

Robert E. Howard's

CONAN



MÖDIPHÜS™
ENTERTAINMENT

PLAYER'S GUIDE

F.F.F.F.™

WELCOME TO THE HYBORIAN AGE

KNOW, O PRINCE, THAT BETWEEN THE YEARS WHEN THE OCEANS DRANK ATLANTIS AND THE GLEAMING CITIES, AND THE YEARS OF THE RISE OF THE SONS OF ARYAS, THERE WAS AN AGE UNDREAMED OF, WHEN SHINING KINGDOMS LAY SPREAD ACROSS THE WORLD LIKE BLUE MANTLES BENEATH THE STARS...

The *Player's Guide to Robert E. Howard's Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of* takes you into the world of Conan the Barbarian, a place where astonishing heroes battle loathsome monsters, raise swords against dire sorcery, and travel to exotic and unknown lands!

Within these covers you'll find all the information you need to create a wide range of characters, whether heroic barbarians, bold rogues, seasoned mercenaries, wise priests, stealthy archers, hardy nomads, or more!

Create your own legend in the time before history!

- Everything you need to create characters from across the whole of Conan's world, including skills, talents, and more. Discover if you've descended from an ancient line that survived the Cataclysm!
- Choose or roll to create the character you want, picking options such as homeland, attributes, archetype, caste, family history, nature, education, and more.
- Select your starting gear from a wide range of equipment, whether a sturdy broadsword a Bossonian bow, horned helmet and scale-mail hauberk... or a sorcerous circle of power.
- All the 2d20 core rules you need to play, including task resolution, features like Momentum and Fortune, struggles, combat, and more.
- Art by a team of iconic Conan artists, including Tim Truman, Simon Bisley, Esteban Maroto, Paolo Parente, Phroilan Gardner, Mark Schultz, Tomás Giorello, and more.
- Developed in close consultation with award-winning Conan scholars, this is the most authentic depiction of Conan and his world ever published for games.

This book requires the *Robert E. Howard's Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of* to use.

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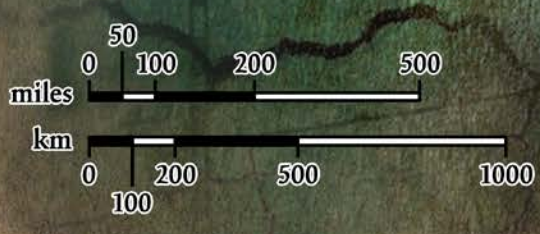


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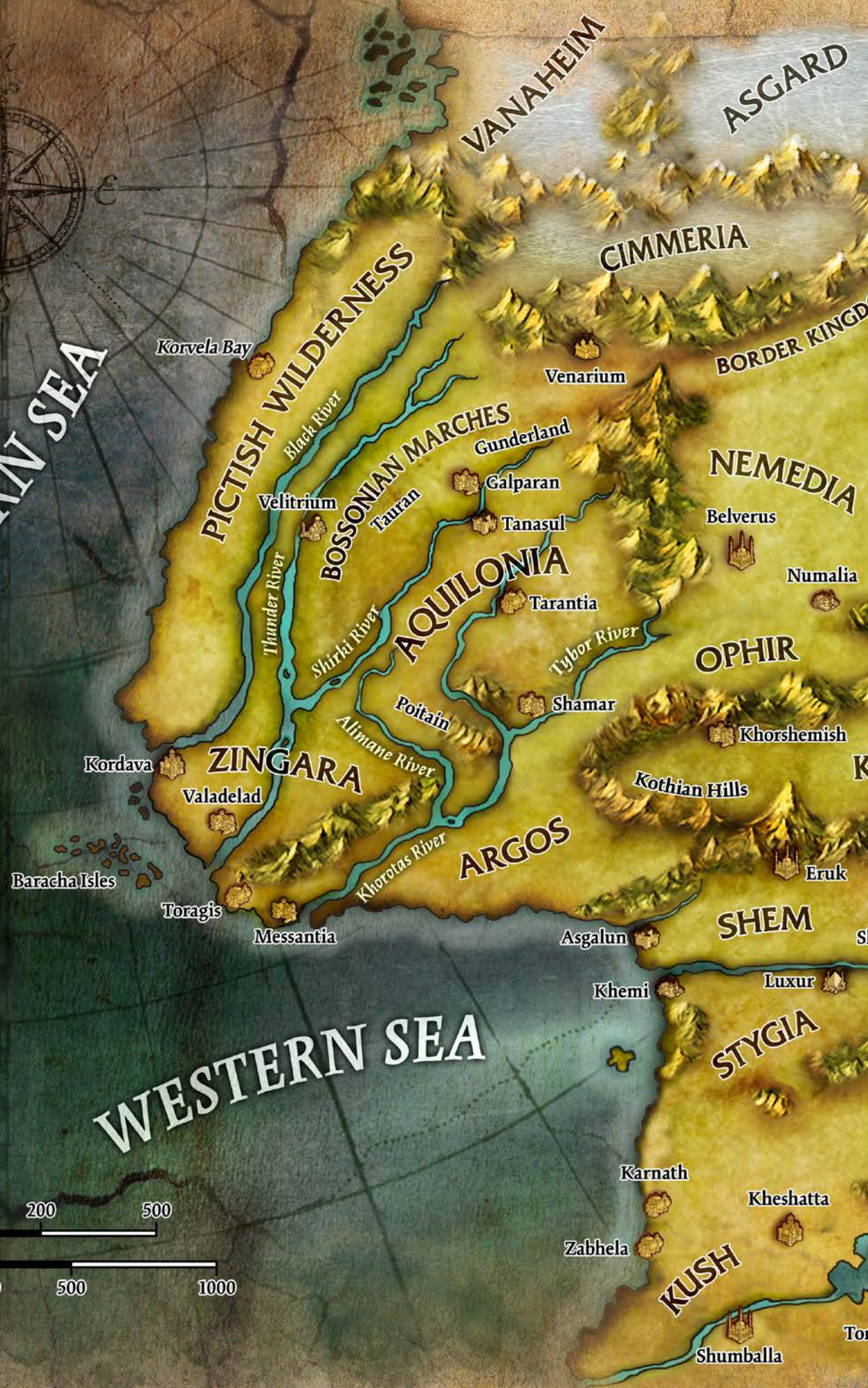
WESTERN SEA



WESTERN SEA



← Isle of the Black Ones





HYPERBOREA

DESERTS

STEPPES

HYRKANIA

BRYTHUNIA

CORINTHIA

ZAMORA

TURAN

KOTH

KHORAJA

KHAURAN

STEPPES

VILAYET SEA

KHITAI

Shushan

Vezek

Sultanapur

Aghrapur

River Styx

DESERTS

TURAN

Xapur

Ft. Gori

Khawarizm

Humir

Nippr

Kuthchemes

Zamboula

Khorusun

Secunderam

Lake Zuad

Sukhmet

Sabatea

GHULISTAN

DARFAR

KESHAN

IRANISTAN

VENDHYA

mbalku

Robert E. Howard's

CONAN

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Again Conan felt the presence of a grim reality behind the veil of material illusion. He sensed again the inexorable drive of a ruthless fate. A feeling of furious panic tugged at his soul, a sense of being trapped, and a red rage that burned to destroy and kill.

— The Hour of the Dragon

GETTING STARTED

Welcome to *Robert E. Howard's Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of* (abbreviated as **Conan** throughout this book).

In **Conan**, the players are the larger-than-life personalities of the Hyborian Age, the world in which Conan dwelled. Players can create and play characters like those from the many phases of Conan's career — barbarians, thieves, mercenaries, pirates, brigands, wanderers, adventurers, and scouts — but can also choose from a wide range of other roles, such as nobles, scholars, minstrels, soldiers, merchants, priests, and even sorcerers. Drawn into adventure for reasons of their own, these characters will write their exploits large against the map of the Hyborian world, making names for themselves as grand as that of Conan.

The adventures the players will experience are likewise set in Conan's world of the Hyborian Age, a place of exotic wonder, lost cities and haunted ruins, fierce combat, and loathsome horror. The central conflict of the age is that of civilization versus barbarism, a battle being played out across the kingdoms of mankind. Civilizations have risen and fallen, and peace is a fragile bulwark against the strivings of brutal warlords, ruthless queens, and blood-thirsty kings, as each grasps openly for power. Behind the illusory curtain of the material world is a darker reality, where ancient horrors and terrible curses lay in wait for those who dare to explore the forgotten places. Decadent sorcery and monstrous evil lurk at the fringes, a source for the power-mad to exert their will upon others. Scholars of the age believe that the great and ancient serpent-god Set coils about the world and sows the seeds of destruction, opposed only by Mitra and his servants, while others believe that their own gods are dominant throughout the cosmos.

Into this world the characters are thrust... some in search of adventure, others glory. Like Conan, some may be driven by wanderlust, a restless desire to see the world in its wholeness. Some are driven by a thirst for vengeance, or simply seek wealth and all that comes with it. Others, too, seek power, whether earned with steel or bargained by desperate pacts. In time, perhaps some of these characters may become kings or queens by their own hands, but those fates have yet to be made...

NEW TO ROLEPLAYING GAMES?

If you have had prior experience with roleplaying games, you can safely skip ahead to the next chapter. If this is your first experience with tabletop roleplaying games, by all means continue reading.

Ultimately, roleplaying games are about stretching the imagination to have fun, a framework within which the participants can imagine they are heroic adventurers in a bygone age of savage and exotic wonder. The rules present a system to help everyone agree on what happens, encouraging everyone's imagination to work together to make sure that the experience is as fair as it is exciting.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

To get the most out of these rules and begin your adventures in the Hyborian Age, it's strongly recommended that you assemble the following before beginning:

A GAMEMASTER

In **Conan**, one player must be the gamemaster (abbreviated as the GM), essentially the host of the game, the one who gets to set the scenes, describe environments, present interesting puzzles and encounters, and portray characters not controlled by the other players. The same person does not always have to be the gamemaster, but for longer or connected games it makes more sense than to have a different gamemaster each week.

PLAYERS

Every game needs players. In addition to the gamemaster, one to six players will each take the roles of the player characters. The players work together to face the gamemaster's



challenges, explaining how their player characters are acting or responding to their environment, and ensure everyone involved is having fun. It's possible to play with more than six people, but the more players, the less time each player gets to share the spotlight.


PLAYER CHARACTERS

Every player will need a player character. *Chapter Two: Characters* and *Chapter Three: Skills & Talents* present all of the information players need to create new characters.

