or 3, it will not happen.

## TURBULENT

95% of the **Domain's** families form a peasant militia (providing an average of 3 troops per family). No income of any kind may be collected, except by force. A -10 penalty is applied to the **Resolve Rating**. The **Resolve** cannot rise above 1 until the ruler of the **Domain** is removed, either through assassination or revolt. All trade caravans and traveling officials are attacked by bandits. Any of the **Domain's** troops moving or deploying within the **Domain** are attacked by peasant militia, deserters, bandits or enemy agents. One or more enemy states provide the peasant militia with military support.

## UNSTEADY

Roll a d12; if the result is a 1 or 12, a -4 penalty will apply to the **Resolve Rating**.

## THE ECONOMY

Each month you need to check on the **Economy** and tally up the income and expenditures for the month.

## INCOME

Monthly income comes from three sources: *Resources*, *Services*, and *Taxes*.

## RESOURCES

Before going into detail, a couple of things need to be kept in mind. First, the system presented here is designed to be not too detailed. Running a **Domain** should not be an exercise in extensive bookkeeping requiring the use of spreadsheets. Second, this system is purposely designed as a "broad brush" system. This means price fluctuations

and discrepancies between resources are purposely left out. This is done to ease the burden and make the process smoother. That does not mean you cannot add in these details. For the purpose of this game, however, a much simpler approach is followed.

Each Domain has between 1 and 6 Resource types, which provide income for the dominion's ruler. The amount of income is:

- Animal = 2/family
- Mineral = 3/family
- Plant = 1/family
- Special = Special

Each family works a single **Resource** within the **Domain**, and the ruler simply allows the population to split themselves evenly between the available **Resources**, or may direct the populace to concentrate on developing a particular **Resource**. There are a few limitations to keep in mind.

First, given the infrastructure needed to develop a particular **Resource** (animals need breeding, crops need sowing, mines need digging), the ruler can only change the emphasis on the Resources once per year. The ruler must decide what their priorities are to be at the start of each year. The actual changes to these priorities occur at the beginning of the following year. In doing so, it is convenient to assign priorities in terms of the percentages of families rather than in absolute numbers of families, since the total number of families in the **Domain** changes from month to month.



Second, the population must work all the **Resources** in the **Domain** for the local economy to thrive and for the populace to be content. In particular, forcing too much of the population to work, for example, in dangerous and unhealthy mines make the ruler very unpopular, and could sow the seeds of revolution.

In game terms, each **Resource** must be worked by at least 20% of the families in the fief. For each 1% below that threshold per year, there is a cumulative -1 penalty to the **Domain's Resolve**. Similarly, no more than 50% of the families in the fief should be made to develop mineral wealth. For each 1% above that threshold per year, there is a cumulative -1 penalty to the **Domain's Resolve Rating**.

Finally, any **Domain** bringing in monthly revenues of 150 GC or more attracts corruption,

black marketeers, and bandits. If the **Domain** does not contain a Stronghold (see above),  $1d12 \times 5\%$  of the potential resource income is lost.

### SERVICE

Families in the **Domain** bring in the equivalent income worth 10 GC per month in **Service**. **Services** range from building works, growing food, tending animals, trades, and so forth.

Unlike other sources of income, this income does not go to you. It is used to offset expenses such as holidays, tithes, taxes, and the pay and maintenance of armies (mercenary or otherwise). Any **Service** income not used for these purposes is wasted, and cannot be saved.

### TAXES

The families in your **Domain** normally pay 1 SC per month in taxes. You are able to set taxes higher or lower if you desires. Each extra 1 SC paid per family incurs a -1 penalty to the **Domain's Resolve** each month. For each 1 SC less paid per family (this is possible—remember  $1 \text{ SC} = 50 \text{ CC} = 20 \text{ BC} = 15 \text{ IC}$ ), there is a +1 bonus to the **Domain's Resolve Rating** each year. Additionally, when tax rates increase, there is an instant -1 penalty incurred to the **Domain's Resolve Rating**, and it forces an immediate **Resolve Test**. Similarly, decreasing the tax rates gives an instant +11 bonus to the **Domain's Resolve Rating**, e.g.:

You assign 25% of the families in your Domain to work in the marble quarries, 25% of the families to work the flint mine, and 50% of the families to work in sheep herding. Since you have at least 20% of the population working on each resource, and you not have more than 50% of the population working on mineral resources, there is no effect on your **Domain's Resolve**. After a few years of growth (not in real time, but game time), the Domain's population is 447 families, with the following breakdown:

$$447 \times 25\% = 112 \text{ families mining flint}$$

$$447 \times 25\% = 112 \text{ families quarrying marble}$$

$$447 \times 50\% = 223 \text{ families herding sheep}$$

The income from the Resources in the first month of that year is:  $(112 \times 3) + (112 \times -3) + (223 \times 1) = 8 \text{ GC } 95 \text{ SC}$

The Service income of the fief is 10 times the population, which is  $(10 \times 447) = 44 \text{ GC } 70 \text{ SC}$

You have not set taxes higher or lower than the 1 SC/family, so the Taxes received are:  $(1 \times 447) = 4 \text{ GC } 47 \text{ SC}$

Thus, for your Domain you receive a total of 13 GC 42 SC in payment and 44 GC 70 SC in services offsetting your expenses.

## EXPENDITURES

*STRONGHOLD STAFF & MAINTENANCE*

In addition to armies, which are always accounted for separately, the costs of a stronghold staff and routine maintenance are assumed to be covered by the **Service** income of the **Domain**. However, extraordinary expenses such as rebuilding in the wake of a raid or a natural disaster needs to be paid for out of your pocket. Service income may not be used to pay for these expenses.

*TROOPS*

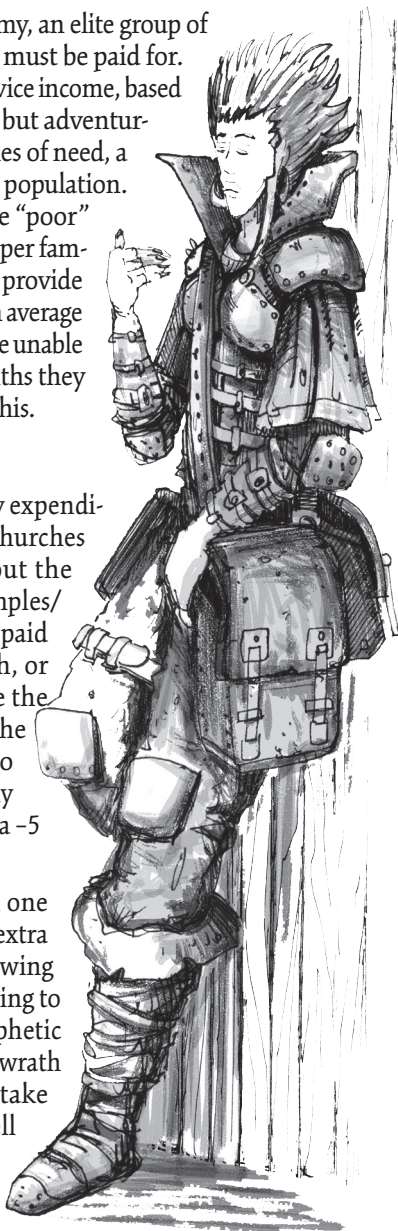
It does not matter if it is a full-time standing army, an elite group of adventurers, or a mercenary company, troops must be paid for. Armies and mercenaries can be paid for with Service income, based on their costs (which are found on page 132), but adventurers usually only work for cold hard cash. In times of need, a peasant militia can be mobilized from the local population. Up to 10% of the families in a Domain provide “poor” quality peasant militia (an average of 2.5 troops per family). A further 10% of the families in an area can provide “untrained” quality peasant militia (providing an average of 2.5 troops per family). Any called for service are unable to produce income of any type during the months they serve with the militia. **Service Income** covers this.

*TITHES*

A tenth of all gross income (income before any expenditures) must be given in tithes to the various churches and temples that are established throughout the **Domain**. This tithe is the total given to all temples/churches within the **Domain**. Tithes may be paid with either *Service* income or personal wealth, or a combination of the two. Failure to provide the full amount of the tithe results in angering the clergy who make their displeasure known to the population. The net result of this is that any year in which tithes are not paid in full incurs a -5 penalty to the **Domain Resolve**.

Not paying or underpaying tithes more than one year in a row offers a chance each year that an extra “Disaster” event happens due to the Gods showing their disfavor and anger. If such an event is going to happen, it will be preceded by omens and prophetic dreams. Angering the Gods and invoking their wrath has much potential. If a second event is to take place, play this up by describing omens as well as prophetic dreams.

**Domain Income** covers the cost of all tithes.



## FESTIVALS & HOLIDAYS

Throughout the year, there are certain days declared as festivals or holidays. These may have been declared by the ruler of the kingdom, or by one of the major religions of the country, or the ruler of the **Domain** may declare their own. Overall costs for a holiday are 5 SC per family. This represents not only the expenses for the celebrations, but the lost income due to the people not working. This cost may be paid for with either **Service Income**, personal wealth, or a combination of the two.

Holidays declared by the churches have their cost recouped from the tithes paid to the church. However, if the cost of the holiday is too much to cover by the tithes or taxes (or if the holiday was declared by the **Domain** ruler instead of a higher power), you must pay the remaining costs themselves. Each time a regular holiday or festival the population is expecting is canceled, a -5 penalty is applied to the **Domain's Resolve**, and an immediate **Resolve Check** must be made.

Each time an extraordinary holiday or festival day is announced, a +2 bonus is applied to the **Dominion's Resolve** (no **Resolve** check needs to be made until the festival or holidays are over).

**Service Incomes** covers this.

## ENTERTAINING VISITORS

Etiquette requires that any nobility or royalty visiting your **Domain** are entertained according to their station. The following costs apply whenever a noble (and their retinue) visits your **Domain**:

- Knight — No Extra Cost
- Baron — 1 GC/Day
- Viscount — 1 GC 50 SC/Day
- Count — 3 GC/Day
- Marquis — 4 GC/Day
- Duke — 6 GC/Day
- Archduke — 7 GC/Day
- Prince — 10 GC/Day
- King — 15 GC/Day
- Emperor — 20GC/Day

## EXPERIENCE FOR INCOME

You gain **Experience Points** due to running your **Domain**. The **Experience Point** rewards are based on the monthly income the **Domain** has. When calculating the **Experience Points** you get from their monthly income, two rules must be followed.



First, only cash income (i.e., **Resources** and **Taxes**) provide **Experience Points**. **Service Income** provides none at all.

Second, **Experience Points** are derived from the gross income (before any expenditures are determined and taken out of the equation). Even if the income is spent due to heavy expenditures and you end up having a net loss, you still receive **Experience Points**.

So how do you gain **Experience Points**? You use the following formula:

$$\text{Income Received} \div 1,000 = \text{Experience Gained}$$

As always, round down.

For example, you receive a total of 1,342 SC in cash and 5,390 SC in services this month. You gain **Experience Points** for all of the cash even though you had to spend some of it. You do not get any **Experience** for the Services money. Therefore you gain **1 XP** this month.

EVENTS

Each year, between 1 and 4 random events happen in the **Domain**. Due to the huge variety of events that potentially occur, it is not possible to list them all here. However, they can be roughly classified into different types of **Events**. For each **Event** occurring, roll on the **Domain Event Table**.

The table is random, but care needs to be taken to not have your **Domain** wiped out by a few bad rolls indicating disaster after disaster. If the dice seem to be against you, the Gamemaster should introduce plot elements or potential adventures into the game that mitigate the worst situations. Similarly, if the dice are favoring you and you are bored with just raking in the money every month without challenge, your Gamemaster should introduce plot elements or adventures that cause additional problems.

However, in either case your Gamemaster should be careful not to railroad you, or your fellow players, and make them feel that the status quo is being forcibly maintained. The Gamemaster should make sure that your decisions have a real impact on the way your **Domain** prospers or struggles.

NUMBER OF EVENTS	
D12	#EVENT
1-3	1
4-6	2
7-9	3
10-12	4

DOMAIN EVENT TABLE	
D12	EVENT TYPE
1-2	Major Positive Event
3-4	Minor Positive Event
5-6	An Event
7-8	Minor Negative Event
9-10	Major Negative Event
11-12	Disaster

EVENT TYPES

MAJOR POSITIVE EVENT

A **Major Positive Event** benefits your **Domain** greatly. It might result in a bonus to **Resolve** up to +10, a doubling of income for a month, a population increase up to +25%, or any combination thereof. Depending on the nature of the event, you may need to get involved personally to get the best results—but there should be some positive results even if you do nothing.

Examples: New resource type found, ancient treasure found, a God decides to become the patron of the Domain.

*MINOR POSITIVE EVENT*

A **Minor Positive Event** benefits the **Domain**, as well as not harming it. It may take the form of a bonus to the **Domain Resolve** of up to +5, up to 50% extra income for a month, a population increase up to +15%, or some combination of the above. You might have to get involved personally in order to gain the benefits—but there should be no negative results even if you do nothing.

Examples: A new trade route opens, a hostile tribe of barbarians moves away from the Domain, passing adventurers clear out local bandits without needing to be hired to do so.

*AN EVENT*

An **Event** either benefits the **Domain** or harms it, depending on how it is dealt with. An **Event** might result in a change to the **Domain Resolve** of up to  $\pm 3$ , up to 25% extra or less income for a month, a population change of up to  $\pm 10\%$ , or some combination of the above. Whether the **Event** works out positively or negatively depends on how you handle it.

Examples: An important visitor arrives unexpectedly, comets or other omens are seen in the sky, heresy is discovered in a local church, a local tribe of barbarians is displaced by a different tribe.

*MINOR NEGATIVE EVENT*

A **Minor Negative Event** harms the **Domain**, or at the least does not benefit it. It may result in a penalty to the **Domain Resolve** of up to -5, up to 50% less income for a month, a population decrease of up to -15%, or some combination of the above. You might have to get involved personally in order to avoid harm—but there should be no significant positive results no matter how you handle the situation.

Examples: Bandits start raiding merchant caravans, an official is assassinated, a monster arrives in the area, a disease breaks out.

*MAJOR NEGATIVE EVENT*

A **Major Negative Event** harms the **Domain** greatly. It may result in a penalty to the **Domain Resolve** of up to -10, up to 50% less income for a month, a population decrease of up to -25%, or some combination of the above. Depending on the nature of the event, you may need to get involved personally in order to get the least bad results—but there should be some negative results no matter how well you handle the situation.

Examples: One of the Domain's resources runs out, an epidemic strikes, a powerful monster enters the domain, agents plot a rebellion against the ruler, a major fire breaks out.

*DISASTER*

A **Disaster** harms the **Domain** greatly in a similar way to a **Major Negative Event**. It may result in a penalty to the **Domain Resolve** of up to -15, up to 75% less income for a month, a population decrease of up to -50%, or some combination of the above. It also results in an immediate **Resolve Check**. Depending on the nature of the event, the

ruler may need to get involved personally in order to get the least bad results — but there should be seriously negative results no matter how well the ruler handles the situation.

Examples: An extremely powerful monster attacks the Domain, plague strikes, a hurricane, tornado, or avalanche sweeps through, an earthquake strikes, a God smites the area.

## USING EVENTS FOR ADVENTURE

Besides affecting the **Domain**, events, especially negative ones, serve as adventure inspirations. GMs should use events as a means to move along any long-term plots of the campaign, as well as introduce new wrinkles into the campaign.

## THE LIFE OF A MERCHANT PRINCE OR PRINCESS



At first blush, rules allowing you to invest funds in ventures does not sound fun. After all this is a roleplaying game, one steeped in human-centric pulp fantasy, where danger and threats lurk behind every corner: this is not *Investments, Returns & Accountants*, but *Shadow, Sword & Spell*! However, there are archetypes of the heroic merchant figure: one of the prime examples is Rupert Avery, or “Roo,” from Raymond E. Feist’s *Rise of a Merchant Prince*.

Power comes in many forms, and one way for characters to acquire power is through the accumulation of wealth. It is wealth that can raise a beggar out of the gutter, and place them into the realms of power. Some players might have the desire to be a guild leader, and use this position to influence events.

What follows are simple rules that allow for these type of characters. By allowing you to invest your funds, you can reap the rewards. These rules also can serve as the impetus for adventures. It is one thing to be the silent partner of a tavern...it is another thing to use this tavern as a front for illicit (yet profitable) activity.

Before going further, it should go without saying that these rules are just that: rules. By no means do they construe actual financial advice. Using them will not bring you real-life wealth. You have been warned.

### TRADE

Contrary to what some might think, trade is the lifeblood of The World.

It is trade which makes life possible, brings wealth to certain regions, and often provides a chance for the lucky to make their wealth. With the size of The World, and the diversity of available goods, some heroes might decide that a life of adventure is too risky, and that it is far safer to buy and sell goods.

TRADE GOODS AVAILABLE				
2d12 ROLL	TRADE GOODS	BASE UNIT COST	UNITS AVAILABLE	TRADE CODE
2	Weapons	20 GC	3d12	A
3	Grain	5 GC	1d12 × 10	F
4	Lumber	8 GC	1d12 × 10	I
5	Fruit	10 GC	6d12	F
6	Precious Metals ★	100 GC	1d12 ÷ 2	LG
7	Stone ▼	15 GC	1d12 ÷ 2	M
8	Vegetables	10 GC	6d12	F
9	Livestock	90 GC	5d12	F, L
10	Historical Artifacts	300 GC	1d12 ÷ 2	LG
11	Spices	100 GC	3d12	LG
12	Textiles	35 GC	6d12	LG
13	Fish	8 GC	1d12 × 5	F
14	Ores ■	50 GC	1d12	I
15	Crystals	20 GC	1d12 ÷ 2	LG
16	Wine	8 GC 50 SC	5d12	LG
17	Gems	50 GC	1d12 ÷ 2	LG
18	Handicrafts	10 GC	1d12 × 10	LG
19	Silk	50 GC	1d12	LG
20	Oil ▲	15 GC	1d12 × 2	I
21	Salt	40 GC	2d12	I, F
22	Armor	60 GC	3d12	A
23	Oil (edible) ♦	30 GC	3d12	F
24	Cotton	18 GC	3d12 ÷ 2	LG

**Notes:**

★ Includes gold, copper, silver, and platinum

▼ Includes marble

■ Includes iron, pigments, and coal

▲ Includes whale oil and lubricants

♦ Includes palm oil, olive oil, or any type of oil consumed

Trade goods run the gamut from such luxury items as spices and gems, to more mundane items such as grain and fabrics. Through careful buying and judicious selling the potential for those to make money are great. It is through trade that the profit potential on such items has led to the formation of Merchant House in The League of Merchants, to the funding of individuals known as Merchant Princes.

This section provides some simple rules to adjudicate such trade.

## TRADE PROCEDURE

If you want to buy goods in order to sell them for a profit, you are attempting to engage in speculation. To do that, you must first determine what goods (and how much) are available for purchase. This is done by rolling on the **Trade Goods Available** table (see page 171). The units available (in tons) is then determined. These units are the total number available for purchase. You may purchase as few, or as many, as you wish. Units may also be split, but doing so incurs a penalty of 1-6% ( $1D12 \div 2$ ).

Once you've determined what goods are available for purchase and their quantities, you then determine the purchase price by making a *Merchant* test. The **Degrees of Success** (or **Failure**) determine the purchase price multiplier, as shown on the **Trade Value** table below, e.g.:

A character is trying to buy several units of grain and achieves 6 **Degrees of Success**. On the table, there is a 0.9 purchase price multiplier for 6 **Degrees of Success**. Multiplying 0.9 and the base unit cost of grains (5 GC) yields 4 GC 50 SC, which is the price per unit at which the character is able to purchase this trade good.

When it comes time to sell an item, you again make a *Merchant* test, with the **Degrees of Success** (or **Failure**) determining the sale price multiplier. It is important to remember that the sale price multiplier, like the purchase price multiplier is applied to the base unit cost, even if the character had purchased a trade good at a price higher or lower than the base unit cost.

TRADE VALUE		
DEGREES ±	PURCHASE PRICE MULTIPLIER	SALE PRICE MULTIPLIER
12+	0.8	2.0
9-11	0.85	1.75
6-8	0.9	1.5
3-5	0.95	1.25
0-2	1.0	1.0
-1 to -2	1.25	0.95
-3 to -5	1.5	0.9
-6 to -8	1.75	0.85
-9 to -11+	2	0.8

## ADDITIONAL RULES

The system presented above is intended to be very simple and straightforward, but some may desire further complexity. If so, the following additional rules may be employed.

### BROKERS

You may employ a local broker to aid in the sale (but not purchase) of goods. A broker grants a +1 to the **TN** of the Trade test, up to a maximum of +5. Brokers work on commission, earning 5% of the final sale price per +1 **TN**. No more than a single broker can be employed per sale.

## SUPPLY & DEMAND

Each type of trade goods has a code listed on the **Trade Goods Available** table. These codes are used in conjunction with the **Supply and Demand** table.

Depending on a market's population, there are varying degrees of supply and demand for each type of trade good. The first number is the supply multiplier and the second is

demand modifier. These multipliers are applied to the base unit cost before any other modifiers. If the supply multiplier is listed as “-”, that type of trade good is unavailable in the market in question, e.g.:

Grain is a foodstuff that sells for 5 GC per unit. In a location with a population between 1 and 249 people foodstuffs is plentiful, so they cost less per unit (5 GC × (-50%) = 2 GC 50 SC). Demand in an area with a population between 7,000 and 9,999 people is much greater, so the sell price increases by +35%.

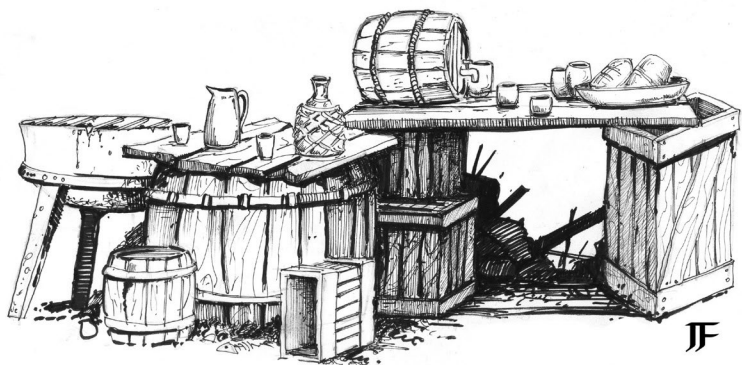
TRADE CODES	
CODE	MEANING
A	Arms
F	Foodstuff
I	Industrial
L	Livestock
LG	Luxury Goods
M	Metals

The table is easily altered. In fact you are encouraged to create custom tables reflecting the peculiarities of individual locations in your campaigns. Likewise, additional modifiers can be employed that affect the supply and demand multipliers, such as location, local economic factors, as well as wars. Of course, there is no need to introduce such complexities into the system unless you enjoy the added detail.

INVESTING

So what if you do not want to buy and sell goods and take such large risks? Or, what if you are looking for a way to spread your money, be it legally obtained or not so legally obtained, in order to bring in more money? That is where investment comes in. At its most basic, investing is using your money, and placing it in a venture. This venture, then, brings you a small return, modest gains, or even great means. Investing can just as easily bring you to ruin as well.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND ADJUSTMENTS						
POPULATION	TRADE CODE					
	A	F	I	L	LG	M
1-249	+20%	0%	+35%	0%	+50%	0%
250-499	+25%	+10%	+30%	+10%	+40%	+10%
500-999	+30%	+15%	+25%	+15%	+30%	+15%
1,000-2,499	+35%	+20%	+20%	+20%	+20%	+20%
2,500-4,999	+40%	+25%	+15%	+25%	+15%	+15%
5,000-6,999	+45%	+30%	+10%	+30%	+10%	+10%
7,000-9,999	+50%	+35%	+5%	+35%	+5%	+5%
10,000+	+50%	+40%	+0%	+40%	+0%	+0%



To invest you pick a sum of money, and decide on where you would like to invest. The types of investments are found in the **Investment Table**, along with the rate of return, and the chance of the type of year the investment has. The return on an investment is tied in with the **Domain** rules (see page 156), and the return is checked once per game year. At the start of each year, you must choose to keep their investment or cash it out.

There is no limit on the number of ventures you are able to invest in, assuming you have the money to do so. To make all investments worthwhile, you need to invest a minimum of at least 1 GC (100 SC) in a venture. Anything less is not worth the bookkeeping of the business, nor does it add to funds a business has to draw upon.

INVESTMENTS					
INVESTMENT	BAD YEAR	NORMAL YEAR	RETURN	GREAT YEAR	RETURN
Agriculture	1–4	5–8	5%	9–12	10%
Art, Creative	1–3	4–10	4%	11–12	8%
Art, Performance	1–5	6–11	2%	12	4%
Banking	1–5	6–9	3%	10–12	6%
Crafting	1–2	3–11	5%	12	8%
Exploration	1–9	10–11	10%	12	15%
Export, Common	1–2	3–11	5%	10–12	8%
Export, Uncommon	1–3	4–10	8%	11–12	12%
Export, Rare	1–4	5–10	12%	11–12	15%
Export, Exotic	1–5	6–11	15%	12	20%
Guild, Craft	1–3	4–11	3%	12	6%
Guild, Criminal	1–2	3–10	9%	11–12	12%
Guild, Merchant	1–6	7–11	15%	12	10%
Husbandry	1–3	4–10	4%	11–12	8%
Import, Common	1–2	3–11	5%	10–12	8%
Import, Uncommon	1–3	4–10	8%	11–12	12%
Import, Rare	1–4	5–10	12%	11–12	15%
Import, Exotic	1–5	6–11	15%	12	20%
Mining	1–5	6–11	5%	12	10%
Quarry	1–4	5–10	4%	11–12	8%
Tavern	1–2	3–11	3%	12	6%

## DESCRIPTIONS

**Bad Year:** The investment did not pan out, and you lost the money you invested. You can choose to reinvest, but the amount invested is doubled from the initial investment:

You invest 1 GC into a tavern, and it has a bad year—reinvestment will cost 2 GC.

If you have three bad years in a row, the investment is considered dead:

You have invested in a tavern, and for three straight years, the tavern has a

bad year. The tavern closes, and that business is no longer a viable venture.

**Normal Year:** The investment succeeds, and you earn a return equal to:

$$\text{Initial Invest} \times \text{Return} = \text{Profit}$$

You invest 1 GC in agriculture, and in a normal year you gain a 5% return, or 5 GC. Thus the character gains 10 GC 50 SC from their investment.

**Great Year:** Be it a bumper crop, a great year of business, or other event, the return on your investment is great:

You invest 2 GC in a venture that sees you importing rare exotic goods, and in a great year you gain a 20% return, or 4 GCs. Thus gain 2 GC 40 SC from your investment.

## TYPES OF INVESTMENT

**Art, Creative:** You have invested in a sculpture, painting, or some type of item that is thought to be of artistic merit.

**Art, Performance:** You have invested in an opera, play, or performance of some type.

**Banking:** You have invested in a bank, and you make your money on the bank lending money to others.

**Crafting:** You have invested in a blacksmith, a wagon maker, or the like.

**Exploration:** You have invested in a person, or group of people, who are to undertake



a voyage to a new land. Examples of this would be investing in a voyage similar in scope to those of Marco Polo, Columbus, or even to the South Pole.

**Exports:** Exporting is the act of transporting and selling goods from your region, to another region. For example, exporting coffee beans from the south, and selling them in the north. There are four different types of imports a character can invest in: common, uncommon, rare, and exotic.

**Guild, Craft:** You have invested in a guild that produces something, be it candles, shoes, leather goods and the like.

**Guild, Criminal:** You have invested in a guild that specializes in criminal activity. Such activity can be thieving, assassinations, smuggling, or other illicit activities.

**Guild, Merchant:** Your investment has been made in a bakery, a tailor, or other type of guild that sells goods.

**Imports:** Importing is the act of bringing in goods from another region, and selling them within your own region. For example, importing silk from the East. There are four different types of imports a character can invest in: common, uncommon, rare, and exotic.

**Mining:** From precious metals, to gems and crystals, mining takes place underground.

**Quarry:** A quarry is where stone, marble, or other forms of minerals are excavated and used for building or art. A quarry is an open process, unlike mining, where the ground is dug, layer by layer, and the material is removed.

**Tavern:** This is your classic tavern, inn, or even restaurant.

## THIEF & CRIMINAL GANGS

So, what if you do not fit the role of being a ruler of a domain, or even a merchant power? What if your inclinations tend to lie along a more “shadowy” path? What if crime is the area that has brought you your wealth and is responsible for your rise in power and infamy? Welcome to the world of thief and criminal gangs.

Creating a thief or criminal gang is very much like creating a domain or becoming an economic power. It takes time, money, and a growing group of people wanting to serve you—in this case, commit crimes for you. Criminal gangs are really nothing more than a collection of henchman and members who come to you in the hope that by doing so your enterprise will not only bring them steady income, but offers them protection from the law.

### FORMING A CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE

The first part of forming a group is for you to have a group of Henchman who aid you in keeping the group running, as well as taking leadership roles. The more Henchman you have, the more control you have over the overall health of your gang of thieves. For rules on henchman, see pages 151 to 154. Though you are the leader of the gang, the henchman carry out the work. Each henchman is able to control a certain number of gang members, and this rate is 5 criminals per each henchman. So if you have 10 henchman, then that means you have a total of 50 criminals within your organization. Your henchman then are your lieutenants who are responsible for running various

aspects of your gang. The more you have, the easier it is to grow your gang, as well as run your gang. So what are the various aspects of a gang? Read on.

## WHAT A GANG DOES

Though they are a collection of criminals, cutthroats and ne'er-do-wells, your gang needs direction and a purpose. It is through this that money comes in, and not only brings you wealth, but keeps everyone happy so they don't seek to cut your throat and take over. For each lieutenant you have, your gang is able to undertake one specific enterprise of crime every month. Consider these enterprises their monthly duties your gang has, and also represent the roles they perform to enrich the gang's coffers.

## NUMBER OF CRIMINAL ENTERPRISES

For each lieutenant you have, your gang is able to perform one enterprise, e.g., if you have 5 lieutenants, then your gang has 5 enterprises. You are free to diversify the number of enterprises your gang does, or have them all perform the same tasks. What are the advantages and disadvantages to this? Good question.

The advantage of having a diversified gang is that you have many income streams coming in, allowing a steady stream of wealth to keep your coffers full. The disadvantage is that if one aspect has a bad month, the income drops. The advantage of having all your gang undertake one aspect increases the potential risk/reward.

In the following table you find the criminal enterprise you are able to assign to your gang, and the income derived from said take. Every month you roll a d12 for the enterprise, and the result tells you if this is a bad, good, or great month. In addition, depending on the month, the income derived is listed. This income is per the number of people your lieutenant has working on them. For example, if your lieutenant has 10 beggars working



under him, and they have each brought in 14 SC in total then your total would be 14 GC (140 SC. Keep in mind, this total is before you, as leader of the criminal organization takes your percentage out.

CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE						
ASSIGNMENT	BAD MONTH	BAD MONTH INCOME	GOOD MONTH	GOOD MONTH INCOME	GREAT MONTH	GREAT MONTH INCOME
Assassination	1-7	1 GC	8-11	2 GC	12	3 GC
Begging	2-5	35 CC	6-9	14 SC	10-12	28 SC
Burglary	1-4	75 SC	5-8	1 GC	9-12	1 GC 25 SC
Coin-Clipping	1-5	5 SC 15 CC	6-11	10 SC	12	15 SC
Counterfeiting	1-4	10 SC	5-10	30 SC	11-12	60 SC
Extortion	1-4	20 SC	5-11	40 SC	12	60 SC
Fencing	1-4	35 SC	5-10	65 SC	11-12	1 GC
Forgery	1-5	18 SC	6-11	24 SC	12	30 SC
Gambling	1-3	50 SC	4-10	1 GC	11-12	2 GC
Kidnapping	1-3	1 GC	4-10	2 GC	11-12	3 GC
Loan-sharking	1-2	50 SC	3-11	1 GC	12	1 GC 50 SC
Mugging	1-5	20 SC 15 CC	6-11	30 SC 20 CC	12	50 SC
Pickpocketing	1-3	10 SC	4-10	20 SC	11-12	30 SC
Piracy	1-12	5 GC	3-11	10 GC	10-12	20 SC
Prostitution	1-2	12 SC	3-11	24 SC	12	32 SC
Protection	1	25 SC	2-10	50 SC	11-12	75 SC
Ransom	1-4	2 GC	5-10	4 GC	11-12	6 GC
Robbery	1-2	15 SC	3-10	45 SC	11-12	1 GC
Smuggling	1-9	2 GC	10-11	3 GC	12	4 GC
Spy	1-3	1 GC 25 SC	4-11	2 GC 15 SC	12	3 GC 5 SC
Swindling	1-2	8 SC 20 CC 10 IP	3-11	18 SC 20 CC	12	24 SC 20 CC 5 IP

DESCRIPTIONS

**Assassination:** Focused on the killing of certain individuals for a price, there is a steady stream of clients, but the rate of return is low. The reason for this is simple: not everyone is able to afford the price to have someone killed.

**Begging:** One of the most overlooked enterprises in an organization is begging. Having beggars brings a steady stream of not only income, but gives the organization a set of eyes and ears which are able to slip among a city and gaining in-formation. Having beggars allows organizations to have lookouts when larger crimes are being committed, as well having an unsuspecting group of couriers able to ferry information and messages.

**Burglary:** Centered around observing a location known to have goods worth stealing, and the actual stealing of said items. Burglary runs from simple things like cloth shipments to expensive things such as jewelry, art, and other valuable items.

**Coin-Clipping:** With economies running on coins of various denominations, coin clipping is the act of shaving just enough of a coin to accumulate enough of the precious metal for your use. By shaving coins, and collecting the shavings, you slowly build your funds. It might not seem enough, but given enough time, all that is collected helps grow the counterfeiting efforts.

**Counterfeiting:** Either stealing raw gold or silver, or collecting the fillings from clipping duties, your gang is able to forge their own coins and pass them off as legal tender. Counterfeiting is a crime touching many, and this is due to almost anyone within large urban areas unknowingly carrying coins that are not minted by the legal authorities. Now the question remains, how does income get generated via counterfeiting? Simple: by being able to strike your own coins, you fill your coffers with wealth easily passed off as legal tender.

**Extortion:** From gaining information from your beggars' network, or by having someone go into debt with the criminal group, blackmail is the act of taking money from someone in order to keep their secrets secret.

**Fencing:** Some criminal enterprise choose to stay small, and instead ply their skills on taking stolen goods from others, and selling them to others. Often this is done as a result of a burglary. It is one thing to successfully steal a work of art worth a lot of money, but another things to sell it. A fence, takes the stolen item, sells it to a known buyer, and for a percentage brokers the transaction.

**Forgery:** The quiet crime where income is generated in forging documents for others to use.

**Gambling:** Everyone likes to gamble, and the larger the city a criminal organization works in, the more people are found who are willing to lose their money to games of chance. No matter how bad an economy is, someone is willing to place a bet, or play a game in the hopes of bringing in a greater return.

**Kidnapping:** Sometimes a person wants a competitor out of the way, or wants to influence them by having a loved one go missing. This is where kidnapping comes in. Unlike ransom (see below) kidnapping is simply grabbing an individual and holding them prisoner.

**Loan-sharking:** Living is expensive. Living in a large city even more so. Everyone needs money, and sometimes if you take too much risk, or need a start on a different path, money is the means to do it. Loans are hard to come by for most people, and that is where the loan shark comes in. They have no problem lending you the money you need, as long as you are able to pay it back at an unusually high interest rate.

**Mugging:** There is nothing simple about this enterprise. You simply find an unsuspecting target, or a assigned target, and rough them up. The purpose of a mugging is one of two things. At the most basic it is overwhelming someone with brute force and stealing what they have on their person. At the other end mugging is an effective tool to be used to send a message to a rival, politician or competitor.

**Pickpocketing:** Unlike mugging, pickpocketing is subtle. By working large crowds, be it along city streets, markets or plazas, cutpurses steal loose coin purses to bring the contents back to the gang. Pickpocketing does not have to be plied on streets: many

work in the taverns, bars, and restaurants where those with a lot of coin drink far too much wine.

**Piracy:** Unlike other enterprises, piracy is an all-or-nothing pursuit. You either have your entire criminal organization doing this or you don't. Why? Piracy is expensive. First you need a ship, second you need a crew, and third you need ships to prey on.

**Prostitution:** Though it might be unsavory, there is always someone looking for someone's company for an hour or two.

**Protection:** Life is rough. Danger is high. Sometimes a businessman needs to make sure nothing happens to their investment. You know, it would be a shame for a fire to break out in this neighborhood. You really have a lot of nice carpets, by the way. I hear the crime rate in this neighborhood is high, and you should pay someone to look after your interests, to make sure nothing untoward happens. I know some people. Do you follow?