DICE

Conan uses two common types of dice found in most hobby and game stores. These are twenty-sided dice (abbreviated as d20s), and six-sided dice (abbreviated as d6s). Ideally, the group will have at least two d20s per player and two or more for the gamemaster. These d20s are used for several different tasks, such as performing skill tests, determining hit locations during combat, and determining results from

tables, such as those found during character creation. The dice are used to help determine the magnitude of certain game effects, such as physical damage during combat, mental damage sustained from terrifying or traumatic events, and any other effects suffered by the characters. More d20s are helpful, as players and the gamemaster can roll up to half a dozen d20s at a time, depending on the circumstances.

Additionally, you will need a dozen or more d6s for the group. When these dice are used in **Conan**, they are called combat dice (abbreviated as  elsewhere in these rules). It is recommended the group has a large number of d6s (combat dice) available. The players will generally need three to six to determine damage, and the gamemaster may need a dozen or more as a resource, if beads or other tokens are not being used (see below).

If dice are scarce, they can be shared between the players and gamemaster. Additionally, Modiphius makes special **Conan** dice, with certain numbers replaced with a Phoenix symbol (the blessed sign of Mitra described in "The Phoenix on the Sword", the first Conan story), but



these are not required. Special combat (described on page 109) are also available and useful, but are also not essential.

PAPER AND PENCILS

These are used to draw maps, keep notes, and track various game effects. The players will want these to make note of temporary impairments affecting their characters, and to keep track of clues, important events, and characters they meet during their adventures. The gamemaster may wish to use paper and pencil to track the status and health of other beings in the game, as well as to draw maps for encounters, or write notes to remember key details from the session. Sometimes the gamemaster can pass notes to players, to keep from announcing them out loud. It's possible to keep track of all of this with tablets, smartphones, or laptop computers, but electronic devices at the game table can be distracting and should only be used with the gamemaster's consent.

TOKENS, BEADS, OR CHIPS

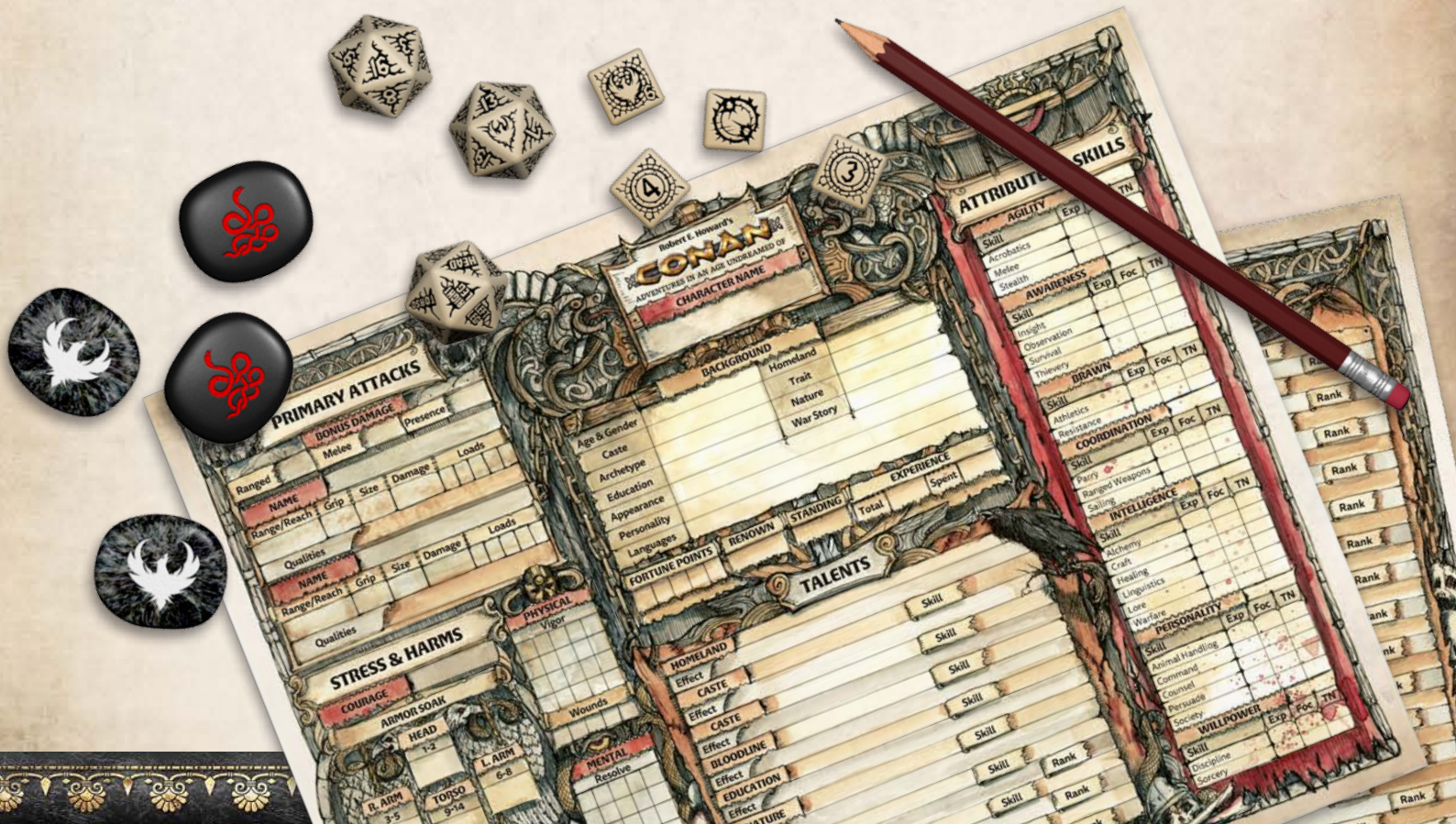
To play **Conan**, the group will need three types of these counters: at least five per player character to track Momentum points; at least three per player character for Fortune points; and a dozen or more for the gamemaster's Doom pool. Each of these resources is described later in the rules. The more players, the more of these counters of each type are needed. These can be all the same type of counter, but different colors are advised. These can be



MATERIAL SPLENDOR

You can acquire official CONAN combat dice, hit location dice, and special d20s showing the sign of the Phoenix (as well as a wide range of other accessories, counters, sourcebooks, cards, and other materials) from www.modiphius.com/conan. Other than this core rulebook, none of these items are required to play, but all are useful to enhance gameplay, and each has been chosen to add to the experience of adventuring in the Hyborian Age.

anything, ranging from poker chips, coins, glass beads such as found in hobby stores, special game counters, or other small chits or tokens.


While these different resource pools can be tracked on paper, using dice as counters, or even smartphone apps, tracking these resources with physical items — such as tokens, beads, poker chips, or even other dice — has a number of advantages. First, it is easier to track the resources by simply adding or removing tokens from each resource pool, and second, it makes it much easier for everyone to know how many of each of these resources remain for each of the other players and the gamemaster. Finally, there is an exciting psychological element as the players watch the gamemaster's Doom pool increase, heightening the tension and a growing sense of unease, as Doom is the resource used by the gamemaster to make life more difficult for the player characters.





In one of these dens merriment thundered to the low smoke-stained roof, where rascals gathered in every stage of rags and tatters — furtive cut-purses, leering kidnappers, quick-fingered thieves, swaggering bravoos with their wenches, strident-voiced women clad in tawdry finery. Native rogues were the dominant element — dark-skinned, dark-eyed Zamorians, with daggers at their girdles and guile in their hearts. But there were wolves of half a dozen outland nations there as well. There was a giant Hyperborean renegade, taciturn, dangerous, with a broadsword strapped to his great gaunt frame — for men wore steel openly in the Maul. There was a Shemitish counterfeiter, with his hook nose and curled blue-black beard. There was a bold-eyed Brythunian wench, sitting on the knee of a tawny-haired Gunderman — a wandering mercenary soldier, a deserter from some defeated army. And the fat gross rogue whose bawdy jests were causing all the shouts of mirth was a professional kidnapper come up from distant Koth to teach woman-stealing to Zamorians who were born with more knowledge of the art than he could ever attain.

— “The Tower of the Elephant”



CHARACTERS

Players play the game through their player characters, fictional creations defined with a series of values that describe their abilities and general qualities. These player characters take on personalities of their own, and can be wildly different from the players who create them. Like Conan himself, player characters do not always have to be heroic, but can be roguish, dastardly, boisterous, or cunning, just as readily as they can be heroic, generous, loyal, and optimistic. Like real people, player characters can be a mix of these, and their personalities are expressed by the players, and can be guided by events in their personal histories and backgrounds.

A great part of the enjoyment of roleplaying games is in creating original player characters, and this chapter describes how to do so.

The term “character” applies to both player characters (those representing and controlled by players) and non-player characters (characters controlled by the gamemaster). While non-player characters (NPCs) are treated somewhat differently in some aspects of the game systems, they are otherwise similar to player characters and thus, the use of “character” in this chapter applies to both player characters and non-player characters.



STEPS IN CREATING A CHARACTER

There are ten steps used in the process of generating a new player character. Each character is made up of four component parts — **attributes, skills, talents, and equipment** — and each of these is described in the pages that follow. Each stage of the character creation process will increase one or more of these aspects. All of these aspects are cumulative, and as players work through the different steps of the character creation process, the results for each step are added onto the character being created, improving and enhancing the existing traits.

While this chapter presents the steps as a series of tables with results generated by random dice rolls, players can choose deliberately to generate a desired result, rather than allowing chance to guide their choice. This way, the

character generation system should never stand in the way of a desired character concept, and some players may begin the character creation process with a clear idea about what sort of player character is desired. Characters may change from the initial conception as they go through different steps, and in some cases they may develop in surprising ways!

At this point, anyone wishing to create a character should have a pre-printed character sheet handy. These are presented on page 130 of this rulebook and downloadable at www.modiphius.com/conan. It's possible to just use a sheet of plain paper, but a character sheet presents the information in an orderly fashion.

It's a good idea to use a pencil when writing down information and notes during character creation, as values for attributes, skills, and talents are likely to change during the process.

Additionally, the section titled *Random Character Creation* on page 41 presents an alternate and quicker means of creating a player character, trusting the character's makeup and background entirely to the results of dice rolling.

STEP ONE: HOMELAND

The various kingdoms, countries, and regions of the Hyborian world are described in *Chapter Eight: The Hyborian World* of the **Conan corebook**. Roll 2d20 and add the results together, or have the players pick the desired result. In some cases, the gamemaster may wish to guide or influence homelands, or restrict them if they are unsuitable.