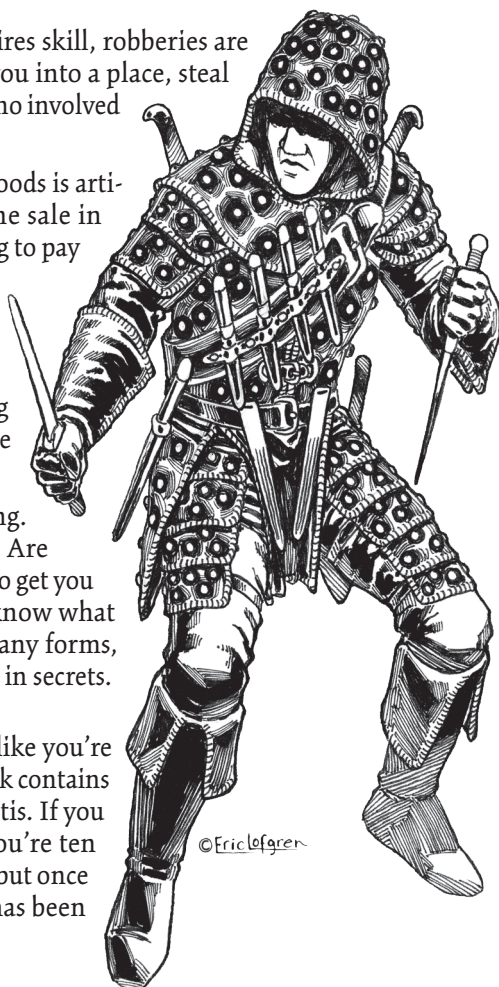
**Ransom:** It is one thing to kidnap someone, but another to take someone for the sole purpose of getting money.

**Robbery:** Unlike a burglary, which requires skill, robberies are a quick smash-and-grab designed to get you into a place, steal what you can, and then escape. No finesse, no involved planning, just brute force.

**Smuggling:** Sometimes the demand for goods is artificially affected by a guild obstructing the sale in order to drive up prices. Those not wanting to pay these prices are often willing to pay an intermediary to provide them what they need. Sometime certain goods might not be available due to war or trade disputes. This is where smuggling comes in. It is providing the market what they want, but without the middleman.

**Spying:** Everyone needs to know something. What if their spouse cheating on them? Are rivals working against you and conspiring to get you out of the way? Maybe you just want to know what the other gangs are up to. Spying takes many forms, and regardless of it, there is always a profit in secrets.

**Swindling:** Hey, you. Yes, you. You look like you're tired. I have just the thing for you. This flask contains a powerful liquid distilled in distant Atlantis. If you drink this every day, you will feel as if you're ten years younger! Come on, first taste is free, but once you try it, you'll be wondering where it has been your whole life.



KEEPING EVERYONE HAPPY

Having a gang is different than having a social circle. Why? A social circle never wants to stab you in the back if you treat them bad. Criminals are a greedy bunch, prone to turn against one another, then work together for the betterment of the entire group. To keep everyone happy, money needs to flow, rules need to be such that it does not seem as if members are slaves, and more importantly, the ones at the top should not appear to be taking the hard work of others for granted.

So how do you measure how happy your band of cutthroats are? The same way as you measure the happiness of all groups within *Shadow, Sword & Spell*: **Resolve**. The **Resolve** of the gang is a measure of how their attitudes are to you and your leadership style. The higher the **Resolve**, the easier it is to keep them in line and perform tasks. The goal of running your gang is this: keep them happy so they do not turn around and stab you in the back.

When forming your gang the initial **Resolve** they have is equal to your **Will × 2 plus 1 per each henchman** you have:

You have Will 8, so the starting **Resolve** would be 16. In addition you have 10 henchman who are with you and aid you in running your gang. This gives you an additional bonus of +10 bringing your starting **Resolve** to 26. This number rises and falls depending on how well, or poorly, you treat those in your gang. Whenever a **Resolve Check** is made, look up the current **Resolve** rating on the **Resolve Level Table** which indicates the new **Resolve**. Remember that although **Resolve** changes frequently, the **Resolve Level** only changes when a **Resolve Check** is made — even if the rating moves into a different range between checks.

MONTHLY RESOLVE CHECK

At the start of each month check the current **Resolve Rating** of your gang to determine their **Resolve Level**. This **Resolve Check** may also be required as a result of certain actions you take (such as not being able to provide enough food in your hideout) or as a result of a disaster striking the group (an unsuccessful fight leading to the death of a beloved follower).

So how do you check **Resolve**? Simply see what the current number is, by finding it on the **Resolve Table**:

Your gang has a current **Resolve** of 53. Looking at the table, you see that 53 means they are Thriving—that is your current **Resolve**.

Descriptions of the various Resolve Levels and their effects on the group are given below.

AVERAGE

The group is running smoothly. There are no special conditions or effects.

RESOLVE LEVEL	
RESOLVE	RESOLVE LEVEL
1	Turbulent
2 to 7	Belligerent
8 to 13	Rebellious
14 to 19	Defiant
20 to 25	Unsteady
26 to 35	Average
32 to 37	Steady
38 to 43	Healthy
44 to 49	Prosperous
50 to 55	Thriving
56+	Ideal

**BELLIGERENT**

A -2 penalty is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition, a *Diplomacy Test* [TN 28] is always required when you order the gang to do something. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is -20%.

**DEFIANT**

A -1 penalty is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition, a *Diplomacy Test* [TN 18] is always required when you order the gang to do something. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is -10%.

**HEALTHY**

A +1 bonus is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition, any **Tests** undertaken have a +1 Bonus. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is +10%.

**IDEAL**

A +2 bonus is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition, any **Tests** the gang undertakes has a +3 Bonus. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is +25%.

**PROSPEROUS**

A +1 bonus is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition, any **Tests** undertaken has a +2 Bonus. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is +15%.

**REBELLIOUS**

A -1 penalty is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition, a *Diplomacy Test* [TN 26] is always required when you order your gang to do something. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is -15%.

**STEADY**

A +1 bonus is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is +5%.

**THRIVING**

A +2 bonus is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition, any **Tests** the gang undertakes have a +2 Bonus. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is +20%.

**TURBULENT**

A -2 penalty is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition, a *Diplomacy Test* [TN 26] is always required when ordering the gang to do something. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is -25%.

**UNSTEADY**

A -1 penalty is applied to the **Resolve**. In addition the monthly take from all criminal activities is -5%.

Depending on how you treat your gang, their **Resolve** ebbs and flows with their circumstances. This ebb and flow is based on your actions, as well as the conditions the gang face.

## EVENT DESCRIPTIONS

*ARREST OF CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE*

Word reached the authorities that the beggars working the docks are stealing purses from unsuspecting merchants. This leads to the whole group being thrown into the dungeon and that ring of pick pockets destroyed.

*ARREST OF LIEUTENANT*

You told Larry of the Broken Nose he should be more careful with what he said when deep in his cups. Too much wine loosens the lips far too much for comfort. Unfortunately, Larry didn't listen as he was recently after bragging about the kidnapping of Watch Captain Lourdes Van'er's mother.

*ARREST OF MEMBER*

The city watch caught your robbers red-handed with the stolen gems from Otto the Jeweler. No one likes to know that crime does not pay.

*CHARACTER DIPLOMACY*

The better your *Diplomacy* skill, the easier time you have in keeping everyone happy.

*ENTIRE ENTERPRISE ARRESTED*

You had a good run while it lasted, but everyone ends up getting caught and doing time—it's the nature of the business.

*EXTRA PAY*

Raising the cut, awarding a bonus; after all, everyone likes extra money.

*FORCED TO DO SOMETHING AGAINST THEIR WILL*

This is a broad category covering such acts as doing a job that is beneath one's status, undertaking an enterprise not accustomed to, or being told a certain target is off limits.

*GIFT*

A new cloak, a new duty, even a new sword; everyone likes gifts.

EVENT	
SITUATION	RESOLVE ±
Arrest of criminal enterprise	-4
Arrest of lieutenant	-8
Arrest of member	-1/person
Character Diplomacy between 1-6	+1
Character Diplomacy between 7-12	+3
Character Diplomacy between 13-19	+5
Character Diplomacy 20+	+7
Death of lieutenant	-5
Death of a member	-2
Extra Pay	+1
Gift	+5
Promotion	+5
Entire enterprise arrested	-20
Forced to do something against will	-10
Miss a Meal	-1
Sickness	-2
Suffer defeat	-3
Suffer defeat with 1/4 casualties	-6
Suffer defeat with 1/2 casualties	-9
Suffer defeat with 3/4 casualties	-12
Victor	+7
Victory, Major	+10
Victory, Minor	+3

### **DEATH OF A MEMBER**

Death comes to all, and when a member dies due to either violence or natural causes, it still hits everyone hard.

### **MISS A MEAL**

Regular meals are important, and members do not like missing one. Each one missed drops their morale more and more.

### **PROMOTION**

Be it a lowly beggar becoming head of the beggars operation, or a trusted lieutenant becoming second-in-command, a promotion is always good.

### **SICKNESS**

Being sick is never fun, but when someone cannot work due to illness or worse, but still needs to work despite the illness, this affects morale.

### **SUFFER DEFEAT**

From a barroom brawl to a skirmish with a rival gang, losing stinks.

### **SUFFER DEFEAT WITH $\frac{1}{4}$ CASUALTIES**

This is the same as suffering a defeat, but there are a minimum of 1d12 casualties.

### **SUFFER DEFEAT WITH $\frac{1}{2}$ CASUALTIES**

Not only did you lose, but you lost half of your men. Maybe you should hire a better general.

### **SUFFER DEFEAT WITH $\frac{3}{4}$ CASUALTIES**

You lost, and lost big. It is time to rethink your military tactics and outlook.

### **VICTORY**

Winning a skirmish or competition, because everyone likes to win.

### **VICTORY, MINOR**

Not only did you win, but you beat the odds.

### **VICTORY, MAJOR**

You beat the impossible.

## **INCOME & EXPENSE**

Running a criminal enterprise costs money and the reason is that there are certain exceptions you have to live up too. That is providing a safe place for members to come to in order to sleep, eat, and seek aid in times of need. What, you thought you get to keep all the money your gang of cutthroats brings in?

Every leader of a gang takes their cut and then uses it to pay their lieutenants as well as provide for the needs of the members. The following table quickly tells you what



effect the take has when it comes to **Gang Resolve** and the expectations Lieutenants and Members have. In addition it tells you, as the leader, how much goes into your personal coffers. Use the examples in the table as guidelines in setting the reaction the character's gang has to the change in take and the payout.

So how does this all work? Easy. Let's say every month your criminal enterprise is bringing in on average 10 GC, and your take of monthly haul is 50% or 5 GC. The remaining 5 GC is given to the various enterprises for the work they have done that month. Of your 5 GC, 25% of

that or 1 GC 25 SC goes to your lieutenants and the remaining 25% of 1 GC 25 SC goes to the general upkeep of the gang. This upkeep takes the form of providing a safe place to stay, food to eat, and general support. Due to the even distribution you have set up within your gang there is no **Resolve** penalty or bonus.

TAKE OF MONTHLY PROFITS	% TO LIEUTENANTS	% FOR UPKEEP	RESOLVE +/-
50%	25%	25%	+0
50%	30%	20%	-1
50%	35%	15%	-2
50%	40%	10%	-3
50%	45%	5%	-4
40%	30%	30%	+2
40%	25%	15%	+0
40%	45%	15%	-2



# CHAPTER

# 9

## GAMEMASTERING

**S**hadow, Sword & Spell is a roleplaying game of pulp fantasy. What exactly does that mean? Put simply, it means that this game is inspired by the works of various fantasy writers from the 1930s to the 1960s, including Robert E. Howard, H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Fritz Leiber, Jack Vance, and Michael Moorcock, and many others who followed in their footsteps. Each of these writers contributed to the creation of a new kind of fantasy, one different from the whimsical fairy tales of the of the 19th century or the epic (or “high”)

fantasies of the 20th century. If you’re familiar with the works of the authors listed above, the meaning of “pulp fantasy” is likely already clear to you—but if you’re not? That’s where this section of the book comes in handy.

## WHAT IS “PULP FANTASY?”

Pulp fantasy adventures are often described as “gritty,” which typically means they are violent and “down and dirty.” Protagonists in pulp fantasy adventures achieve their goals at the cost of blood and sweat, facing obstacles and opponents that make them pay for every last victory one way or another. This means that the life of an adventurer in a pulp fantasy world is not glamorous.

Actually it sucks.

It is difficult, filled with challenges demanding every ounce of skill and determination on the part of the protagonist to overcome. Even when they are beaten, these challenges leave marks and scars on the adventurer, whether physical or emotional, that linger for a long time after the fact.

Pulp fantasy characters are “working stiffs.” The world isn’t handed to them on a silver platter—they have to fight for every silver piece they lay their hands on, and there’s always someone else looking to steal it from them. These characters live in a “dog eat dog” world, and often it is the dog eating them! It means always being on guard against danger.

If that sounds like a miserable existence, you might be missing the potential it holds for exciting adventures. Everything they do, from journeying from one city-state to another, to negotiating a mercenary contract in a seedy inn, is fraught with danger. Bandits lie in wait along the trade routes to ambush the unwary, and armed brutes look to press-gang foreigners into military service or, worse, sell them into slavery. And that’s not even counting all the tombs to be robbed, the lost cities to be explored, and the dispossessed rulers looking to reclaim their crowns!

There is no doubt pulp fantasy characters lead miserable lives. They rarely stay on top for long. They are always on the move, seeking out new ways to keep themselves fed, acquire lodging and supplies, often struggling just to live out one more day. If they’re talented and bold (and lucky), they might manage to acquire wealth and gain power in the long run. Even so, there’s never any guarantee they’ll keep it for long—there’s always someone plotting to take it all away from them, and murder them to boot.

So why even play a game like this?

The flippant answer is it is fun. However there is more to it than that. This style of game rewards risk, daring, and belief in oneself. Fighting against the odds and overcoming them brings not only fame but rewards.

Actions have repercussions. These repercussions lead to renown, wealth and even more challenges. The odds might be against your character, but so what? Always bet on yourself because the greatness is within you.

## ROGUES — WITH HEARTS OF GOLD (WELL, ACTUALLY WITHOUT)

Not surprisingly, pulp fantasy characters aren't generally upstanding members of society. Living on society's margins, taking jobs and undertaking adventures "normal" sane people would never even consider. Likewise, their motives for doing so are rarely altruistic. Instead, they're motivated by more base desires, which probably explains why they have few qualms about putting their own good ahead of that of others.

This makes it very easy to create adventures for characters in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. Adventurers are always in need of money. Dangle a likely source of wealth in front of them, and they'll immediately begin plotting to take it, even if the risks are seemingly great. After all, pulp fantasy characters are not only greedy, but they're also a cut above the average person. Risk-taking is in their blood, and they crave excitement almost as much as they crave coins. Combine the possibility of wealth with the opportunity for derring-do, and you've got a great recipe for a *Shadow, Sword & Spell* adventure.

### ONE OF A KIND

Pulp fantasy has long been criticized for the casual racism and sexism it often contains, and the rampant use of stereotypes to portray "savage, uncivilized" cultures. There is some merit in these critiques, and for many this prevents them from enjoying the wealth of material classified as pulp fantasy. I, too, get uncomfortable at times with seeing these things.

However, like many such criticisms, it fails to take into account that sometimes these stereotypes exist so you are able to shatter them in surprising ways. For example, if an entire culture is described as being one of sub-human, bloodthirsty cannibals, it makes things all the more dramatic when a member of that culture shows herself to be an urbane individual every bit as sophisticated as the player characters. It not only calls into question the stereotype, but also throws the players for a loop, since they must deal with a situation they didn't expect.

The key word here is "individual." Pulp fantasy, more than other genres, is very much about individuals. There are innumerable cities, nations, and cultures in *The World*, but they're mostly painted in broad strokes so as to not confine the Gamemaster's options in using them.

Individuals, on the other hand, are the center of attention, and they must be given much greater detail. This extends not only to your characters, but also to important NPCs. It's perfectly fine if most members of the City Watch of Gravina are portrayed as nameless, faceless mooks because they're not important. However, Watch Commander Nikephoria, who's taken notice of your daring thefts of the city's temple treasuries, deserves more. You should present her in great detail, since she's an important antagonist, one who'll dog the characters' heels, a la Inspector Javert, for many adventures.

In a similar fashion, monsters, that is to say, non-human enemies, should be treated as individuals as well. You'll notice that there are no monstrous "races" in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. So too are the number of traditional fantasy monsters. That's by design, and it adheres

to the traditions of pulp fantasy. You do not encounter “orcs” or “elves” or anything of the sort. Instead, there are individual monsters, such as Thog-Ummath (a massive tiger), “The Thing That Should Not Be,” or “The Black Beast of Blood Moon Pass” (a spirit summoned by a long dead sorcery whose eldritch might was not what she thought).

## THINGS MAN WAS NOT MEANT TO KNOW

In other types of fantasy, magic is a substitute for science. Its principles are well-known, and its practitioners can rely upon it to do what they expect. Not so in pulp fantasy! Magic in pulp fantasy is a dark and mysterious power. It acts according to its own laws and obeys no one, not even those who claim to command and wield it. Using magic is the domain of the foolhardy and the insane, and those who fail to understand this soon come to realize the error of their ways.

In *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, braving the risks of learning has you pay the price. Likewise, the practice of magic won’t win you many friends. In fact, it only further marginalizes you as a disreputable outlaw with whom upstanding people refuse to have dealings with. At the same time, there’s no question magic brings with it the potential for great power and influence, making the arcane arts another terrific motivator for adventures. If you’re looking for the *Ritual of the Emerald Sleep* in order to add to your knowledge, learning that



this information can be found within the tower of Archmage Pharnibazus, Hierophant of Lemuria, will prove to be a strong temptation a clever GM can use to good effect.

Likewise, magic is useful as a means of adding mystery to a *Shadow, Sword & Spell* adventure or campaign. By its very nature, magic breaks reality's laws as commonly understood. Using magic is a terrific way to do something unexpected, whether it be a chamber where gravity is reversed, a city located underwater, or a sword with a mind of its own. Use magic to throw players off-kilter and keep them guessing. Play with their expectations and make them doubt what they think they know. This not only adds mystery to an adventure, but it also ensures that there's always something new for them to experience.

## ABOVE ALL, FUN

In the end, regardless of all the guidelines offered, pulp fantasy is a wide open genre of fantasy infinitely malleable and conducive to variety of interpretations. You might say that its first and most important rule is that there are no rules. That's why many pulp fantasies include elements of science fiction, horror, detective stories, and other genres if their inclusion makes for a more fun and exciting game. No one will, or should, tell you what's right or wrong in your game, so you should feel free to add those elements that you think work best. Thus, if allowing laser pistols or flying cars alongside your barbarian warlords and evil necromancers makes for a better game, more power to you!

Pulp fantasy isn't a rigid, ossified genre. Like its protagonists, it is fond of taking risks in the name of adventure. Never be afraid to add or subtract whatever elements you wish your games to have if it makes them more enjoyable for everyone. This book, and future *Shadow, Sword & Spell* supplements, will provide lots of examples and suggestions on what to include. None of these, however, are written in stone, and you are encouraged to treat them as what they are, mere inspiration, just like the books and authors that influenced this game.

## POLITICS & HIGH STAKES

In *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, the primary assumption about adventures is that they are centered on survival. You are worried about your next meal, or if you have enough coin to repair your armor, or hell, whether you can replace it. Adventure is all about survival, not only dealing with physical dangers, but the mundane ones. As you grow in experience and power, your outlook on the world and your goals begin to change as well. Gone are the days when you are selling his sword to the highest bidder. You now lead your own band of cutthroat mercenaries. Or, your own gang of thieves. Or, you are working behind the scenes in the lethal political theater of palace and court intrigues. Adventures like these take on a special challenge for you. What challenge? How do you make it interesting?

It is not that adventures for powerful heroes are difficult to create, it's just that they are different. Look at the Kull short stories by Robert E. Howard. Here is a hero who has gained the throne, and must not only deal with byzantine plots, but antagonists wanting him dead. More and more, his adventures primarily involve the various competing factions. For a more recent example, look to David Sim's *High Society*, in which

the main character, Cerebus, not only has to deal with a political election, but the fallout of the election's results. This, in turn, leads him to dealing with the various religious factions (see *Church & State I* and *Church & State II*), and his eventual appointment as Pope. Though at first blush these seem like dull adventure prospects lacking risk of harm, this is far from the truth: the higher the stakes, the greater the risk you run of being killed.

Keep in mind that you have henchmen, hirelings, and hangers-on who need not only action, but more importantly, money. Often it is this need to keep the troops happy that spurs action. If you have been given lands and titles, you have obligations that might require mustering armies, staffing outposts, or serving as diplomats to far-off, distant locations.

## POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Leading armies, slaying powerful beasts, or even partaking in a gang war is rife with adventuring possibilities. However, sometimes shifting the focus to political adventures offers just as many adventuring opportunities, as well as the impetus for creating some memorable game moments. How do you, the Gamemaster, create political campaigns, let alone adventures? First, have a talk with your players.

The first question that needs to be asked is a simple one. *What type of game do you want?* Answering this helps guide the campaign's direction, as well as gives you the overall goal. There are many ways they might answer this question. Here are a few examples:

- The characters have made a name for themselves, and are now assigned to the king, emperor, or top of the leadership ladder, tasked with protecting the ruler in question.
- The characters have been appointed to a remote outpost, and must work to bring rival factions to the bargaining table to negotiate a peace treaty.
- The characters have been given a **Domain**, and must work to tame it and lead it in a civilizing direction.
- Due to their deeds, the characters are elected to the senate, ruling council, or other type of government body, and now need to brave and survive the backroom politics.
- The characters are pious, and have worked their way up the rungs of their religious organization's ladder, and must deal with various competing factions on the verge of open sectarian strife.
- The characters become merchants, and must not only deal with the rise and fall of trade prices, but the effects of organized crime.

Political campaigns can take place at any time. These campaigns are not limited to characters leading armies—sometimes, political campaigns are just as effective with weaker characters. As a general rule of thumb, the following table is a good reference tool in figuring out the starting level for a political campaign. This table includes Power Levels, as discussed on page 196.

Though not necessary, it doesn't hurt for you to have a theme or a goal, as this gives everything a sense of direction. This goal ranges from the cliché concept of taking over the world to something as simple as bringing peace to a war-torn kingdom. These type

of campaigns are far more effective if there is a goal in mind. Why? Because it offers you an easy reference point in creating adventures.

## VILLAINS & ADVERSARIES

The key component to any political campaign is effective villains and adversaries. They are essential not just for good political campaigns, but all campaigns. Keep in mind they do not have to be uber-powerful demi-gods capable of destroying cities with a flex of their arms. Villains and adversaries range from the apparently weak clerk, who through family connections and blackmail, is able to machinate with impunity behind the scenes. All villains and adversaries, regardless of type have a few things in common: **Power Base**, **Goals**, **Motivations**, and *Je Ne Sais Quoi*.

### POWER BASE

A **Power Base** is a source of influence, personal resources, and skills that villains use to accomplish their goals. A **Power Base** could also be secret, be it one in which a certain bastard son lives, to one in which the Count's wife is having an adulterous affair with her brother-in-law. It is with this **Power Base** that the villains gain influence as well as



nudge events so as to harm or hinder others. Networking is another important **Power Base**, and it is through their personal connections and networks of owed favors that the villain is able to assert their will. Position is an even more important **Power Base**, because it is through a given position resources are able to be used to thwart the actions of others. Finally, the most important **Power Base** is wealth: money is the ultimate resource that allows votes to be bought, judges to be paid off, and nefarious individuals to be hired.

## GOALS

Just as you have your own **Goals**, villains have **Goals** as well. **Power Base** are important to the villain because they aid in creating adventures. **Goals** take many shapes and forms, from acquiring vast sums of wealth to taking the crown for themselves. Some examples of villains' **Goals** include:

- Restoring family honor
- Reclaiming a birthright
- Protecting trade interests
- Destroying a specific group of people or a tribe
- Breaking (or expanding) the control a religious sect has on a government
- Bankrupting a rival business owner, trader, or merchant
- Taking control of a religious sect, temple, or monastery
- Discovering the key to ascending to godhood
- Enslaving a group of people to feed the constant need to build an empire
- Uncover a lost relic which would enable the summoning of a demon

While **Goals** might be melodramatic or over the top they are extremely important to the villain. It does not matter how strange a goal seems as, for the villain, the **Goal** is their driving force. No action is too debased, no deed unjust, if it means that the villain's **Goal** will be met.

## MOTIVATION

Though a **Goal** is a villain's driving force, it is their **Motivation** that drives the villain to accomplish their **Goal(s)**. **Motivation** ranges from such simple concepts as love to more complex emotions such as envy. Emotions are important, and it is these emotions which you should use and mull over when giving your villains their motivations.

## JE NE SAIS QUOI

*Je Ne Sais Quoi* (from the French, literally meaning, "I do not know what") is that special something that makes a villain, well...a villain. This is the edge that villains have. *Je Ne Sais Quoi* makes the villain a match for the player characters, and should come into play often. *Je Ne Sais Quoi* can range from anything from allies (a villain's close confidant or ally who works to prevent the characters from disrupting the villain's plan) to something like popularity (the villain is popular among the denizens of the city, and no one thinks or believes the villain is actually a villain).

## WRAP UP

By thinking about a villain's **Power Base**, **Goal**, **Motivation**, and *Je Ne Sais Quoi*, you should have a villain capable of challenging the players. A villain does not end there. More important than these traits, you need to ensure your villain is as well-rounded as the players' characters. Why is the villain the way they are? What is their personality like? What do they look like? What makes them tick? All of these should be kept in mind, and are just as important as the villain's stats.

## BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Good villains can be hard to create, because they take time and effort, but their proper creation pays big dividends. Firstly, as noted earlier, they give your players a personal way of approaching the obstacles they face in an adventure. It is much easier to contend against a relentless witch hunter than it is to deal with impersonal forces, if only because you can actually converse with—and roleplay with!—the witch hunter, whereas, for example, a torrential rainstorm or difficult mathematical theorem offer no such opportunities.

Secondly, villains provide you with a way of confronting the players with challenges that hold a mirror up to their own actions. Even the noblest character must sometimes make a decision or undertake actions skirting the edge of the “dark side.” villains are characters who have wholly, freely, and willingly given themselves over to this “darker side” of human nature. They have little, if any, moral qualms and it is this fact that makes them interesting. Good villains should be seductive in their own way. They represent another path that even characters might take, wherein lies much of their power and appeal.

Finally, villains afford you a chance to play a character active and involved in the game. By their nature, villains are involved in adventure plots in a way most NPCs are not. They advance the plot forward by their actions and decisions, with goals and desires of their own in a way that most NPCs do not.

Villains give you a chance to play as well. Why should your players have all the fun?!

## NUTS & BOLTS OF VILLAIN DESIGN

Unlike the players, you have more freedom when it comes to designing villains and adversaries to pit against the players. Unlike the players, who must always balance their wants against the number of points they have to create a character, you don't have any of these constraints. If you want to create a sorcerer who knows most of the known spells, as well as skilled in numerous Alchemical Arts, you can do so. However, your players might find this villain too powerful to defeat, let alone survive an encounter with.

One of the key skills to learn as a Gamemaster is balancing the opposition so that it presents a challenge to the players, but not an impossibility. One way to obtain this balance is found in the following table.

All adversaries—be they creatures, villains, or animals—are created in the same way as players create their characters. However, you have the ability to tailor the threats your player’s face by scaling the power level of the adversaries you create. The table above is designed to help you choose the power level you want, and then help you build the threat or threats.

VILLAIN POWER					
POWER LEVEL	ABILITY POINTS	SKILL POINTS	MAX ABILITY	ACTION POINTS	NUMBER HOOKS
Infirm	8	15	2	1	2
Feeble	10	20	6	2	2
Weak	15	25	7	2	3
Below Average	25	30	8	3	3
Average	35	35	10	3	3
Above Average	45	40	12	3	4
Experience	55	45	14	4	4
Seasoned	65	50	16	4	4
Veteran	75	55	20	4	5
Legendary	85	60	22	5	5
Mythic	95	65	24	5	5

Though multiple Average adversaries pose a challenge for the players more times than not, the players will usually survive the encounter. A more difficult encounter then would be to create an adversary that is Seasoned, a villain who is a little more experienced, a little more powerful.

By keeping this table in mind, as you create adventures for your players, you can scale the difficulty in the opposition faced. Keep in mind, like anything, you must be flexible. Sometimes you might want to create a villain who gives off the impression of being more powerful than they are. Conversely, you might want to create a villain who appears weak, but in truth is very powerful. This is perfectly acceptable, and keeps your players on their toes.

ASSIGN HOOK & ACTION POINTS

Just like characters, villains have **Hooks** and **Action Points**. **Hooks** for villains work in much the same way as it does for the characters (see page 56). As for the number of **Hooks** and **Action Points**, refer to **Villain Power Table** for the number available based on the villain’s power level.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE POINTS

At the end of every adventure, you should reward your players with **Experience Points (XPs)**. **XPs** indicates the measure of what each character has accomplished. By learning from their in-game decisions, characters become more proficient at what they are capable of doing. **XPs** are given if the characters succeed at their tasks, accomplish their goals, roleplay well, and/or perform some great feat or achieve a difficult goal.

Anywhere from between 1 to 4 **XPs** should be awarded per adventure, with the typical reward being 2 **XPs**.

There are other ways to gain **XP** and the following list gives you some idea of other ways to earn **XP**.

Buying new goods for sale	1 XP/1 GC
Creating and leading criminal enterprise	1 XP/per each one max 5 XP
Finding new goods to sell	1 XP/ 1 GC 50 SC
Founding a Domain	3 XP
Founding an additional Domain	1 XP/per each new one
Having retainers equal to half the character's maximum limit	1 XP
Having retainers equal to the character's maximum limit	3 XP
Income received from Domain	Income Received ÷ 1000 = XP
Investment, Bad Year	1 XP
Investment, Good Year	2 XP
Investment, Great Year	3 XP
Leading an army into battle	1 XP
Monthly take from criminal enterprise before expenses	1 XP/1 GC maximum 5 XP
Raising an army	10 XP
Starting a new business	4 XP
Traveling	.25 XP/50 miles
Traveling to a new region	1 XP/500 miles
Winning a battle	15 XP

## SPENDING EXPERIENCE POINTS

**Experience Points (XPs)** convert to skill points on a 1 to 1 basis. Thus, if you have **10 XPs**, you can convert these into **10 Skill Points**. These **Skill Points** can be used to increase currently held skills, purchase new skills, or to advance ranks in **Spells** and **Alchemical Arts**. When acquiring new skills you should provide some explanation for how they acquired such new knowledge, and the Gamemaster is within their rights to restrict or otherwise limit the skills you could plausibly gain through the expenditure of **XPs** without an in-game explanation.

Ideally, you only spend **XPs** on those skills they actually used during the course of an adventure. Likewise, the acquisition of new skills should be logical, and stem from events in the campaign rather than mere player whim. **XPs** can also be used to purchase additional **Action Points** to add to those received at character creation. Each additional **Action Point** costs **10 XPs**. However, you should bear in mind that the new **Action Point** should be tied to a new **Hook**, related to the recently completed adventure.

A new **Hook** must make sense within the context of your character's development and their place in the campaign. That is to say, you cannot suddenly acquire a **Hook** like "Heir to the Throne" when there has been no previous suggestion that you are related to royalty, or any plot in the campaign revealing this heritage. Once acquired, the new **Action Point** and associated **Hook** function normally as per the rules laid out in **Chapter 3** (see "Hooks" on page 58).

You may wish to limit the number of **Action Points** and **Hooks** a single character may acquire through **XPs**. As a practical guideline, it is generally best if no one has more than **12 Action Points** or **Hooks**, but you are free to ignore this suggested limitation or institute a lower cap, whatever you deem best for your campaign.

RAISING SKILL RANKS

At the end of each adventure, **XP**s are awarded. You should take note in terms of what skills, spells, or arts were used during the course of the adventure. These are the skills you can increase with **Experience Point** expenditures. If the characters used any skills *Untrained*, and used them a lot (at least two or three times per session), these skills can be purchased at their **Base Ranks**.

WHAT ABOUT RAISING ABILITIES?

It is possible to raise **Abilities**, at a cost of **25 XP** to raise a single **Ability** by **1 point**. Typically you should not allow for abilities to be raised and the reason for this is simple: skills.

By not improving skills you will soon find it difficult to function when risks become greater. Why save **25 XP** to raise your **Muscle** from **7** to **8**? After all, with those **25 XP** you would have been able to buy and improve spells, improve a currently known skill, or even add a new skill to your repertoire. Yes, with high abilities come higher ability bonuses, but those bonuses are offset by the **-4** penalty associated with untrained skill use. But if still you want to do this, go for it.



UNIFIED SKILL & SPELL COSTS		
	BASE RANK	RAISE RANK
Alchemical Art	8	3
Arcane Spell	5	4
Common Spell	4	2
Skill	4	2

THE COST OF SKILLS & SPELLS

Every time you buy a new skill you do so at the **Base Rank**, or **+1**. To buy a skill at its **Base Rank** costs you 4 points. To raise a skill by one rank costs you 2 points per **Rank**. Spells and arts are purchased the same way, but the cost varies. Refer to the following table to help you find the cost to buy and raise skills, spells, and arts.

# CHAPTER

# 10

## SETTINGS

**P**ulp fantasy novels and magazines, from which much of **Shadow, Sword & Spell's** inspiration is derived, is rich in the tradition of exploring the world. Think of Howard's Conan, or Kull and the stories where his heroes explore the larger world and discover adventure. Even in more "modern" works such as Moorcock's works, Elric wanders the Young Kingdoms in search of his lost love (Cymoril), his peace (Tanelorn), or for other opportunities.

World-spanning is important, especially if the hero is searching for land to claim as their own, a throne to take, or new markets where they can buy and sell goods. *Shadow, Sword & Spell* offers you two choices when it comes to settings.

Both settings, even though one is large-scale and the other small, offer many opportunities for you to put to use. The settings are only barely detailed. A lot is left blank so you can take it and create what you want. Where I describe aspects of the setting, this is done in very broad strokes. I do this for a few reasons.

First, a fantasy game without a setting is not useful. A setting helps give context to the rules, but also serves as an example for you when creating your own game world. In addition, a setting helps set a tone for the game. Think of Games Workshop's *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, TSR's *Greyhawk*, Dave Arneson's *Blackmoor*, or even Judges Guild's *City State of the Overlord* (as I type this I realize I have just dated myself). These settings stand the test of time not only because of the tone, but also due to the hook. The hook for a setting is important, and should be summed up in one succinct sentence. For example, let's use *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* as an example. What is the hook? A grim world of perilous adventure. That hook is a perfect descriptive element, and when kept in mind, helps you create adventures and other aspects of the world for your players.

Another reason a setting is useful is that it sets a baseline for your games. This baseline provides not only inspiration in creating characters, but also for in creating adventures.

Finally, the other reason to provide a setting is that it is fun to create a world, no matter how large or small it is.

## SETTING DESIGN

Before diving into the setting for *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, let's talk about the nuts and bolts of setting design. Setting design is relatively easy, as well as offering numerous rewards. However, when faced with a blank piece of paper, many world builders fall into two groups:

- World builders with stage fright
- World builders with too many ideas

There might be other groups, but over the years, these are the two groups of setting designers commonly found. What follows are the guidelines and lessons I've learned. There might be other ways to approach setting design, and my methods are not the only ones to follow, but through the years this method has worked for me. Before writing any history, drawing any map, or naming any feature, you need to ask yourself one simple question: what type of campaign do I want?

The answer to this question is important, and answering it helps guide you in the building of your world. Is your campaign going to be centered on exploration? If so, will it consist of trekking across massive landmasses like some fantastical Marco Polo or Lewis and Clark? Or is your campaign going to center on oceanic exploration, where new lands are discovered across uncharted seas? Is war going to be the focus? Are two kingdoms at war? Cities? Tribes?

The answers to these questions help guide you in the creation of your setting. How?

For two kingdoms, you need to come up with the bare bones of who rules, why they are fighting, and what the two kingdoms look like geographically. For two cities, these same questions are useful as well, but you are more confined to a smaller area. For tribes, this region is an even smaller.

With the answer to what type of campaign you want, the process of creation begins. Often this is seen as a daunting task. It really isn't. World-building is just as enjoyable as creating adventurers, running a weekly game, and devising clever encounters. Where the struggle comes in, is the type of campaign you create. When you boil all the advice down, all the options and the possibilities, you are left with two types of settings: **Encyclopedia** or **Sandbox**. Each has its own pluses and minuses, and both are very rewarding.

**Encyclopedic Settings** are those where you strive to detail everything, ones in which you showcase your creativity, and the thought that goes into one of these settings serves as a springboard for other ideas. Another advantage is that you're ready for any question asked and creates a richness of detail making the world seem alive. The downside of this is that often the bulk of this material never comes into play. Though nothing goes to waste, *per sé*, the details do go to waste if they never leave the confines of your note-filled workbooks. Some might not even care to ask what the lineage of a certain ruler is. Their concerns are more primal, like who is paying them, how do they afford a new sword, or how they might learn a new spell. Examples of **Encyclopedic Settings** are found in sprawling multi-volume fantasy epics such as Robert Jordan's *Wheel of Time*, J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, Raymond E. Feist's works, M.A.R. Barker's *Tékumel*, N. Robin Crosby's *Hårn*, and TSR/Wizards of the Coast's *Forgotten Realms*, originally created by Ed Greenwood.

These settings are rich and brimming with detail; however, most of this detail is never needed. So, should you not create a setting like this? No. Go for it! Keep in mind that often the bulk of your creation is for your own enjoyment.

So if an **Encyclopedic Setting** is one end of the spectrum, a **Sandbox** is the other.

What is a **Sandbox** setting?

It is a setting where you purposely leave large areas empty. Instead, you think about the area where you plan to have your adventures take place, and you flesh it out in broad strokes. One example of this is The Merchant League in The World, most definitely designed to be a sandbox to play in. Only the bare minimum is written up, and as your adventurers explore, details are fleshed out. Growth is more spontaneous and details are created as players ask questions, or as you need them. **Sandbox** campaigns are rewarding in that everyone has a hand in shaping the growth. However, some GMs find them daunting because they often have to "wing it." This is a good thing, because some of the best creations are the ones you make up as you go along. The key to a **Sandbox** is that all you need are a few notes, as well as a notebook in which you can jot down what you create.

The game world of *Shadow, Sword & Spell* is a **Sandbox**. It is designed this way to serve not only as an example, but because I want you to make the game world your own.

OK, with the basics out the way, what follows are the two settings I have created for *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. Both of these settings are **Sandbox** ones, but they each work

at a different scale. Though *The World* (the larger setting) is large, much of it is left blank, and I invite you to add your own ideas and creations to it. Hell, even areas I have developed and mentioned are open to you. I have provided you with the building blocks and a slight blueprint. Take it, and let your imagination run wild!

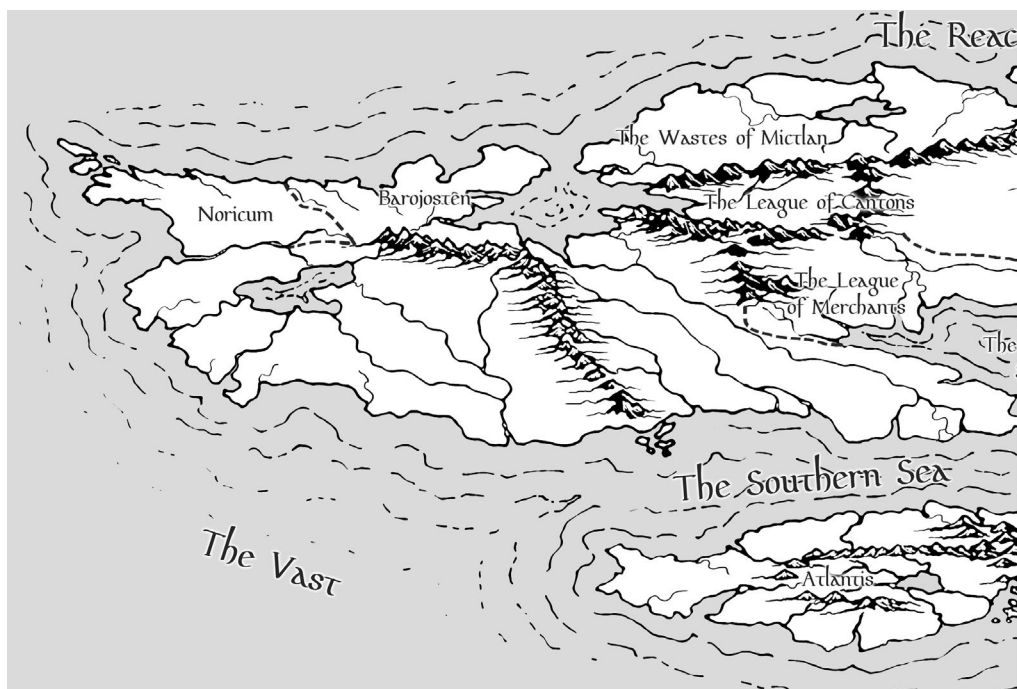
## THE WORLD

### ATLANTIS

Very few know of Atlantis, and what is known is only rumor and conjecture. An ancient kingdom, the sorceresses and mages living here are said to be immortal. Is this true? No one knows, as those who have sailed to Atlantis have never returned to tell the tale. From time to time, ships hailing from Atlantean ports appear, seeking to trade with the powers of the North. A few ports are rumored to be open to trade, but no one has been able to confirm this. There is presently a rumor that the land is home to immortal wizards who have been turned into undead as a result of the working of powerful magic. As for the truth of this rumor, no one has lived to confirm or deny it.

### BAROJOSTËN

Hugging the Berg Sea's western shores is the realm of Barojostën. The fjords and sheltered coves of this landscape hold what many jokingly refer to as "civilization." The tribes that live here are some of the best sailors found in *The World*, and their dragon-headed boats have been seen sailing not only the Southern Sea, but the Azure Sea as well. The numerous rivers which flow south to the Cantons and the City States of Döärn have borne witness to these ships as well. A hearty people, these tribal folk are the only ones



brave—or foolish—enough to venture into the Wastes seeking glory.

## BEIDHA

The great seafaring nation of Beidha is ruled by the Dynasty of Jade, who have ruled the people there for close to 1,200 years. Beidha's navigators are a constant sight on both the Azure Sea and The World's oceans. For the past twenty years, Beidha has been in a constant state of war with Nipur. It is a testament to the Navy and soldiers of Beidha that the Dynasty of Jade has not been overrun. Despite their fearless nature, the Beidhans are known for their skills in science, mathematics, and Alchemy. It is their Alchemy which the Kingdom is best known for, and the current Maharajah, Deviprasad Sukhjinder XXVIII, is perhaps the greatest living Alchemist walking the land.

## CAL'ATHAR

Stretching along the eastern coast is the small kingdom of Cal'athar. Though The Shimmering Sands border this land to the west, Cal'athar is a rich, teeming land. Her people are expert sailors, shipbuilders, and explorers. Cal'athar has no central government or rulers. Instead, the land is tribal, and the ancient tribes who once lived here have grown and developed into clans that dwell on their ancestral lands and carry out the work of their forefathers. The exact number of clans is unknown, but some speculate that there are close to 200 of them. Some clans are rich and powerful, and their homes resemble large cities, others are poor and downtrodden. The head of each clan can be either male or female, and are known as either Dasho (male) or Ashi (female). The only requirement to be head of the clan is that one must be the eldest. As the saying goes: "The clans are like flowers: many, unique, and blooming."



## CATHAR

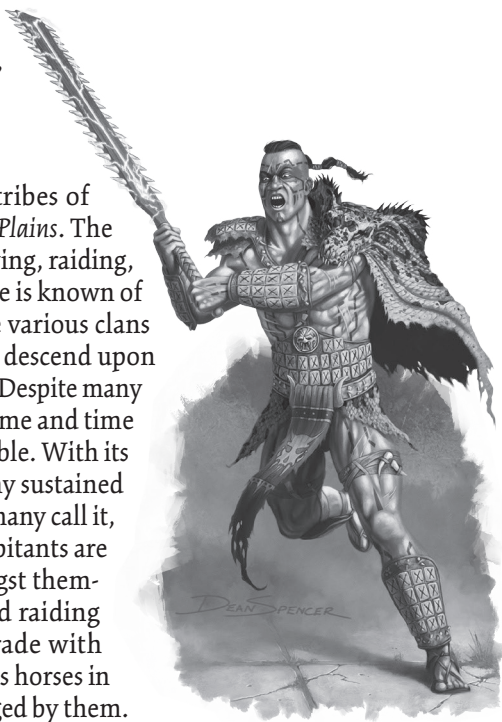
This large northern kingdom is thought by many to be one of the oldest in existence. Ruled by an Empress, Cathar's origins date back some 3,000 years. Known as the Earthly Celestial Bureaucracy, Cathar's Empress leads this bureaucracy and seeks to bring order to the world's chaos. A kingdom of artists, poets, and sculptors, the refined scholarly air in Cathar hides an efficient and highly trained militaristic way of life. Soldiers are considered to be the highest level of society, and all nobles live to fight. Military matters and warfare are the domains of the nobility, and other aspects of life are left up to the workers and non-nobles. Merchants seek the numerous goods produced here, and other kingdoms import the military techniques and weapons to use as their own.

## CITY-STATES OF DÖÄRN

An ancient empire once stretching all the way to the west, the Empire of Döärn was ravaged by internal strife, and had the bad luck of suffering from weak emperors as well. It was this weakness which led to the collapse of the Empire, and the establishment of the various city-states now dotting the land, each of which is led by a general who commands their own private armies. These generals war against each other, as well as try to conquer new lands so they can expand their private empires. If someone could unite all the city-states as a whole, many feel the Empire of Döärn could well rise again. The citizens of the city-states share a kindred past, but their present is marked by the ebb and flow of peace and war. Though the time of endless conflict is over, war and skirmishes take place between the various generals and their armies. Though many feel the only trade that the City-States have is war, nothing is further from the truth. A diverse culture with a focus on agri-culture can be found here, as well as a growing class of writers, dramatists, and poets.

## THE HEGEMONY

This vast steppe is home to various tribes of nomads known only as the *People of the Plains*. The various groups roam the steppes surviving, raiding, and warring amongst themselves. Little is known of these tribes, but from time to time the various clans unite under the banner of a Khan and descend upon more civilized lands and plunder them. Despite many attempts, the Hegemony has proven time and time again to be untamable and unconquerable. With its diverse number of tribes, the lack of any sustained industry or agriculture, "The Heg," as many call it, is a wild grasslands region whose inhabitants are just as wild. When not warring amongst themselves, the tribes are frequently found raiding along the borders. Some tribes do trade with various kingdoms, usually furs as well as horses in exchange for iron and implements forged by them.



## **JUNGLES OF MOARN**

Nestled along the eastern shores of the Azure Sea lie the dense, mist-shrouded jungles known as Moarn. The jungle's green wall of trees hides numerous secrets, and no known kingdom or power has been able to claim the lands within for themselves. All attempts to penetrate deeply into the secret lands fail, and even Nipur avoids conflict with Moarn at all costs. Small tribes of men and women are found throughout the jungles, who war amongst themselves, but also trade with the various merchant houses (see below) that have set up trading posts along Moarn's coast. These trading posts are the only form of civilization known in the region.

Visitors to the coasts of Moarn report that merchant houses from The League of Merchants, the City-States of Döärn, and Cal'athar can be found here. Along the western borders with Cathar, trading posts are found as well, and it is rumored that even mountain passes linking Beidha to the jungles exist. Explorers who have survived the jungles' depths tell of ruined cities hidden deep in the jungles, as well as numerous statues and monuments dedicated to the god Seth. Also rumored to lurk in the deepest reaches of the jungle are Snake Men, who according to the Moarn tribes, still teem within the shadows, serving their priest-kings.

## **KARELIA**

Located to the north is a rocky, icy region known as Karelia. A hard land that only the strongest can survive, the various barbarian tribes living here know one thing: struggle. When not fighting each other, the tribes of Karelia war with the Hegemony to the south, Cathar to the southeast, and the creatures from The Wastes of Mictlan. Hidden in the valleys and glaciers of Karelia are the ruins of an ancient race who once called this place home. The tribes now living here are unique, and have their own beliefs and way of life. The only thing they have in common with one another is their god, Chairoum. Chairoum is a cruel God, and wants his children to be strong. That is why they constantly war, so that they can grow strong in the sight of their god.

## **KU'KKU**

No one goes here unless they have the desire to die. A strange race calls this land home, and in R'lyeh, a temple dedicated to Cthulhu stands.

## **THE LEAGUE OF CANTONS**

Nestled in the midst of the high alpine lands of this region are small domains known as Cantons. These Cantons once consisted of the various tribes that embraced civilization in this region. The Cantons are independent, and though they govern themselves, they have formed a League in order to protect their mutual self-interests. There are fifteen Cantons found in this region, each of which has its own industry and way of life. The League is also known for its scholars and sages, and many feel The World's knowledge is to be found here, contained in the numerous libraries dotting the land.

## **THE MERCHANT LEAGUE**

The heart of commerce for the Azure Sea, her cities are quickly gaining power, wealth, and prestige. The League, though small, will be a force to be reckoned within the years to come (see pages 209-215 for more details).

## MÜ

Ringed by mountains, some whisper dragons live here. There are a few trading posts nestled along Mü's north and south coasts which trade with the various tribes that live in Mü's interior. Some has penetrated the mountains ringing the land, and tales of walking monsters and tribes of aboriginal warriors hunting these creatures with weapons of gold are plentiful. These tribes place a value on ivory, and see gold as nothing but a worthless metal. Gold, silver, and platinum are found in the mountains, and the tribesmen use these precious metals to make weapons and other mundane goods. In the center of the land is a giant lake, the waters of which, it is said, cover an ancient city of the gods.

## NIPUR

This small tropical kingdom is ruled by a feudal lord, who is seen as the earthly form of the god Nergal (page 218). Nipur is an evil place, and rumors persist that hidden deep in its jungles are a set of ruins in which a rift is located through which the evil inhabiting The World passes. Though some feel this is nothing more than a rumor or myth, Nipur's military is known to have a heavy presence within the jungles. Currently, the southeastern portion is rocked by war between Nipur and Beidha. The origin of this war is a simple one: Nipur wants to expand their borders, and Beidha is in their way. The war has raged for close to twenty years, and is a constant presence in the two regions. The conflict ebbs and flows like the tides, with the last major clash occurring two years ago. Nipur is currently marshaling its forces, and will once again spill across the Beidhan border. When this will be is anyone's guess.

## CATHA

If there is one place you can call the center of all evil, Catha is it. It is within this city that Nergal takes human form and leads his people. It is here where foul magics are created and practiced and diseases are crafted. All of this is done to feed the great machine of war. Those who have survived their visit to this city state the same thing: it is built in a fetid swamp whose air is filled with living clouds of flies, the stench of death, and the wretched living. At the center of the city can be found the tower known as Nergal's Finger. This black edifice reaches into the sky, and at its top sits the earthly form of Nergal, surveying all of his domain.

## NOGOTON

Known as "The Empire of the Golden Sun," Nogoton is the earthly realm of the Eternal Celestial Dragon who sits upon the Sun Throne and rules all that he gazes upon. Nogoton is a mysterious place whose existence is unknown to most, where only a few in the west have been lucky enough to visit. It is a major oceanic power in the southeast, and the kingdom is known for numerous products, specifically silk, jade, and amber. Perhaps the greatest export is the mystics, who wander the land seeking knowledge and dispensing guidance to those who are willing to listen.

## NORICUM

Though one of the smallest kingdoms, the people of Noricum are known for their skills in battle, their abilities in magic, and the bloody civil war spilling out of it into

neighboring regions. At one time, the warrior-mystics of Noricum could be found leading and training other armies, and Noricum mercenary companies often found work fighting throughout The World. Then came the Time of Blood. Mog Ruith, once the God of the people, was slain by Buddakapula, a rival God who coveted Mog Ruith's power. The people of Noricum are broken into two sects devoted to the two Gods, and have fought a never-ending war for 50 years, and the once-proud land is awash with blood, pain, tears, and death. No longer contained within their own borders, the sect of Buddakapula still fights with Mog Ruith's survivors. This fighting has even claimed innocent lives in faraway Gravina.

## **THE SHIMMERING SANDS**

Hemmed in by the mountains to the north, west, and south is a vast desert known simply as The Shimmering Sands. Legend holds that the desert covers an ancient civilization destroyed when its peoples tried to capture the god Hastur in order to attempt to tap his power. The entire empire was destroyed, and the kingdom is now a desert dotted with ruins and some oases. Due to the shifting sands, ruins often appear and beckon any who are foolhardy or daring enough to enter and explore. Despite appearances, a variety of living things can be found here, usually located in or near the numerous oases that dot the land. Numerous tribes live at these oases, trading with the various nomads who roam the sands. These nomads, according to some, are the descendants of the civilization that once existed here. They now wander the sands atoning for their sins, praying to Hastur for his forgiveness.



## **THE WASTE OF MICTLAN**

Imagine a place dotted with ice, snow, steam, geysers, volcanoes, and bubbling mud pits. Imagine a land filled with poisonous gases, rivers of lava, and ponds of boiling tar. This gives you some idea of Mictlan. If there is a place where old gods walk, strange creatures roam, and death lives in the air, Mictlan is it. All who have seen this place have been forever changed by it. The secrets which lie here are many, and evil festers in Mictlan that will one day break free and devour The World. It is a place of wild magic, and strange and monstrous creatures that are spawned there. Rumors abound about tribes of humans living in the wastelands. These tribes appear from time to time, raiding along the border of the Hegemony and the League of Cantons. Due to the nature of the Waste and the dangerous creatures inhabiting it, the League of Cantons insures that the border is well protected. A series of keeps line the entire border with the Waste of Mictlan, and the garrisons within stand a constant vigil.

## **GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES**

### **BODIES OF WATER**

There is a great variety of geographic features found in The World. Due to the vast size and scope of The World, this variety is too great to fully detail here. This is especially true with regards to the various bodies of water. There are five oceans and one sea around which all life is centered.

*AZURE SEA*

Occupying the center of The World is a vast, inland body of water known as the Azure Sea. The countries ringing it are the powers who vie for dominance, and their ships can be found sailing from port to port, buying and selling goods. Numerous islands dot these waters and hide a multitude of wonders, riches, and threats. One of the threats in the Azure Sea are the pirates who plague the shipping lanes. Another threat is the vast monstrosities lurking in the depths, which occasionally surface to wreak havoc. A canal some 200 miles wide and 500 feet deep connects the Azure Sea to the Southern Sea. The canal has always been here—who or what made it is a mystery still to this day.

*BERG SEA*

Named for the number of icebergs which float within its confines, this Sea is a challenge to sailors, and only the most daring venture there. In addition, due to The Waste of Mictlan being located on its eastern shore, this is doubly a challenge. Finally, another threat sailors must face when sailing the Berg Sea are pirates, who have created hidden bases within and atop some of the largest icebergs.

*THE GREAT OCEAN*

Bordering the eastern realms and reaching toward the rising sun is a body of water simply known as the Great Ocean. Though islands are scattered along the coastal waters, like The Vast, eventually these small landfalls give out and all that can be seen is the open water. What lies beyond the horizon? No one knows.

*THE REACH*

Stretching along the top of The World is the icy region known simply as The Reach. This ocean typically has a thick sheet of ice covering it, and only the coastal waters are readily navigable. However, during winter, the sea ice often drifts south and blocks the waters off. The ice is so thick that barbarians and other creatures are often seen walking, hunting, and even warring across it. In addition, some tribes roam the vast ice in boat-like sleds designed to skate across the frozen surface, powered by wind and sail as if they were on water.

*THE SOUTHERN SEA*

The waters bridging the mainland from the southern continent is known simply as the Southern Sea. This Sea is traveled heavily by the kingdoms of Nipur, Beidha, and Nogoton, and these powers tend to fight more than they trade. Other countries can be found here trading, and also seek new markets to exploit. Due to the location of the southern continent, and the fact that it contains a vast array of strange peoples, creatures, and things, the Southern Sea is a challenging environment as well. If there is one place that sailors consider to be the most dangerous to travel, it is the Southern Sea.

*THE VAST*

The western ocean has been called The Vast for centuries. The origins of this name are many, but if pressed, scholars state the name is based on the simple fact that no one has explored it fully. All attempts to discover if any land masses lie to the west have failed due to the explorers sent there vanishing without a trace. Though small islands dot the

coast, there appears to be nothing beyond them, and those who have sailed into the Vast for months eventually turn back, no land ever being sighted.

## THINKING SMALLER: THE LEAGUE OF MERCHANTS

Nestled on the Azure Sea, lying wedged between countries coveting its wealth, are the collection of trading cities known collectively as the Region della Vite d'Oro (Golden Vine Region). This region teems with wide open spaces, and pockets of settlements that represent the attempts to tame this wild land. Compared to the rest of The World, the region is relatively young, but several of its roots run much deeper.

Bordering the northern edge of the region are the tall, jagged peaks of the Spineback Mountains. These mountains protect the northern part of the region from the expansionistic plans of the City-States of Döärn. The Spinebacks, aside from being a haven for bandits, raiders, and creatures, house numerous ruins and hidden mysteries. Flowing south from the Spinebacks is the Wine River which cuts through the region, dividing it in two. The river is wide and deep, and ships from the coast can be found sailing up and down the Wine, carrying goods into and out of the interior of the region. Dominating the majority of the western portion is the vast Darkwood Forest, a dark, ancient wood that conceals numerous threats.

The country itself is broken into three regions: The Vintage, The Region of the Amber Petals, and The Coast. The largest of the three, and the most culturally important, is the Wine Region (The Vintage). This area, nestled at the feet of the Spineback Mountains and running east to the sea, is dotted by hills teeming with a wide variety of grapes and, unsurprisingly, numerous wineries. As you come closer to the coast, twelve olive plantations spring up, and some of the best oils in The World are pressed and produced here.

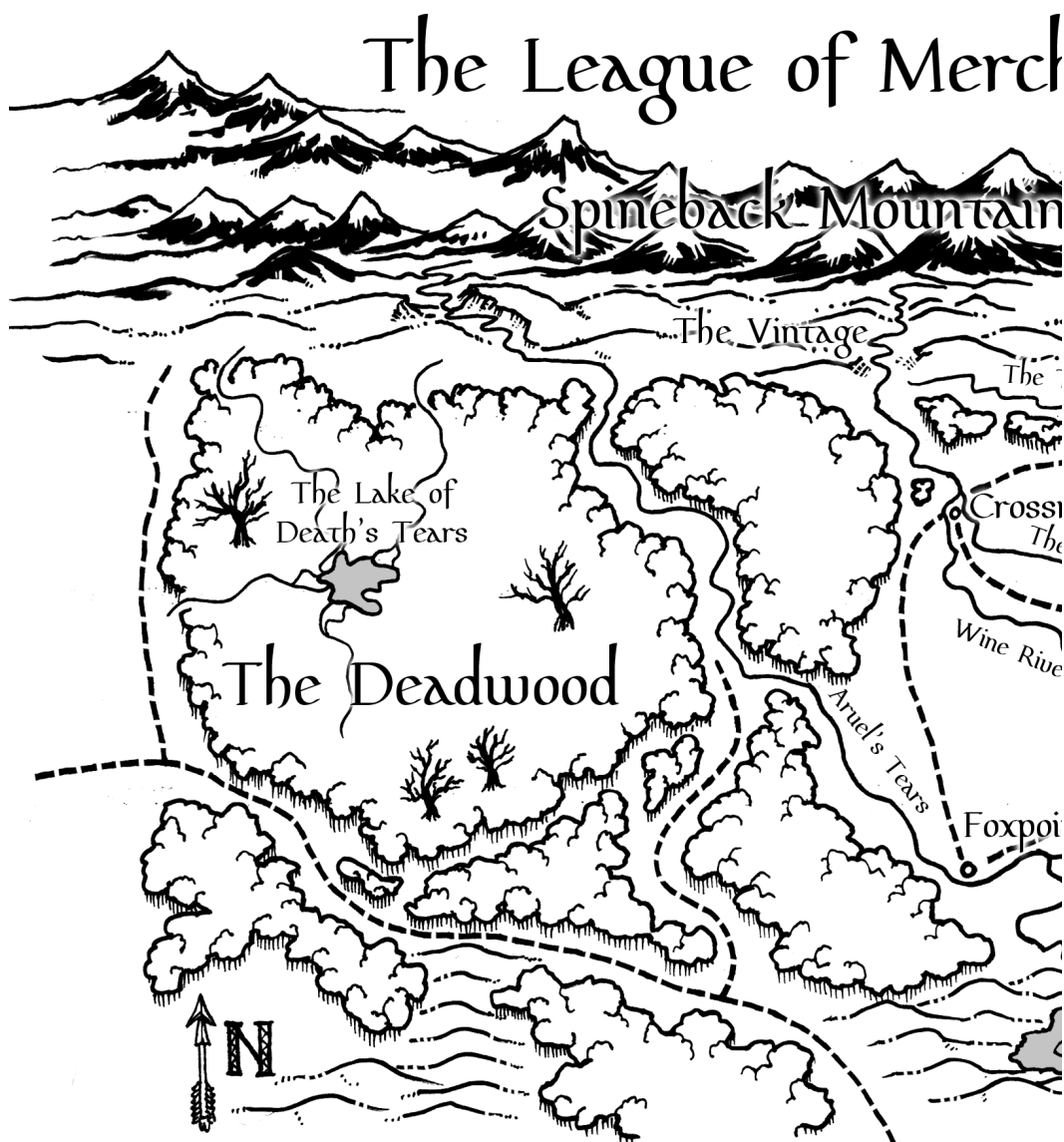
The wineries and plantations found here are more like small, independent towns, and there is no real central authority. Smaller, but far more wealthy than The Vintage, is the Region of the Amber Petals. This region is famous for one thing: saffron. The most expensive spice found in The World, many covet saffron to the point of plotting to take over the country merely to control the saffron trade. Unbeknown to all, the Region of the Amber Petals has its own plans, and there is a threat to all here that festers unchecked. The third area in this country is The Coast, and it is here that the engine of commerce churns, where vast amounts of wealth and goods are exchanged daily.

### CITIES

The Merchant League has many small settlements, the majority of which are located in the interior, notably in the The Vintage and the Region of the Amber Petals. Major cities are found on the coast, though there is one city in the interior that has grown to become a major power.

### GRAVINA

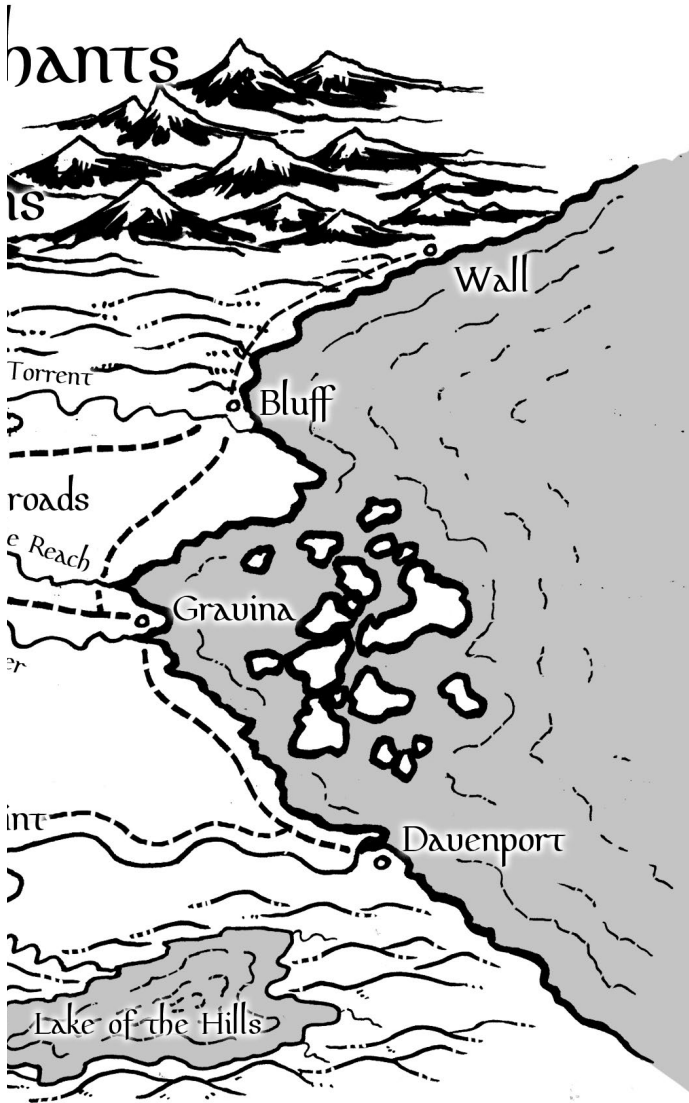
Any discussion about the cities of the Merchant League begins and ends with Gravina. This ancient city, built around a system of canals, dominates trade, discovery, magic, art, and learning. An old city, its roots go back nearly 600 years, and thus numerous hidden crypts and basements abound within the city, slowly being submerged by the water



levels rising year after year. Gravina is seen by many to be a den of thieves, scoundrels, and villains. However, Gravina is large and diverse, a melting pot of different peoples and cultures, though it is true that it attracts many less savory folk.

#### FOX POINT

Seen as the de facto capital of the Region of the Amber Petals, Fox Point is a small city when compared to Gravina, but is probably one of the wealthiest due to the thriving saffron trade. It is from Fox Point that all saffron is bought and sold, and many



from the world over can be found here buying and selling this rarest of spices. In addition, Fox Point is known for its darker commerce, and some whisper that the city is the source of the flesh trade.

#### DAVENPORT

Smaller than its sister cities, Davenport is known throughout the region and neighboring countries for its shipping, via land, and water. The city is also recognized for its military, and compared to the other cities of the Merchant League, it has both a navy and army. For those who live in the communities of the League's inner lands, Davenport is the protector, and it is to their credit that many of the threats to the Merchant League have been pushed back.

#### CROSSROADS

The largest city found in the interior of the Merchant League is Crossroads. It is viewed by many as the gateway for the wine trade. Though small when compared to the cities in the south,

Crossroads is seen as one of the last bastions of civilization before one enters The Vintage. For others, it is said to be a rural area, populated by those who lead a simple life, and devoid of any culture.

#### BLUFF

Located along the southeastern coast, Bluff is known for trade, but has become infamous (or famous, depending on who you ask) for smuggling and piracy. Gravina is at odds with Bluff over their lack of interest in dealing with the piracy and smuggling that goes on.

WALL

Located at the foot of the Spineback Mountains, and blessed with a deep harbor on the Azure Sea, Wall is known for its shipbuilding as well as its trade. In addition, the city is one of the few in the Merchant League that encourages the study of the ways of magic.

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

The lands of the Merchant League are a loose collection of small principalities, centered around the major cities or regions (in the case of The Vintage centered on wineries). Each principality has its own laws, currency (though weights are standard), and standing military. Though each principality has its own cultural and societal differences, they each revere the same deities and share a common past. This past history is one that saw a kingdom ripped apart when a feudal king died without an heir. Said conflict ripped the kingdom to shreds, and created the current environments and cultures. Though the cities of the Merchant League are independent, from time to time representatives meet to decide group policy, settle disputes, and insure that the safety of the region is preserved. The League Council meets once a year, rotating from city to city. When it comes to The Vintage, the yearly conference is held at the region’s largest winery. Other than The Vintage—which has militias comprised of villagers as well as the younger sons of the winery’s owners—each principality has its own standing military.

TYPES OF GOVERNMENT	
Bluff	Oligarchy
Crossroads	Family Tribunal
Davenport	Elected Mayor
Fox Point	Heredity Viscount
Gravina	Guild Rule
The Vintage	None
Wall	Ruling Council

THREATS

Numerous threats exist within the Merchant League, ranging from bandits and cultists to monsters and other unspeakable things. Each city has its own threats to contend with, which can range from street gangs and organized crime (be it guilds, racketeering, gamblers, smugglers, and black marketeers) to agents from foreign countries. In the wilds of The League, bandits, highwaymen, creatures great and small, and other vile threats lurk within the shadows waiting to pounce on the careless.

DAILY LIFE

Life in the area of the Merchant League is a strange mix of urban and rural. There are large cities which command great power and prestige, yet there are great expanses of rural areas where life is lived at a slower pace.

TRADE GUILDS

Numerous Trade Guilds exist in the major cities of the Merchant League, and these Trade Guilds run the gamut from trade to labor. Trade Guilds vie for power and prestige, and members seek to join them not only for safety but for the training they offer. Trade Guilds are powerful and wield much influence, and often the power these Trade Guilds possess leads them into conflict with one another. Some Trade Guilds hide in the shadows, and work in trades that are quite dark and vile.

## MERCHANT HOUSES

The Merchant League's wealth comes from trade. The Merchant Houses are old, and some of the oldest families trace their origins to the foundation of the Merchant League. Unlike small businesses, Merchant Houses are families dedicated to trade. They scour the globe, searching for goods to buy, merchandise to sell, and markets to exploit. The Merchant Houses fund the building of infrastructure in the known lands and expeditions to discover new lands (and markets and goods). The Houses are always looking for new markets, workers, and others to help increase their wealth and prestige.

## THE SAFFRON LEAGUE

The Saffron League, or more commonly The League, began as nothing more than a consortium of saffron farmers. Working in unison, they became The World's sole provider of saffron, and grew extremely wealthy in the process. The League was the brainchild of two men, Giovannell Falco and Rustichell Maggioncalda. Of all the saffron farmers in the Region of the Amber Petals, these two men were seen to be the most successful. Before the Saffron League's founding, prices for saffron varied from producer to producer. The market was in a state of flux, and buyers could pit the various farmers against each other to obtain the lowest price. Realizing that more money could be made and that all saffron producers could benefit, Falco and Maggioncalda called for a meeting of the growers.

The saffron growers discussed the wide range of prices and the demand there was for saffron, and all agreed that demand was high enough to support high prices, but that there was no way to get these prices with buyers being able to play the producers off each other to garner the best price for themselves. What Falco and Maggioncalda proposed was a unified negotiating agency for the saffron growers. The farmers would deliver their saffron yield to a centralized location, and from there, buyers would be able to purchase their needed quantities. Unlike in years past, the buyers would be given only one price, and if the price was not met, they would not be sold the saffron they desired. The farmers signed the agreement three weeks before the bulbs were to be planted, and from that moment on, the Saffron League became the one source of saffron.

Over the years, the Saffron League has become the major power in the Region of the Amber Petals. They have used their monopolistic control of the saffron industry to become powerful and influential. Despite appearances, the League is not highly organized, and many members have different goals and agendas. The only thing that the members agree on is the continued protection of the saffron trade. The trade's continued



survival is paramount, and measures are taken to keep profits high. In order to guarantee this, the League pays mercenaries to protect saffron shipments, warehouses, and the fields. The mercenaries also ensure that none of the workers steal any of the crop. These mercenaries are also used for other purposes, most of them not legal.

Using the cover of the Saffron League, a few farmers have expanded their business interests into other areas. These areas are all criminal in nature, and over the years, the Saffron League has become a major power in the criminal underworld. Not all of the fifteen plantations that are members of the Saffron League participate in criminal activity. Members who do not partake in criminal activities look the other way, since all members share in all of the benefits, primarily increased profits. Originally the League was active in the drug trade, and used saffron shipments to the eastern kingdoms to smuggle drugs back to the Region of the Amber Petals, eventually distributing them throughout the south and up to the north. Beside drugs, the Saffron League has another side business: slaves.

With increased contact with Nogoton, certain members of the League saw a means to make more money by selling slaves to them. With their contacts in different markets, it was a simple matter to buy slaves in Moarn, and then transport them to the City-States of Döärn. In effect, the League has become the middleman in a growing slave trade, centered in Fox Point. Here, in the warehouses owned by the League, slaves are secretly brought in, sold in auctions, and shipped off to buyers in other markets. The League employs mercenaries to actively guard these warehouses, and ensure that word does not leak out of this activity.

The League is active in many other criminal areas, and though most of the fifteen plantation owners do not take part, they do benefit. Due to the charter signed, all members of the League share the profits from all business dealings. This profit sharing includes any criminal activity, and since certain members of the League deal in drugs and other nefarious activities, the entire League has profited quite significantly. Some members may not like the types of businesses the League has taken on, but they like the money they get from them. As long as the saffron trade does not suffer, anything goes. Often the interests of the Saffron League conflicts with that of The Guild (see below).

Many times, both groups have competed in the drug and smuggling trade, and the two groups have been carrying on a secret war for years. Now with Salina Scaringella courting the League for a partnership, a few of the members of The League have become at odds.

For some, joining with The Guild in any type of alliance would severely limit the flow of capital into The League. Some fear that if the partnership takes place, it would give The Guild access to the rich saffron market. These fears are groundless, since unknown to Salina, The League wants to put The Guild out of the picture. By



working with Salina, they will eliminate all their rivals, and then can easily deal with Salina once The Guild is gone. This process has been slow, but it is only a matter of time before some agreement is reached.