Once the character's homeland has been determined, players are encouraged to read the relevant section for more information. The selection of a character's starting homeland grants a talent to the character, and each character can speak the language of their homeland. For cases where more than one language is provided, the player must pick one of the languages the character knows.

It is possible that the character's land of birth is not the same as the one they were raised in. For example, the player might decide that the character was born in Shem but was enslaved as a child and raised in Stygia. In cases like these, use the alternate homeland as the one to base talent and language choice from. Such backgrounds should not yield additional talents or languages: the player must pick one influential homeland and use the results it provides.

HOMELAND TALENTS

Once homeland is determined (randomly or by choice), the player should write down the associated homeland talent and language. Your character will have a variety of talents, learned from various phases of character creation and earned with experience through game play. Homeland

talents are described below and languages are discussed later in the chapter, on pages 38 and 62.

The effects of the homeland talents are presented here. Other types of talents exist, and will be explained later in *Chapter Three: Skills & Talents*. Any talent that reduces a skill's Difficulty cannot reduce it below Simple (Do).

HOMELAND, TALENT, AND LANGUAGE			
Roll	Homeland	Talent	Language
2-7	Aquilonia	Cosmopolitan	Aquilonian
8-9	Bossonian Marches	Hunter	Aquilonian
10	Keshan	Savage Court	Keshani
11	Kush	Strife	Kushite
12	Khoraja	Cosmopolitan	Shemitish or Kothic
13	Cimmeria	Hunter	Cimmerian
14	Hyperborea	Savage Court	Hyperborean
15	Border Kingdom	Strife	Nemedian or Hyperborean
16	Nordheim: Asgard or Vanaheim	Winter-born	Nordheimer
17	Ophir	Gilded	Ophirian
18	Koth	Strife	Kothic
19	Argos	Sea Raider	Argossean
20	Gunderland	Hunter	Aquilonian
21	Brythunia	Cosmopolitan	Brythunian
22	Nemedia	Cosmopolitan	Nemedian
23	Zamora	Honest Corruption	Zamorian
24	Shem	Strife	Shemitish
25	Zingara	Sea Raider	Zingaran
26	Corinthia	Strife	Corinthian
27	Stygia	Desert-born	Stygian
28	Khauran	Cosmopolitan	Shemitish or Kothic
29	Zimbabwe	Desert-born	Zimbabwean
30	Punt	Gilded	Punt
31	The Black Kingdoms	Strife	Kushite, Keshani, Punt, or Darfari
32	Darfari	Savage Court	Darfari
33-34	Turan	Gilded	Turanian
35-36	Hyrkania	Of Saddle and Bow	Hyrkanian
37-38	Iranistan or Afghulistan	Desert-born	Iranistani or Afghuli
39	Vendhya	Gilded	Vendhyan
40	Khitai	Savage Court	Khitan

Cosmopolitan

Your homeland has many visitors and people dwelling within it, all with different customs and tongues. When speaking with a non-player character that also has the *Cosmopolitan* talent, it is assumed that you each possess enough of each other's languages in common that you are considered fluent when speaking with one another.

Desert-born

Your homeland is a vicious and arid one, harsh and indifferent to its inhabitants. When in the desert, the number of successes required for any Survival test you attempt is reduced by 1. This can even reduce tests to a Difficulty of Simple (Do), usually an automatic success. However, when attempting Survival tests in areas offering the *Winter-born* talent, you must achieve 1 additional level of success.

Gilded

In a land where gold is commonplace, you have learned to spot those pretending to have wealth. In every scene, you can attempt to make a free Average (D1) Thievery or Craft test to gain a general feel for the wealth of a particular non-player character, or even the relative worth of an environment.

Honest Corruption

In a land of corrupt merchants and honest thieves, you have gained a sixth sense about those who are likely to betray you. When interacting with a non-player character for the first time, you can make a free Average (D1) Thievery or Counsel test to gain a general feel for the trustworthiness of the non-player character.

Hunter

You've lived with the wild as a constant neighbor, and know how to take from that environment what is necessary for survival. When in the rural parts of your homeland, the Difficulty for any Survival tests you attempt is reduced by 1, even if this reduces the Difficulty of the test to Simple (Do).

Of Saddle and Bow

Hyrkanian riders are renowned for their facility while on horseback, with stories of these horse archers reaching far and wide. As one of these riders, you count as having the *Hunter* talent so long as you have a horse and bow ready for use. You can also reduce the Difficulty of any Animal Handling test by 1, even if this reduces the Difficulty of the test to Simple (Do).

Savage Court

With civility being a new addition to your homeland, it is difficult to know when the old ways will rise to the surface. In any scene within your homeland, you can make a free Challenging (D2) Lore test. Each point of Momentum gives

EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION: HOMELAND

Samantha is sitting down to create a character. She has decided to roll randomly when determining her character's homeland. She rolls 2d20 and gets a 12 and a 10, adding them together for a result of "22". Samantha consults the *Homeland, Talent, and Language* table, and determines that her character is Nemedian.

The associated talent is *Cosmopolitan*, and her character's native language is Nemedian. Samantha writes this information on her character sheet, and then follows the page reference and reads a little bit about her character's homeland.

- HOMELAND: Nemedia
- LANGUAGES: Nemedian
- HOMELAND TALENT: *Cosmopolitan*

Now it's on to the next step, determining the character's attributes.

you a general idea as to how easily it would be to overturn the civility of the moment and cause savage old emotions to rule the day.

Sea Raider

The Difficulty of all Sailing tests made in your homeland's waters are reduced by 1. This can reduce tests to a Difficulty of Simple (Do). Additionally, the Difficulties of any Athletics tests relating to swimming are similarly reduced.

Strife

With fractious nobles and near-constant civil war, it pays to be attentive. Each day when in your homeland, you can make a free Simple (Do) Lore test. Each point of Momentum gives you a general idea as to whether there will be a major disturbance that day. While matters can take a turn at any point (and this doesn't account for the actions of you or your allies) this test should provide accurate — if nonspecific — information about the general feel of the region.

Winter-born

Born in a place of deep winter and intense cold, often spanning the entire year, you are accustomed to frigid climes. When in wintry environments, the number of successes required for any Survival test you attempt is reduced by 1. This can even reduce tests to a Difficulty of Simple (Do). However, you must achieve 1 additional level of success when attempting Survival tests in areas offering the *Desert-born* talent.

STEP TWO: ATTRIBUTES

Each character in *Conan* is defined by seven attributes. These attributes embody a character's intrinsic physical and mental abilities and limitations. They are: **Agility**, **Awareness**, **Brawn**, **Coordination**, **Intelligence**, **Personality**, and **Willpower**.

Each attribute has a rating that determines its measure. Higher attribute numbers reflect greater ability. For humans, most attributes range from 6 to 12, with 8 representing an average rating. It is possible for human attribute ratings below 6 to reflect particularly inept, weak, or poor attributes. Additionally, humanity has descended from prior heights of development, and some human attributes may have ratings above 12 to reflect an *Ancient Bloodline* (see the talent on page 11). Furthermore, non-humans — a range that includes animals, beasts, monsters, and creatures of dark sorcery — may have attributes that vary across a broader range, going below 6 and far above 12.

Each attribute is described below, as well as the bonus it provides and the skills it governs. These latter aspects are described in greater detail later in this chapter.



- **Agility:** Agility is the measure of your physical and manual dexterity, sense of balance, and body control. This attribute governs the Acrobatics, Melee, and Stealth skills.
- **Awareness:** Awareness represents perception and sense acuity across all five of the key senses: vision, hearing, feeling, taste, and smell. Awareness governs Insight, Observation, Survival, and Thievery, and determines your bonus damage with ranged weapons.
- **Brawn:** A measure of might, endurance, toughness, and the physical force you can exert, Brawn governs Athletics and Resistance, and determines your close combat damage bonus and the Vigor reserve, the amount of physical injury or stress that you can withstand.
- **Coordination:** The Coordination attribute describes hand-eye coordination, aim, and ability to navigate within one's surroundings, both physically and mentally. Coordination governs the Parry, Ranged Weapons, and Sailing skills.
- **Intelligence:** Intelligence is the measure of your wit, intellect, and a combination of studies and cunning learned on the streets. Intelligence governs Craft, Healing, Linguistics, and Lore, as well as less-common skills like Alchemy and Warfare.
- **Personality:** A measure of your charisma, ease of social interaction, and ability to be charming or deceptive as needed. Personality governs skills such as Animal Handling, Command, Counsel, Persuade, and Society. Personality also determines your bonus damage for Threaten actions.
- **Willpower:** A person's force of will, and mental resolve, the Willpower attribute governs Discipline and Sorcery. Equally as important, Willpower determines your Resolve capacity, the reserve of sanity that prevents mental trauma.

STARTING ATTRIBUTES

All characters usually begin with a starting value of 7 in every attribute. With the gamemaster's permission, the player can voluntarily reduce one or two attributes to 6 and raise an equal number of attributes to 8.

Once this decision is made, the designated attribute aspects (from the Attributes table following), are applied to the character's attributes. Players should roll twice on this table, so that their characters gain two attribute aspects, determined by random roll or by player choice.

After determining the character's two attribute aspects (or one attribute aspect if the same result is rolled twice),

the character gains two mandatory and one optional attribute increase (picking one of the two optional attributes presented).

The player selects a “best” and a “worst” attribute from amongst all four of their mandatory attributes. The best attribute increases by +3, and the worst increases by +1. All other mandatory attributes increase by +2. A character can have the same mandatory attribute aspect twice, but cannot choose the same aspect as best and worst.

Optional attributes improve the chosen attribute by +1.

The attribute totals generated above should be written upon the character sheet, but may change upon further steps of character generation. These may increase attributes to above the normal human maximum of 12. As the character is generated, the player can choose to change or ignore any choice that pushes an attribute above 12, and can ignore the additional points completely, if desired.

If an attribute increases to above 12, the character immediately gains the *Ancient Bloodline* talent, described in the adjacent box. Though this talent does allow for attributes to increase past the human maximum, it means that the character stands out as being different, and may be subject to fear, discrimination, persecution, and other forms of bigotry.

Even with this talent, no attribute may exceed 14. Any points in excess are ignored.