## THE GUILD

Centered in Gravina, but slowly spreading out into the other cities of the Merchant League, is the group known simply as The Guild. With the growing wealth of the merchant class in the nation, there are always those looking to seize this wealth for their own. From prostitution to gambling, there are certain areas of interest that criminal cartels control, and fight to keep under their control. Crime is the secret business of Gravina, and the five crime families known only as The Guild control much of the crime in the city. The Guild has slowly become entangled in numerous skirmishes with the Saffron League, as well as coming into conflict with many people who have grown to resent the hold they have on aspects of Gravina's city life.

## GODS

Though the League of Merchants have their own deities (see below), they are not the only ones found in The World. Numerous Gods are found in the various nations and regions, as it seems that each culture and kingdom has their own religions as well as deities. What follows is by no means an exhaustive list. There are far too many religions, cults, sects, and gods to easily chronicle here. These are the most well-known, as well as being tied to the lands that have been previously noted above.

### **ARDUD LILI**

When the world was dark and new, there was a god known only as Moma, who carved his kingdom out of the very marrow of Chaos. Naming his realm Mictlan, the domain became the final resting place for all souls. It was also where evil was born and from which monsters emerged, and it was from here that Ardud Lili, the Temptress and Mother of All Demons, arose. She and her children overthrew Moma, and took control of Mictlan. Sitting atop her throne carved from Moma's skull, she seeks power and dominion over all. Ardud Lili is worshiped by those who seek power, crave authority or seek to enslave all. Her worship is hidden in small shrines and her children seek to bring her more worshipers. She is depicted as a beautiful woman, draped in shadows, whose unearthly beauty brings pain to all who gaze upon her.

### **AZATHOTH**

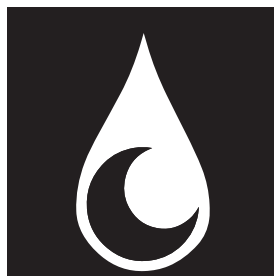
One of the many gods worshiped in mysterious Atlantis, Azathoth is seen as the Lightbringer and Source of All Life. Often depicted as a fiery sun, the priests preach that Azathoth lies at the universe's center, giving and taking life. Though heavily worshiped in Atlantis, the worship of Azathoth has spread north with sailors, travelers, and merchants. The most important sect devoted to the god is found in Davenport, located in The Merchant League. As to the beliefs and tenets of the faith, no one knows. Worship of Azathoth is kept a secret, and those who are devoted never talk to non-believers. Rumors hold that worship focuses upon fire and sacrifice.



ARDUD LILI



AZATHOTH



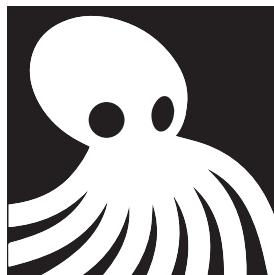
BUDDHAKUPULA



CAIM



CHAIROUM



CTHULHU

## **BUDDHAKUPULA**

Noricum worships one god, He Who Is The Creator of All. Always depicted as bluish-black in color, Buddhakupula has one face, four arms, and his body is festooned with the bones of his enemies. In one hand he carries a wicked sword, in another a giant cudgel, and in another the severed head of Mog Ruith, the god who once held sway in Noricum. Buddhakupula is a Blood God and his worshipers believe it is the blood of his enemies that feed him as well as protect his people. The devoted, notably the priests, tattoo their bodies blue and carry both a knife and cudgel. This is a cult which is quickly gaining a foothold in the south, and rumors persist that the sect can be found not only in Gravina and Wall in The Merchant League, but in Barojostên and the Cantons.

## **CAIM**

God of Night, Death, Murder, and Strife. Caim is a deity whose worship has spread throughout The World. Worshipers of Caim tend to be those who are the lost or who lurk in the shadows. The central tenet of the worship of Caim is the eating of the dead. By eating the dead, one shows one's determination as well as gaining the power of the dead. Ghouls are said to be the Children of Caim, and rumors abound that Ghouls are the high priests in the religion of this god. There is no central site of worship. Sects and cults are found in numerous locations, where the faithful gather and consume the flesh of the dead.

## **CHAIROUM**

God of the North Wind, Memory, Knowledge, and War. Chairoum is the primary deity worshiped by the barbarians of Karelia. Chairoum is seen as a fickle, angry god,

whose mood changes on a whim. He is said to have three eyes, with the third resting in the middle of His forehead. It is this eye which is said to see everything, and allows Chairoum to chronicle all he sees. Chairoum is an uncaring god, and he wants nothing from his worshipers, thus his faithful should expect nothing from him.

## CTHULHU

Ancient are the ways of Cthulhu. This is a god who has touched the world for eons. According to legend and lore, as well as his worshipers, Cthulhu came to the world in a flash of light, and when the world ends, he will be there collecting the souls of all, including all the other gods. Though rumors abound that his main temple is located in R'lyeh, sects devoted to Cthulhu are found in many places. It seems as if every major city has at least one temple dedicated to Him. Though the thoughts of Gods are beyond the ken of men, scholars, and theologians, Cthulhu is associated with Death, Dreams, Destruction, and Knowledge. It is the aspect of Knowledge which attracts the worship of scholars, sorcerers, and sages to this deity.

## HASTUR

At the dawn of time, there was Hastur. He emerged from the Void, and his coming heralded all life. It was he who battled Cthulhu, and the sparks of their battle created the stars filling the night sky. The unblinking eye, Hastur sees and knows all. According to legend, Hastur was driven mad after he pierced the Veil of Time and witnessed the end and rebirth of all life. It was seeing the paradox of a world with no time that caused him to go insane. Some also whisper that it was the civilization once living in the region known as The Shimmering Sands that not only destroyed their civilization, but drove the god mad. The fact that numerous ruined statues, as well as relics, bearing his likeness dot the landscape of the Shimmering Sands lends credence to this. There are many small cults and churches scattered throughout The World which are dedicated to Him.

## HAZIEL

Though no one would “love” the goddess Ardud Lili, there is one who does, and it is her mate and general, Haziel. The god of war is Haziel, who marshals Mictlan’s hordes of demons and leads them into war. A strong god, he is depicted as a large muscular man, red in color, with the head of a bull. He is always naked, and carries a massive sword that only he can wield. Haziel is widely worshiped among warriors, pit fighters, and soldiers. He is also a favorite of the barbarian tribes found throughout the north.



HASTUR



HAZIEL



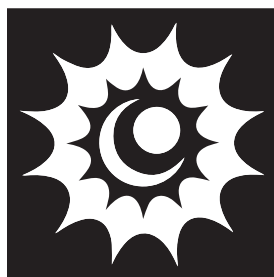
MOG RUTH



MULCIBER



NERGAL



NODENS

## MOG RUITH

A dead god, once the only deity of Noricum. Mog Ruith died at the hands of Buddhakupula, which signified the start of the conflict between the two sects in that nation. Though many feel that Mog Ruith is dead, his worshipers are still active and, it is believed, miracles in his name are still being performed. Mog Ruith is seen as the world's creator, as well as being the Lifebringer. He is depicted as a single flame, with a human head. Since his murder, images of Mog Ruith can be found everywhere.

## MULCIBER

When a fire destroys, it is Mulciber. When a storm rages and claims the livestock of a farmer, it is Mulciber. The god of punishment and destruction, Mulciber is viewed as an angry storm cloud. His worship is widespread, and temples can be found dedicated to him throughout the world. His devotees tend to be those who seek to punish wrong-doers or those who have survived some form of destruction. Prayers are always said to Mulciber before crops are planted or buildings are constructed.

## NERGAL

The main god of Nipur, Nergal is the one and only true god of that land. He is a god of war and plague, depicted as a skeleton dressed in armor, wielding a sword covered with maggots. Nergal's worshipers tend to be those who've survived an illness, and in a strange twist, lepers are considered holy beings touched by the god. The city of Cutha itself is considered to be the most important temple to Nergal, and it is from here that the plague priests lead their followers in spreading sickness. It is also here that Nergal walks among the mortal lands, leading his people, and spreading the sickness of his faith. Though Nipur is the major region of worship for Nergal, small sects to the deity can be found in all major regions of The World.

## NODENS

A mysterious goddess whom many feel is more myth than reality. Although there are no known temples to her, the mark of Nodens—a cupped hand holding an orange sun—can be found scrawled on walls, streets, and even doors throughout The World.

Rumors abound that Nodens is worshiped heavily by those living in the Region of the Amber Petals in The Merchant League, as well as throughout the League of Cantons. Those who come to the cult do so because they search for something, whether it's power, vengeance, knowledge, peace, or punishment.

### **NYARLATHOTEP**

The Trickster. The Tempter. The Seducer. The Liar. Where malice lies in the heart of a person, you find Nyarlathotep. When jealousy leads to murder, Nyarlathotep holds the bloody weapon. When a general orders his army to slay all the innocents it is Nyarlathotep who revels in the massacre. A dark god who offers no promises, nor keeps his word, Nyarlathotep and his worshipers are seen as liars. Gamblers appeal to him for luck, as well those seeking to swindle others. It is said no one willingly worships this god, but that misfortune compels them to do so. Worship of Nyarlathotep is found throughout The World, but his most important temple is found in Nogoton, at the top of a mountain perpetually shrouded in clouds. Other temples and shrines can be found in all major cities, frequently in gambling halls, near merchant areas, trading halls, and markets.

### **NYOGTHA**

Sitting at the bottom of The Vast is a realm of swirling seas and terrible creatures. It is here that Nyogtha rules, and it is his constant anger that causes all storms. His domain is the water, and though known by many names, all kingdoms worship Nyogtha, the Lord of Water and Master of Storms. Worshiped by sailors, merchants, and farmers, anyone who depends on water for a living pray to him. Fickle and short of temper, sailors have learned to always make a sacrifice to him before setting sail, whereas farmers make a sacrifice to him before the first planting and after the last harvest. His temples and shrines are always located near a body of water, and his priests always wear the color blue. His symbol is a crashing wave, pierced by a lightning bolt.

### **QU'TANGLES**

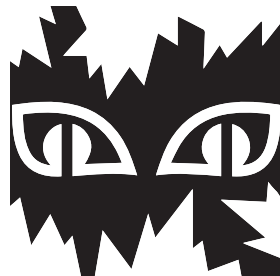
He who comes with the dawn and devours the night. He whose blood fills all, and through him life flourishes. The beginning and the end. A dead god. Once the sole god of the various tribes of the Jungles of Moarn, Qu'Tangles was killed by Seth, who now wears his skin as a cloak. Strangely, hidden among the jungle's depths are shrines to this god, and his priests still carry out their worship. Many of these priests whisper



NYARLATHOTEP



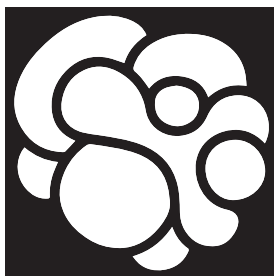
NYOGTHA



QU'TANGLES



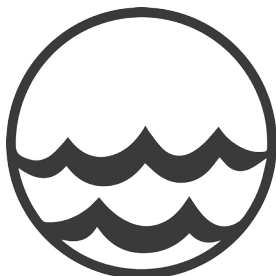
SET



SHUB-NIGGURATH



ADONAEI



ARUEL



IAOTH

to have been granted visions by him, and some feel it is only a matter of time, before Seth is made to pay. They whisper that, like a snake Qu'Tangles, shed his skin in order to grow and rejuvenate. It is believed he lives deep in the jungle and those who are unaware will soon feel his growing wrath.

## SET

Lying in the center of the earth gnawing at its roots is Set, the Great Snake and Devourer of All Life. Set was once a mighty mortal sorcerer who discovered immortality and craved godhood. He challenged Qu'Tangles and slew him. Assuming his shape, Set rose above Qu'Tangles's people and became the deity of the Serpent People of the Jungles of Moarn. Seth is an angry, power-hungry god who even now still craves power. All are put upon the earth to fuel Set's anger. Though his worship is based mainly within the jungles, small cults devoted to him can be found throughout the world. Those seeking power, or eternal life, typically come to his worship.

## SHUB-NIGGURATH

A decadent god, Shub-Niggurath is always depicted as androgynous possessing both male and female genitalia, whose slightest gaze inflames lust in all. Seen as the ruler of fertility, some view him/her as the igniter of passion, desire, and love. Worship of this god centers around sex, in all of its forms. A favorite of the wealthy and powerful, devotion to Shub-Niggurath is found in all regions of The World. Though temples dedicated to him/her tend to be small and secret, some take the form of brothels, sex clubs, or feasting halls.

## GODS & GODDESSES OF THE MERCHANT LEAGUE

Though numerous Gods and religions exist in the larger world, there are many gods native to the area that comprises the Merchant League. Though these gods and goddesses are specific to the area, there are other deities worshiped in secret cults throughout the nation.

### ADONAEAL: GODDESS OF HEALING

The priests and priestesses of this goddess deal with the healing arts, and for many, the advances in the fields of science and medicine have been due to the faith and dedication of Adonael's worshippers. Though many feel it is a dichotomy that the faith concentrates on fighting as well, warriors dedicated to the goddess are thought to be some of the deadliest alive today. The priests and priestesses of Adonael believe in fighting corruption, regardless of whatever form it takes, and the warriors of Adonael always stand ready to fight.

### ARUEL: GODDESS OF WATER

One of the oldest of the region's deities, Aruel is the Giver of Water and Life. Farmers worship her, appealing to her to help their crops grow, while sailors worship her in the hope she will provide gentle seas and strong winds. A capricious goddess, Aruel's priests and priestesses are known to be similar in this regard to their goddess in both mindset and behavior.

### IAOTH: GODDESS OF THE TRUTH

The favored deity of lawyers and judges and those in leadership positions, Iaoth is thought to be the One who shines her brightest light in the darkest of corners, so as to reveal the truth and that which is hidden. A relatively young faith, this religion has been caught up in controversy dealing with the secrets of The Vintage.



MARCHIDIEL



OCH



SABRAEL



URIEL

**MARCHIDIEL: GODDESS OF KNOWLEDGE**

The large temples devoted to this goddess tend to be libraries and schools, open to all who wish to learn and discover new ideas. Her worshippers view magic not as a work of evil, but as a divine gift that is usable by all those who desire to learn. Marchidiel worshippers venerate fire and flames, for them fire represents the spark everyone has that drives them to learn and seek knowledge. So important is flame that every temple has a statue of the goddess with left hand outstretched, and flame always lit.

**OCH: GOD OF ALCHEMY**

It was Och who taught the first Alchemist how to distill the elements and transform them into other things. Those worshipping Och are viewed more often than not as a cult, rather than as an organized faith. His shrines, when they are encountered, are found in alchemical forges and small, out-of-the-way places. Och and Marchidiel are rivals, with their rivalry taking the form of a friendly competition over who can uncover the most knowledge. Both clergy are always welcome in each other's temple, and both groups share what knowledge they have freely.

**SABRAEL: GOD OF PROTECTION**

The favorite of those in the military, Sabrael is also venerated by those who wish to protect the weak and persecuted. Sabrael's tenets include strength, both in mind and body, as well as service to all. Templar Knights swear vows to help all those in need, and to defend the helpless. Priests of Sabrael take vows to protect the voiceless and powerless, while their lawyers seek to represent those in trouble. Regardless of whether they are templars or priests, all of these worshippers of Sabrael are considered to be the finest warriors.

**URIEL: GOD OF SALVATION**

By far the most widely worshiped god, Uriel is dedicated to the ideals of salvation. This religion teaches that pacifism, meditation, and tolerance are the roads to salvation. Those dedicated to Uriel do not take up arms, and instead seek to be the calming voice in these times of troubles. Aside from its vows of pacifism, the temple preaches chastity and poverty. For the faithful, there is no better way of showing their faith in their deity than by giving all that they can to those in need.

**TITLES OF NOBILITY & GOVERNING**

Due to the sheer variety of governments found in The World, there are many types of Titles and Ranks to be found. What follows are merely some of them.

***BAROJOSTÊN***

All of Barojostên is led by the Konge (male) or Kaven (female). To aid in this method of rule, as well as to insure that no one has full authority, Barojostên various villages are led by a Jarl, who swears fealty to the Konge or Kaven.

**BEIDHA**

At the highest rung of Beidha is the high king known as the Maharajah (male) or Maharani (female). All serve him or her, and their authority is absolute. Underneath the Maharajah or Maharani are the Rajah (male) or Rani (female), who rule over the various provinces, and these are combined into a state. Beidha is divided into provinces, or Sabah, and ruling these provinces are Nawab. Kshatriyas are the warrior nobles of Beidha, and they make up the bulk of the Beidhan noble class.

**CAL'ATHAR**

The head of each clan is known as the Dasho (male) or Ashi (female).

**THE HEGEMONY**

The leader of each tribe is known simply as Khan. When all the various tribes unite and follow the banner of one, this leader is known as the Kha-Khan.

**LEAGUE OF CANTONS**

There are no central rulers; instead the leader of each Canton is known as an Elder. Each Canton is an oligarchy, and the Elders of each Canton meet in what is known as a Landsgemeid, which is an assembly of between 5, 7, 9, 11 or 13 members. If a Canton is unable to meet the numerical requirement, the number is reduced until it is. To insure that there is never a deadlock, the Landsgemeid must always have an odd number of members.

**LEAGUE OF MERCHANTS**

There are no central rulers, as each city is run by a collection of Guilds or Councils.

**NIPUR**

There is but one ruler of Nipur, the God-Emperor Nergal.

**NOGOTON**

At the highest rung of Nogoton rests the Emperor or Empress. Though the Emperor or Empress's word is law, the entire country is a giant bureaucracy. Underneath the Emperor or Empress is the Wang, of which there are two. One Wang rules the Eastern part of Nogoton, and the other the West. Each Wang oversees two provinces that are led by the Gung. Each province is broken up into four regions, and each is in turn ruled by a Hou. The regions are further divided into six areas, each ruled by a Bi. To further add to the layer of government and confusion, each area is divided into eight districts, which are each led by a Dse. Finally each district is broken into ten lands, which are each ruled by a Nans.

**NORICUM**

No one knows who, or how, the tribes are led.

## ***THE SHIMMERING SANDS***

The leader of each tribe is known as the Malik, and this person must always be the eldest male. There are no other divisions, regardless of whether the tribe is nomadic or if it is settled at an oasis.



# CHAPTER

# 11

## THREATS

**S**hadow, Sword & Spell is a diverse place. Numerous groups lurk in—and out of—the shadows, working their plans and attempting to make their mark on the world. From the northern barbarian tribes to cultists devoted to the dark Elder Gods, these threats are varied. This chapter is devoted to these threats, and can be used by you in two ways.

The first way is rather obvious, as ready-to-use NPCs. They are suitable as threats and can be used with very little effort. In many cases, these threats can form the basis of an adventure built around them.

The second way these threats are useful is that they serve as an example of the characters that can be created using these rules. In some cases, they can serve as ready-to-run Heroes when a new player is stumped as to what type of character they want to play.

## COMMON THREATS

### BANDITS

**Brawn 6, Quickness 7, Toughness 6, Wits 5, Will 6, Vitality 30, Sanity 30, IR 6, A 2**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- Did you not know that you must pay the toll in order to travel down our road?
- Who ever heard of steal from the rich to give to the poor? I steal for me.
- You wound me! I am no thief, I am a simple liberator of items.

**Skills:** Archery [+4], Melee [+3], Stealth [+3], Track [+4].

**Gear:** Leather Armor, Shortbow, 20 Arrows and Shortsword

Found in areas outside of the major population centers, bandits are small groups ranging between ten and fifty individuals; more than fifty is considered a mercenary company. Bandits make their living roaming the tracts of wilderness, raiding merchants, and living off the fruits of others' labor.

### BARBARIANS

**Brawn 9, Quickness 6, Toughness 9, Wits 6, Will 6, Vitality 45, Sanity 30, IR 6, A 2**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- I am rage, I am violence, I am death!
- Pray to your gods, weakling, your end is near!
- My axe will drink deeply from you.

**Skills:** Melee [+6], Survival [+4], Tactics [+2], Track [+2].

**Gear:** Chainmail, Small Helmet, Large Shield, Handaxe or Longsword.

Though much of the region is civilized, the lands beyond the borders of the Merchant League are not civilized as such. To the far north lie numerous regions inhabited by tribes of barbarians who live, hunt, war, and survive in those areas. From time to time, war parties surge from these wild lands and crash into the lands of the civilized Merchant League to plunder its wealth and leave a swath of destruction in their wake.



## CAIM'S KNIVES

**Brawn 5, Quickness 11, Toughness 6, Wits 5, Will 9, Vitality 25, Sanity 45, IR 8, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

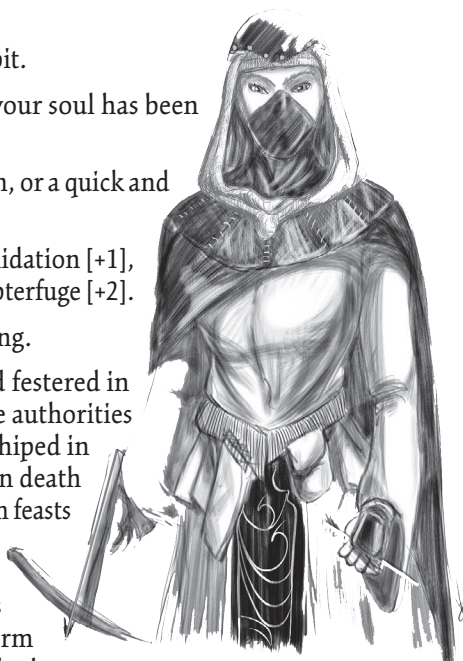
**Hooks:**

- Hush now, this will not hurt a bit.
- I bring a message from Caim: your soul has been requested.
- Choose: a slow and painful death, or a quick and easy one.

**Skills:** Acrobatics [+1], Dodge [+1], Intimidation [+1], Melee [+2], Observe [+1], Stealth [+2], Subterfuge [+2].

**Gear:** 3 Daggers, Crossbow, Dark Clothing.

The Cult of Caim has slowly grown and festered in Gravina, much to the dismay of both the authorities and The Guild. Caim is a dark god worshiped in the south, and the faith's tenets center on death and darkness. The faith preaches that Caim feasts on souls, and it is through this feasting that he brings darkness to all. The cult is divided into two sects, one of which takes orders from the other. Caim's Knives form the bulk, and these dark-hearted individuals collect souls via murder and assassination.



## CAIM'S VEIL

**Brawn 4, Quickness 4, Toughness 4, Wits 10, Will 10, Vitality 25, Sanity 60, IR 7, A 1**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- Caim's call is not to be ignored, and he calls for you now.
- One life or two—what does it matter? They all belong to Caim.
- You think death is a release? You have no idea what you shall meet.

**Skills:** Magic (Fright [+3], Protection [+2], Strike True [+2]), Resist +1, Sense +2, Study (Religion) +2.

The priests of Caim's sect of the Veils lead the faithful, and send the Knives to collect the souls. Rumors abound of more powerful Veils existing, but those who have encountered them have not lived to tell such tales.

## CITY WATCH

**Brawn 5, Quickness 5, Toughness 5, Wits 4, Will 5, Vitality 10, Sanity 25, IR 2, A 2**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- Halt!
- Move along before I bash your head in.
- When you question my authority, you question all the Watch.

**Skills:** Brawl [+2], Defend [+1], Empathy [+1], Melee [+2], Streetwise [+1].

**Gear:** Plate Mail, Shield, Longsword, or Halberd, or Spear and Small Shield.

Though the major cities of the Merchant League have their own soldiers (see their stats below), they are not employed in patrolling and protecting the cities. The job of City Watch is a thankless one that pays poorly, and corruption runs wild within its ranks.

## CULTISTS

**Brawn 4, Quickness 6, Toughness 5, Wits 8, Will 4, Vitality 20, Sanity 20, IR 7, A 2**

**Action Points:** 3

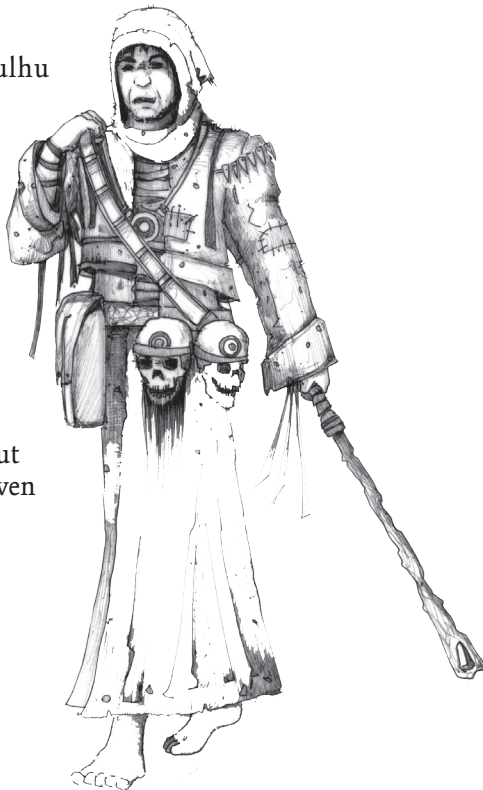
**Hooks:**

- Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn!
- In the glory of your name, I consign this life to you.
- In Hastur's name we sign, and in Hastur's name we exult.

**Skills:** Diplomacy [+1], Lore [+4], Sense [+2], Study [+2].

**Gear:** Knife

Dark cults can be found throughout the region, and these cults worship even darker and fouler gods.



**FATE WEAVER****Brawn 3, Quickness 4, Toughness 5, Wits 13, Will 11, Vitality 20, Sanity 65, IR 8, A 1****Action Points: 3****Hooks:**

- The path you walk is not a solid one, you still have a choice.
- I can see your future young one. For a crown, I can show it to you.
- Let me shake the bones and see what the gods have to say.

**Skills:** Astrology [+3], Diplomacy [+2], Divination (1 emphasis) [+5], Empathy [+4].**Gear:** Robes, Knife, Staff

Fate Weavers are men and women who have been touched by Iaoth's grace, who are able to divine fate. More than mere fortune-tellers, they are able to pierce the cloak of fate to detect and reveal reality and truths.

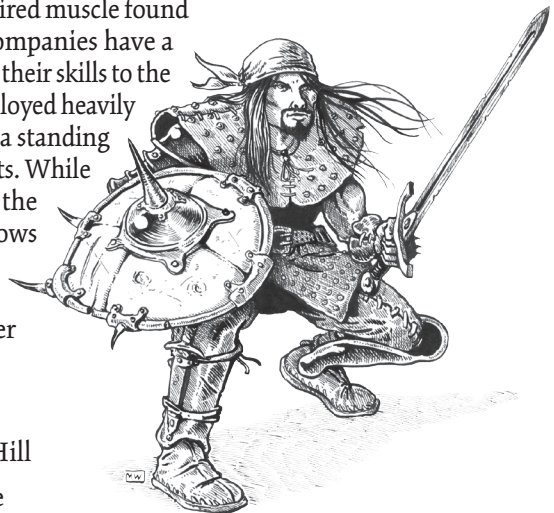
**MERCENARIES****Brawn 9, Quickness 6, Toughness 8, Wits 7, Will 6, Vitality 40, Sanity 30, IR 6, A 2****Action Points: 3****Hooks:**

- My loyalty is yours until the pay runs out.
- Come you sorry lot, our luck has changed. We're changing sides!
- Raise the standard! Let them see our colors and quake in their boots!

**Skills:** Brawl [+4], Defend [+3], Melee [+6], Streetwise [+4].**Gear:** Chainmail, Shield, Longsword, 2 Knives

Forming the bulk of the available hired muscle found in The World are mercenaries. Companies have a minimum of fifty members, and sell their skills to the highest bidder. Mercenaries are employed heavily throughout areas that do not have a standing army, as well as guards for merchants. While attempts have been made to list all the active companies, no one really knows how many exist. However, there are some who've made a name for themselves, and these groups either have fame or infamy:

- The Red Banner
- Warriors of the Rolling Hill
- Arrowheads of Ioa's Rage



## PIRATES

**Brawn 7, Quickness 9, Toughness 7, Wits 6, Will 7, Vitality 35, Sanity 30, IR 7, A 3**

**Action Points: 3**

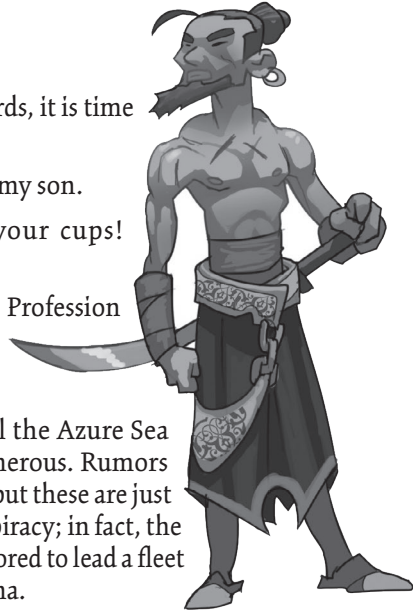
**Hooks:**

- Trim the sails boys, and grab your swords, it is time to pluck that juicy ship of its loot.
- You don't know what the waves hide, my son.
- Fill your hands, lads, and drain your cups! Tomorrow, we sail!

**Skills:** Athletic [+6], Gambling [+1], Melee [+5], Profession (Sailor) [+2].

**Gear:** Shortsword, Dagger.

Pirates are a fact of life, and the ships that sail the Azure Sea that offer fruit ripe for the picking are too numerous. Rumors persist that many pirates are based out of Bluff, but these are just that, rumors. Beidha and Nipur are hotbeds of piracy; in fact, the notorious Braber'el Maq, the Pirate King, is rumored to lead a fleet of sixty pirate ships from a port hidden in Beidha.



**PIT FIGHTER**

**Brawn 9, Quickness 7, Toughness 9, Wits 6, Will 5, Vitality 45, Sanity 25, IR 6, A 2**

**Action Points: 3**

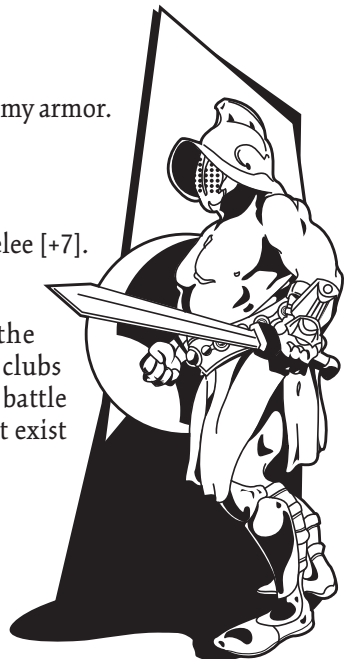
**Hooks:**

- Ya gon' hafta try harder, punk. These scars are my armor.
- One strike, one kill. One kill, one crown.
- Is that the best you can do?

**Skills:** Brawl [+4], Defend [+1], Intimidation [+2], Melee [+7].

**Gear:** Full Helmet, Small Shield, Shortsword, Knife

Scattered throughout the League and located in the darker, remote alleyways of the major cities, fight clubs exist where the wealthy gamble and watch warriors battle to the death. These fight clubs are frowned upon, but exist and thrive nonetheless.



**PRIEST OF ADONAEI****Brawn 5, Quickness 7, Toughness 6, Wits 8, Will 9, Vitality 25, Sanity 45, IR 7, A 2****Action Points: 2****Hooks:**

- I can heal your wounds, but the evil within your soul I cannot touch.
- Yes, I will heal you, but it will cost you.
- The grace of Adonael is free, but the healing will cost you.

**Skills:** Diplomacy [+2], Empathy [+3], Heal [+4], Physick [+3], Study (Theology) [+1].**Gear:** Robes, Staff

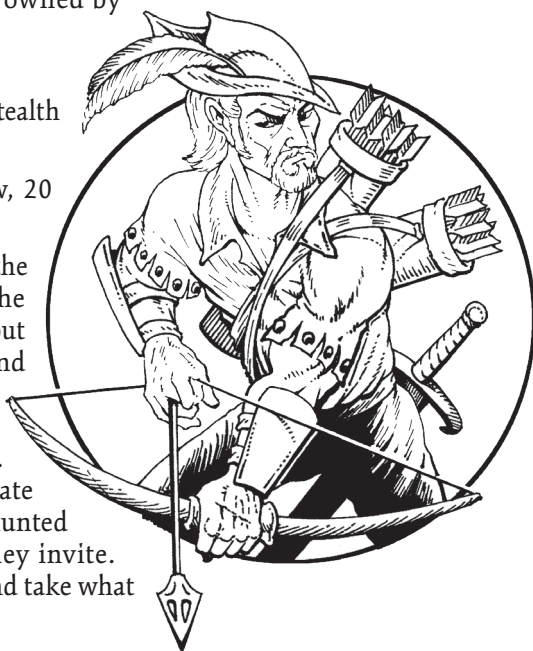
Most people in their day-to-day lives require healing at one time or another. The clergy of Adonael are available to help those in need—for a price.

**POACHERS****Brawn 5, Quickness 6, Toughness 4, Wits 5, Will 4, Vitality 20, Sanity 20, IR 5, A 2****Action Points: 3****Hooks:**

- That's another one for the stew-pot.
- If it walks free, it is not owned by anyone.
- Even the poor need to eat.

**Skills:** Archery [+4], Observe [+1], Stealth [+2], Tracking [+4].**Gear:** Leather Armor, Shortbow, 20 arrows, 2 Knives

Poachers make a living hunting off the private lands owned by nobility, the upper class, and wealthy. Throughout The World, much of the nobility and the wealthy have summer manors and estates allowing them to escape the heat and congestion of the cities. These summer "homes" have private grounds and preserves which are hunted only by the owners and those they invite. Poachers sneak onto these lands and take what they can.



## SAFFRON LEAGUERS

## SLAVERS

**Brawn 3, Quickness 3, Toughness 3, Wits 11, Will 15, Vitality 15, Sanity 55, IR 7, A 1**

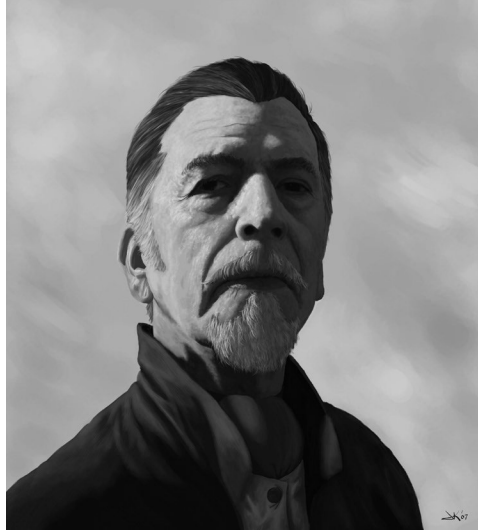
**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- You will bring a nice profit.
- Cry, beg, plea all you want, it makes no difference. To market you will go.
- You break it, you bought it.

**Skills:** Bureaucracy [+3], Diplomacy [+2], Bargain [+4], Merchant [+5].

**Gear:** Luxury Clothes, 3 Knives, Shortsword



## SLAVE HUNTERS

**Brawn 10, Quickness 10, Toughness 7, Wits 5, Will 4, Vitality 50, Sanity 20, IR 7, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- You thought you could escape?
- Struggle all you want, these shackles will not come off.
- You have seen your last sunrise in freedom, you will see many sunsets in captivity.

**Skills:** Defend [+1], Empathy [+2], Intimidation [+3], Melee [+2], Tracking [+5].

**Gear:** Leather Armor, Longsword

The Saffron League is a growing threat whose tentacles have slowly stretched into not just most parts of the Merchant League, but the City-States of Döärn as well. This organization has slowly become a power in the region, not only due to the saffron trade, but also the slave trade. Though slavery is frowned upon in the region, it is an institution in not only Nogoton, but Nipur, Beidha, and the City-States. The League scours the world, capturing people so as to sell them into slavery. Slavers are the ones who travel to the markets selling not only saffron, but their human merchandise as well. Slave hunters, on the other hand, work to acquire the needed slaves to sell in other areas. In addition, they serve as guards for slavers, as well as leaders for the security details that protect the saffron shipments.

**SOLDIERS**

**Brawn 8, Quickness 6, Toughness 8, Wits 7, Will 7, Vitality 40, Sanity 35, IR 6, A 2**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- Let the drums sound, we march to war.
- For honor, for glory, and for the throne!
- March, thrust, dodge, bash, that is my lot in life.

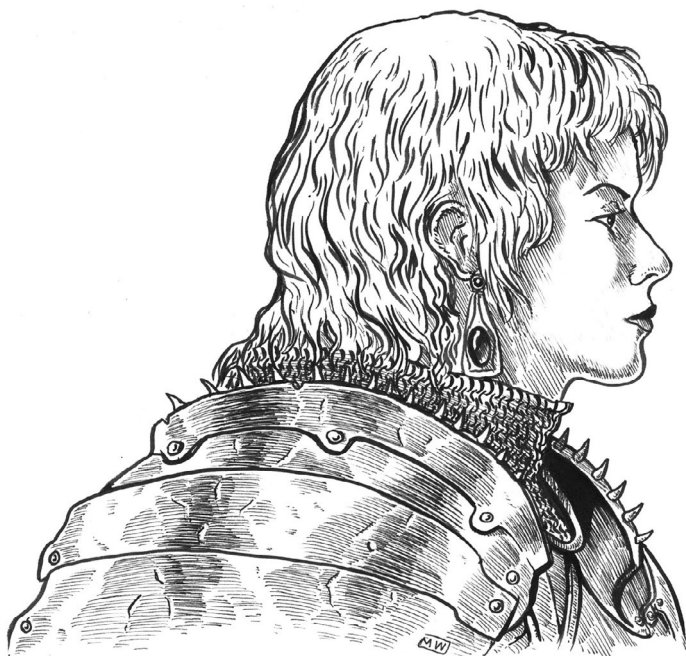
**Skills:** special

- *Archers:* Archery [+3], Brawl [+1], Observe [+3], Melee [+3]
- *Cavalry:* Animal Handling [+2], Defend [+3], Melee [+4], Tactics [+2]
- *Foot:* Brawl [+1], Defend [+3], Intimidation [+2], Melee [+4]

**Gear:** see below

- *Archers:* Chainmail, Shortsword, Longbow and 20 Arrows
- *Cavalry:* Plate Armor, Full Helmet, Shield, Lance, Longsword
- *Foot:* Chainmail, Small Helmet, Shield, Longsword

From the League of Merchants, to Nogoton, all civilized societies of The World have their own standing army employed in the defense of the land during times of war. Depending on the situation, armies vary in size, type as well as skills.

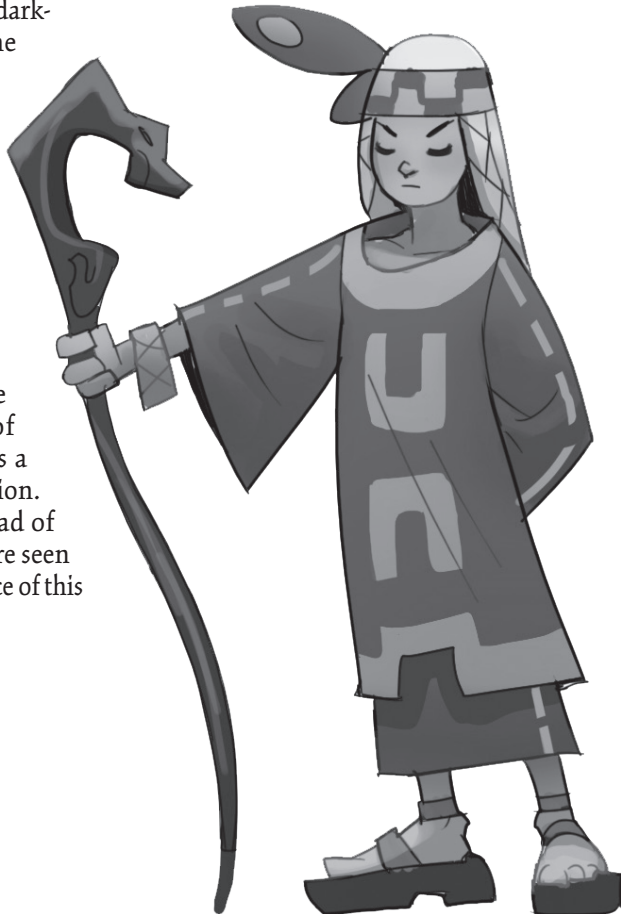


**SORCERERS OF NOGOTON****Brawn 3, Quickness 4, Toughness 3, Wits 14, Will 12, Vitality 15, Sanity 60, IR 9, A 1****Action Points: 3****Hooks:**

- Let the mists of Ma'alung shroud you in their loving embrace.
- Look into the candle's flame, and within you shall see the mysteries of the world.
- Do not look at me as an equal, I am your better.

**Skills:** Lore [+2], magic (3 Spells at [+2] each), Resist [+6], Sense [+3], Study (Esoteric Magic) [+1].**Gear:** Leather Armor, 4 Daggers, Staff

Ruled by a magician class, Nogoton has been growing in power for years. They scheme and plot in the shadow-darkened towers, and no one knows what exactly they plan. Nogoton has embassies in every major city of The World, and their representatives are both welcomed and feared. Many fear that Nogoton leaders are working to corrupt the land, and some whisper the growth of narcotics in Gravina is a result of this manipulation. Furthermore, the spread of Shub-Niggurath cults are seen by many as more evidence of this decadence.



**THIEVES****BEGGAR**

**Brawn 7, Quickness 10, Toughness 6, Wits 7, Will 6, Vitality 30, Sanity 30, IR 8, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- Please good lady, can you spare a copper for a lost soul?
- 'ello me ol' son, how much you'd pay for a whisper of news?
- May the blessings of the god or goddess of our choice be upon your kind soul for the charity you have shown me.

**Skills:** Bargain [+2], Brawl [+1], Melee [+1], Streetwise [+3].

There are two types of beggars in all major cities, one type of which are the most common - the poor, the sick and lame, who have no place to go but the streets. The other type of beggar is more sinister; these are the ones who use the cloak of the downtrodden to beg, as well as observe for other thieves making their work easier.

**CUTPURSE**

**Brawn 7, Quickness 10, Toughness 6, Wits 7, Will 6, Vitality 30, Sanity 30, IR 8, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- Excuse me mister, I need to watch where I'm walking.
- The more hidden a purse, the biggest my reward.
- It is your own fault for not keeping an eye on your belongings.

**Skills:** Dodge [+2], Streetwise [+2], Stealth [+4], Subterfuge [+6]

**Gear:** Leather Armor, Dagger

Common on the streets of all major cities, cutpurses form the bulk of most criminal gangs. As their name implies, they seek to separate a purse of money from the person carrying it.

**MUGGERS**

**Brawn 10, Quickness 6, Toughness 8, Wits 6, Will 6, Vitality 40, Sanity 30, IR 3, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- One way or another, you'll give me your purse, and I'll give you a lump on yer noggin in exchange.
- Why do they always think they can fight me?
- Ah, there be an easy mark!

**Skills:** Brawl [+5], Intimidation [+1], Melee [+3], Streetwise [+3], Stealth [+3].

**Gear:** Leather Armor, Club

Prowling the streets and alleyways, muggers are thieves who prey upon the weak and take what they want through force, and usually enjoy the violence involved in doing so.

### RACONTEUR

**Brawn 5, Quickness 9, Toughness 5, Wits 10, Will 7, Vitality 25, Sanity 45, IR 9, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

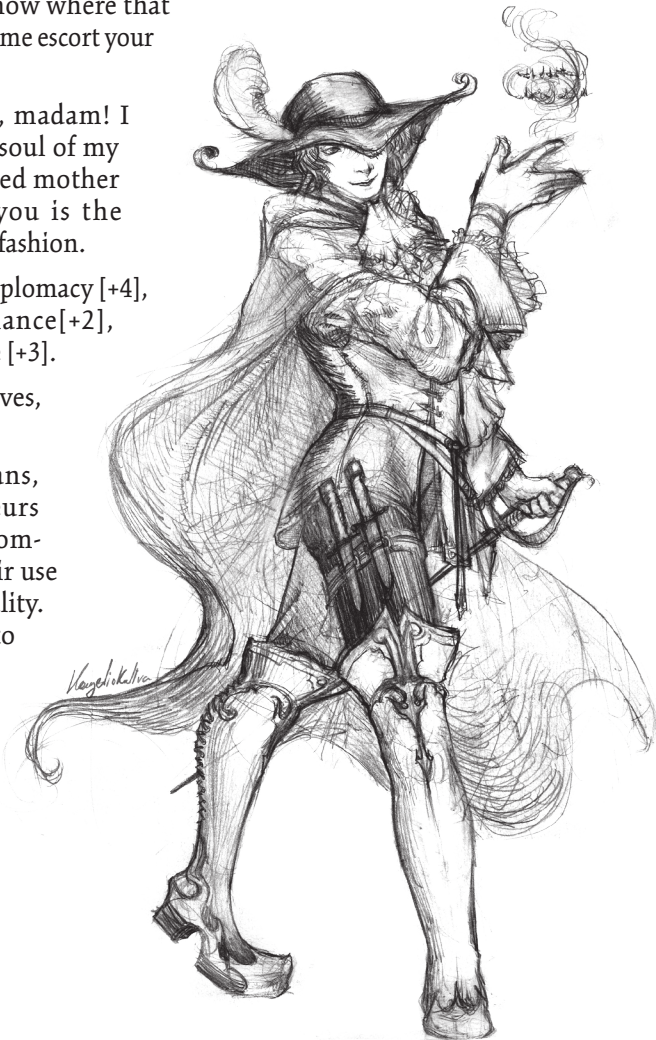
### Hooks:

- Sir, yes, you sir. You look like you need something to make your day. I might have just the thing for you.
- Why yes, I know where that building is, let me escort your there.
- You hurt me, madam! I swear by the soul of my dearly departed mother what I tell you is the truth. After a fashion.

**Skills:** Bargain [+1], Diplomacy [+4], Melee [+1], Performance [+2], Stealth [+1], Streetwise [+3].

**Gear:** Clothing, 3 Knives, Shortsword

Embleshers, charlatans, and grifters, raconteurs are a cut above the common thief, due to their use of charm and personality. They know all, seem to have contacts everywhere, and would rather use the soft arts of charm to acquire someone's wealth than the more risky and violent arts of other thieves.



## CREATURE DESIGN

### CREATURE BASICS

The world of *Shadow, Sword & Spell* teems with beings and creatures of all kinds. This section will help you design your own creations to aid, harm, and challenge your player characters. Like everything else in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, creature design is simple and straight-forward. It is geared toward ease of use and designed to foster fun roleplaying rather than adhering to strict realism.

#### WHY ARE THERE MONSTERS ANYWAY?

Another question that often comes up is why have monsters when a game that is human-centric pulp fantasy rarely, if ever, has monsters? Good question. If I was to pay adherence to the genre's orthodoxy, this chapter would only have a few creatures listed, namely apes, snakes, wolves, big cats, and various animals resembling monsters. This chapter would then only be a few pages long. Instead, I have opted to give you various examples if you choose to have a variety of challenges.

Creatures are dangers you face from time to time, offering challenges in the adventures they undertake. Most creatures want nothing more than to be left alone, so they attack only when threatened. Some creatures have malice lurking within their hearts, or hunger in their empty stomachs, and will attack no matter the situation. These malevolent creatures offer numerous opportunities to pose threats and challenges.

Four types of creatures—**Natural**, **Otherworldly**, **Infernal**, and **Undead**—exist in *Shadow, Sword & Spell*. These creatures encompass the monstrous threats you face during their adventuring lives.

**Natural** creatures are part of the natural, physical world, and run the gamut from common animals to werewolves.

**Otherworldly** creatures are creatures native to other planes of existence, who struggle to remain in the natural world. In order to manifest and remain in the natural world, **Otherworldly** creatures must expend **Plasm**, the force fueling everything these creatures do. **Otherworldly** creatures, since they do not have physical bodies, do not have the **Vitality Ability**; instead, their **Plasm** acts as this **Ability**.

**Infernal**, as with **Otherworldly** creatures, are not native to the physical world, existing in realms outside the scope of man. **Infernal** creatures have **Taint**, the power fueling them and the abilities upon which they can call.

Finally, **Undead** are creatures who have died, and yet their physical forms remain animated, and are usually dangerous to the living.

Regardless of whether a creature is **Natural**, **Otherworldly**, **Infernal**, or **Undead**, they are all created through the use of **Creature Points**. As is the case with character creation, creature creation has 7 easy steps. These steps are:

- **Step 1:** Determine **Power Level**
- **Step 2:** Purchase **Abilities** with **Creature Points**
- **Step 3:** Purchase **Traits** with **Trait Points**

- **Step 4:** Purchase Skills with Skill Points
- **Step 5:** Calculate **Plasm**, **Taint** or **Vitality**, **Actions**, and **Initiative Rating**
- **Step 6:** Assign **Hooks**
- **Step 7:** Set creature free into the world

So how does this process work?

Let's say you want to create a dog. To create a dog, you determine that the average dog is generally not tough, so you decide the **Power Level** is *Feeble*, which means that the dog has **10 Ability Points** to use in building it. The maximum for any **Ability** is 5. You have **14 Trait Points** which you can use to buy **Traits**, and **20 skill Points** to buy skills.

## STEP 1: DETERMINE POWER LEVEL

Determining the **Power Level** sets up all the other steps for creating a creature. The stronger the creature, the more points you have to build it with. The table below gives the available **Power Levels** and the points available to build your creatures.

CREATURE POWER						
POWER LEVEL	ABILITY POINTS	TRAIT POINTS	SKILL POINTS	MAX ABILITY SCORE	ACTION POINTS	HOOKS
Infirm	8	8	15	2	1	2
Feeble	10	14	20	6	2	2
Weak	15	18	25	7	2	3
Below Average	25	24	30	8	3	3
Average	35	28	35	10	3	3
Above Average	45	34	40	12	3	4
Experience	55	38	45	14	4	4
Seasoned	65	44	50	16	4	4
Veteran	75	48	55	20	4	5
Legendary	85	54	60	22	5	5
Mythic	95	58	65	24	5	5

## STEP 2: PURCHASE ABILITIES WITH CREATURE POINTS

All creatures have the same **Abilities** that characters have. You purchase these **Abilities** the same way as you do when creating a character.

## STEP 3: PURCHASE TRAITS WITH TRAITS POINTS

All creatures have **Traits**. **Traits** are the facets of a creature that makes them a creature, and unique in some fashion. What follows is a list of unusual **Traits** that can be chosen to give creatures unique abilities or "powers." Not all creatures need to have special **Traits**. However, most creatures that do have **Traits** from the list that follows, even if it is something like *Size*, a *Bite* or *Claw* attack, or something else inherent in its nature. This section is provided to aid you in creating creatures having special talents and traits that differ from characters, villains, and NPCs. Each **Trait** has a "cost." In addition, there are a number of **Traits** listed as "Drawbacks." These **Traits** are negative ones in

that they do not provide the creature with any benefits, but instead limit it in some fashion. **Drawbacks** grant the creature a number of additional bonus **Trait Points** that may be added to their total.

### ACIDIC

The creature's saliva is acidic, and can burn others, increasing the Damage Value of the creature's bite by 1. The creature must have a natural bite, stinger, touch, or other form of physical attack to take this Trait.

**Cost:** 1

### ATTACK BONUS

The creature is particularly talented or skilled at combat, and gains a bonus to all **Combat Tests**. A conditional **Bonus** only applies to attacks against a certain type of target (such as members of certain species or factions), or attacks under certain conditions (such as in extreme heat or cold or underwater); this reduces the build point cost of the **Bonus** to one-half its normal cost, rounded down.

**Cost:** 5 (+1); 10 (+2); 15 (+3)

### ATTACK PENALTY (DRAWBACK)

The creature is less talented or skilled at combat. A creature with this drawback suffers a penalty to **Combat Tests**, either all the time or under certain conditions. A conditional attack penalty only applies against a certain type of target (such as specific creatures), or attacks under certain conditions (such as in extreme heat or cold); this reduces the build points provided by the penalty to one-half its normal bonus, rounded up.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 5 (-1); 10 (-2); 15 (-3)

### BITE

Bite is what it implies; it causes damage via teeth or fangs. In addition, the Bite can be linked to other **Traits**, such as *Acidic Saliva* (see above). The damage a **Bite** causes is **Brawn Bonus + Degrees of Success**.

**Cost:** 1

### BONY SPURS

Bony spikes protrude from the creature's joints, giving it a jagged profile, and making it dangerous to touch. Anyone touching the creature, either due to combat or some other means, takes a **1 Damage** attack.

**Cost:** 2

### BREATH

The creature is able to breathe flames, cold, poison, darkness, acid, or other harmful substances. This Trait is useful against opponents not only in hand-to-hand combat,

but also when the creature is not that close to its target. To use this ability, the creature must make a **successful Quickness Test** to hit its target. Creatures with the *Breath Trait* always have a **Range** and **Damage** listed.

**Cost:** 1 for each increment of 10 feet in **Range** and 1 + **Degrees of Success Damage**

#### BRITTLE BONES (DRAWBACK)

The creature's bones are so weak that they cannot withstand hard or sudden impacts (falling, being struck by blunt weapons, and the like). The creature also takes an additional **1d12 points of Damage** from any fall greater than 10 feet in height (see "Size" on page 250).

**Bonus Points Provided:** 2

#### COLD IRON DEFICIENCY

The creature's biology is such that cold iron is dangerous to it. Whenever coming into contact with cold iron the creature takes an automatic **2 Damage**. If the cold iron is used as manacles, the creature suffers **2 Damage** every round they remain on the creature. Weapons, whether melee or ranged, cause **Double Damage** when striking a creature with this vulnerability.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 4

#### CLAWS

Claws are what they imply: they cause damage from raking or slashing. The **Damage** claws cause is **Quickness Bonus + Degrees of Success**.

**Cost:** 1

#### COMBAT FEAR (DRAWBACK)

The creature is gripped by an inexplicable fear whenever facing a dangerous or frightening situation. After **Initiative** is rolled, but before the creature takes its first **Action** in combat, it must make a **Will Test**. If the creature fails the test, it is shaken for the rest of the encounter, suffering a -2 on all **Attack** and **Skill Tests**. If the **Test** succeeds, the creature overcomes its momentary fear and negates the ill effects.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 2

#### CONTROL

The creature is able to control something, be it animals, elements or the like. To use this ability the creature must make a **Will Test**, with success indicating that the creature successfully controls the target of the control attempt. The number of targets/objects the creature can control is equal to its **Will** stat. The duration is equal to one-half the creature's **Will**, and the range is equal to the creature's **Will** × 5 feet.

**Cost:** 8

**CURIOUS**

The creature is intensely interested in new knowledge and experiences, and gains a **+1 bonus** to any Test it attempts either for the first time, or while in pursuit of some knowledge or experience it has never had or seen before.

**Cost:** 1

**DAMAGE REDUCTION**

The creature takes less damage from whatever the source of the damage is, depending on the object or the circumstance. Examples of this might be damage reduction against flames, poison, steam, cold, heat, physical attacks, iron, etc. As for the reduction in damage, the reduction is half.

**Cost:** 3 per type of reduction

**DISEASE**

The creature carries a disease that can be passed on to an opponent via bite, claw, horn, gouge, breath or physical contact. The target is able to resist the disease as per the rules in Chapter 1 (see page 38).

**Cost:** 5 per each Disease

**DRAIN**

Creatures that have the **Drain Trait** can drain **Abilities**, **Vitality**, or **Sanity**. Drain can be linked to a bite, claws or any other physical attack. In addition, the Trait can be taken multiple times if a creature can drain more than two different things, such as **Brawn** and **Will**. A creature can drain 5, 10, or 15 points and the cost is based around this.

**Cost:** 4 (Drain 5 Points), 8 (Drain 10 Points), 12 (Drain 15 Points)

**ELASTICITY**

The creature is able to bend and twist its body in unnatural ways, allowing it to squeeze into and through very tight spaces. Consequently, the creature can squeeze through an opening or passage one-fifth as wide and tall as its height, in inches, although it does so very slowly compared to its normal movement rate (movement is reduced by half).

**Cost:** 2

**EXTRA ARMS**

The creature possesses an additional pair of arms, which look and behave exactly like its other arms. As a species with more than two arms, the creature gains a +2 bonus on **Brawn**, **Athletics**, and **Brawl Tests**. For the purposes of combat, both extra arms are treated as “off hands” (that is, you still have only one primary hand).

**Cost:** 3 (per set of extra arms)

## FEAR

Creatures cause **Fear** when first encountered. This represents a creature's existence and the initial surprise a character has in encountering them. At the start of the first round in an encounter with the creature you make a **Fear Test**. In case of multiple creatures you must deduct the cumulative modifiers. For example, you are facing 3 zombies and each zombie has Fear -1. With the three have a total of Fear -2. Remember **Fear Tests** with creature who have **Fear** only have this effect at the start of an initial encounter.

**Cost:** 4 per point of Fear

## FIERCE

The creature is naturally aggressive, or becomes angry when threatened. Creatures with this ability must make a **Will Test** once they takes damage. If the test is failed, the creature becomes enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** temporarily increased by 2 points each, and its **Vitality** is temporarily increased by 15 Points. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily lowered by 2 points each. Fierce lasts for 1d12 rounds, and while in this state, the creature is immune to all **Fear Tests** and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. When the Fierce state passes, the creature's **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.

**Cost:** 3



## FLIGHT

The creature is able to fly, whether due to having wings or some ability to make its body lighter than air.

**Cost:** 1+ for each increment of 10 feet in **Range**

**FRAILITY (DRAWBACK)**

The creature's body is particularly vulnerable to the ravages of poison, disease, heat, and other ailments. It also has trouble stabilizing when it is severely wounded. The creature takes a -2 penalty on all **Toughness Tests**, including tests made to heal or stabilize after unconsciousness.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 2

**GAZE**

The creature is able to cause damage with just a look. This ability has a range, and to use it, the creature must make a **Successful Quickness Test**. Damage and the gaze's effects vary from creature to creature, and are detailed in the description for each creature with this ability.

**Cost:** 2 for each increment of 10 feet **Range** and 1 + **Degrees of Success Damage**

**GILLS**

The creature possesses a set of gills allowing it to draw oxygen out of water. The gills appear on its neck, chest, or back (near the windpipe or lungs). Consequently, the creature can breathe both in and out of water, and never has to worry about drowning.

**Cost:** 1

**GLIDER**

The creature has fleshy flaps that allow it to glide on wind currents. The creature may glide through the air as though flying, but only while descending in altitude. For every 20 feet in altitude that it descends, the creature may move 80 feet horizontally. Thus, if it leaps off a 40-foot-tall structure, it may glide horizontally for 240 feet. If an updraft is caught, the creature is able to continue gliding.

**Cost:** 2+ for each increment of 20 feet in **Range**

**GORE**

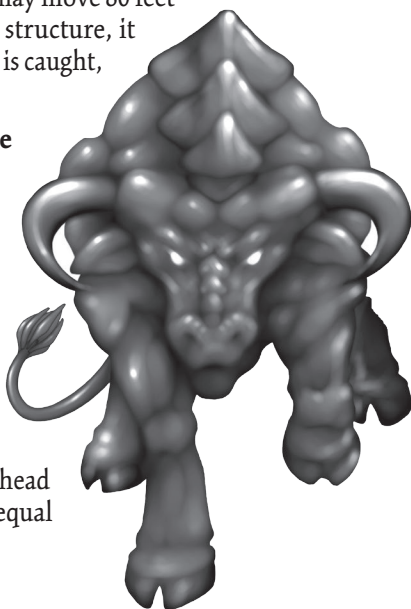
The creature is able to use tusks or horns to attack an opponent, and does **Quickness +1 Damage**.

**Cost:** 1

**HEAD BUTT**

The creature's skull is thick, allowing it to use its head as a weapon. The damage a Head Butt causes is equal to the **Toughness** score.

**Cost:** 1



## HEAT/COLD SUSCEPTIBILITY (DRAWBACK)

The creature's body does not react well to particularly hot or cold temperatures. The creature takes **Double Damage** from prolonged exposure to extreme heat or cold, as well as weapons, spells and the like.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 1

## HORRIFIC VISAGE

This is always on, by that this means at the start of every round anyone facing the creature must make a **Fear Test**. For all succeeding rounds the **Fear Test** must be made. For example, you are facing a creature with **Fear -2** and **Horrific Visage**. At the beginning of each round a **Fear Test** must be made at the -2. Each preceding found that character needs to make a **Fear Test** due to the creature's horrific visage.

Now some might wonder what is the difference between this trait and **Fear**? After all, they essentially do the same thing, right? Well, no. **Fear** is the sense you get when you first encounter something and once the initial shock of the situation is over, everything returns to normal. Facing a creature whose appearance is so horrific, every encounter with the creature has a product of revulsion. So great is this revulsion is that it rattles your mental resilience.

Too look at it another way: **Fear** is someone jumping out of the closet saying "Boo!" **Horrific Vision** is facing someone whose face is being eaten by maggots.

**Cost:** 5

## HORNS

The creature has either a single horn or a set of horns that it is able to use as a weapon. The **Damage** caused by **Horns** is **Brawn + 1**.

**Cost:** 1

## HUG/SQUEEZE

This ability allows a creature to damage an opponent by squeezing or hugging them (either by enfolding the character in its arms, coiling around them with its body, or any other physical means it can use to squeeze them). To use this **Ability**, the creature must make a successful *Brawl Test* to grab its opponent. Those trapped can try to break out by making a successful **Brawn Test**. For every **Round** trapped in the hug or grip of the creature, the opponent suffers a cumulative -1 to the **Test**. For example, if the opponent has been in the hug for 3 **Rounds** he would suffer a -3 to the **Test**. The **Damage** from this ability is equal to the creature's **Brawn + Toughness Bonus**.

**Cost:** 2

## HYPERSENSITIVITY

The creature is particularly sensitive to its surroundings, and gains a +2 bonus on *Investigation* and *Observe Tests*.

**Cost:** 2

**INFERNAL**

This ability is usually found in creatures that originate from **Otherworldly** realms, called the **Infernal Realms**, and confers to the creature an aura of evil that requires all within **10 feet** of it to make a **Fear Test**. Upon **Failing** this **Test**, the person feels uncomfortable, as well as having a desire to flee from it as quickly as possible. **Infernal** creatures are immune to normal weapons, but weapons that have been blessed by a religious figure cause them **Double Damage**.

**Cost:** 6

**IMMUNITY**

Creatures with **Immunity** suffer no **Damage** when they come into contact with whatever it is to which they are **Immune**. For example, if the creature is **Immune** to fire, it suffers no **Damage** from fires, no matter how hot they are, or if attacked by a fire-based weapon or from spells of fire.

**Cost:** 4 per Immunity

**INVISIBILITY**

The creature has the ability to become **Invisible**, and gains a +2 to its **Initiative** and is at a -4 to be hit. Creatures with this **Trait** can remain **Invisible** for a number of **Rounds** equal their **Will**.

**Cost:** 3

**INSUBSTANTIAL**

**Insubstantial** is the ability that allows the creature to shift its body from a solid state to a gaseous or ghostly state. In this state, all physical attacks pass through the creature harmlessly, causing no **Damage**. In addition, while in this state, the creature is unable to make any physical attacks.

**Cost:** 4

**KICK**

The creature causes damage by kicking. The **Damage** is equal to **Brawn + 2**.

**Cost:** 1

**LEAPER**

The creature gains the ability to leap incredible distances. The creature gains a +5 bonus on all *Athletics Tests* or any other **Tests** that this **Trait** has bearing. The distance a creature is able to jump is equal to its **Brawn × 2 feet**.

**Cost:** 1

**LETHARGY (DRAWBACK)**

The creature has trouble reacting quickly to danger. Consequently, it suffers a -2 to all *Quickness* or **Quickness-based Tests**.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 3

**LIGHT SENSITIVITY (DRAWBACK)**

The creature's eyes are unable to adjust to bright light. Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight) blinds the creature for **10 Rounds**, and it suffers a -1 on attacks, *Investigation Tests*, and *Observe Tests* as long as it remains in the brightly lit area.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 1

**MANIFEST**

The creature is able to enter into the physical world and allows insubstantial creatures to make physical attacks.

**Cost:** 3

**MINDSLAVE (DRAWBACK)**

The creature has certain mental deficiencies that make it harder to resist mind-influencing effects. It suffers a -2 on all **Will** or *Resist Tests*.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 1

**MOAN**

The creature has a voice, roar, or growl it uses against an opponent, causing **Damage**. In order to use its moan, the creature needs to make a successful **Quickness Test**.

**Cost:** 3 (10' Range and 4 Damage), 4 (20' Range and 8 Damage), 5 (30' Range and 10 Damage), 6 (40' Range and 12 Damage)

**NATURAL ARMOR**

The creature possesses some type of natural armor that makes it harder to injure. The creature gains the number of points of **AV** that function exactly like other types of artificial armor.

**Cost:** 1 per point of AV

**NATURAL ARMOR PENALTY (DRAWBACK)**

The creature is particularly susceptible to attacks. A creature or species with this drawback suffers more damage from attacks directed against it than usual. Creatures with this trait generally cannot possess the **Natural Armor** trait (see above).

**Bonus Points Provided:** 1 per additional point of damage per successful attack (maximum 10). Cost is halved if it works against a single type of attack.



## NIGHT VISION

The creature is able to see in the dark as easily as it sees in full daylight, and ignores all penalties while fighting in the dark.

**Cost:** 1

## POISON

The creature is poisonous—whether it produces venom for a bite, poisonous saliva, or secretes poison—and causes damage to an opponent because of this poisonous nature. Unless noted otherwise, this type of poison is natural. Anyone hit by a poisonous creature must make a successful opposed **Toughness** test or be poisoned, taking **Damage** equal to the **Degree of Success**. Poison can be delivered by spit, secretion and contact with skin, via bite or stinger, ingesting, or some other such means.

**Cost:** 2 per Poison Rank

## PLASM

The creature is able to tap into a source of power outside the scope of men, which fuels its abilities. This power, once drained, ends the creature's hold and ties to the physical world, and it must rest to regain their **Plasm**. When creatures with **Plasm** manifest in the physical world, they expend **Plasm**. Every **Round** the creature is in the physical realm, it costs them **1 Plasm**. Once the creature's **Plasm** is reduced to 0, they

BKM-97

leave the physical world and return to their home realm, resting until they regain their **Plasm**. Depending on how many **Creature Points** are spent, this resting period can be in **Rounds**, **Hours**, or **Days**, and **Plasm** is regained at a rate equal to the creature's **Will**.

Calculating a creature's **Plasm** is determined in **Step 5**, below.

**Cost:** 8 (Plasm regained in days), 10 (Plasm regained in hours), 12 (Plasm regained in rounds)

### PREHENSILE TAIL

The creature possesses a tail that can grasp and hold objects. A Prehensile Tail grants a +2 to *Acrobatics Tests*. It also allows the creature to grasp and manipulate a small, simple object, like a dagger or club. A Prehensile Tail cannot be used to operate a piece of equipment that requires opposable digits or fine motor control. A creature can "hang" from its Prehensile Tail indefinitely by wrapping it around a larger object, thereby freeing up its other limbs. The Prehensile Tail is not dexterous or strong enough to fire ranged weapons or to make melee attacks. However, it can be used to make **Hug/Squeeze** attacks.

Creatures cannot possess both a Prehensile Tail and the Tail Trait (see below).

**Cost:** 2

### REJUVENATION

The creature is able to heal **Damage** suffered and regrow lost limbs. Creatures with this **Trait** can regain **1d12 Vitality** as an **Action**. Re-growing a missing limb takes **1d12 days**.

**Cost:** 6

### SECOND WIND

The creature can shrug off minor wounds with ease. Once per day the creature can heal itself of a number of points of **Vitality Damage** equal to its **Toughness**.

**Cost:** 1

### SCENT

The creature possesses an acute sense of smell, allowing it to track prey with ease. Creatures with this ability are able to smell an opponent within a 40-foot range. If upwind, the distance is doubled, and if downwind, the distance is halved. The range can be increased for each additional point spent.

**Cost:** 2 +1 Point for each 10-foot increment (maximum of 100 feet)

### SHIFT

Through magical means or by creating a rift or portal, the creature is able to shift its position by 5 feet as an **Action**. Shifting requires a **Will Test**, with **Success** allowing the creature to shift. **Failing** the **Test** means the creature does not shift, and a causes the creature to lose **5 Toughness** or **Taint**.

**Cost:** 4

SIZE

The creature is larger than most. **Size** has a scale starting at 1, progressing up to 12. As a creature gets larger, there is an effect on the creature such that they become stronger and heartier, but slower. In addition, if a creature reaches extremely large sizes, it becomes slower in thought as well, thus suffering **Wits** reductions. The following table shows the effect of **Size**.

**Cost:** 5 for each Size.

SPAWN

The creature is able to create creatures of the same type in some fashion appropriate to its nature. Thus, if a vampire chooses, they can drain a victim of all their blood, killing them, or decide instead to turn them into a vampire. This can be done via a bite, some set of circumstances, or other means detailed in the creature’s description.

**Cost:** 10

SPEED

The creature is extremely fast, giving it the ability to chase down an opponent, or allowing it to have quicker reaction times. Creatures with this **Trait** gain a +1 to their Initiative tests, as well as double their movement.

**Cost:** 4

SPELLCASTER

The creature is able to work magic, and has at least one Spell it is able to perform. Creatures with **Taint** or **Plasm** fuel their spells with either **Taint** or **Plasm**, and not **Toughness**. In the case of Arcane Spells, creatures fuel the Sanity cost with Will.

**Cost:** 8 (Per Common Spell), 10 (Per Arcane Spell)

SIZES		
SIZE	HEIGHT	EFFECT
-6	2"	-6 Brawn, +6 Quickness
-5	4"	-5 Brawn, +5 Quickness
-4	6"	-4 Brawn, +4 Quickness
-3	1'	-3 Brawn, +3 Quickness
-2	2'	-2 Brawn, +2 Quickness
-1	4'	-1 Brawn, +1 Quickness
0	6' (Avg.)	Nil
1	+8'	+1 Brawn
2	+10'	+2 Brawn, +1 Toughness, -1 Quickness
3	+12'	+2 Brawn, +2 Toughness, -2 Quickness, -1 Wits
4	+16'	+3 Brawn, +2 Toughness, -2 Quickness, -1 Wits
5	+20'	+3 Brawn, +3 Toughness, -3 Quickness, -2 Wits
6	+24'	+4 Brawn, +3 Toughness, -3 Quickness, -2 Wits
7	+28'	+4 Brawn, +4 Toughness, -4 Quickness, -3 Wits
8	+32'	+5 Brawn, +4 Toughness, -4 Quickness, -3 Wits
9	+36'	+5 Brawn, +5 Toughness, -5 Quickness, -4 Wits
10	+40'	+6 Brawn, +5 Toughness, -5 Quickness, -4 Wits
11	+44'	+6 Brawn, +6 Toughness, -6 Quickness, -5 Wits
12	+48'	+7 Brawn, +6 Toughness, -6 Quickness, -5 Wits

## SPIRIT ANIMAL

Creatures with this **Trait** gain a +1 bonus to all **Abilities** (**Brawn**, **Quickness**, etc.). They are immune to **Fear**, and will aid all creatures within 10 feet of them by granting a +1 Bonus to all **Fear Tests**.

**Cost:** 8

## STENCH

The creature has a terrible odor. This smell is so powerful that it makes contact with the creature troublesome, and any within hand-to-hand range of the creature suffer a -1 to all tests.

**Cost:** 3 (-1 to all tests), 5 (-2 to all tests), 7 (-3 to all tests), 9 (-4 to all tests), 11 (-5 to all tests), 13 (-6 to all tests)

## STOMP

Creatures with this ability are able to stomp creatures smaller than themselves, and cause damage equal to their **Toughness** × 5 due to their immense size. For example, a creature **Size** 5 and **10 Toughness** is able to do 50 points of damage to any creature smaller than **Size** 5. To have this **Trait**, the creature must also have the **Size Trait** (see above). In addition, **Stomp** can only be used against creatures that are at least **2 Ranks** smaller than the creature in question.

**Cost:** 6

## SWARM

Creatures that **Swarm** are different from individual creatures. The **Brawn** of the creatures in a **Swarm** gives weaker creatures a chance to stand up to tougher creatures. Creatures that **Swarm** have **Vitality**, and in addition, creatures that **Swarm** cause **Damage** based on their numbers; this **Damage** takes into account their normal means of attack and the like.

**Cost:** 4 for every 25 creatures; thus, for a 100-creature Swarm, the cost is 16 Points.

## TAIL

The creature possesses a thick **Tail**. This **Tail** may be fur-covered, slender, whip-like, or scaly like a lizard's. Although the **Tail** improves the creature's balance and can serve as a weapon, it cannot be used for gripping objects. The **Tail** provides a +2 bonus to all *Acrobatics Tests*. A creature that already has the **Prehensile Tail** (see page 249) cannot gain this **Trait**.