In summary, attribute aspects offer the following, based on two rolls on the *Attributes* table:

- **Mandatory Attributes:** Four attributes are determined as “mandatory”. If the same result is rolled or picked, then only two attributes are mandatory.
- **Best and Worst Attributes:** One mandatory attribute is designated as the “best”, and another is the “worst”. The best attribute gains a +3 bonus and the worst a +1 bonus. The other mandatory attributes

ANCIENT BLOODLINE

The *Ancient Bloodline* talent indicates that you are obviously descended from one of the great fallen civilizations, peoples whose physical and mental attributes were greater than those of the folk of the Hyborian Age. Whether their parentage descends from the isles of sunken Atlantis or the ruined empire of Acheron, you visibly stand out as a beacon of excellence... or depravity.

With this talent, any time you fail to make a Personality test of any kind, the player must immediately pay the gamemaster 1 Doom point, and will gain an additional d20, adding its result to the test. The test is otherwise resolved in the normal fashion. If the player has already spent Doom points to gain 3d20 to modify the Personality roll, the player must pay the Doom point but does not get to roll the additional d20.

It is recommended that the gamemaster use Doom points gained in this manner to harden the hearts of nearby non-player characters capable of witnessing the interaction, strengthening their resolve, manifesting itself in ancient hatred and fear against these long-forgotten foes of their race. If this is not appropriate as a result, it can be ignored and the Doom points spent as the gamemaster sees fit.

are increased by +2 each. If any of these attributes are the same (best/worst and other mandatory), the bonuses are stacked.

- **Optional Attributes:** One attribute is picked from the two options offered for each roll. Each of these attributes is increased by +1.

ATTRIBUTES

Roll	Attribute Aspects	Mandatory Attribute	Mandatory Attribute	Optional Attribute	Optional Attribute
1-2	Strong and Resolute	Brawn	Willpower	Personality	Intelligence
3-4	Acute and Aware	Awareness	Intelligence	Agility	Coordination
5-6	Fast and Fit	Agility	Brawn	Coordination	Awareness
7-8	Eagle-eyed	Awareness	Coordination	Intelligence	Personality
9-10	Wise and Friendly	Intelligence	Personality	Coordination	Brawn
11-12	Socially Adept	Awareness	Personality	Agility	Willpower
13-14	Brave or Foolhardy	Agility	Willpower	Brawn	Coordination
15-16	Dexterous	Agility	Coordination	Brawn	Willpower
17-18	Charismatic	Personality	Willpower	Awareness	Intelligence
19-20	Warrior-born	Awareness	Brawn	Agility	Coordination

EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION: ATTRIBUTES

Samantha's character's attributes all begin with a value of 7. When asked by the gamemaster if she wants to reduce two of them to 6 and raise another two to 8, she decides against it.

She rolls twice on the *Attributes* table instead of picking results, and gets results of 9 and 10: "Wise and Friendly", twice. Samantha decides to maximize her character's Personality, and designates that attribute as her character's "best". Intelligence is designated as the "worst", or weakest, attribute.

Thus, her character's Personality attribute increases by +3 and +2, for a total of +5. Intelligence increases by +2 and +1, for a total of +3.

Samantha chooses both Brawn and Coordination as optional attributes, raising them each by +1.

Since all attributes begin with a value of 7 before being modified, Samantha's character emerges from this step with the attributes shown below.

Samantha notices that her character is smart and good with people, as represented by her high Intelligence and Personality attributes. This is useful to know, and will help guide some of her decisions to come in the steps ahead.

Because none of Samantha's character's attributes increased to above 12, her character is not the inheritor of one of the ancient bloodlines found in the Hyborian Age, a mixed blessing.

Attribute	Starting	Mandatory	Optional	Best	Worst	Total
Agility	7					7
Awareness	7					7
Brawn	7		Yes, +1			8
Coordination	7		Yes, +1			8
Intelligence	7	Yes, +2			Yes, +1	10
Personality	7	Yes, +2		Yes, +3		12
Willpower	7					7

STEP THREE: CASTE

Caste is the social class from which the character was born and/or has emerged. Generally, this will have been the character's class since birth, though occasionally nobles are enslaved and barbarians become kings and queens. Caste is determined as normal, with a dice roll or picked.

Caste grants two caste talents, one skill, and a story. Unlike most talents, caste talents are not part of a regular talent tree and are instead based on years of prior learning. As such, they are seldom available after character creation.

The skill gained adds +1 Skill Expertise and +1 Skill Focus to the designated skill.

Skills will be described more fully in *Chapter Three: Skills and Talents*, but in short, skills represent learned experience within a particular activity. To determine the chance of success for a particular skill, Skill Expertise is added to the associated attribute. Skill Focus represents additional aptitude, and is initially linked with Skill Expertise (but can vary later).

The caste-based story (determined in *Step Four: Story*, page 22) will determine the character's character trait (page 16) and can be rolled or chosen as normal. Note that even though the members of some castes are expected to possess wealth, caste does not determine wealth. Wealth must be acquired through separate means. Caste also determines Social Standing, which can impact a range of social situations.

Based on your character's homeland (determined in *Step One: Homeland*, on page 7) you may choose to ignore the dice roll and pick a desired result, modifying the title to something more appropriate to the homeland.



CASTE DESCRIPTIONS

These castes are generic in nature and may or may not apply to a particular homeland. When they are unsuitable, the player and/or gamemaster are encouraged to suggest an alternate caste.

CASTE, CASTE TALENTS, SKILL GAINED, SOCIAL STANDING

Roll	Caste	Caste Talents	Skill	Story	Social Standing
1-2	Crafter	Subject, Tradesman	Craft	Page 16	1
3-4	Escaped Serf/Slave	Embittered, Vagabond	Survival	Page 16	0
5-6	Farmer	Homesteader, Subject	Animal Handling	Page 17	1
7-8	Herder	Sentry, Subject	Animal Handling	Page 18	1
9-12	Merchant	Tradesman, Vagabond	Persuade	Page 19	1
13-14	Outcast	Embittered, Survivor	Thievery	Page 20	0
15-16	Petty Nobility	Sheltered, Subject	Command	Page 20	2
17-18	Priesthood	Priest, Subject	Lore	Page 21	2
19-20	Warrior	Sentry, Subject	Parry	Page 22	1

Crafter**Caste Talents:** *Subject, Tradesman***Skill Gained:** Craft

There is an honesty in the way hammer hits metal, or how the awl bites into the wood. You've learned to trust in the objects you make, far more than those who might use them. When war-drums beckon, your purse swells with gold, and in peace-time it is sometimes difficult to make ends meet. Perhaps it's time you packed up your tools and went looking for a new war.

Escaped Serf/Slave**Caste Talents:** *Embittered, Vagabond***Skill Gained:** Survival

Whether from an open field or within the confines of the deepest mine, you were caught and forced into labor, a fate you despised. One day an opportunity presented itself, and you set yourself free. Now you look back only to see if your former masters are searching for you.

Farmer**Caste Talents:** *Homesteader, Subject***Skill Gained:** Animal Handling

Born to the field, you learned your parents' lessons well. One day, though, the time came when you had to face the open road. Perhaps your farm was razed to the ground, or suffered blight, or you simply sought a life other than that of a farmer. Whether your memory is filled with regrets or swimming with excitement, you feel a connection to the soil and to those who work to reap its bounty.

Herder**Caste Talents:** *Sentry, Subject***Skill Gained:** Animal Handling

There are wolves at the edge of every land. Some walk on four feet, others on two. Regardless of where these

SOCIAL STANDING

Social standing represents different social expectations the characters will possess. For those at the bottom of society, those at the top often seem to have an easier life — standing is often accompanied by wealth and prestige. For those at the top, those at the bottom live simpler lives, less complicated by politics and etiquette. When a character attempts a Command, Society, or Persuade test where the character's relative social standing would have an impact, the gamemaster may modify the test accordingly, increasing or decreasing the test Difficulty by one or more steps in either direction. Sometimes having higher status can demand obedience, other times, a lower status can help a character avoid scrutiny... but similarly, a difference in status can hinder communication simply because of different expectations and standards of etiquette.

predators come from, they inevitably seek to steal from your flock. It is up to you to stop them. Even though you've taken to a different life and your original flock is long gone, this basic fact hasn't changed, and you remain ever-vigilant.

Merchant**Caste Talents:** *Tradesman, Vagabond***Skill Gained:** Persuade

In vast families joined by convention and marriage there is little room for the youngest child to thrive. Still, whether you managed your uncle's stalls, sold jewels found by thieves in the Maul, or supervised caravans between mighty cities, you know there is profit in providing the rare to the wealthy. Perhaps in this there is room enough for you to make your mark.

Outcast

Caste Talents: *Embittered, Survivor*

Skill Gained: Thievery

Met with disgusted eyes from even the slaves, outcasts are the beggars and petty thieves that skulk in alleys, sifting through rubbish for something to sell. While each nation treats outcasts differently, none treat them well, and you are used to hostility, or indifference at best, wherever you go.

Petty Nobility

Caste Talents: *Sheltered, Subject*

Skill Gained: Command

Your family has little need for you, as you were born far outside the line of succession. Your father sent you away; his parting words telling you to “find your own sort of glory, or fail and be forgotten” are seared into your mind. You have unlimited opportunities to find your own way, but you may find trouble should your family’s enemies learn of your forays.

Priesthood

Caste Talents: *Priest, Subject*

Skill Gained: Lore

The gods are real and active in the world around you, a fact you know for certain. They require sacrifice and dedication, and are not as merciful as we would hope. Whether your worship is from love, fear, ambition, or tradition, you have the certainty needed to navigate their most complicated rites and to ensure they do not inflict curses upon those you would protect.

Warrior

Caste Talents: *Sentry, Subject*

Skill Gained: Parry

One of your parents fought and died in battle. Your grandparent died guarding a city wall, having seen nothing more than the occasional tavern brawl. There was never a choice as to whether you’d pick up the blade as a calling, only the question as to how you’d turn profit from it.



CASTE TALENTS

Each caste offers two talents to improve your character. These should be written on the character sheet in the “Talents” section. As with the homeland talents (described on pages 14–15) these offer benefits to skill use, and are

EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION: CASTE AND CASTE TALENTS

Now that Samantha’s character’s homeland and initial attributes are determined, it’s time for her to determine her character’s caste and the associated caste talent. She rolls a d20 and gets a result of 10, indicating that her caste is “Merchant”. Given her character’s high Intelligence and Personality, this makes sense.

She notes that her caste talents are Tradesman and Vagabond, and she gains +1 Skill Focus and +1 Skill Expertise with the Persuade skill. She marks all of this down.

■ CASTE: Merchant

■ CASTE TALENTS: *Tradesman, Vagabond*

Skills	Caste	Expertise	Focus
Persuade	Merchant	1	1

Now it’s time for Samantha to move onto *Step Four: Story*, and she’s starting to get some ideas about what sort of character she’s creating.

described later in this chapter. Talents that reduce the Difficulty of a task cannot lower it below Simple (Do).

As with the caste descriptions above, the description of the caste talents can be interpreted to suit a particular homeland, though the modifiers should remain unchanged.

Embittered

You have long since given up fealty to your lord. You avoid taxes and play fast-and-loose with the law. Within the borders of your homeland, *Embittered* reduces your Social Standing by 2, and as a result, reduces the cost of your Upkeep. Outcasts are at –2 Social Standing and escaped slaves at –1, hence Upkeep is reduced by –2 and –1, respectively.

Homesteader

You’ll take the wide vistas of crops and fields over the cramped, stinking confines of a city any day. So long as you are in your homeland, you reduce the Difficulty of Survival tests by one. This may reduce tests to Simple (Do).

Priest

You are an ordained priest in one of the land’s many cults. Wherever in a town or city your faith has a presence, you may spend time amidst the faithful before traveling again. When Carousing, if you do not have sufficient Gold to pay your Upkeep, you may turn to your order for support. If you



do so, you are required to donate all remaining Gold you have. If you attempt to cheat your order out of any of the Gold they are owed, you are expelled from the order and lose access to this talent until restitution or some sort of penance has been made (at the gamemaster's discretion).

Sentry

You learned at a young age that the watchful eye subsists on little rest. So long as you have had a total of four hours of sleep within the last two days (either one four-hour stretch or multiple short rests), you suffer no penalties for sleep deprivation when making Observation tests.

Sheltered

You led a remarkably sheltered existence, buffered by family and servants against the rigors and dangers of the outside world. The prestige of your family means that you find many willing to pay for your room and board, so long as you are suitably grateful upon future visits. Whenever you enter a new town or city, you may seek out shelter from those willing to support you; these people pay your Upkeep. However, they are liable to ask for further compensation — either in Gold, or in the form of a favor — at some later juncture.

Subject

You are a subject in good standing to a lord or king. While subject to their laws, the taxes you face are much less than the more expensive taxes others experience. Whenever you pay Upkeep within your homeland, you can reduce the amount of Gold the Upkeep costs by one.

*“What purgatory can be worse than life itself?
So we are all damned together from birth.”*

— Valerius, *The Hour of the Dragon*

Survivor

Deprivation has been all too common in your life. When you are deprived of obvious sources of food and water, you reduce the Difficulty of Survival tests by one. This may reduce tests to Simple (Do).

Tradesman

You have passed apprenticeship with a tradesman or within a guild. While your talent may be mediocre or worse, at least you have a fallback plan. When Carousing, if you do not have sufficient Gold to pay your Upkeep, you may offer your services to a tradesman or to a guild in order to cover your Upkeep. However, you may not take any other actions during that period of Carousing.

Vagabond

The road is more home to you than any town or city ever has been. Whether a nomad by choice or necessity, you can reduce the Difficulty of Survival tests by one, so long as you are on a maintained road. This may reduce the Difficulty of tests to Simple (Do).



STEP FOUR: STORY

Based on your character's caste, roll on (or pick from) the story tables presented in this step. These suggest background elements and ask questions that the player can answer, or the player can choose to leave these questions unanswered, as desired. Players with a specific character origin or backstory in mind may wish to ignore this step and simply ask the gamemaster to assign an appropriate trait.

Traits are elements of your character's background that you can evoke in play, potentially regaining spent Fortune points. These vital resources are described more fully in *Chapter Nine: Gamemastering*. For now, simply make a note of your event and trait on your character sheet.

As with caste (*Step Three: Caste*, pages 12–15), the stories presented here are subject to interpretation based on the character's homeland.

CRAFTER STORIES

Roll	Event	Trait
1–3	Exalted Mark	Suspicious
4–6	Gifted Mark	Unworthy
7–10	The Quiet Hours of Peace	Secret Past
11–14	Pressed for War	Envious Peers
15–17	Too Many Closed Mines	Criminal Past
18–20	Sundered Mark	Cast Aside

Exalted Mark

Your mark has been added to the roll of honor in your local town. This was likely a political decision, as you'd only just passed from apprenticeship to tradesman. You were quite naive when you were invested, but now that you've had time to ponder the matter, you think you know who was behind it. Who are they, what motives did they have, and do you deserve to be among the invested?

Gifted Mark

Your mark is that of your grandfather: a mark proudly passed on to all his apprentices to show that they conform to the family tradition. There is a problem, though. Having witnessed the many wondrous designs and creations of your kin, you suspect you are unworthy to use the mark. It started before the old man died, when he criticized your work, and his stern words became a shadow in the back of your mind. What was his criticism, and do you still use the mark?

The Quiet Hours of Peace

Your apprenticeship fell in a lull between wars between neighboring powers. Though you still had hours of drudgery in which to learn your trade, making weapons was low on the list of priorities. You had to work such craftsmanship out for yourself. Your first self-made blade was balanced poorly and its edge was fragile, but you needed it and you were unwilling to steal a blade. Why did you need the blade, and did it serve its purpose?

Pressed for War

Your apprenticeship came to you as siege engines fired over the bulwarks of your city and shattered the walls and roofs within. The blacksmiths made weapons and armor constantly, and often enough you were handed a box of scrap metal and told "get to it". After ten days, you'd done more work than most journeymen and produced some quality work, despite the pressures outside. What was your greatest creation from that time? What came of it?

Too Many Closed Mines

You passed your apprenticeship, but only barely so. Ore was rare and mines were largely worked out. You had to scavenge with some of your fellow apprentices to try and find enough ore to work with. When you finally found some, a gang of prospectors tried to steal it from you. What happened? Did you get enough metal to achieve the journeyman rank, or did you have to look elsewhere?

Sundered Mark

You have caused dire offense to the guild of your home town, and now your family's mark has been stricken from memory. Where it once hung, the mark has been scraped clean, filled in, and painted over. Very few examples of your craft remain, and folk will only buy your wares at a significant discount. While you can still earn your way performing your craft, it is only because of what few friends will still stand by you. How did you earn the ire of the guild, and who can you still count on?

ESCAPED SERF/SLAVE STORIES

Roll	Event	Trait
1–3	A Band of Brothers, Living Free	Regrets
4–6	Hidden Far from Noble Sight	Fond Memories
7–10	One of the Multitudes	Marked by the Pit
11–14	Under the Eyes of the Masters	Stalked like Prey
15–17	Hunted by Your Master	Nemesis
18–20	Hunted by the Law	Hunted!

A Band of Brothers, Living Free

Whether by your own hand or the will of another, you were freed, alone in the world. You found others like yourself, and formed a band. Through scavenging, work, and even theft, you supported one another, hidden within a ruined building on the fringe of society. Then something brought it to an end. Who betrayed your band? What, or who, were the guards looking for? Why do your former friends mistrust you?

Hidden Far from Noble Sight

Suddenly they died and you were alone. You could go anywhere, do anything. You took their money and spent every penny, constantly on the move. Then you found it: a perfect home, far from suspicious eyes. That home is gone now, just a memory that makes you smile. Where was that home, and what made it so special?

One of the Multitudes

Thousands of laborers toiled in the site as your master brought forth his vision. Conditions were cruel and many times you tasted the lash. As if by a miracle, the call came. As the uprising spread through the camp, with dozens of others you won your escape. Did you fight your oppressors valiantly, or did you slink away like a cur?

Under the Eyes of the Masters

They know you have escaped and they know where you have run. Perhaps they bide their time, or perhaps you are

not worth the cost of retrieval. Still you know the strange one from the blackened tower has spies that watch your every step. Why is the strange one so interested in you?

Hunted by Your Master

Your former master never forgot the indignity of your escape. Now with estate in ruins, she lives only for vengeance. Who is she and why does she hate you so much?

Hunted by the Law

They're on your track, crashing through taverns and looking in the alleys. Perhaps you committed the crime and it was worth it. Perhaps you are unjustly tormented. Either way, a trail of suffering follows in your wake. Whose suffering do you regret the most and what will you do to put them at ease?

FARMER STORIES

Roll	Event	Trait
1-3	Blessed Harvests	Family
4-6	Ample for Winter	Lost Love
7-10	Winter in the Balance	Vengeance
11-14	Meager Soup and Angry Eyes	Traitor
15-17	Not a Spare Bean	Trusted or Traitor
18-20	Famine	Cannibal



Blessed Harvests

You remember fondly how hard work made the ground spill its bounty and how the seasons seemed to be fair. You remember the fellowship of your loved ones. Where are they now?

Ample for Winter

Every day brought a small hardship that made you strong. The ground was hard in summer and slush in winter, yet when the stores had to be opened there was always enough barley for a strong drink and plenty of food. Looking back, you scarcely remember the people of your village. Should you return, they would scarce remember you. Perhaps there is someone there worth returning to see. Do you even remember that person's name?

Winter in the Balance

It was a struggle every year. The lord took plenty for his knights, leaving little for the common folk. Sometimes you ate, while other times you simply drank snow water and slept as the wolves howled. You remember no beauty in that bleak place — only the torments of the thieving knights. One knight in particular took pleasure in the hardship he inflicted. If you meet him again, will you take revenge? Why?

Meager Soup and Angry Eyes

Even the protectors of your village went hungry, and when they did, everyone suffered. Raids were planned on other villages, but you never saw any of the food they brought back. The only way to survive was by poaching, but the game was scarce and you had to keep your kills to yourself. Eventually, you were found out and the angry eyes of the villagers were terrible to behold. Were you punished, and did you ever redeem yourself?

Not a Spare Bean

You remember seeing the warrior die. He simply stopped and fell, his armor clattering on the stony ground. He had come to take taxes for the fifth time, but there was no food or other wealth to be had. When he learned he could take nothing from you and your kin, he just stopped, as if his soul had given up, onwards to some other place of plenitude. The horse was short work for the butcher and you were sent south to find someone to buy the man's sword. Did you find a buyer? Did you take the profits home?

Famine

When the crops were gone, you ate the beasts of the forest. Then you killed and shared the beasts that worked your fields. As water became a luxury, some in your village looked at the soft flesh of the masters and contemplated a different type of prey. As the knife sunk deep into the landowner's agent,

rain began to fall. You looked on in horror, as desperation revealed its ugliest side. You were forced to ask yourself the hardest question. How hungry were you?