**Cost:** 1

### SWARMING CREATURES

# CREATURES	DAMAGE	VITALITY
1-25	1d12 Damage	25
26-50	2d12 Damage	50
51-75	3d12 Damage	75
76-100	4d12 Damage	100

**TAINT**

**Infernal** creatures have **Taint**, which is the evil of the creature that seeps into the natural world. **Taint** fuels the **Infernal** creatures when manifesting in the physical world, and serves as their **Vitality**. Once the creature runs out of **Taint**, it is forced to leave the physical world and return to its native realm where it must “rest” for a number of days equal to its **Will**. In addition, it costs **Taint** to stay in the physical world, and every **Round** an **Infernal** creature must expend **1 Taint** to remain in the physical world.

Calculating a creature’s **Taint** is determined in **Step 5**, below.

**Cost:** 8

**TELEKINESIS**

The creature is able to move objects without touching them, using the power of its mind or personality. The creature is able to move a number of objects equal to its **Will**, and furthermore, the creature can move up to **(Will × 10)** lbs. in weight. This weight can either be one object or a number of objects that equal this total weight. Objects can also be moved a number of feet equal to **Will + d12**; if used as a weapon, an object does Damage equal to the creature’s **Will**.

**Cost:** 9

**THERMAL VISION**

The creature is able to see in the dark due to being able to see various heat sources and the like. This trait cannot be taken with **Night Vision**.

**Cost:** 1

**THICK FUR COAT**

The creature possesses a thick, protective layer of fur over its body. The creature gains a +4 bonus on **Tests** against extreme cold temperatures. In addition, the creature has **AV 5** because of the fur; they cannot take **Natural Armor** due to the Thick Fur Coat.

**Cost:** 1

**UNDEAD**

The creature is **Undead**, and because of this, it is immune to smoke, heat and cold, and cannot die from suffocation. Furthermore, creatures that are **Undead** are immune to **Diseases**, **Poison**, and **Fear**. Since they are already dead, these creatures do not breathe, and are thus immune to drowning. They are not immune to physical attacks, however, and suffer damage normally.

**Cost:** 8



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### UNFATHOMABLE

This ability is a special one, and is not easily defined by any of the other traits. Creatures with this ability have it noted in their written description, where it is explained and the game mechanics are detailed.

**Cost:** Between 1 and 10

### WALL CRAWLER

The creature is able to walk on walls and cling to ceilings like a spider. It has tiny barbs on its hands and feet to facilitate climbing, or its fingers and toes secrete a transparent adhesive that allows the creature to cling to smooth surfaces. As long as the creature's hands and feet are uncovered, it can climb perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surfaces. In addition, the creature gains a +3 bonus on all *Athletics (Climb)* Tests.

**Cost:** 1

### WEAKNESS

The creature has a **Weakness**, whether it is fire, holy water, or even direct sunlight. While in contact with or exposed to its weakness, the creature suffers **Double Damage**.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 1 per weakness

### WEAK IMMUNE SYSTEM (DRAWBACK)

The creature's body is weaker than usual, and it has difficulty preventing infections from entering its system; thus, it is prone to sickness and disease. The creature suffers -2 to all **Toughness Tests** to resist the effects of **Poison**, **Disease**, and **Sickness**.

**Bonus Points Provided:** 1

## WEBBED DIGITS

The creature possesses webbing between its fingers and/or toes, and can move more easily through liquids. The creature gains +3 on all *Athletics (Swim) Tests*. Having webbed digits does not interfere with the creature's ability to grasp or manipulate objects.

**Bonus Point Cost:** 1

## STEP 4: PURCHASE SKILLS WITH SKILL POINTS

As is the case with characters, creatures have **Sills**. **Skills** tend to be along the lines *Brawl, Defend, Dodge* and the like, but it is not uncommon for creatures to have *Stealth, Survival*, and others at your discretion.

## STEP 5: CALCULATE PLASM, TAINT OR VITALITY, AS WELL AS INITIATIVE RATING &amp; ACTIONS

All creatures have **Vitality, Plasm** or **Taint** (see above), as well as **Initiative Rating** and **Actions**. These are calculated in a manner similar to that used to create characters.

## CALCULATING PLASM, TAINT, VITALITY, INITIATIVE RATING &amp; ACTIONS

$$\text{Actions} = \text{Quickness} \div 3$$

$$\text{Plasm} = \text{Will} \times 5$$

$$\text{Taint} = \text{Will} \times 5$$

$$\text{Vitality} = [(\text{Brawn} + \text{Toughness}) \div 2] \times 5$$

$$\text{D12} + [(\text{Quickness} + \text{Wits}) \div 2] \pm \text{modifiers} = \text{Initiative Rating}$$

## STEP 6: ASSIGN HOOKS

Just like with characters, creatures have **Hooks**. **Hooks** for creatures work pretty much the same way as it does for the characters (see page 58 for the rules on **Hooks**). Just like characters, creatures need **Action Points** to invoke their hook, the table on page 196 shows you how many **Action Points** and **Hooks** a creature is able to have depending on their power level.

## STEP 7: RELEASE THE CREATURE INTO THE WILD

Now's the fun part: letting it free to rampage the countryside or city streets! After all, when there's a monster on the loose, your PCs have a chance to make some money by hunting it down—if they survive.

## CREATURES

Unlike the **Threats** found on pages 226-237, the threats found here are creatures. Creatures for the purpose of *Shadow, Sword & Spell* cover both animals as well as what are known as monsters. The creatures found here are ready to run. Their traits are set, and their abilities and skills ready; everything you need is here.

## CREATURE BASICS

Creatures are dangers that those who live in The World, face from time to time, and they offer opportunities and challenges you can use to base adventures. Most creatures want nothing more than to be left alone, so they will only attack when threatened. Some creatures, on the other hand, have evil lurking within their hearts, or hunger in their bellies, and will attack no matter the situation. These evil creatures offer GMs many opportunities to pose challenges to the player characters.

### READING CREATURE ENTRIES

All Creature entries have five parts, and all Creatures follow this same format.

**Name:** The name of the Creature.

**Abilities:** Just like the stats all characters have, Creatures have similar stats.

**Action Points:** The number of Action Points the creature has.

**Hooks:** The hooks the Creature is able to call upon.

**Skills:** Just as with characters, Creatures have Skills as well.

**Traits:** The “powers” that the Creature has. Everything you need for each trait is listed in the entry.

**About:** What the Creature is.



## CREATURES GREAT & SMALL

### INFERNAL

#### DEMONS

Demons are one of the most powerful and vile creatures in existence. They are the embodiment of evil, normally dwelling outside the Natural World on a different dimensional plane. Demons manifest in the Natural World in one of two ways: either through a rift or dimensional portal, or by being summoned. Demons are the embodiments of chaos, randomness, and the elements. There are more demons existing than any catalog could possibly list—for every one known, there are countless unknown awaiting discovery.

#### BÁLEYGR

**B 12, Q 10, T 10, W 11, WI 12, T 60, IR 15, A 3**

**Action Points:** 5

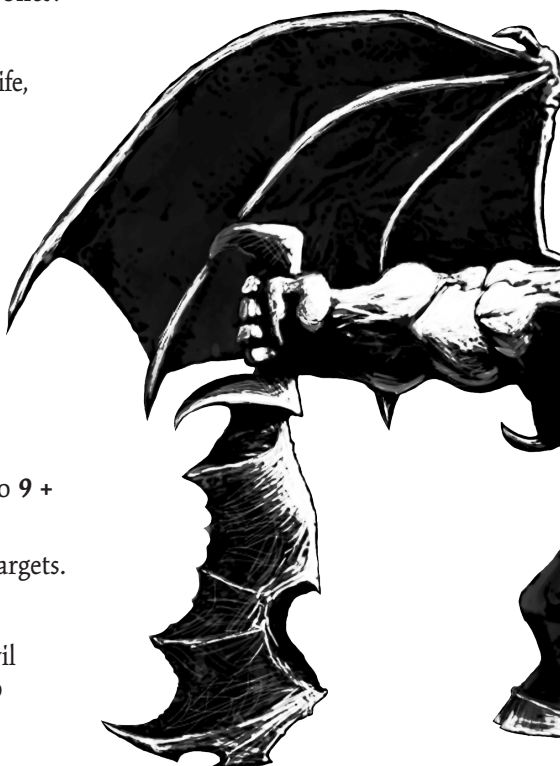
#### Hooks:

- Your petty pleas for mercy will go unanswered.
- Make peace with your gods, puny ones!
- My rage is fueled by my hate.
- You know no peace in your miserable life, nor shall you in your pathetic death.
- You may think you can kill me, but my hate will remake me.

**Skills:** Melee [+8], Resist [+12], *Spell* – *Produce Element* [+11], *Spell* – *Ball*, *Fire* [+7], *Spell* – *Burn* [+7]

#### Traits:

- *Breath – Fire:* **Successful Quickness Test** to hit their target. The range of a Báleygr's flames is 50 feet, and the fires do **9 + Degrees of Success** in damage.
- *Fear* -4: Báleygrs cause **Fear** in its targets.
- *Flight:* Báleygr are able to fly.
- *Infernal:* Báleygrs have an aura of evil requiring all within 10 feet of it to make a **Fear Test**. **Failing** this **Test**, has them feeling uncomfortable, as well as having a desire to get away



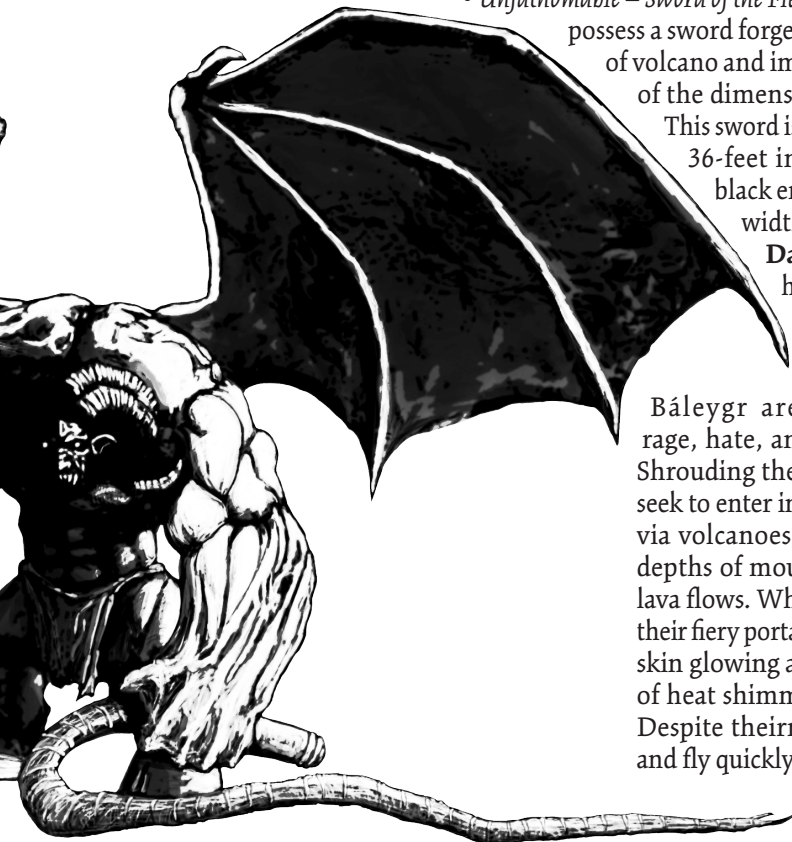
as quickly as possible. Báleygrs are immune to normal weapons, but weapons that have been blessed by a religious figure cause them double damage.

- *Insubstantial*: **Insubstantial** is the ability allowing Báleygrs to shift their body from a solid state to a gaseous state. In this state, all physical attacks pass through harmlessly, causing no damage. In addition, while in this state, the Báleygr is unable to make any physical attacks.
- *Manifest*: Báleygrs are able to enter into the physical world and allows them to make physical attacks.
- *Size* +5
- *Spellcaster*: Báleygrs can work magic, and fuel their spells, both *Common* and *Arcane*, with **Taint**.
- *Taint*: Báleygrs have **Taint**, which is the evil radiating off it that seeps into the natural world. **Taint** fuels the Báleygrs when manifesting into the physical world, as well as acts as their **Vitality**. Once a Báleygr runs out of **Taint**, they are forced to leave the physical world and return to their native plane where they must “rest” for a number of days equal to their **Will**. In addition, it costs **Taint** to stay in the physical world, and every **Round** an Báleygr must expend **1 Taint** to stay fixed in the physical world.

- *Unfathomable – Sword of the Fiery Depths*: All Báleygr possess a sword forged from the very heart of volcano and imbued with the power of the dimension they came from.

This sword is massive in size, some 36-feet in length, and with a black ember blade of 8 feet in width. The sword does **18 Damage** to anything it hits, as well as instantly ignites.

Báleygr are demons of pure rage, hate, and fiery destruction. Shrouding themselves in fire they seek to enter into the physical world via volcanoes, lava vents, and the depths of mountains connected to lava flows. When they emerge from their fiery portals they stand tall, with skin glowing as magma, and waves of heat shimmering around them. Despite their size, Báleygr move and fly quickly.



## OTHERWORLDLY

### ELEMENTALS

Most of the inhabitants of The World do not realize that life is made up of a combination of elements. All life is a balance between these five elements, and all life is made up of them. Wizards, especially those who live in decaying, decadent Atlantis, know the means of summoning Elementals, which are the physical embodiment of the elements. Elementals are not native to the physical world, but spirits native to different dimensions.

#### AIR ELEMENTAL — SYLPH

**B 7, Q 15, T 7, W 7, Wl 12, P 60, IR 11, A 5**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- You cannot so much as stop me, as you can the wind.
- The wind you feel deep within your soul is my hate.
- Come, come into my embrace and let the gentle wind sooth you.

**Skills:** Brawl [+9], Dodge [+12], Resist [+13], Sense [+13]

**Traits:**

- *Flight:* Sylphs are able to fly through the use of their wings.
- *Immunity – Earth:* Sylphs suffer no damage when coming into contact with the element of earth.
- *Insubstantial:* Sylphs can shift their body from a solid state to a gaseous state. In this state, all physical attacks pass through them harmlessly, causing no damage. In addition, while in this state, the sylph is unable to make any physical attacks.
- *Invisibility:* Sylphs have the ability to become **Invisible**, and gain a +2 to their **Initiative** and are at a -4 to be hit. They can stay **Invisible** a number of **Rounds** equal their **Will**.
- *Manifest:* The creature is able to enter into the physical world and allows **Insubstantial** creatures to make physical attacks.
- *Plasm:* The sylph is able to tap into a source of power outside the scope of men, that fuels its abilities. This power, once drained, ends the sylph's hold and ties to the physical world, and it must rest to regain more **Plasm**. When sylphs manifest in the physical world,



they expend **Plasm**. Every **Round** the sylph is in the physical realm, it costs them **1 Plasm**. Once the sylph's **Plasm** is reduced to 0, they are forced to leave the physical realm and return to their home realm, and rest while they regain their **Plasm**. Sylphs regain **Plasm** in a number of **Rounds** equal to their **Will**.

- *Shift*: By creating a rift, a sylph is able to **Shift** its position by 5 feet as an **Action**. Shifting requires a **Will Test**, with **success** allowing the sylph to shift. **Failing** the **Test** means the Sylph does not **Shift**.
- *Speed*: The sylph is extremely fast, giving it the ability to chase down an opponent, or allowing it to have quicker reaction times. Sylphs gain a **+1** to **Initiative Tests**, as well as double their movement.
- *Telekinesis*: Sylphs able to move objects without touching them, using the power of its mind or personality. They are able to move a number of objects equal to their **Will**, and furthermore, they can move up to their **Will** times 10 lbs. in weight. This weight can either be one object or a number of objects that equal this weight. Objects can also be moved a number of feet equal to **Toughness + d12**; if used as a weapon, an object does **Damage** equal to the sylph's **Will**.
- *Weakness – Fire*: The sylph has a weakness against fire. When in contact with or exposed to fire, the sylph suffers double damage.

No one, not even the most ancient of wizards, has ever seen a Sylph. They appear as shimmering forms in the air, and their touch, depending on their mood, is as soft as a summer breeze, or as violent as a winter storm.

#### EARTH ELEMENTAL — GNOME

**B 10, Q 7, T 15, W 4, WI 10, P 50, IR 9, A 2**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- The earth is my home, and soon it will be your grave.
- My strength is from the earth, and from it I will not fail.
- Listen, can you hear that? That is the sound of your doom.

**Skills:** Bargain [+10], Brawl [+11], Craft (Stonework) [+9], Empathy [+12]

**Traits:**

- *Fear -3*: Gnomes cause **Fear** in their targets. The **Fear** modifier is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Hug*: This ability allows a gnome to damage an opponent by squeezing or hugging them (either by enfolding in its arms, coiling around them with its body, or any other physical means it can use to squeeze them). In order to use this ability, the gnome must make a **Successful Brawl Test** to grab its opponent. Those trapped can try to break out by making a **Successful Brawn Test**. For every round trapped in the hug, the opponent suffers a cumulative -1 to the **Test**. For example, if the opponent has been in the hug for **3 Rounds** they

suffer a **-3** to the **Test**. The **Damage** from this ability is equal to the gnome's **Brawn + Toughness**.

- *Immunity – Fire and Heat*: Gnomes suffer no damage when they come into contact with fire, flames and/or heat.
- *Manifest*: Gnomes able to enter into the physical world and are able to make physical attacks.
- *Natural Armor [AV10]*: a gnome's skin resembles rock.
- *Plasm*: The gnome is able to tap into a source of power outside the scope of men, that fuels its abilities. This power, once drained, ends the gnome's hold and ties to the physical world, and it must rest to regain more **Plasm**. When gnomes manifest in the physical world, they expend **Plasm**. Every **Round** the gnome is in the physical realm, it costs them **1 Plasm**. Once the gnome's **Plasm** is reduced to 0, they are forced to leave the physical realm and return to their home realm, and rest while they regain their **Plasm**. Gnome regain **Plasm** in a number of **Rounds** equal to their **Will**.
- *Size (-1)*
- *Weakness, Water and Cold*: Gnomes suffer **double Damage** from water and cold.
- *Unfathomable (Elemental Movement)*: Gnomes are able to move through earth as easily as a person moves on the ground.

Small in build and possessing a stone like skin, gnomes resemble statues when first encountered. Do not let this fool you, they are stronger than they look.

#### FIRE ELEMENTAL — SALAMANDER

**B 4, Q 18, T 4, W 7, WI 12, P 60, IR 9, A 6**

**Action Points:** 3

#### Hooks:

- The flame of my rage shall punish you.
- My spite is the furnace which feeds my inner fire.
- Fire is my mistress, and I am her lover.

**Skills:** Brawl [+10], Dodge [+8], Resist [+10], Sense [+10]

#### Traits:

- *Cold Susceptibility*: The salamander's body does not react well to particularly cold temperatures. Salamanders take **double Damage** from prolonged exposure to extreme cold, as well as weapons, spells and the like.
- *Control – Flames and Heat*: Salamanders are able to control flames and heat. To use this ability the salamander must make a **Will Test**, with **Success** indicating they **successfully** control either flame or heat. Controlling flames allows the salamander to will a flame, fire, or other open fire to flare, move, and even extinguish. To use flames as a weapon, they must make a **successful Quickness**

**Test**, with success having them hit their indented target for **1d12 + Degrees of Success** in damage. The range of this is equal to the salamander's **Will + 5** feet. A salamander also has the ability to make a 10-foot radius centered on them unbearably hot: while within the radius of this heat anyone suffers **10 + Will in Damage**. The duration of this control is equal to half the Salamander's **Will** and the range is equal to its **Will × 5 feet**.

- *Immunity – Fire*: Salamanders suffer no **Damage** when they come into contact with flames, fire, or heat.
- *Manifest*: Salamanders able to enter into the physical world and are able to make physical attacks.
- *Poison*: The salamander's touch is poisonous. Those touching, or attacked, need to make a **Toughness Test**. **Failure** has them suffer **10 Damage**, and an additional **5 Damage** for **10 Rounds**.
- *Plasm*: The salamander is able to tap into a source of power outside the scope of men, that fuels its abilities. This power, once drained, ends the salamander's hold and ties to the physical world, and it must rest to regain more **Plasm**. When salamanders manifest in the physical world, they expend **Plasm**. Every **Round** the salamander is in the physical realm, it costs them **1 Plasm**. Once the salamander's **Plasm** is reduced to 0, they are forced to leave the physical realm and return to their home realm, and rest while they regain their **Plasm**. Salamanders regain **Plasm** in a number of **Rounds** equal to their **Will**.
- *Size (-2)*
- *Unfathomable (Extinguish)*: The salamander is able to extinguish any flames that they touch.
- *Weakness - Water*: The salamander has a weakness to water. When in contact with or exposed to water, the salamander suffers **Double Damage**.

No longer than 2 feet in length, Salamanders have the body of a lizard and the face of an old bearded man.

#### ETHER ELEMENTAL — WILL-O'-WISP

**B 1, Q 17, Toughness 1, W 12, WI 12, P 60, IR 14, A 5**

**Skills**: Dodge [+10], Lore [+12], Resist [+10], Sense [+14]

**Action Points**: 3

**Hooks**:

- Follow my light.
- The glow of my inner strengthen will feed on your magic.
- You should have walked away.

**Traits**:

- *Breath – Magic Energy*: [**10 + Degrees of Success Damage**, R 50, ROF 1/1]

- *Drain* — **Sanity**: Touching the target drains **1 Sanity** per a number **Rounds** equal to **Degrees of Success**.
- *Flight*: The will-o'-wisp is able to fly due to its being made out of energy.
- *Hypersensitivity*: The will-o'-wisp is particularly sensitive to its surroundings, and gains a **+2 bonus** on *Investigation* and *Observe Tests*.
- *Immunity* — *Air and Water*: Will-o'-wisps suffer no damage when coming into contact with air and water, and are **immune** to attacks made with these two elements.
- *Insubstantial*: Will-o'-wisps are able to shift their body from a solid state to a ghostly state. In this state, all physical attacks pass through them, causing **no Damage**. In addition, while in this state, they are unable to make any physical attacks.
- *Manifest*: Will-o'-wisps can enter into the physical world and allows insubstantial creatures to make physical attacks.
- *Plasm*: The will-o'-wisp is able to tap into a source of power outside the scope of men, that fuels its abilities. This power, once drained, ends the will-o'-wisp's hold and ties to the physical world, and it must rest to regain more **Plasm**. When will-o'-wisps manifest in the physical world, they expend **Plasm**. Every **Round** the will-o'-wisp is in the physical realm, it costs them **1 Plasm**. Once the will-o'-wisp's **Plasm** is reduced to 0, they are forced to leave the physical realm and return to their home realm, and rest while they regain their **Plasm**. Will-o'-wisp regain **Plasm** in a number of **Rounds** equal to their **Will**.
- *Shift*: By creating a rift, will-o'-wisps are able to shift their position by 5 feet as an **Action**. Shifting requires a **Will Test**, with **success** allowing the creature to shift. **Failing** the **Test** will-o'-wisp does not shift.



- *Weakness – Earth and Fire:* The will-o'-wisps has a weakness to earth, as well as fire. When in contact with or exposed to its weaknesses, will-o'-wisps suffer **Double Damage**.

Unknown to many, magic is an element. It is as fundamental to life as are earth, fire, air, and water. Though sorcerers are able to work magic, many do not realize how fundamental it is in nature. Will-o'-Wisps appear as balls of light that float in the air, and dart around in a rapid, seemingly haphazard way. Typically white, their colors change depending on their emotional state.

#### WATER ELEMENTAL — UNDINES

**B 5, Q 18, T 4, W 9, Wl 10, P 50, IR 13, A 6**

**Action Points:** 3

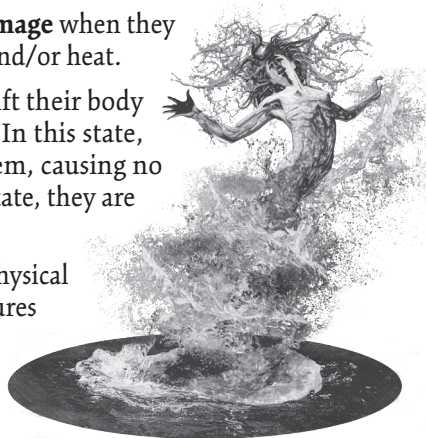
#### Hooks:

- These are no gentle waters.
- Let these waves overcome you and bring you to the depths.
- Secrets lurk deep in the dark depths of the fathomless depths.

**Skills:** Athletics [+9], Brawl [+6], Diplomacy [+9], Performance [+11]

#### Traits:

- *Control – Men:* The undine is able to control people, and they must make a **Will Test**, with **Success** indicating that it successfully controls the person in question. The number of people the undine can control is equal to its **Will**. The duration is equal to half the Undine's Will, and the range is equal to the Undine's **Will** × 5 in feet.
- *Gills:* Undines possess a set of gills allowing them to draw oxygen out of water. The gills appear on the undine's neck. Consequently, the undine can breathe both in and out of water, and never has to worry about the possibility of drowning.
- *Immune – Fire:* Undines suffer no **Damage** when they come into contact with fire, flames, and/or heat.
- *Insubstantial:* Undines are able to shift their body from a solid state to a ghostly state. In this state, all physical attacks pass through them, causing no **Damage**. In addition, while in this state, they are unable to make any physical attacks.
- *Manifest:* Undines can enter into the physical world and allows insubstantial creatures to make physical attacks.
- *Plasm:* The undine is able to tap into a source of power outside the scope of men, that fuels its abilities. This power,



once drained, ends the undine's hold and ties to the physical world, and it must rest to regain more **Plasm**. When undine manifest in the physical world, they expend **Plasm**. Every **Round** the undine is in the physical realm, it costs them **1 Plasm**. Once the undine's **Plasm** is reduced to 0, they are forced to leave the physical realm and return to their home realm, and rest while they regain their **Plasm**. Undine regain **Plasm** in a number of **Rounds** equal to their **Will**.

- *Weakness – Earth:* The undine has a weakness, earth. When in contact with or exposed to their weakness, undines suffer double damage and might be unable to act.

The beauties of the water, undines are typically found in forest pools and waterfalls, but they are also sometimes found in tidal pools and the like. Possessing beautiful voices, which are sometimes heard over the sound of the water, undines seek men to control as well as prey upon.

## NATURAL

### BASILISK

**B 9, Q 10, T 8, W 7, Wl 11, Vit 40, IR 8, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- Advert the eyes, for it will be the last thing you see.
- That is no lizard.
- Hisssssssss...

**Skills:** Brawl [+8], Dodge [+8]

**Traits:**

- *Breath:* Fire [DV 2(30), R 5/15/30, ROF 1/1]



- *Claws*: Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Fierce*: The basilisk is naturally aggressive, and tends to become angry when threatened. The basilisk must make a **Will Test** once it takes damage. If the **test** is **failed**, the basilisk becomes enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily raised by **2 points** each, and its **Vitality** is temporarily increased by **15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are for reduced by **2 points**. The fierce state lasts **1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the basilisk is **immune** to all **Fear Tests**, and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the Fierce state passes, the basilisk's abilities return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.
- *Fear -4*: The basilisk is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear** modifier is applied to a target's **Will Test** when making a **Fear Test**.
- *Gaze*: R 50', ROF 1/1, on a successful hit target must make a **Toughness Test**, with **failure** resulting in their being paralyzed for 1 day.
- *Moan – Hiss*: Effective only against animals, any animal within a 50-foot radius of the basilisk must make a **Toughness Test**, with **failure** causing them to lose half their **Vitality**.
- *Weakness – Weasels*: A weasel's attacks on the basilisk cause **double damage**.

The basilisk looks like a lizard. A fierce creature, it is a danger to all life, and has been known to attack with no regard for itself or its surroundings. Like the scorpion, it prefers dry places, and thus they are native to The Shimmering Sands. Though some think this creature is able to turn a person to stone, that is just a myth. A Basilisk is hatched from a cock's egg—a rare occurrence—and they are susceptible to the attacks of weasels.

## BAT

**B 1, Q 7, T 1, W 3, WI 3, Vit 5, IR 5, A 2**

**Action Points: 2**

### Hooks:

- Child of the night.
- On darken wing it flies.
- The flutter of night's dark shadow.

**Skills**: Brawl [+7], Observe [+5], Stealth [+6]

### Traits:

- *Size (-3)*: 1 foot long.
- *Swarm*: Swarms of bats inflict damage based on their numbers; this damage takes into account biting and the like. The damage for bats is as follows: 1-25 bats **1d12 Damage**, 26-50 bats **2d12 Damage**, 51-75 bats **3d12 Damage** and 76-100 bats **4d12 Damage**.

Bats are nocturnal creatures that many link to the supernatural. They are seen as creatures that desire blood, and many consider their appearance to be a sign that the supernatural is nearby.

**BEAR****B 6, Q 6, T 6, W 3, Wl 4, Vit 30, IR 4, A 2****Action Points:** 3**Hooks:**

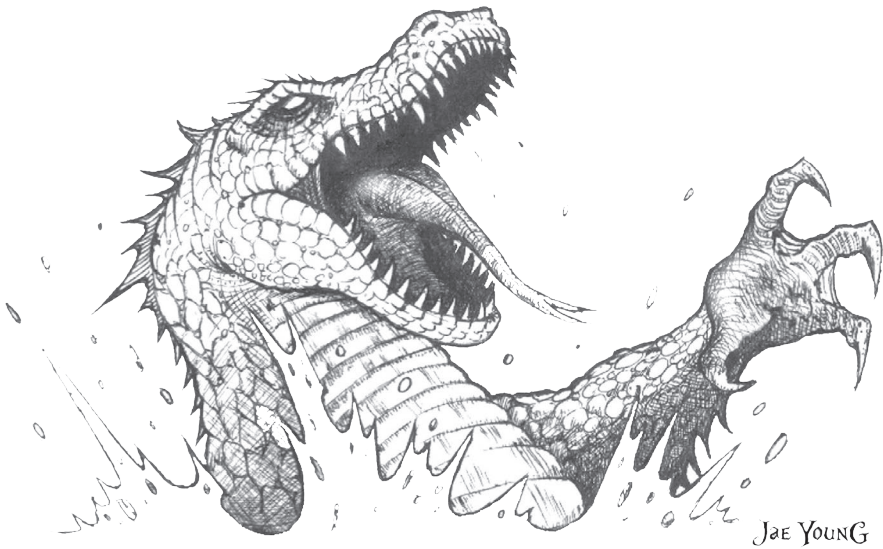
- This. Is. My. Territory!
- The roar of your doom.
- Faster than I appear.

**Skills:** Brawl [+8], Observe [+4], Survival [+7]**Traits:**

- *Bite:* Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Claws:* Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Hug:* In order to use this ability, the bear must make a **successful Brawl Test** to grab its opponent. Those trapped can try to break out by making a **successful Brawn Test**. For every round trapped in the bear's hug, the victim suffers a cumulative **-1** to the **Test**. For example, if the opponent has been in the bear hug for **3 Rounds**, he would suffer a **-3** to the **Test**. The **Damage** from this ability is equal to the bear's **Brawn + Toughness**.
- *Scent:* Bears are able to smell an opponent within 60 feet, 120 feet upwind, and 30 feet downwind.
- *Size (+1):* 8 feet long.

Native to the wilds and the northern portions of The World, bears are ferocious and the most dangerous of creatures found in the wild. Many bears have killed unsuspecting warriors, trackers, and travelers who underestimate the speed of a creature this size.





### BOAR CROC

**B 15, Q 10, T 15, W 8, Wl 12, Vit 65, IR 9, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

#### Hooks:

- A creature from a time long past.
- The bite is not the only thing to be feared.
- You need to do better to get through that hide.
- This must be a creature born from the Infernal Realms.

**Skills:** Athletics [+12], Brawl [+12]

#### Traits:

- **Bite:** Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- **Fear -3:** The boar croc is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear** modifier is applied to a target's **Will Test** when making a **Fear Test**.
- **Fierce:** The boar croc is naturally aggressive, and becomes angry when threatened. They must make a **Will Test** once they take **damage**. If the **Test** is **failed**, they become enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily raised by **2 points each**, and its **Vitality** is temporarily **increased** by **15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily reduced by **2 points each**. **Fierce** lasts for **1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the boar croc is **immune** to all **Fear**, and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the **fierce** state passes, the boar croc's abilities return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.

- *Head Butt*: The boar croc's skull is thick, allowing it to use its head as an effective weapon. The **damage** a head butt causes is equal to its **Toughness**.
- *Natural Armor*: Their thick hide gives them **AV 5**.
- *Size (+5)*: 20 feet long.

The boar croc is native to the Jungles of Moarn, as well as other tropical areas. Nearly 20 feet in length, it attacks from its hind legs. It has an armored snout filled with three sets of dagger-like teeth, and three tusks jut out above and below the creature's jaw.

### CAT, LARGE

**B 3, Q 6, T 3, Wits 3, Will 4, Vit 15, IR 4, A 2**

**Action Points: 2**

### Hooks:

- I might not be as large as others, but my teeth and claws kill just the same.
- All shall bow to their queen.
- I am no simple cat.

**Skills:** Brawl [+10], Observe [+5], Stealth [+8]

### Traits:

- *Bite*: Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Claws*: Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Night Vision*: Cats are able to see in the dark as easily as it sees in full daylight, and ignores all penalties while fighting in the dark.

Large cats include cougars, mountain lions, and other big cats that can be found throughout The World. These cats tend to keep to themselves, and hunt in areas devoid of a human presence.



**CAT, SMALL****Brawn 1, Quickness 4, Toughness 1, Wits 2, Will 3, Resolve 10, Vitality 5****Skills:** Brawl [+3], Stealth [+5], Observe [+4]**Action Points:** 1**Hooks:**

- I carry within me a heart of a lion.
- I choose when I want to acknowledge you.

**Traits:**

- *Bite:* Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Claws:* Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Night Vision:* Cats are able to see in the dark as easily as it sees in full daylight, and ignores all penalties while fighting in the dark.



Small cats are a common sight among the farms in rural areas and houses in the urban parts of The World. Cats serve an important role by keeping mice and rats under control. Black cats, however, are seen as creatures of evil and the tools of sorcerers.

**CHIMAERA****B 10, Q 11, T 11, W 4, WL 9, Vit 50, IR 7, A 3****Action Points:** 3**Hooks:**

- This is what happens when you work forbidden lore.
- I have many ways to kill you.
- No creature like this should exist.
- An affront to everything natural.

**Skills:** Brawl [+11]**Traits:**

- *Bite:* Bite does d12+**Brawn** bonus damage.
- *Breath – Fire:* [DV 10, R 10/15/20, ROF 1/1]
- *Claws:* Claws do d12+Quickness bonus **Damage**.
- *Fear -3:* The chimaera is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier**



is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.

- *Fierce*: The chimaera is naturally aggressive and angry when threatened. The chimaera must make a **Will Test** once it takes damage. If the **test** is **failed**, the chimaera becomes enraged. As a result its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily raised by **2 points** each, and its **Vitality** is temporarily increased by **15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily reduced by **2 points each**. *Fierce* lasts for **1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the chimaera is **immune** to all **Fear Tests** and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the *Fierce* state passes, the chimaera's **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.

With the head of a lion, a goat's body, and a serpent's tail and horned head, the chimaera is a female monster that alchemists have been known to create. These monsters are thankfully rare. However, rumors persist that these creatures abound in Nipur, roaming freely and devouring all they encounter.

### DEEP ONE

**B 8, Q 9, T 7, W 5, Wl 6, Vt 35, IR 7, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

#### Hooks:

- A creature from the depths of your nightmares.
- The sea holds many mysteries, this is just one.
- Welcome to my waters, you will not enjoy your stay.

**Skills:** Athletics [+9], Brawl [+9], Defend [+7], Melee [+9]

#### Traits:

- *Bite*: Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Claws*: Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Fear -1*: Deep Ones are able to cause **Fear** in their targets. The **Fear** modifier is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Fierce*: Deep Ones are naturally aggressive and becomes angry when threatened. Deep Ones must make a **Will Test** once they takes damage. If the **Test** is **failed**, the Deep One becomes enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily **raised** by **2 points each**, and its **Vitality** is temporarily **increased** by **15 points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily **reduced** by **2 points each**. *Fierce* lasts for **1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, Deep Ones are immune to all **Fear Tests** and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the *Fierce* state passes, the Deep One's **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.
- *Gills*: The Deep Ones possess a set of gills allowing them to draw oxygen out of water. The gills appear on their necks, chests, or backs (near the windpipe or lungs). Consequently, the Deep Ones can breathe both in and out of water,



and never have to worry about the possibility of drowning.