HERDER STORIES

Roll	Event	Trait
1–3	A Heavy Lambing Season	Exotic tastes
4–6	Nights of Sweet Silence	Hedonist
7–10	Howls in the Night	Nightmares
11–14	A Decimated Herd	Survivor
15–17	Wolves Amongst the Flock	Compassionate
18–20	Raiders	Vengeful

A Heavy Lambing Season

You scarcely remember the work, but you'll never forget the noise. An endless chorus of bleats, swearing, and the wet sounds of butchery. When the season was over, you were rich enough to afford comforts your forebears had never indulged in. What did you get a taste for, and does it tempt you still?

Nights of Sweet Silence

You remember the hills where you rested, sandwiched between the grasses and scented herbs of the wild. The days were tender and the nights were long. You spent more time at play than at work, and gained memories that still lighten your heart, even in leaner years. Of these, what is your fondest memory?

Howls in the Night

Wolves were only an occasional threat, but tell that to your aunt. She was determined to make you a masterful wolf hunter, even if she had to beat the lessons into you. Despite all the training, you only remember hearing howls once. Your aunt woke you quietly and with you went into the forest, brandishing fire and steel. When you emerged into daylight, she seemed a hundred years older and you never slept properly again. What dreams haunt you still?

A Decimated Herd

The illness left many dead in its wake. Superstition had its way, and even more of the herd were sacrificed to save the healthy. When the plague had passed, only one in five lived. The herd was doomed. Your cattle master drove the remainder to town, where they were slaughtered and the money divided amongst you. In the morning, you found him hanged with a lock of his wife's hair still woven around his fingers. Just the night before he had seemed so wise. What was the last thing he said to you?

Wolves Amongst the Flock

It was only natural in the hard winter that the wolves would find you. At first, they were the nuisance they had always been, but as the snows grew deeper the tracks got larger. Somewhere in the forest, a great wolf was gathering a pack larger than any seen before. Foresters would go in gangs to gather firewood, but you quickly found yourself lost. In the snow while carrying a bundle of wet branches, you saw it and looked into its eyes. To this day those eyes haunt you. What did you see and why did it let you live?

Raiders

First there was nothing but thin trails of smoke, off in the distance. Soon there was the report of laughter, carried as if on the wind. In hushed tones, the old men of your village whispered a word that carried with it a weight of dread... "Raiders!" The fences were surrounded with traps and the able-bodied in your village were set as guards. On the third night the raiders struck. Half the herd was stolen and fifteen were placed upon the pyre. Finally, it was time for the young to speak and your voice joined many. What did you do, and what was the cost?

MERCHANT STORIES

Roll	Event	Trait
1-3	Extravagant Profits	Ostentatious
4-6	Profits from the Town	Spy
7-10	Profits from the Road	Well-traveled
11-14	The Lash of Taxation	Witness to Brutality
15-17	Hard-won Profits	Divided Family
18-20	Ruin	Vengeful

Extravagant Profits

There was only ever celebration in your grandfather's house. Granted a monopoly long ago, he sold his goods for a handsome price, and his competitors had no recourse when his soldiers confiscated or taxed their goods on the road to town. You were a noble in all but name, but it did not last. Now the old man is dead and the monopolies returned to the prince who increases the taxation on your properties to ruinous amounts. While he was alive, the old man had a motto that governed all his business dealings. What was that motto, and do you agree with it?

Profits from the Town

While working in your aunt's home you got to see many wealthy visitors stop by and broker purchases. You were young enough that they didn't pay you much mind unless you were serving wine. Consequently, you learned a great deal that the visitors didn't want your aunt to know. A

generous woman, she always made sure you were rewarded whenever a significant deal was brokered. What was your biggest score, and did the customer ever find out?

Profits from the Road

It seemed like you were always on the move. Taking goods from one town, trading them for goods in the next, pocketing some coin along the way. Spending the coin on some cheap wine, and then moving on. It was easy to become embittered about your cousins, living it up in the city while you plied your way through the expanses on dangerous caravan routes. Still, it's not like you didn't have adventures or see amazing sights. What was the most amazing thing you have ever seen?

The Lash of Taxation

Your local lord had grandiose dreams and a mind to have the merchants within his lands pay for them. You learned that sometimes a merchant needs to have two cargoes: one to be seen, and one to pay for the trip. You also witnessed firsthand what happens to smugglers. Who did you see suffering at the hands of the lord's soldiers?

Hard-won Profits

When you were young, a bandit lord took to plundering your family's caravans. At first, mercenaries were hired, but they deserted and joined the bandits in their plunder. Then, soldiers were borrowed from the king but the taxes on that service were exorbitant. You spoke up and offered a plan that made half your family revile you and the rest love you. What was your plan, and why was it so effective?

Ruin

Your family had been making profits and living well. You were not one of the most powerful families but you had enough long-lasting ties that your future seemed secure. Over the course of one banquet, all this changed. Your uncle offended one of the more powerful courtiers, and the courtier made it his mission to destroy your family. By the time the courtier was done, your family's name was in ruin. The king granted your rivals monopolies that blocked your goods from entry to the larger cities, and bandits harassed your caravans. When the fire took your family's estate, you were left thoroughly dispossessed. Now that you've started to rise, you must consider your options. What vengeance, if any, will you take upon the courtier? How will you escape his wrath?



OUTCAST STORIES

Roll	Event	Trait
1-3	The Charity of Honest Men	Honor Debt
4-6	The Charity of Pompous Priests	Thief!
7-10	Food and Rough Liquor	Fond Regrets
11-14	One of the Rabble	Betrayed
15-17	Shunned Even by Lepers	Cursed
18-20	Hunted by the Law	Hunted!

The Charity of Honest Men

While you might not be the most pathetic of the beggars, in a time of need a charitable man of means gave food and shelter enough to survive. What had enfeebled you, and who was your benefactor?

The Charity of Pompous Priests

As a display of piety, a priest took you in and read to you boring sermons, hour after hour. While you stayed with the priest, you saw many treasures and ate scraps that at any other table would be the height of dining. Did you take anything from the priest's home, and is your theft known?

Food and Rough Liquor

The rabble of your shanty might not have had much, but it was shared with cheer and many fond (if humble) memories were made. Now this shanty is no more. What befell its inhabitants? Did any survive?

One of the Rabble

There were hundreds squabbling over food in the shadows of the lord's fealty. Betrayal was a part of life, but you never expected it from your fellow outcasts. Who betrayed you, and why do you still feel the sting of the betrayal?

Shunned Even by Lepers

There was a time you were doing well for one of the ragged, but then something happened. You barely remember how or why it happened, but it marked you as surely as if it were branded upon your face. Why do the beggars spit at your shadow? Are there any that remember you with kindness?

Hunted by the Law

They're on your track, crashing through taverns and looking in the alleys you used to haunt. Perhaps you committed the crime and it was worth it. Perhaps you are unjustly persecuted. Either way, a trail of suffering follows in your wake. Whose suffering do you regret the most and what will you do to put them at ease?

PETTY NOBILITY STORIES

Roll	Event	Trait
1-3	Guest of a Greater Name	Chosen
4-6	Guest of a Rival	Conspiracy
7-10	Left to Your Own Devices	Adventurous
11-14	Exile to the Estates	Cast Aside
15-17	Scandal	Mocking Peers
18-20	Blood Feud	Feud

Guest of a Greater Name

At a young age, you piqued the attentions of one of the great nobles within your land. Their expectations were impossible to meet, but the training they offered you was second to none. While much of the training was typical, some of it was bizarre, to say the least. What strange knowledge did this notable personage seek to impart to you?

Guest of a Rival

You spent your childhood in the care of a political rival. You wanted for nothing, but there was an air of constant threat that made it hard for you to relax and thrive. One night, you wandered the halls and witnessed three warriors speaking in hushed tones about your host, your family's rival. What did you hear, and what did you do about it?

Left to Your Own Devices

Your home was a dull one, where little was expected of you. You could come and go as you saw fit. While others in your family suffered the responsibilities of your caste, you were free to pursue talents that a proper tutor might have deemed unsuitable. What did you get up to when no one was watching?

Exile to the Estates

You didn't think it would happen, but your parents decided that enough was enough, and sent you from the estate and holdings you had been raised within. Banished from civilization to miserable estates, you spent many years impoverished, abandoned by your family. What, if anything, did you do to provoke this banishment? Was it just? Did you ever make amends?

Scandal

Had they caught you in time you might have escaped with mere banishment. Instead, intervention came too late, and you brought scandal down upon your family, besmirching their good name to all within your sphere. Bribes were paid, and the offense was put behind you, but other nobles know what happened, and often speak ill of you behind your back. What was the scandal?



Blood Feud

The insult is deep. So deep that blood may not settle the debt it has incurred. Though the one who gave offense was banished, theirs was merely the most egregious of the insults and accusations heaped upon you and yours. There is only one solution: a blood feud. It matters not whether it was called by your enemies or your allies. The only things that matter are who your enemies are, and who will survive?

PRIESTHOOD STORIES

Roll	Event	Trait
1-3	A Time of Feasting and Merriment	Patronage
4-6	Beneficial Omens	Demanding Peers
7-10	A Place in Need of Guidance	Shrine Guardian
11-14	Intolerant Potentates	Righteous Disobedience
15-17	Ill Omens	Cursed
18-20	Forced Penance	Criminal Past

A Time of Feasting and Merriment

Your time as a novice has been quite unremarkable, but for you it's been a time of exposure to wise sages, great scholars, peace, and prosperity. Simply being in the presence of the

gifted has taught you many things. Primary amongst these is that even the gifted have moments of doubt or disgrace. You have even come to the aid of one of your land's more gifted artists. What aid did they require, and how did you help? Have they repaid the favor?

Beneficial Omens

Your birth was marked by strange omens, and your induction was conducted at a time when the stars were at their peak. Members of your order speak about you in hushed tones, worried about the meaning of so many omens surrounding your entry into their ranks. Occasionally, members of your order will come to you with strange tests and tasks, seeking answers to questions they will not share with you. What was your strangest task? Did you complete it, and were there any notable omens during its completion?

A Place in Need of Guidance

You rode into town with your master and two others, to bring the teachings of your god to the disbelievers. Your arrival was met with indifference, but over time you established a small shrine and some of the curious became worshippers. As offerings became more frequent, you drew the attention of a local noble, who threatened your shrine should he not be paid off. Your master refused to pay, and the consequences were dire. What happened to your shrine? What happened to the noble who set into motion its downfall?

EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION: STORY

Once more, Samantha trusts to the dice, letting the chips fall where they may. She rolls on the *Merchant Story* table and gets a result of 7, "Profits from the Road". She reads the description of this story, and notes that the trait it provides her is "Well-traveled". This fits in well with her notion of a roguish character with a diverse background, so she decides to stick with the results of the dice roll.