- *Horrific Visage:* Deep Ones have a terrifying appearance, and those looking upon them are struck with fear that shakes their resolve. This Trait is always “on,” meaning that whenever a character comes into contact with a Deep One, they are affected by the creature’s appearance. The effect of this Horrific Visage is such that the character must make a **Will Test**, with **Failure** causing them to lose **1 Sanity**.

Grayish-green in color, Deep Ones dwell in the seas, where they worship their dark gods, and terrorize all those who live along the shoreline. Human in size, their heads resemble that of a fish, with giant, bulging eyes that protrude from the sides of their heads.

#### DINOSAUR, SMALL – RAPTOR

**Brawn 4, Quickness 10, Toughness 4, Wits 5, Will 2, Vitality 20, IR 7, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- One is tough, many brings your death.
- That rustle is the sound of your approaching doom.
- There is no escape.

**Skills:** Athletics [+6], Brawl [+10], Tactics [+10]

**Traits:**

- *Bite:* Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Claws:* Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Scent:* Raptors possess an acute sense of smell, allowing them to track prey with ease. These creatures are able to smell an opponent within an 80-foot range. If upwind, the distance is 160 feet, and if downwind, the distance is 40 feet.
- *Size (1):* The small dinosaurs average 7 feet in length.
- *Unfathomable – Pack Hunting:* When 3 or more raptors hunt together, they all gain a bonus to their attacks due to their ability to hunt in packs. This bonus depends on the number of raptors; for every three Raptors, there is a **+1 cumulative bonus** to the **TN**. Thus, if there are 9 Raptors hunting together, they gain a **+3 TN** bonus to attacks.

Standing at just 2 feet in height, raptors are 7 feet long. Smaller dinosaurs, they are covered in feathers that range in color from deep brown to pale green. More cunning than most dinosaurs, raptors are often found in packs of three or more.

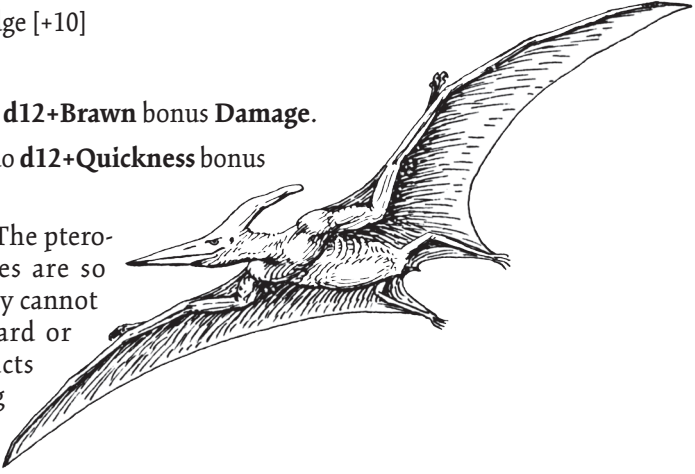


**DINOSAUR, MEDIUM – PTERODACTYL****Brawn 4, Quickness 10, Toughness 4, Wits 3, Will 4, Vitality 25, IR 6, A 3****Action Points:** 3**Hooks:**

- Death glides upon the wind.
- These are the jaws that shall grind your life.
- Graceful in fight and graceful in hunting you.

**Skills:** Brawl [+8], Dodge [+10]**Traits:**

- *Bite:* Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Claws:* Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Brittle Bones:* The pterodactyl's bones are so weak that they cannot withstand hard or sudden impacts (falling, being struck by blunt weapons and the like). The creature also takes an additional 1d12 points of **Damage** from any fall greater than 10 feet in height.
- *Glider:* The Pterodactyl has fleshy flaps that allow it to glide on wind currents. They may glide through the air as though flying, but only while descending in altitude. For every 20 feet in altitude that it descends, the pterodactyl may move 80 feet horizontally. Thus, if it leaps off a 40-foot tall structure, it may glide horizontally for 240 feet.
- *Size (1):* Standing at 6 feet in height, but has a 25-foot wingspan.



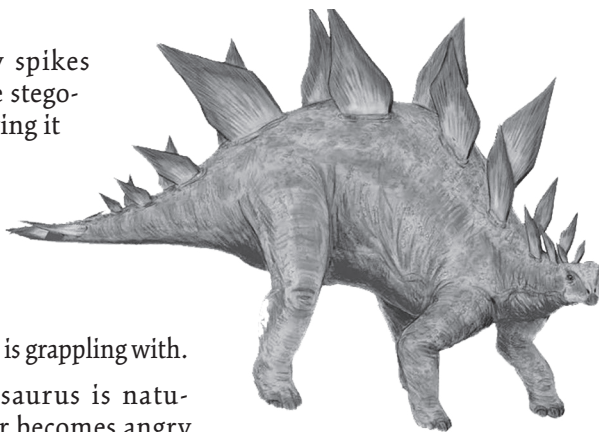
With long bills filled with sharp teeth, pterodactyls are one of the few dinosaurs able to fly. Their ability to fly is more akin to launching off and gliding on wind currents. Because of this, they tend to land and dwell on cliffs and other high places.

**DINOSAUR, LARGE – STEGOSAURUS****Brawn 9, Quickness 4, Toughness 12, Wits 4, Will 6, Vitality 50, IR 4, A 1****Action Points:** 3**Hooks:**

- Do not mistake docile as safe.
- I shall impale you upon my spurs.
- Fighting me, shall cost you your life.

**Skills:** Brawl [+11], Defend [+10], Observe [+9]**Traits:**

- *Bite*: Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Bony Spurs*: Bony spikes protrude from the stegosaurus's joints, giving it a jagged profile and making it dangerous to grapple. The spurs can do **1 DV** attack to anyone the creature is grappling with.
- *Fierce*: The stegosaurus is naturally aggressive, or becomes angry when threatened. Creatures with this ability must make a **Will Test** once they take damage. If the **Test** is failed, they become enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily raised by **2 points each**, and its **Vitality** is temporarily **increased by 15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily **lowered by 2 points each**. **Fierce** lasts for **1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the creature is immune to all Fear and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the **Fierce** state passes, the creature's **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.
- *Horns*: The Stegosaurus has a set of horns that it can use as a weapon. The **damage** caused by these horns is **Brawn+1**.
- *Natural Armor*: The stegosaurus tough hide gives it an **AV 15**.
- *Size (3)*: The Stegosaurus stands 14 feet in height, and averages about 30 feet in length.



Standing 14 feet tall and 30 feet long, the stegosaurus is covered in bony armor, as well as having spurs that race down its spine. A short, squat dinosaur that, despite its fierce appearance, is usually slow to anger and very docile.

## DINOSAUR, LARGE – TYRANNOSAURS

**Brawn 12, Quickness 12, Toughness 11, Wits 4, Will 10, Vitality 55, IR 13, A 4****Action Points: 3****Hooks:**

- Faster than I look.
- Now you shall see why many fear me.
- These jaws bring your doom.
- The more you harm me, the closer you come to your death.

**Skills:** Athletics [+12], Brawl [+15], Intimidation [+11]**Traits:**

- *Bite:* d12+Brawn bonus damage.
- *Fierce:* Tyrannosaurs are naturally aggressive, or becomes angry when threatened. Creatures with this ability must make a **Will Test** once they take damage. If the **Test** is **failed**, the creature becomes enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily **raised by 2 points each**, and its **Vitality** is temporarily **increased by 15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily **lowered by 2 points each**. *Fierce* lasts for **1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the creature is immune to all **Fear** and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the *Fierce* state passes, the creature's **Abilities** return to normal.
- *Scent:* The tyrannosaurus possesses an acute sense of smell, allowing it to track prey with ease. The tyrannosaurus can smell an opponent within a 90-foot range. If upwind, the distance is 180 feet, and if downwind, the distance is 45 feet.
- *Second Wind:* The tyrannosaur can shrug off minor wounds. **Once per day**, the creature can **heal** itself of a number of points of **Vitality damage** equal to its **Toughness** score.
- *Size (3):* The tyrannosaur stands 14 feet in height and averages about 30 feet in length.

Standing at 14 feet tall, the tyrannosaur is 42 feet long from the tip of its nose to tail. Extremely aggressive creatures, tyrannosaurs are powerful in both jaws and legs, and can easily run down their prey, and then grab it in their powerful jaws. Though equipped with poor sense of vision, they have a great sense of smell.





### DINOSAUR, GIANT – APATOSAURUS

**Brawn 16, Quickness 3, Toughness 16, Wits 2, Will 10, Vitality 80, IR 2, A 1**

**Action Points:** 3

#### Hooks:

- The size is a hindrance.
- Size has its advantages.
- I can see for miles.
- Only I can see the unseen.

**Skills:** Brawl [+16], Intimidation [+10]

#### Traits:

- *Bite*: Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Kick*: Damage is equal to its Brawn +2.
- *Size (4)*: Though 15 feet in height, these dinosaurs average close to 85 feet in length.
- *Stomp*: The apatosaurus is able to stomp creatures smaller than itself, and this causes damage equal to its **Toughness x 5** due to their immense size. In addition, this Trait can only be used against creatures that are at least 2 Size scores smaller than itself.

Though only 15 feet tall, the apatosaurus is one of the longest dinosaurs known, measuring in at 85 feet in length. Large and slow, they are herbivores that live near lakes and swamps, where their long necks allows them to feed on the water bottom as well as grass along the water's edge.

## DOG

**Brawn 2, Quickness 4, Toughness 2, Wits 2, Will 5, Vitality 10, IR 4, A 1**

**Action Points:** 2

**Hooks:**

- Loyal through hardship.
- The bite is as worse then its' bark.
- The heart of wolf.

**Skills:** Brawl [+6], Observe [+4]

**Traits:**

- *Bite:* Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Scent:* Dogs are able to smell an opponent within 40 feet, 80 feet downwind, and 20 feet upwind.

Whether as a hunting dog, or a watchdog, dogs are found in many parts of The World, and serve as constant companions to many.

## GORILLA

**Brawn 11, Quickness 7, Toughness 10, Wits 7, Will 10, Vitality 80, IR 7, A 2**

**Action Points:** 3

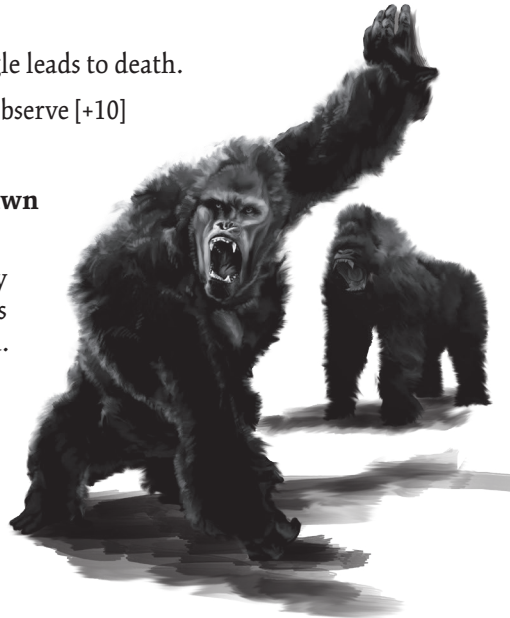
**Hooks:**

- I am the king of this jungle.
- The howl you hear are the sounds of all who fear me.
- I will kill you.
- Intruding within my jungle leads to death.

**Skills:** Athletics [+9], Brawl [+10], Observe [+10]

**Traits:**

- *Bite:* Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Fierce:* The gorilla is naturally aggressive, and becomes angry when threatened. They must make a **Will Test** once taking damage, and if the **Test** is **failed**, they become enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily **raised by**



**2 points each**, and its **Vitality** is temporarily **increased by 15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily **reduced by 2 points each**. Fierce **lasts for 1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the creature is **immune to all Fear** and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the Fierce state passes, the creature's **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.

- *Hug*: In order to use this ability, the gorilla must make a successful *Brawl Test* to grab its opponent. Those trapped can try to break free by making a successful **Brawn Test**. For every **Round** trapped in the hug of the gorilla, the opponent suffers a **cumulative -1 to the Test**. For example, if the opponent has been in the gorilla hug for 3 Rounds, he would suffer a -3 to the Test. The **damage** from this ability is **equal** to the creature's **Brawn + Toughness**.

Though many types of apes and monkeys can be found in The World, the gorilla stands above and rules over all. Though close to 6 feet in height, these animals are massive in girth, and extremely volatile in temper.

## HOMUNCULUS

**Brawn 4, Quickness 10, Toughness 4, Wits 4, Will 7, Vitality 20, IR 7, A 3**

**Action Points: 3**

### Hooks:

- Spawned from a nightmare.
- On leather wings I fly.
- A part of me is with you.

**Skills:** Brawl [+7], Dodge [+11], Empathy [+8], Resist [+6], Sense [+6]

### Traits:

- *Claws*: Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Drain*: The touch of the homunculus **drains Vitality equal to Will**.
- *Fear -2*: Able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Flight*: The homunculus is able to fly because of its rather ugly wings.
- *Horrific Visage*: The homunculus has a terrifying appearance, and those looking upon it are struck with fear that shakes their resolve. This Trait is always "on," meaning that whenever a character comes into contact with a homunculus, they are affected by the creature's appearance. The effect of this Horrific Visage is such that the character must make a **Will Test**, with **Failure** causing them to **lose 1 Sanity**.
- *Size (-2)*: Homunculi are no more than 2 feet tall.
- *Unfathomable (Transference)*: A homunculus is able to give **Vitality equal to its Will** to the Alchemist who created it.



Resembling a small baby, with bat-like wings and a face that looks as if it was fashioned from melted wax, the homunculus is an Alchemical creation, only coming to life through the skill of an Alchemist.

## HORSE

**Brawn 6, Quickness 6, Toughness 6, Wits 2, Will 5, Vitality 40, IR 4, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- On iron shod hooves I run.
- I can carry your burden.
- Temperamental is an understatement.

**Skills:** Athletics [+9], Brawl [+9]

**Traits:**

- *Bite:* **d12+Brawn bonus damage.**
- *Kick:* Kicking damage is equal to Brawn +2.

The horse is the predominant form of transportation in The World. Therefore, not only are they very important to the livelihood of many, but they are found virtually everywhere.

## LION

**Brawn 10, Quickness 11, Toughness 10, Wits 6, Will 12, Vitality 50, IR 8, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- The king of all that I see.
- My roar announces my hunt.
- Claws of iron and teeth of steel.
- Do not challenge me.

**Skills:** Brawl [+12], Stealth [+10], Track [+12], Survival [+8]

**Traits:**

- *Bite:* **d12+Brawn modifier bonus damage.**
- *Claws:* **d12+Quickness modifier bonus damage.**
- *Fear -2:* The lion is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Fierce:* The lion is naturally aggressive, and becomes angry when threatened.



They must make a **Will Test** once taking damage, and if the **Test** is **failed**, they become enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily **raised by 2 points each**, and its **Vitality** is temporarily **increased by 15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily **reduced by 2 points each**. Fierce **lasts for 1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the creature is **immune to all Fear** and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the Fierce state passes, the creature's **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.

- *Night Vision*: The lion is able to see in the dark as easily as it sees in full daylight, and ignores all penalties while fighting in the dark.
- *Size (2)*: Lions are 10 feet long.

Found throughout the plains and savannas of The World, the lion is the undisputed king. One of the largest cats in existence, lions are extremely territorial and are deadly hunters.

## MANTICORE

**Brawn 10, Quickness 9, Toughness 10, Wits 4, Will 12, Vitality 50, IR 6, A 3**

**Action Points: 3**

### Hooks:

- A unimaginable abomination.
- Things in which life should not allow.
- By claw, by tooth, and by tail.
- The hate of life runs through my veins.

**Skills:** Brawl [+12], Dodge [+9], Intimidation [+12]

### Traits:

- *Claws*: Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Fear -3*: Able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Horrific Visage*: The manticore has a terrifying appearance, and those looking upon it are struck with fear that shakes their resolve. This Trait is always "on," meaning that whenever a character comes into contact with the manticore, they are affected by the creature's appearance. The effect of this Horrific Visage is such that the character must make a **Will Test**, with **Failure** causing them to **lose 1 Sanity**.
- *Moan – Roar*: Anyone within a 50-foot radius of the manticore must make a **Will Test**, with **failure** causing them to **lose Sanity equal to half** of the manticore's **Will**.
- *Night Vision*: The manticore is able to see in the dark as easily as it sees in full daylight, and ignores all penalties while fighting in the dark.
- *Poison*: The manticore's tail is poisonous, and does damage to any opponents

struck by it. Anyone successfully hit by the manticore's tail must make a **successful Opposed Toughness Test** or will be poisoned, suffering **damage equal to the Degree of Success multiplied by 2**.

- *Second Wind*: The manticore can shrug off minor wounds with ease. Once per day the manticore can **heal itself** of a number of **points of Vitality damage equal** to its **Vitality** score.
- *Tail*: The tail of the manticore is tipped with a vicious stinger that injects venom. Creature's struck by the tail suffer **damage equal to the manticore's Toughness × 2**.

A manticore has the body of a lion, the head of a man, and the tail of a scorpion. Manticores are furious beasts, and many believe they have been made possible only because of the Alchemical Arts. However, some manticores have been seen in the south that live naturally, and are not the products of Alchemy.

## RAT

**Brawn 1, Quickness 2, Toughness 1, Wits 2, Will 3, Vitality 5, IR 2, A 1**

**Action Points:** 2

**Hooks:**

- I carry your doom.
- Even the smallest of creatures are the deadliest.

**Skills:** Brawl [+9], Stealth [+3]

**Traits:**

- *Bite*: **d12+Brawn bonus damage**.
- *Disease*: Rats carry the disease *Camp Fever*, and any target attacked by a rat must make a **successful Toughness Test**, with **failure** resulting in their contracting *Camp Fever*.
- *Fear -1 to -4*: Rats are able to cause **Fear** in their targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**. Depending on the number of rats in a swarm the **Fear** number increases as follows: Up to 25 Rats (-1), 26-50 Rats (-2), 51-75 (-3) and 76-100 (-4).
- *Night Vision*: Rats are able to see in the dark as easily as they see in full daylight, and ignore all penalties while fighting in the dark.
- *Swarm*: Rats that Swarm have **Vitality**, and in addition, creatures cause **damage** based on their numbers; this damage takes into account biting and the like. The **damage** for swarms is as follows: **1-25 Creatures 1d12 Damage**, **26-50 creatures 2d12 Damage**, **51-75 creatures 3d12 Damage**, and **76-100 creatures 4d12 Damage**.

### CAMP FEVER

You have an unnaturally high fever, and experiences bouts of vomiting and uncontrollable weakness for 5 days. During this time, your **Vitality**, **Brawn** and **Nimble** are reduced by half, and you suffer a -1 penalty to all **Tests** until healed.

The disease-ridden rat can be found on nearly every ship, along every wharf, and in nearly every building in The World.

**SCORPION, GIANT****Brawn 10, Quickness 6, Toughness 6, Wits 3, Will 10, Vitality 40, IR 4, A 2****Action Points:** 3**Hooks:**

- Mind the tail.
- One touch and you will surly die.
- I thought the small ones were dangerous.

**Skills:** Brawl [+10], Survival [+8]**Traits:**

- *Claws:* **d12+Quickness bonus damage.**
- *Fear -2:* The giant scorpion is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear** modifier is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Natural Armor:* Their thick hide gives them **AV 15**.
- *Poison:* The giant scorpion's tail is venomous, and does damage to any opponents struck by it. Anyone **successfully** hit by the creature's tail must make a **successful Opposed Toughness Test**, or will be poisoned, suffering **damage equal to the Degree of Success multiplied by 5**.
- *Size (1):* Giant scorpions are 8 feet long.
- *Tail:* Its tail is tipped with a vicious stinger that injects venom.

Though scorpions are common in the deserts of The World, giant scorpions are creatures whose origins scholars do not agree about. Aggressive, some are found in caves, or in service as pets to evil rulers.

**SERPENT, GIANT****Brawn 11, Quickness 8, Toughness 8, Wits 4, Will 10, Vitality 45, IR 6, A 2****Action Points:** 3**Hooks:**

- This coil will crush you.
- I am no average serpent.
- I lie in wait for my prey.

**Skills:** Brawl [+8]**Traits:**

- *Elasticity:* The giant serpent is able to bend and twist its body in unnatural ways, allowing them to squeeze into and through very tight spaces. Consequently, they can squeeze through an opening or passage one-fifth as wide and tall as its height, in feet, it does so very slowly compared to its normal movement rate.

- *Fear -2*: The giant serpent is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Squeeze*: In order to use this ability, the giant serpent must make a **successful Brawl Test** to grab its opponent. Those trapped can try to escape by making a **successful Brawn Test**. For every **round** trapped in the grip of the creature, the opponent **suffers a cumulative -1 to the Test**. For example, if the opponent has been in the squeeze for 3 Rounds, he would suffer a -3 to the Test. The **damage** from this ability is **equal to the giant serpent's Brawn+Toughness**.
- *Size (3)*: Giant Serpents average 14 feet in length

Found in dark and fetid swamps and jungles, these serpents are some 14 feet long, and have sparked numerous myths and legends. While some confuse them with dragons or other mythical beasts, their origins are perhaps more basic, perhaps even being the result of creation by an Alchemist, or the spawn of a dark god.

### SERPENT PEOPLE

**Brawn 8, Quickness 9, Toughness 8, Wits 10, Will 10, Vitality 40, IR 9, A 3**

**Action Points: 3**

#### Hooks:

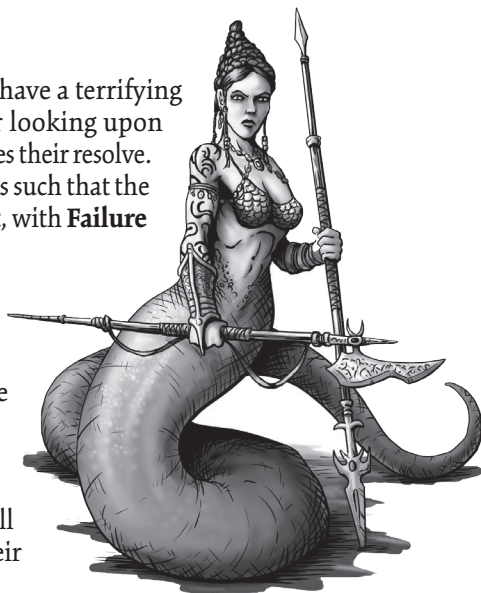
- From a time long forgotten.
- I am a child of the earth.
- I was here before you walked across this earth.
- I am the terror which hides in the shadows.

**Skills:** Brawl [+7], Defend [+7], Melee [+9], Observe [+12], Resist [+5], Sense [+5], Track [+7].

#### Traits:

- *Horrific Visage*: Serpent people have a terrifying appearance, and any character looking upon them is struck with fear that shakes their resolve. The effect of this horrific visage is such that the character must make a **Will Test**, with **Failure** causing them to **lose 1 Sanity**.

Found in the eastern jungles, the upper halves of the Serpent People resemble that of a human, while their lower halves resemble a snake. Some speculate that serpent people were one of the first races to inhabit The World. Others, however, whisper that they are the servants of a dark god, plotting the downfall and enslavement of humankind from their jungle ruins.



**SHARK****Brawn 8, Quickness 12, Toughness 8, Wits 6, Will 11, Vitality 40, IR 9, A 4****Action Points:** 4**Hooks:**

- I prowls the murky depths.
- These teeth render all flesh.
- You will need a bigger boat.
- I am a creature of pure hunger.

**Skills:** Athletics [+9], Brawl [+9]**Traits:**

- *Bite:* **d12+Brawn bonus damage.**
- *Fear -1:* Able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier is applied to a target's Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Fierce:* The shark is naturally aggressive, and becomes angry when threatened. They must make a **Will Test** once taking damage, and if the **Test** is **failed**, they become enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily **raised by 2 points each**, and its **Vitality** is temporarily **increased by 15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily **reduced by 2 points each**. **Fierce lasts for 1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the creature is **immune to all Fear** and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the **Fierce** state passes, the creature's **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.
- *Scent:* The shark possesses an acute sense of "smell," or prey detection, allowing it to track its victim with ease. Sharks are able to sense prey within a 90-foot range, and up to 180 feet if the prey is bleeding. This range can be increased for each additional point spent.
- *Size* (2)

The fiercest of all the ocean's predators, sharks can be found in all oceans of The World. Though there are smaller sharks, the ones most known by sailors are the Great White, which averages close to 20 feet in length, with some rare specimens approaching 30 or more feet.

**SPIDER, GIANT****Brawn 8, Quickness 12, Toughness 8, Wits 7, Will 10, Vitality 40, IR 15, A 4****Action Points:** 4**Hooks:**

- I am your worse fear.
- On silken thread I stalk.
- My bite is not the only thing you must worry about.
- I will have you.

**Skills:** Athletics [+12], Brawl [+9]**Traits:**

- *Bite*: Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Fear -4*: The giant spider is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Horrific Visage*: The giant spider has a terrifying appearance, and those looking upon it are struck with fear that shakes their resolve. This ability is always "on," meaning that whenever a character comes into contact with the creature, they are affected by the creature's appearance. The effect of this horrific visage is such that the character must make a **Will Test**, with **Failure** causing them to **lose 1 Sanity**.
- *Poison*: **Damage 1d12 to Toughness**, but only **half damage** on a **successful Toughness Test**.
- *Size (2)*: Giant Spiders are 10 feet in length.
- *Web*: Webbing can be spun up to 50 feet and if caught in the web, the victim can try to break free. This requires an **Opposed Test** between the **target's Brawn** and the **web's elasticity (TN 14)**. **Failing** the **Test** results in the victim become more entangled, and their **Brawn** is reduced by one point for the purposes of trying to break free. For every **failure** on this **Test**, **Brawn** is reduced by 1 additional point, until it reaches 0. Once reduced to 0, the victim is completely entangled.

Spiders are common throughout The World. They come in all the standard colors and sizes. However, some spiders have been tinkered with by Nyarlathotep, who has raised these creatures to be nightmares for those who face them.

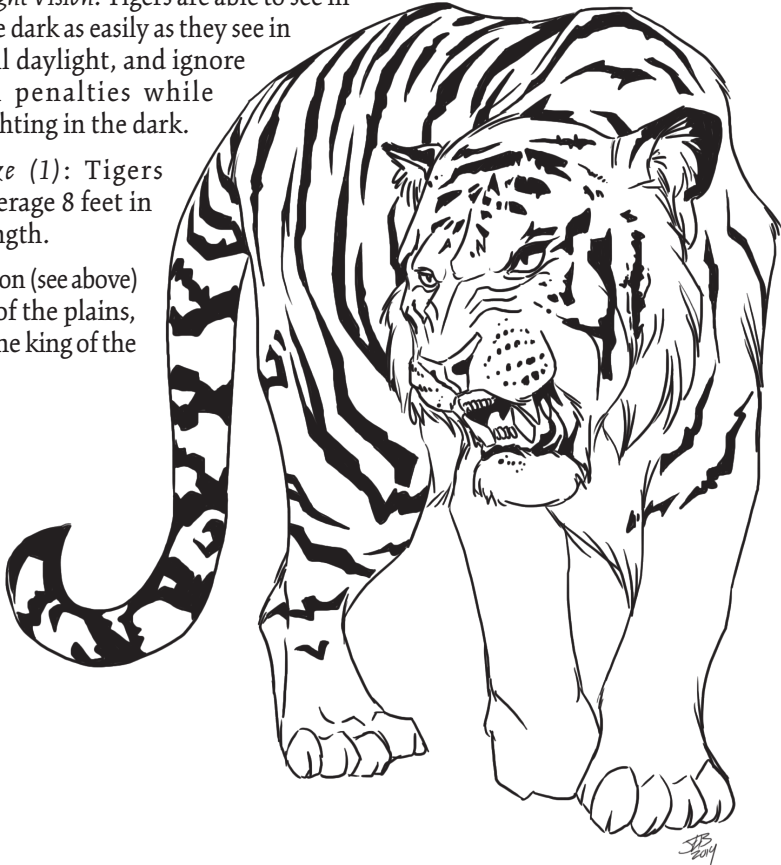
**TIGER****Brawn 11, Quickness 10, Toughness 11, Wits 4, Will 10, Vitality 55, IR 7, A 3****Action Points: 4****Hooks:**

- On silent paw I stalk.
- The jungle hides many things, namely your doom.
- You will not see me unless I want you too.
- I know no fear.

**Skills:** Brawl [+9], Observe [+10], Stealth [+12], Track [+9]**Traits:**

- *Bite:* Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Claws:* Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Fear -2:* The tiger is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear** modifier is applied to a **target's Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Night Vision:* Tigers are able to see in the dark as easily as they see in full daylight, and ignore all penalties while fighting in the dark.
- *Size (1):* Tigers average 8 feet in length.

Where the lion (see above) is the king of the plains, the tiger is the king of the jungle.



**WHALE****Brawn 14, Quickness 10, Toughness 14, Wits 8, Will 15, Vitality 70, IR 9, A 3****Action Points: 4****Hooks:**

- From the murky depths.
- My size is great, my power is greater.
- Look into the eyes of the violent abyss.
- I patrol the oceans, you are not welcomed.

**Skills:** Athletics [+14], Brawl [+14]**Traits:**

- *Bite*: Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Fear* -3: Able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is **applied** to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Fierce*: The whale is naturally aggressive, and becomes angry when threatened. They must make a **Will Test** once taking damage, and if the **Test** is **failed**, they become enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily **raised by 2 points each**, and its **Vitality** is temporarily **increased by 15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily **reduced by 2 points each**. **Fierce lasts for 1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the creature is **immune to all Fear** and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the **Fierce** state passes, the creature's **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.
- *Head Butt*: The whale's skull is thick, allowing it to use its head as a weapon. The **damage** the **Head Butt** causes is **equal to the Whale's Toughness**.
- *Natural Armor*: Due to the whale's blubbery hide, it is very tough to penetrate their hide, giving them **AV 10**.
- *Size (4)*: Whale's range in length, but the typical size is 16 feet.
- *Unfathomable - Tail Buff*: Can use its tail to slap, and this causes **Brawn + Toughness damage**.

Whales are large creatures native to the seas; whales are found throughout The World. There are numerous types of whale ranging in color and size.

## WEREWOLF

**Brawn 9, Quickness 11, Toughness 11, Wits 5, Will 9, Vitality 20, IR 8, A 3**

**Skills:** Brawl [+11], Observe [+10], Tracking [+8], Stealth [+13]

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- By the light of the full moon I remember I am no longer human.
- My curse is one I gladly share.
- Come, let us howl at the moon, and let all know we stalk the night.

**Traits:**

- *Bite:* **d12+Brawn bonus damage.**
- *Claws:* **d12+Quickness bonus damage.**
- *Disease:* **Successfully** biting a victim, a Werewolf bestows upon them the disease *Lycanthropy*.
- *Fear--:* The Werewolf is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is **applied** to a **target's Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Lycanthropy:* This trait is more of a disease and those afflicted are immune to normal weapons, but suffer double damage when attacked with silver weapons. Those with the Lycanthropy trait are unable to control their transformation, and on the night of the full moon, they assume a hybrid human/wolf form.
- *Scent:* Werewolves are able to smell an opponent within 40 feet, 80 feet downwind, and 120 feet upwind

The werewolf is one of the most feared among the creatures of the supernatural, and

**LYCANTHROPY**

A rare disease, Lycanthropy is only contracted through a werewolf's bite. Once bitten you must make an unmodified Toughness Test to see if you have been infected. Failing this Test results in you contracting the disease. There is no known cure for this disease, magical or mundane.

With this disease you revert into a wolf-human hybrid each full moon. The effects of Lycanthropy are devastating, and are applicable once they transforming into your werewolf:

- **Brawn, Nimble, & Toughness** - increased by 2
- **Will** - decreased by 6
- *Obsessions:* Eats humans, infect others. Every time they come into contact with someone, they must make an unmodified **Will Test**, with failure having them bite the encountered person.
- *Amnesia (Temporary):* Whenever your character reverts back to human form, they forget the previous night's events.
- The traits of a werewolf

is cursed with the disease of *Lycanthropy*. Some who contract this disease are unable to control the transformation, true werewolves change their shapes at will, and can assume the form of the wolf or a hybrid shape between wolf and human. Regardless of the shape they take, their **Abilities**, **Skills** and **Traits** remain the same.

Werewolves are hunters, and their favored prey is humans. They crave the blood and flesh of humans, transforming at night beneath the full moon into a wolf-like creature that hunts down and kills their prey, and then eats them with relish.

## WOLF

**Brawn 4, Quickness 6, Toughness 5, Wits 4, Will 6, Vitality 20, IR 5, A 2**

**Action Points:** 3

### Hooks:

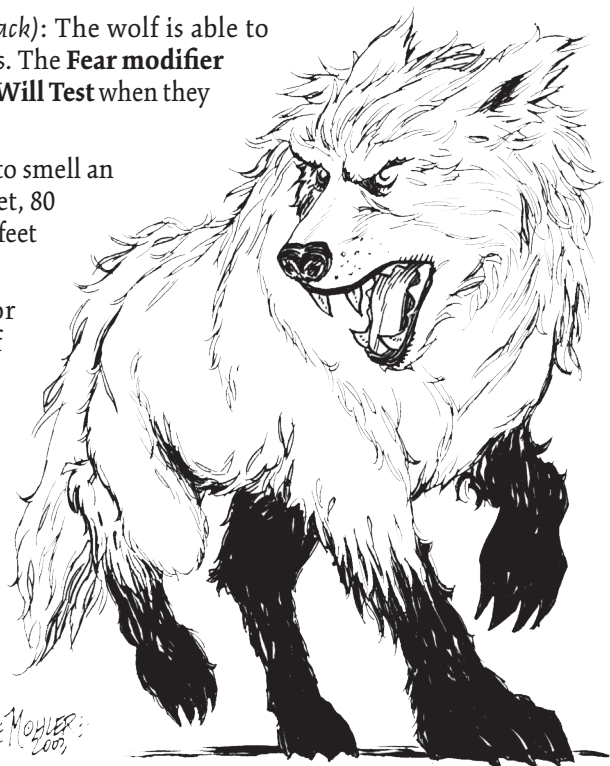
- My pack is never far behind.
- Hear that? That is howl calling for your death.
- I hunt, I kill, and I live.

**Skills:** Brawl [+5], Observe [+5], Stealth [+7], Tracking [+5]

### Traits:

- **Bite:** Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- **Fear -1(solitary)/-4(pack):** The wolf is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is **applied to a target's Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- **Scent:** Wolves are able to smell an opponent within 40 feet, 80 feet if upwind, and 120 feet if downwind.

Proud, fierce, and known for their hunting prowess, the wolf is feared by all. Among those who dwell in the rural parts of The World, the wolf is seen as an agent of evil. Others, notably those who dwell in tribal societies, honor the wolf for its hunting prowess and strength.



## UNDEAD

### BANSHEE

Brawn 0, Quickness 12, Toughness 7, Wits 5, Will 11, Plasm 55, IR 8, A 4

Action Points: 3

#### Hooks:

- Your deed is now your doom.
- The vengeance of the wrongly killed.
- In death I shall have my revenge.

Skills: Stealth [+6]

#### Traits:

- *Fear -4*: The banshee is able to **cause Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier is applied to a target's Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Insubstantial*: 2 Plasm/Round. Allows the banshee to shift its body from a solid state to a gaseous state. In this state, all physical attacks pass through her harmlessly, causing no damage. In addition, while in this state, the creature is unable to make any physical attacks.
- *Manifest*: The banshee is able to enter into the physical world.
- *Moan – Moan of Death*: Causes **damage** and if the victim **fails a Will Test**, they loses **12 Vitality** and **12 Sanity**. Range is 40-foot radius, **4 Plasm to use**.
- *Plasm*: Banshees tap into a source of power fueling their abilities. This power, once drained, ends their hold and ties to the physical world, and they must rest to regain more Plasm. When manifesting into the physical world, they expend Plasm. Every round they are in the



physical realm, it costs 1 Plasm. Once the creature's Plasm is reduced to 0, they must leave the physical realm and return to its home realm, and must rest while it regains its Plasm which is regained at a rate of 12 Plasm/Day.

- *Undead*: Immune to smoke, heat, cold, diseases, poison, and fear, and cannot die from suffocation.
- *Unfathomable - Touch (Death's Icy Grip)*: The touch of a banshee is painful, and its icy grip **causes 6 Damage**, and **2 Damage per round** for a number of **rounds equal** to the **Degrees of Success**.

Banshees are the ghosts of women who have been killed because of violence against them. So angry are they with the circumstances of their deaths that they return in the form of a ghost seeking vengeance on all men. Some cultures view banshees as the harbingers of death, whose arrival is an ill omen of death.

## GHAST

**Brawn 10, Quickness 10, Toughness 10, Wits 6, Will 9, Vitality 50, IR 8, A 3**

**Action Points: 3**

### Hooks:

- The scent of death floats upon the wake of my passing.
- I have lost my humanity long ago.
- There is nowhere you can hide.
- I hunger for your life.

**Skills:** Brawl [+10], Observe [+11]

### Traits:

- *Fierce*: The ghost is naturally aggressive, and becomes angry when threatened. They must make a **Will Test** once taking damage, and if the **Test** is **failed**, they become enraged. As a result, its **Brawn** and **Toughness** are temporarily **raised by 2 points each**, and its **Vitality** is temporarily **increased by 15 Points**. In addition, both its **Will** and **Wits** are temporarily **reduced by 2 points each**. **Fierce lasts for 1d12 Rounds**, and while in this state, the creature is **immune to all Fear** and ignores any modifiers associated with lost **Vitality**. As soon as the **Fierce** state passes, the creature's **Abilities** return to normal, and the boosted **Vitality** disappears.
- *Hypersensitivity*: The ghost is particularly sensitive to its surroundings, and gains a **+2 bonus** on *Investigation* and *Observe Tests*.
- *Leaper*: The ghost has the ability to leap incredible distances. Ghosts gains a **+5 bonus** on all *Athletics (Jump) Tests* or any other **Tests** that this trait is applicable. The distance a ghost can leap is equal to **Brawn x2 feet**.
- *Light Sensitivity*: The ghost's eyes are unable to adjust to bright light. Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight) **blinds** the ghost for **10 Rounds**, and it suffers a **-1 TN** on attacks, *Investigation* and *Observe Tests* as long as it remains in the brightly lit area.

- *Night Vision*: The ghost is able to see in the dark as easily as it sees in full daylight, and ignores all penalties while fighting in the dark.
- *Scent*: Ghosts are able to smell an opponent within 60 feet, 120 feet
- *Stench*: The ghost has a terrible odor, and this smell is so powerful that it makes contact with the creature troublesome; any within hand-to-hand range of the creature suffer a **-1 to all Tests**.
- *Undead*: Immune to smoke, heat, cold, diseases, poison, fear, and cannot die from suffocation.
- *Weakness*: No tolerance for natural light, and light causes them to suffer a **-1 to all Tests**. Sunlight kills them instantly.

Though their faces resemble that of a human—albeit missing the nose—ghosts are pale in skin tone, and their legs are long and angled, resembling those of a kangaroo, with hooves for feet. Ghosts live underground, away from the light, and are a war-like race of the dead who hunt in packs and prey on all. Rumors abound that this was a race of men that were cursed by a forgotten god for some unknown blasphemy.

## GHOST

**Brawn 0, Quickness 11, Toughness 7, Wits 7, Will 10, Plasm 50, IR 9, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

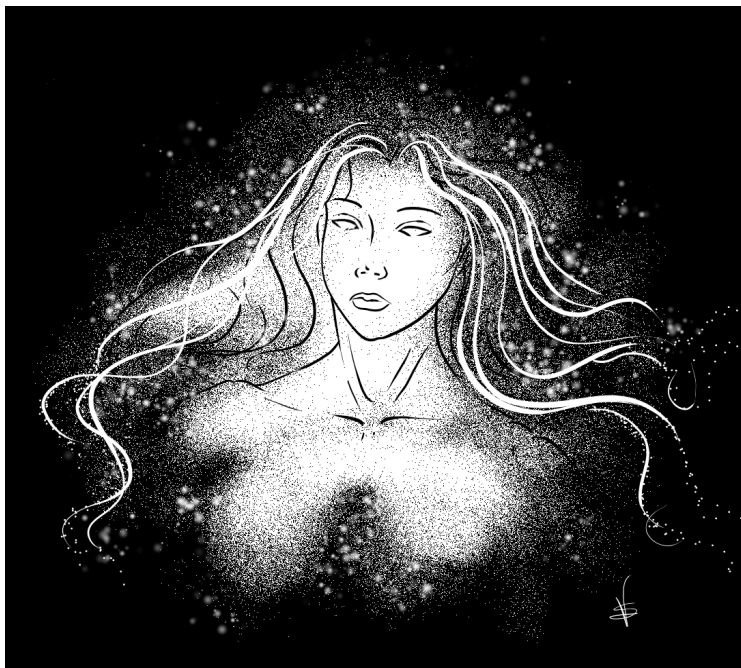
### Hooks:

- Restless in death.
- I know no peace until I am avenged.
- You will not harm me.

**Skills:** Sense [+11], Stealth [+12]

### Traits:

- *Drain*: Drains **Vitality equal to Will** if the ghost successfully touches an opponent.
- *Fear -2*: Ghosts are able to cause **Fear** in their targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to the target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Insubstantial*: 2 Plasm/Round. Allows the ghost to shift its body from a solid state to a gaseous state. In this state, all physical attacks pass through the ghost harmlessly, causing no damage. In addition, while in this state, ghosts are unable to make any physical attacks.
- *Rejuvenation*: Ghosts are able to replenish their **Plasm** by **successfully draining Vitality** from an opponent, and turning it into **Plasm**, which is done on a one-for-one basis.
- *Telekinesis*: Ghosts are able to move objects without touching them by expending **Plasm**. They are able to move a number of objects equal to the amount of **Plasm** the ghost spends (**1 Plasm per object**; thus, if the ghost wants to move



10 objects, it costs 10 Plasm). Furthermore, the ghost is able to move up to **(Will × 10) lbs. in weight**. This weight can be incorporated in one object or a number of objects that can be moved a number of feet equal to **(Will + d12)**. If used as a weapon, the object in question does damage equal to the Ghost's Will.

- *Undead*: Immune to smoke, heat, cold, diseases, poison, fear, and cannot die from suffocation.
- *Unfathomable - Illusions*: Ghosts are able to create illusions that they can use to frighten people, and drive them away in fear. Examples of illusions include rattling chains, phantom footsteps, bleeding walls, and paintings whose subjects seem to come alive. Illusions can affect as many people as the ghost wants, but it costs **1 Plasm per person** to do so. Thus, if the ghost wants eight people to see bleeding walls, it costs the ghost **8 Plasm** to do so. The **Duration** for the Illusions is **10 Rounds**. An illusion forces an opponent to make a **Fear Test**, with the ghost's **Fear modifier**, with **Failure** causing him to be frightened.

Ghosts are the restless spirits of the dead that haunt the living to exact their vengeance on them. Ghosts have haunted the land for many years. They haunt battlefields and old buildings, spreading fear and misery whenever some poor fool crosses their path.

## GHOUL

**Brawn 9, Quickness 6, Toughness 7, Wits 6, Will 7, Vitality 40, IR 6, A 2**

**Action Points:** 3

**Hooks:**

- I hunger.
- My addiction to the sweet meats have left its' mark.
- Look upon me and see your death.

**Skills:** Brawl [+10], Stealth [+8]

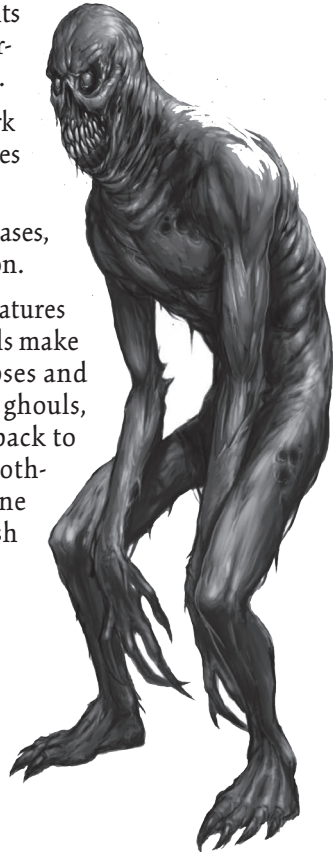
**Traits:**

- **Bite:** Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- **Claws:** Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- **Disease:** The bite and the touch of a ghoul causes *Curse of the Grave*.
- **Fear -2:** The ghoul is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- **Night Vision:** The ghoul is able to see in the dark as easily as it sees in full daylight, and ignores all penalties while fighting in the dark.
- **Undead:** Immune to smoke, heat, cold, diseases, poison, fear, and cannot die from suffocation.

Haunting graveyards and battlefields, ghouls are creatures that feast on the dead. Digging into the earth, ghouls make graveyards their home, where they feast on corpses and worship their dark, foul gods. As to the origins of ghouls, some speculate that they can trace their origins back to the ancient times before The World was old, while others feel that these creatures have always existed. One rumor exists that those who partake of human flesh transform into ghouls.

**CURSE OF THE GRAVE**

Contracted only when coming into contact with a ghoul. To resist the disease you must make a successful **Toughness Test**. **Failure** results in contracting the disease, and you turn into a ghoul yourself. There is no known cure for this disease. It manifests in 1d12 days. Once the incubation period is past you're a ghoul. As a ghoul, you retains all of your memories, but now become a mockery of what you once was.



## MUMMY

**Brawn 12, Quickness 10, Toughness 12, Wits 15, Will 16, Vitality 60, IR 12, A 3**

**Action Points:** 4

**Hooks:**

- My death only made me stronger.
- You dare to question me?
- Look, puny little creature upon the face of death.
- You will find that I am not to be trifled with.

**Skills:** Magic (3 Spells with 4 Ranks in each), Sense [+18]

**Traits:**

- *Disease:* The touch of the creature causes *Mummy Rot*.
- *Fear -5:* The mummy is able to cause Fear in its targets. The Fear modifier is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a Fear Test.
- *Horrific Visage:* The mummy has a terrifying appearance, and those looking upon it are struck with fear that shakes their resolve. This ability is always "on," meaning that whenever a character comes into contact with the mummy they are affected by the creature's appearance. The effect of this horrific visage is such that the character must make a **Will Test**, with **Failure** causing them to lose **1 Sanity**.
- *Spellcaster:* The mummy is able to work magic.
- *Stench:* The mummy has a terrible odor, and this smell is so powerful that it makes contact with the creature troublesome, and any within hand-to-hand range of the mummy suffer a **-1 to all Tests**.
- *Undead:* Immune to smoke, heat, cold, diseases, poison, fear, and cannot die from suffocation.

Kingdoms to the south mummify and entomb their dead rulers. Some of these rulers were so evil that their spirits live on, even though their bodies have been mummified.



**MUMMY ROT**

This disease is contracted when you are touched by a mummy, and there is no natural cure. To resist the disease requires a **Toughness Test**, with **Failure** indicating you contract the disease, which manifests in a number of days equal to your Toughness. Once the incubation phase of *Mummy Rot* is over, you lose **1 Toughness** per day, and once you **Toughness** is reduced to 0, your body turns to dust. While suffering from this disease, your body takes on a dry and flaky appearance. This appearance has you suffer a cumulative **-1 penalty** to all **Social Skill Tests**, up to a maximum of a **-6**.

## REVENANT

**Brawn 10, Quickness 10, Toughness 10, Wits 5, Will 10, Taint 50, IR 7, A 3**

**Action Points:** 3

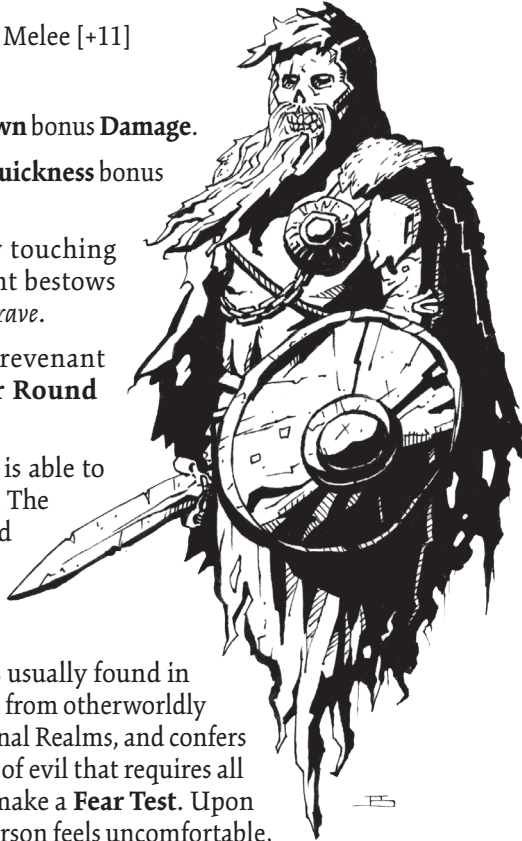
### Hooks:

- I am the embodiment of hate and rage.
- You will not join me in death, for your life will be extinguished.
- Fool! You should have known better to let your greed lead you.
- In death I serve.

**Skills:** Brawl [+6], Defend [+8], Melee [+11]

### Traits:

- **Bite:** Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- **Claws:** Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- **Disease:** **Successfully** touching a victim, the Revenant bestows them the *Curse of the Grave*.
- **Drain:** The bite of a revenant drains **5 Vitality per Round** from the victim.
- **Fear -2:** The revenant is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- **Infernal:** This ability is usually found in creatures that originate from otherworldly realms, called the Infernal Realms, and confers to the creature an aura of evil that requires all within 10 feet of it to make a **Fear Test**. Upon **failing** this **Test**, the person feels uncomfortable, as well as having a desire to get away as quickly as possible.
- **Taint:** Revenants have **Taint**, which is the evil of the creature that seeps into the natural world. **Taint** fuels the revenants when they manifest in the physical world, as well as acting as their **Vitality**. Once the revenant runs out of **Taint**, it is forced to leave the physical world and return to its native plane where it must "rest" for a number of days equal to its **Will**. In addition, it costs **Taint** to stay in the physical world, and every minute a revenant must expend **1 Taint** to stay fixed in the physical world.



- *Undead*: Immune to smoke, heat, cold, diseases, poison, fear, and cannot die from suffocation.
- *Unique – Sword and Shield of Hate*: Revenants are able to focus their hate into both a sword and shield. The sword glows with a black light and is only a solid object in the Revenant's hand. The sword grants the Revenant a +1 to all *Melee Tests* and does an additional 10 Damage. As for the shield, it is a black shimmering object resembling more shadow than a solid mass. This shield grants the Revenant a +2 to all **Defend Tests**.
- *Weakness*: Fire causes a Revenant double damage; removing the heart of a Revenant kills it instantly.

When an evil warrior dies, sometimes the spirit lives on to terrorize the living. Either due to a promise made to a dark god, or summoned by a necromancer, revenants are the elite warriors of the undead.

## SKELETON

**Brawn 5, Quickness 5, Toughness 5, Wits 0, Will 0, Vitality 25, IR 5, A 1**

**Action Points:** 2

**Hooks:**

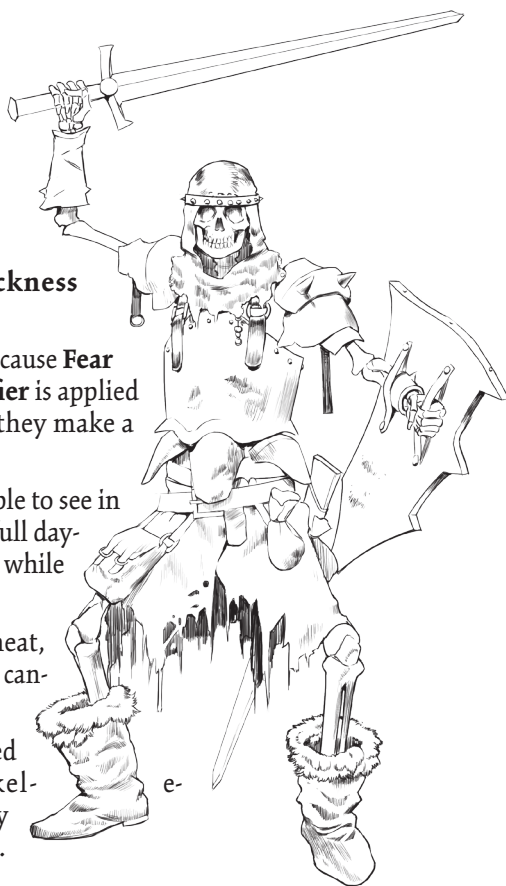
- There is no rest in death.
- The rattle of bones announces your death.

**Skills:** Brawl [+8]

**Traits:**

- *Claws*: Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Fear -1*: The skeleton is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Night Vision*: The skeleton is able to see in the dark as easily as it sees in full daylight, and ignores all penalties while fighting in the dark.
- *Undead*: Immune to smoke, heat, cold, diseases, poison, fear, and cannot die from suffocation.

One of the most commonly encountered creatures of the supernatural, skeletons are mindless creatures often used by black magicians as servants and guards.



## VAMPIRE

**Brawn 10, Quickness 11, Toughness 10, Wits 12, Will 12, Vitality 50, IR 11, A 3**

**Action Points: 4**

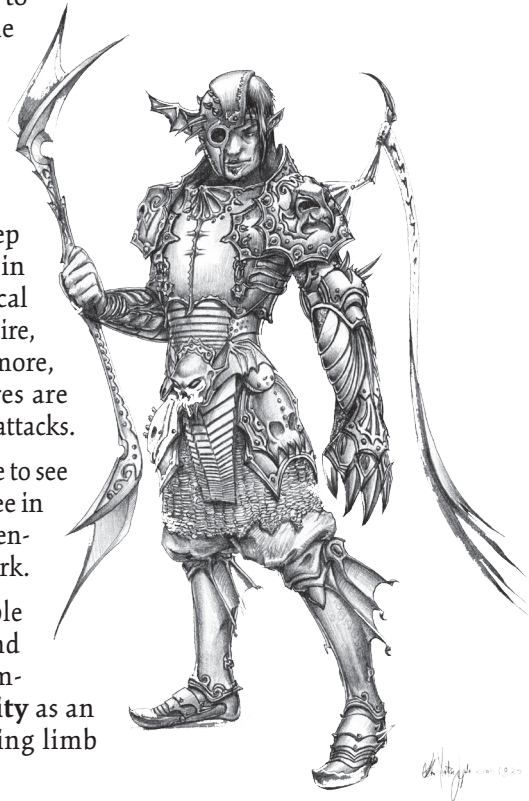
**Hooks:**

- No I do not drink, ale.
- I am a child of the shadows. I am a creature of the night. I am your master!
- You simple fools, did you think you could defeat me?
- As I drink the blood from your body, know that in death there will be no peace.

**Skills:** Brawl [+6], Intimidate [+10], Defend [+8], Diplomacy [+10], Melee [+8], Observe [+8], Sense [+10]

**Traits:**

- *Bite:* Bite does **d12+Brawn** bonus **Damage**.
- *Claws:* Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Drain:* A vampire **drains 1d12 points of Vitality**. To continue draining **Vitality**, the vampire must make a *Brawl Test* every round; success results in their continuing to drain **1d12 points of Vitality**.
- *Fear--3:* The vampire is able to cause **Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Insubstantial:* A vampire can transform into mist, which allows them to float or seep through any cracks. While in this gaseous state, all physical attacks pass through the vampire, causing no damage. Furthermore, while in this state, vampires are unable to make any physical attacks.
- *Night Vision:* Vampires are able to see in the dark as easily as they see in full daylight, and ignore all penalties while fighting in the dark.
- *Rejuvenation:* A vampire is able to heal damage suffered, and regrow lost limbs. The vampire can **regain d12 Vitality** as an **Action**. To regrow a missing limb takes d12 days.



- *Shape Change*: As an **Action**, a vampire can transform into a bat or wolf. While in this form, their **Traits** remain unchanged; they simply take the form of the animal.
- *Spawn*: When a victim bitten by a vampire loses all their **Vitality**, they must make a **Will Test**; if they **Fail** the roll, they become a Vampire in d12 days.
- *Summon*: Vampires can **summon a swarm of bats** (50 in total), or a pack of wolves (8 in total). To do so counts as an **Action**, and requires **1d12 Rounds** for the creatures to arrive.
- *Undead*: Immune to smoke, heat, cold, diseases, poison, fear, and cannot die from suffocation.
- *Weakness*: Garlic repels vampires. Vampires cannot cross running water. Driving a wooden stake into the heart of a vampire automatically causes them to shift into mist form. Removing the head of the vampire kills it instantly. Being exposed to day light causes the vampire 15 Damage per Round while exposed, if the Vampire is unable to get out of the sun, the vampire will turn to ash.

One of the greatest evils ever to walk the earth, vampires are thralls of the evil, who live to inflict pain on the living.

## ZOMBIE

**Brawn 5, Quickness 2, Toughness 6, Wits 1, Will 1, Vitality 25, IR 1, A 1**

**Action Points: 2**

### Hooks:

- The dead never rest in piece.
- Grrrrrrr.
- The dead should be safe in their grave.

**Skills:** Brawl [+8]

### Traits:

- *Claws*: Claws do **d12+Quickness** bonus **Damage**.
- *Damage Reduction*: Zombies suffer half damage from all blunt weapons.
- *Fear -1*: The zombie is able to **cause Fear** in its targets. The **Fear modifier** is applied to a target's **Will Test** when they make a **Fear Test**.
- *Night Vision*: The zombie is able to see in the dark as easily as it sees in full daylight, and ignores all penalties while fighting in the dark.
- *Undead*: Immune to smoke, heat, cold, diseases, poison, fear, and cannot die from suffocation.

Zombies are the hungry dead that shamble through the night feeding on, or destroying, whatever living thing they find. Zombies are created by foul wizards and serve as their servants.





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# INDEX

## A

Abilities 20, 47  
    Ability Bonuses 21  
    Actions 21  
    Brawn 20  
    Initiative Rating 21  
    Quickness 20  
    Toughness 20  
    Vitality 21  
    Will 20  
    Wits 20  
Action Points 56  
    The Action Point Effect 56  
Actions 26, 50  
    Action Formula 26  
Alchemical Arts 110  
    Acids and Alkali Creation 110  
    Alchemical Vitriol 111  
    Create Homunculus 111  
    Create Manticore 111  
    Distillation 112  
    Elixir Creation 112  
    Metallurgy 114  
    Poison Creation 114  
    Transmutation 114  
Arcane Spells 99, 103  
    Banish 99  
    Bring Forth Elemental 99  
    Contact 100  
    Curse 102  
    Destroy the Dead 103  
    Dispel 103  
    Enchant 104  
    Exorcise 104  
    Geas 105  
    Pillar of Light 106  
    Plague 105

    Raise Dead 106  
    Summon 106  
    The Water's Fount 110  
    Transformation 108  
    Ward 108  
Armor 39  
    Sacrificing a Shield 40  
    Shields 39  
Avoiding Attacks 37  
    Ability Tests 37  
        Charm (Wits) 37  
        Confusion (Wits) 38  
        Constriction (Brawn) 38  
        Disease (Toughness) 38  
        Fear (Will) 38  
        Illusion (Wits) 38  
        Magical Range Attacks (Quickness) 38  
        Mental Attacks (Will) 38, 39  
        Poison (Toughness) 39  
        Psychological (Will) 39  
        Trap (Quickness) 39

## B

Background 50  
    Cultures 51  
        Advanced 51  
        Barbarian 51  
        Civilized 51  
        Primitive 52  
Modifier  
    Sand Dweller 55  
Modifiers 52  
    Atlantean 52  
    Beidhan Jade Warrior 52  
    Catharian Bureaucrat 52  
    Catharian Legionnaire 53  
    Decadent 53  
    Eastern 53

- Haughty 53
- Magi 53
- Maritime 53
- Martial 54
- Mercantile 53
- Mountaineer 54
- Mystic 54
- Nogoton Navigator 54
- Nomadic 54
- Northern 54
- Pious 55
- Scholarly 55
- Sorcerous 55
- Tolerant 55
- Warrior of the North 55
- Building & Construction 129

## C

- Carrying, Lifting, & Pushing 40
- Combat 29
  - Bull Rush 30
  - Called Shots 30
  - Careful Aim 31
  - Charge 31
  - Combat Complications 29
  - Cover 31
  - Darkness & Obscured Vision 31
  - Dirty Fighting 32
  - Disarm 32
  - Entangle 32
  - Feint 32
  - Hug 33
  - Other Types of Combat Modifiers 33
  - Scaling Combat Difficulty 30
  - Shield Bash 33
  - Shield Charge 33
  - Size 33
  - Steal 34
  - Two Weapons 34
- Common Spells 89

- Awake 90
- Ball/Bolt 91
- Bar 90
- Burn 90
- Cause Gloom 91
- Conjure Element 92
- Cure Disease 92
- Eldritch Tendril 93
- Floating Disc 93
- Fright 94
- Healing 94, 95
- Leap 95
- Magic's Luminance 95
- Open 96
- Produce Element 96
- Protection 96
- Quicken 97
- Resist Elements 97
- Silence 97
- Strike True 98
- Commpn Spells
  - Guardian 94
  - Refresh 97
  - Sleep 98
  - Warning 98
- Creature Design 238
  - Assign Hooks 254
  - Calculate Plasm, Taint or Vitality, and Initiative Rating 254
  - Determine Power Level 239
  - Purchase Abilities 239
  - Purchase Skills 254
  - Purchase Traits 239
- Creatures 254
  - Elementals 258
  - Infernal 256
    - Báleygr 256
  - Natural 264
    - Basilisk 264
    - Bat 265
    - Bear 266

- Boar Croc 267
- Cat, Large 268
- Cat, Small 269
- Chimaera 269
- Deep One 270
- Dinosaur, Giant -- Apatosaurus 276
- Dinosaur, Large -- Stegosaurus 274
- Dinosaur, Large -- Tyrannosaurs 275
- Dinosaur, Medium -- Pterodactyl 273
- Dinosaur, Small -- Raptor 272
- Dog 277
- Gorilla 277
- Homunculus 278
- Horse 280
- Lion 280
- Manticore 281
- Rat 282
- Scorpion, Giant 283
- Serpent, Giant 283
- Serpent People 284
- Shark 285
- Spider, Giant 286
- Tiger 287
- Whale 288, 289
- Wolf 290

Otherworldly 258

Undead 291

- Banshee 291
- Ghast 292, 293
- Ghoul 295
- Mummy 296
- Revenant 297
- Skeleton 298
- Vampire 299
- Zombie 300

Criminal Gangs 176

Currency 118

## D

Damage 34

- Falling 36
- Fire & Smoke 36
- Melee Combat Damage 35
- Other Types 36
  - Drowning 36
  - Falling 36
- Ranged Combat Damage 35
- Shock 35
- Unarmed Combat Damage 35

Defend 40

- Dodge 40

Degrees of Failure 25

Degrees of Success 24

Disease 42

Domains 156

- Building a Stronghold 157

Drugs 45

- Type of 45

## E

Equipment, Travel, and Services 126

Experience Points 65, 196

- Spending Experience Points 197

## F

Fear 40

Followers 151

- Henchmen 151

- Henchmen & Hirelings 151

Fractions 15

## H

Healing 36

Henchman & Hirelings

- Hirelings 153

Hooks 58

- "Bad" Hooks 63

- Creating Hooks 62

- Equal Opportunity Hooks 63

- Hook Examples 64

Hooks in Play 64  
When to Invoke 61  
Hooks & Action Points 17

## I

Initiative 25, 50  
Formula 25  
Initiative Modifiers 26  
Surprise 26

## M

Magic  
Acquiring Spells 86  
Categories of Spells 86  
Spell Ranks & Tests 87  
Using Spells 88  
Mercenaries 131  
Movement 28

## P

Poison 43  
Herbalists & Poison 43

## R

Range 28  
Modifiers 28  
Ranks  
Base Rank 22  
Limit on 22  
Skill 21  
Spells 21  
Rate of Fire  
27  
Rounds 25

## S

Sanity 50  
Regaining Sanity 42  
Skills 22  
Challenges & Modifiers for Skill Tests 23

Choosing Skills 55  
Formula 15, 22  
Ranks 22  
Skill list  
Magic (Will) 76  
Skill List 68  
Acrobatics (Quickness) 68  
Alchemy (Wits) 69  
Animal Handling (Wits) 69  
Astrology (Wits) 69  
Athletics (Brawn, Untrained) 70  
Bargain (Will, Untrained) 71  
Brawl (Brawn, Untrained) 71  
Bureaucracy (Wits, Untrained) 71  
Defend (Brawn, Untrained) 72  
Diplomacy (Will, Untrained) 72  
Divination (Wits) 72  
Dodge (Quickness, Untrained) 73  
Empathy (Will, Untrained) 73  
Gaming (Wits, Untrained) 73  
Heal (Wits) 74  
Intimidation (Will, Untrained) 74  
Investigation (Wits, Untrained) 74  
Language (Wits) 74  
Lore (Wits) 76  
Melee (Brawn, Untrained) 76  
Merchant (Wits) 76  
Observe (Wits, Untrained) 77  
Performance (Will, Untrained) 78  
Physick (Wits) 78  
Profession (Wits) 78  
Resist (Wits, Untrained) 79  
Ride (Quickness, Untrained) 79  
Sense (Wits) 79  
Shoot (Quickness, Untrained) 79  
Socialize (Will, Untrained) 79  
Stealth (Quickness, Untrained) 80  
Streetwise (Will, Untrained) 81  
Study (Wits) 81  
Subterfuge (Quickness) 82

- Survival (Wits) 83
- Tactics (Wits) 83
- Throw (Quickness, Untrained) 83
- Track (Wits) 84

- Trained 22
- Untrained 22

- Specialists 132
- Starting Gear 119
- Success

- Automatic Successes 24
- Success & Failure
  - Degrees
    - Degrees of Failure 25
    - Degrees of Success 24

- Success & Failure 16
  - Bonus & Penalties 17
  - Degress 17

## T

- Tactics 26
- Target Numbers 16
  - Formula 15

- Tests
  - Ability Tests 15
  - Opposed Tests 16
  - Skill Tests 15
- Throwing 28

## U

- Using Spells
  - Attack Rolls 88
  - Maintaining Spells 89
  - Range 89
  - Resistance 88
  - Sanity Cost 89
  - Time 88

## V

- Vitality 48

## W

- Weapons 119



# DESIGNER NOTES

This is something I rarely do. I do not like writing personal things, sharing my thoughts on something I design. For me, the work should speak for itself, and when you break the *fourth wall*, it comes off pretentious. A game is a game, after all. Why does anyone need to know, or even care, about what the designer has to say about it?

So, if you do not care what I have to say, feel free to ignore this. If you want a peek behind the curtain, and learn what I think about this, then read on.

First, a confession: I hate fantasy.

No, really. I really **hate** it.

Yeah, that is something I should probably not write in a fantasy roleplaying game I want people to buy.

OK, maybe that's a bit harsh.

It is not that I hate fantasy, per se, but I hate the state of fantasy as it currently exists in pop culture. I'm bored by it. Everything has a sameness to it, and it all seems as if everyone writing fantasy today is trying to recapture that feeling they had when they first read *The Hobbit*, or discovered the tales of Conan, or my favorite, Kull. For me, these are creations that have lasted because of their uniqueness. They speak of the writer, and the writer speaks for them.

The fantasy I'm most dismissive of is "high fantasy." You know what I mean. Powerful wizards, magic everywhere as if it is candy, cookie-cutter villains, generic locations, heroes that have no value other than to be a superhero with a sword or wondrous item, where there is never any doubt they will overcome any challenged they face.

Dull.

Boring.

Devoid of substance.

Like popcorn: sure, it tastes good when you're eating it, but it isn't at all filling or satisfying, and an hour later you need to eat real food.

Even when it comes to fantasy games, I am not particularly fond of them. The reason for this is simple: I can never recapture that feeling I had when I opened up my first roleplaying game, created my first character, and played inside my imagination.

Born in 1971, I began playing "these games" in 1979. From the moment I took up the dice, I was hooked. Over the years gaming consumed my life, and at the center of this was *Dungeons & Dragons*. That was my gateway into this fantastic hobby, and without *D&D*, I would not have discovered, let alone played, the games that have shaped me. It was *D&D* that led me to discover wargames, miniature gaming, and more importantly, a different world of styles, themes and genres.

There is one other fantasy game that was also a significant influence, one I played more than any other (maybe Mayfair's *DC Superheroes RPG* is a close second). The game?

*Warhammer Fantasy Role Play (WFRP)* from Games Workshop, and later, Hogshead Publishing.

This game clicked with me from the moment I bought the rulebook in 1986. It was nothing like I had ever seen before, and it captured my imagination like nothing then, or since. It is the game I use as my yardstick whenever I try any new roleplaying game.

I went all in with *WFRP*, and it affected me profoundly. This was not a clean, saccharine game, or the same generic setting I had been running and playing in since I was a kid.

This was not a shiny, happy game where heroes are heroes, and villains are villains.

No, *WFRP* was a game with no heroes, a game that is out to punish you. Dark, grim, moody, and depressing, it is, for me, the perfect game.

It was *WFRP* that encouraged me to design my own games. It was *WFRP* that led me to explore new themes and ideas. It would not be until I became older that I would find myself pursuing a path in the hobby. But this game started me down that path.

*Shadow, Sword & Spell* is a game I always wanted, but could never find. However, I never wanted to create a fantasy RPG. I am happy with *Colonial Gothic* and a few other projects I am keeping under wraps. Then, as always, one of my weekly players said that he wanted to play a fantasy game, and wanted to use the rules of *Colonial Gothic* to do so. He then laid down the gauntlet: design it.

So I did.

Then something happened: in 2009, I had a nervous breakdown.

This affected me in ways I can never describe, nor will most people understand. A byproduct of this is I stopped doing anything while I was recovering.

Between 2010 and 2015 I would discover I have bipolar disorder, I would come to grips with a very painful past, be diagnosed as an adult on the Spectrum, I would fight the demon of suicide (and I still do), I would dissolve the partnership with my business partner, and I would see the deaths of three close friends who, over the span of a weekend, took their own lives.

All of this had a toll on me.

It still does.

Things like that never go away.

Ever.

If it was not for a few very close friends (Athena, Tricia, Danni, Jenni, Brandon, and Nick), and my wife Ariana, I would not be here writing this.

In any case, during that span of time nothing worked, and I found myself unable and unwilling to be creative. There were many times I thought about turning the lights off, in more ways than one, and ending it.

The fact that you are reading this obviously means I didn't.

This game, *Shadow, Sword & Spell 2E*, is the result of the rebuilding of my mental health. It was, unbeknownst to me, one of the beacons that helped me get through the darkness.

I wanted this game to be better, and as a result, I went to work.

If you have made it this far, my apologies for this being so long. Creators put themselves into their creations, and *Shadow, Sword & Spell*, along with *Colonial Gothic*, have a piece of me in them.

*Shadow, Sword & Spell* is the fantasy game I always wanted to play. It is also my love letter to my 37+ years of playing games, running games, designing games, and participating in this hobby I love.

At the end of the day, whether any of this works or not, depends entirely upon you. Take these rules, create your own worlds, and most importantly, have fun. If this book helps you do that, then that means I've succeeded at what I set out to do.

Thank you.

- #### -

# Shadow Sword & Spell

## CHARACTER SHEET (FRONT)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Brawn

☐ Quickness

☐ Toughness

☐ Wits

☐ Will

Move



Initiative



Armor Value



Action Points



### Background & Modifier

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### Skills


### Hooks

--	--

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Brawn

☐ Quickness

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☐ Wits

☐ Will

Move



Initiative



Armor Value



Action Points



### Background & Modifier

--	--

### Skills


### Hooks

--	--

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## Character Sheet (Back)

Weapon	DV	Defend	Range	RoF
	( )		/ /	
	( )		/ /	
	( )		/ /	
	( )		/ /	

Possession

Spells

Notes

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Weapon	DV	Defend	Range	RoF
	( )		/ /	
	( )		/ /	
	( )		/ /	
	( )		/ /	

Possession

Spells

Notes

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You are a **hero**, an **outlaw**, even a **thorn in the side of the powers that be**. Your trials prepared you, and now, you are ready to inscribe your name upon the rolls of history. The world will feel your justice. Your enemies cower from your vengeance. Those in power have no choice but to share it with you. You will be king, and the dynasty you found will endure for centuries.

## ARE YOU UP TO THE CHALLENGE?

Inspired by the writings of **Robert E. Howard**, **Clark Ashton Smith**, and **H.P. Lovecraft**, **Shadow, Sword & Spell** is fantasy of a different sort: pulp fantasy. This is fantasy where heroes seek to carve their own glory, and the threats faced are outside the scope of humankind.

Grab your sword. Hoist your staff. Sharpen your knives. It is time to adventure!

Revised, rewritten and redesigned **Shadow, Sword & Spell 2nd Edition** provides you everything you need to run pulp fantasy adventures: rules covering the use of magic and alchemy, quick and easy mass combat, what to do when you start a criminal enterprise; the possibilities are endless.

Using a fast and simple mechanic, setting up and running a game of **Shadow, Sword & Spell** has never been easier. Plus, this **Second Edition Rulebook** is fully compatible with all previous **Shadow, Sword & Spell** adventures and sourcebooks.

## ARE YOU READY TO GRAB YOUR DESTINY?

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