The trait does not have any immediate effects on her attributes or skills, and is not a talent. The gamemaster explains to Samantha that during the course of the game, if she can invoke that trait in some fashion, it can help restore a spent point of Fortune.

Next comes *Step Five: Archetype*, where she begins to get even more of a picture of her character.

Intolerant Potentates

You didn't join your faith with battle in mind, but your potentates were wrathful in the extreme and soon all your order wore blades. Your battlefield was in the streets, and many fell to your blade. You tried to be merciful when you could afford it, and deep within the home of one of your faith's enemies, you found someone who could be brought to your faith. Did you help this person escape, or were you prevented somehow? What became of this potential follower?

Ill Omens

Your birth was marked by strange omens, and immediately after your induction into the priesthood, the high priest died in his sleep, without any prior illness. Members of your order mutter that you are the last survivor of the ceremony, and that ill fortune follows in your wake. Occasionally, members of your order will come to you, sending you miles away on seemingly needless, sometimes dangerous errands. What was your most perilous task? Did you complete it, and how many died during its completion?

Forced Penance

Whatever offense was committed, you didn't do it. Somehow you were blamed, and another bore witness against you, falsely. You tried to explain this when you were accused, but the high priest did not care. Your penance was brief, but unduly harsh. What were you accused of? What was the penance? Do you know who incriminated you? Do you plot revenge?

WARRIOR STORIES

Roll	Event	Trait
1-3	Decisive Victory	Valorous
4-6	Glorious Battle	Veteran
7-10	Idle Hours Guarding Open Gates	Cursed
11-14	Idle Hours Guarding Cold Walls	Hedonist
15-17	Blood-soaked Endeavor	Greed
18-20	Disastrous Battle	Coward

Decisive Victory

The war saw you fight in many battles, gaining glory as you survived. Then the final clash came. You leapt to the front, proud of your place in the vanguard. Horses cried in pain as arrows rained down, and through the blood and smoke of the field you saw your opportunity. The charge was long and the fight short but when you presented your captains with the banner you had claimed, they proclaimed you one of the day's chosen champions. You were cared for by your lord's own servants and presented to him at the feast afterward. What valor had you accomplished? What words did he have for you?

Glorious Battle

The battle began with your numbers few. The bulk of your force was a day away and would be tired from the march. You knew yourselves dead, but you had to hold out so that the warriors would stand an even chance against the horde. The fight was brutal. The corpses of horses, soldiers, and other makeshift barricades piled up in front of your line, turning the fight from massed battle to deadly skirmish. Fully half of your number was slain, but you gave better than you got and it was them that routed. When the rest of your army emerged from the forest road, they found boys turned into veterans. Your company was promoted to guard the sunrise flank and those who survived became strong friends. How do you mark your membership in this august company?

Idle Hours Guarding Open Gates

Your gate was the main gate for your settlement. You saw all who would come through. While there was little trouble, you saw many strange and varied travelers. One day you saw three riders come close to the settlement gates. They halted, spat at the ground, and rode back the way they came. Do you remember anything about these strangers? Did you find out why they did not enter?

Idle Hours Guarding Cold Walls

Your home was less-than-inviting to strangers. Most were greeted with spear points and sling stones. Soon the word

spread and few travelers made the journey. You spent many hours drinking swill and rolling dice for petty coin. Eventually even these pursuits grew stale and you were forced to find your own entertainments. How did you survive the boredom? What pursuits did you engage in?

Blood-soaked Endeavor

While the vanguard gained the glories, you were treading the ground they swept, preventing the enemy from encirclement, stomping the injured into the mud. As the day turned to evening and the light began to shift, the scope of the massacre became clear. Your army had swept through the enemy and carved deep into their encampment. The bodies of servants and children littered the ground. Seeking to profit from the battle, you searched the nearby tents and left, knowing the enemy would never truly recover. What loot did you gather and whose hand did you prize it from?

Disastrous Battle

Your armies were evenly matched and the battle a stalemate ‘til the third hour, when the heavens opened with torrential rainfall, centered upon your forces. The ground turned to a thick black swamp and their archers, outside the rain’s course, could fire unmolested. The wind carried their arrows into your ranks and soon there wasn’t a soldier left unmarked. Only a very few limped away from the battle, and none made it home. How did you escape?

**STEP FIVE:
ARCHETYPE**

While the ten archetypes presented here are only a sample of the many and varied types possible, they are the most representative of the types of characters encountered on the open roads and in dim-lit taverns, seeking adventure. You can pick your archetype or roll randomly to determine it, as desired.

ARCHETYPE			
Roll	Archetype	Roll	Archetype
1-2	Archer	11-12	Pirate
3-4	Barbarian	13-14	Priest/ Priestess
5-6	Mercenary	15-16	Scholar
7-8	Noble Warrior	17-18	Scoundrel
9-10	Nomad	19-20	Witch/Shaman

As discussed in *Steps in Creating a Character* on page 7, characters are made up of attributes, skills, talents, and equipment. Attributes were determined in *Step Two: Attributes*, and here, archetypes add skills, talents, and equipment to your character.

*“You are a fighting man,” she answered.
“To risk your life is part of your profession.”*

“For a price,” he admitted.

— Zabibi to Conan,
“The Man-Eaters of Zamboula”

Each archetype grants the character a total of seven skills. The first of these is the career skill, which grants the character +2 Skill Focus and +2 Skill Expertise. Additionally, the character gains a talent associated with this skill. Four of these seven skills are mandatory for each archetype, and the last two skills are elective, chosen from a short list. Each mandatory and elective skill grants the character an increase of +1 Skill Focus and +1 Skill Expertise. You cannot pick the same elective skill twice for your character.

Lastly, the archetype provides an initial assortment of equipment, representing weapons, armor, gear, trade tools, or other implements the character is assumed to possess.

So, in summary, archetypes grant the following:

- **Career Skill:** This adds +2 to Skill Focus and +2 Skill Expertise for the specific skill.
- **Career Talent:** This grants one talent associated with the career skill.
- **Mandatory Skills:** Each of these four adds +1 to Skill Focus and +1 Skill Expertise.
- **Elective Skills:** Both of these each add +1 to Skill Focus and +1 Skill Expertise.
- **Equipment:** The character begins with an assortment of appropriate gear.

In addition to the equipment listed in each archetype, it is assumed that each character has a basic suit of clothing appropriate to their culture and caste, and a traveling kit of some sort containing whatever personal effects are needed for basic survival, grooming, and personal upkeep. These contents might include a coin purse, basic cutlery, a drinking jack or horn, a comb or brush, cosmetic items, or other small personal effects. Additionally, if encountered in the wild, the character likely has enough rations (food, drink, etc.) to survive for at least a few days.

Riding and transport animals are described in the appropriate sections of *Chapter Four: Equipment*.

In the city, the character is assumed to have a place to sleep for a few days appropriate to their caste and background, which could range from guest quarters in an opulent estate to a not-so-dingy corner of a filth-strewn side alley.

ARCHER

Whether trained alongside the legendary Bossonian archers (see page 250), within one of the militaries of the great middle kingdoms, or even skilled in Hyrkanian horse archery, you are now a practiced archer, capable of sending iron-tipped shafts across great distances with accuracy.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Ranged Weapons skill

CAREER TALENT: *Accurate* (see page 69)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Animal Handling, Observation, Stealth, and Survival

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, or Melee

EQUIPMENT:

- Bow and reloads (2)
- Choice of one of the following: a padded gambeson and trousers (Armor 1: Torso/Arms/Legs); a brigandine vest and trousers (Armor 2: Torso/Legs); or a mail vest (Armor 3: Torso; Noisy)
- Helmet (Armor 3: Head; Heavy)
- Melee weapon of choice
- A riding horse or donkey



BARBARIAN

You hail from one of the untamed lands bordering civilization, whether to the far north, the east, the south, or some other uncharted territory. Your ways are as strange to civilized folk as their customs are inscrutable to you.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Melee skill

CAREER TALENT: *No Mercy* (see page 65)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, and Survival

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Healing, Parry, or Stealth

EQUIPMENT:

- Choice of one of the following: a full suit of brigandine (Armor 2: Torso/Arms/Legs); mail vest (Armor 3: Torso; Noisy) and a helmet (Armor 3: Head; Heavy); or ragged furs which count as Heavy Clothing (Armor 1: Torso/Arms/Legs)
- Two melee weapons of choice



MERCENARY

Whether drafted into the militia as a youth or adult, or voluntarily signing on for military service, you have become a sell-sword, a paid soldier, loyal only to the hand that holds the strings to the coin purse. You travel the Hyborean kingdoms in search of work, sometimes even fighting against your former masters.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Athletics skill

CAREER TALENT: *Strong Back* (see page 53)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Acrobatics, Melee, Parry, and Ranged Weapons

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Healing, or Stealth

EQUIPMENT:

- Pick from either a suit of mail armor (Armor 3: all locations; Noisy) or a brigandine long coat (Armor 2: Torso/Arms/Legs) with a helmet (Armor 3: Head; Heavy)
- A spear or other polearm
- A melee weapon of choice
- A sling with load of stones (1)
- A baggage mule and a cheap riding horse



NOBLE WARRIOR

You may be a knighted noble from one of the civilized Hyborean kingdoms such as Aquilonia, Nemedia, Zingara, Brythunia, or elsewhere. Whether you hold to a code of chivalry or are merely a well-trained and equipped warrior, you fight primarily for yourself and for causes you choose.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Society skill

CAREER TALENT: *A Modicum of Comfort* (see page 74)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Parry, and Resistance

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Melee, Persuade, or Ranged Weapons

EQUIPMENT:

- A suit of heavy armor (any type, all locations) and choice of shield
- Two weapons of choice
- Suits of fine and traveling clothing
- Warhorse with light barding (Armor 2)

HONORIFICS & DUTIES:

- Can demand to be addressed as "Sir" (or a similar cultural title)
- Can be pressed into the army of your king at any time without pay



NOMAD

To the east and south, the Hyborian kingdoms are surrounded by deserts, steppes, tundra, and wastelands — inhospitable to civilized folk but home to you and your people. You know how to survive in these places, to find food and water and to make shelter, and to navigate to safety. Life is hard in your homeland, perhaps the reason you left.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Animal Handling skill

CAREER TALENT: *Born in the Saddle* (see page 51)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Acrobatics, Athletics, Parry, and Survival

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Melee, Ranged Weapons, or Stealth

EQUIPMENT:

- Choice of three weapons or extra reloads
- Choice of either heavy clothing (Armor 1: Torso/Arms/Legs) or a mail shirt (Armor 3: Torso/Arms; Noisy)
- A horse and a mule
- Animal Handler's kit and 3 rewards



PRIEST/PRIESTESS

Born into the faith or a late convert, you feel the calling of one of the many gods of the Hyborian Age: from holy Mitra, accursed Set, Ishtar, Bori, Asura, Ibis, Erlik, Bel, Derketo, or even those who are not overly worshipped, like Crom, Ymir, or the Zamorian spider-god. You are either associated with a particular temple or you are itinerant, wandering the land and converting the unfaithful by any means you can, be it through example, with convincing speech, or by the sword.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Counsel skill

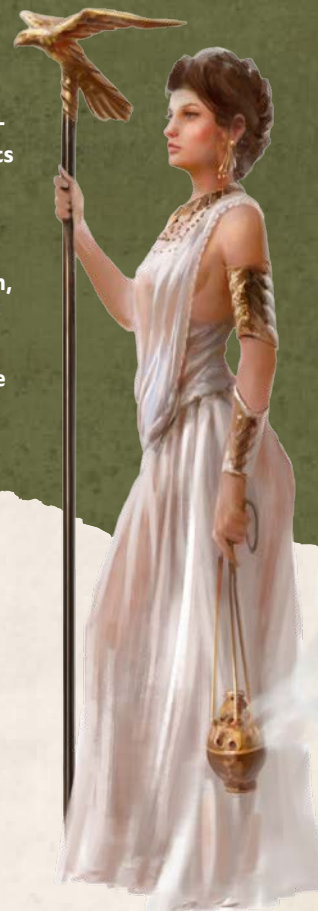
CAREER TALENT: *Quiet Wisdom* (see page 55)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Insight, Lore, Persuade, and Society

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Alchemy, Healing, or Sorcery

EQUIPMENT:

- A single melee weapon of choice (often a staff, sword, or knife)
- A single copy of a scroll or book containing your faith's precepts and holy words
- Traveling clothes and priestly vestments
- Oils, herbs, and religious accoutrements
- A mule
- One kit for each elective skill chosen, as appropriate (see *Chapter Four: Equipment* for more information)



PIRATE

You may once have been a sailor, a merchant, or even a member of one of the great navies, but eventually you turned your hand towards piracy. More at home on the open water than on land, you are nonetheless willing to seek your fortune wherever fate guides you.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Observation skill

CAREER TALENT: *Sharp Senses* (see page 66)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Melee, Parry, Resistance, and Survival

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Sailing, Stealth, or Thievery

EQUIPMENT:

- A melee weapon of choice
- A padded jerkin (Armor 1: Torso/Arms)
- A share in a small water craft, or the proceeds that may come from its activities



SCHOLAR

You have explored the breadth of history and human knowledge from the vantage point of a chair, spending hours poring over thick tomes of lore. Your interest may be specific to a particular field of study, or you may have broad expertise in a variety of subjects. Despite your inclination towards scholarship, you have ventured into the world outside your studies, to experience the world firsthand.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Lore skill

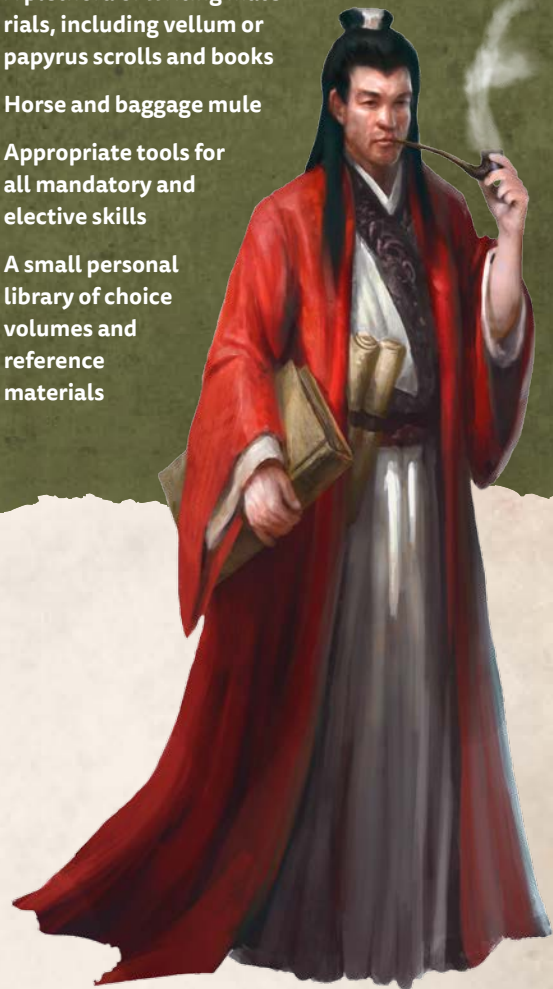
CAREER TALENT: *Scribe* (see page 64)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Animal Handling, Linguistics, Persuade, and Society

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Alchemy, Healing, or Sorcery

EQUIPMENT:

- A melee or ranged weapon of choice
- Several sets of plain traveling clothes and a suit of courtly clothing
- A plethora of writing materials, including vellum or papyrus scrolls and books
- Horse and baggage mule
- Appropriate tools for all mandatory and elective skills
- A small personal library of choice volumes and reference materials



SCOUNDREL

You make a living exploiting the weaknesses of others, whether gambling, theft, or outright banditry. Survival by wits is the only life you have ever known, and you have gotten quite good at it, trusting in your wits, reflexes, and lack of scruples to get you out of danger, though by one means or another you readily find yourself back in the thick of it.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Acrobatics skill

CAREER TALENT: *Agile* (see page 48)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Athletics, Parry, Persuade, and Society

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Melee, Stealth, or Thievery

EQUIPMENT:

- A melee weapon of your choice
- A choice of one of the following: brigandine jacket (Armor 2: Torso/Arms) or heavy clothing (Armor 1: Torso/Arms/Legs)
- A shield of your choice, if desired
- A small chest of counterfeit goods



WITCH/SHAMAN

You have made pacts with powers that are not of this world, sought knowledge forbidden to, and feared by, most, and for this daring you have been granted power and insights beyond those of mortal men and women. Even if you are unable to use sorcery outright, you know much secret lore as well as the secrets of the natural world. It is up to you whether you practice your gifts to assist others, or for your own desires.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Persuade skill

CAREER TALENT: *Force of Presence* (see page 68)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Alchemy, Counsel, Healing, and Lore

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Sorcery, or Thievery

EQUIPMENT:

- Broad sharp knife or dagger
- A toughened leather jacket (Armor 1: Torso/Arms)
- Healer's kit (see page 90 of *Chapter Four: Equipment*)
- Alchemist's kit (see page 90 of *Chapter Four: Equipment*)
- Personal library (might be clay tablets or scrolls)
- A riding horse or donkey



EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION: ARCHETYPE

Samantha rolls randomly to determine her character's archetype, and gets the result of "Scholar". For various reasons, this doesn't appeal to her, so she decides to ignore the result and picks "Scoundrel" in its place. Samantha notes that her character gains the mandatory skills of a Scoundrel: Athletics, Parry, Persuade, and Society.

With low Agility and Awareness attributes, Samantha chooses Melee and Thievery for her elective skills, to shore up her character's abilities. She marks the page number so she can write in her character's equipment later.

With the Scoundrel archetype, her career talent is Agile, which she writes down on her character sheet.

Skills	Caste	Archetype	Expertise	Focus	Talent
Acrobatics		Career	2	2	Agile
Athletics		Mandatory	1	1	
Melee		Elective	1	1	
Parry		Mandatory	1	1	
Persuade	Merchant	Mandatory	1+1	1+1	
Society		Mandatory	1	1	
Thievery		Elective	1	1	

STEP SIX: NATURE

While archetype tells you what your character does, nature tells you how and why your character might choose to act in a certain way. To determine your character's nature, either pick one that appeals to you or roll randomly.

NATURE			
Roll	Nature	Roll	Nature
1-2	Cautious	11-12	Scheming
3-4	Curious	13-14	Sneaky
5-6	Inspirational	15-16	Stoic
7-8	Learned	17-18	Supportive
9-10	Practical	19-20	Wrathful

The primary bonus from nature is a +1 bonus to one of your character's attributes, specified by the nature chosen.

Similar to skills from archetypes, your character gets a number of skills based on nature, and adds +1 to Skill Expertise and +1 to Skill Focus for each. Three skills are considered mandatory and all characters with this nature must take them. The character can also pick two additional different elective skills from a short list, each receiving the same bonus. These skills may be the same as those from archetype skills.

The skill bonuses your character earns from nature add onto the top of those from your character's archetype, so

bonuses to career skills — whether mandatory and elective — can be added to those from the prior step.

In addition to the skills and attributes provided by nature, all characters gain a new talent associated with any one of the skills offered by nature. Talents are described in *Chapter Three: Skills & Talents*. The character must qualify for any talents picked from a skill earned in this step, and some talents can be "stacked", with multiple ranks possible.

In summary, nature offers the following:

- **Attribute Improvement:** +1 to a single attribute
- **Mandatory Skills:** +1 Skill Expertise and +1 Skill Focus to three skills
- **Elective Skills:** +1 Skill Expertise and +1 Skill Focus to two skills of the player's choice
- **Talent:** One new talent, associated with any of the above skills. The character must meet the prerequisites for the talent at this stage of character creation.

As with other steps, the descriptions of these natures are open to player interpretation, and can be changed, though the actual benefits should remain unaltered.

Savagely loyal to his companions, the Cimmerian's wild nature saw no reason why the rest of the world should not be plundered. He lived by the sword.

— Untitled Draft

CAUTIOUS

You do your best to avoid trouble, whether through innate self-preservation or from hard-learned experience.

Attribute Improvement: +1 to Willpower

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Lore, Parry, and Stealth

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Athletics, or Sailing

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

CURIOUS

The world is a fascinating place, with many mysteries yet to be discovered. You are always trying to find out what is unknown, or what is being concealed from you.

Attribute Improvement: +1 to Agility

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Athletics, Observation, and Stealth

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Alchemy, Lore, or Thievery

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

INSPIRATIONAL

The world is a difficult place, and you take it upon yourself to provide a good example to those around you. Maybe you learned this from a prior command, or it seems the right thing to do.

Attribute Improvement: +1 to Personality

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Counsel, Observation, and Persuade

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Command, Healing, or Society

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

LEARNED

You enjoy the path of knowledge, as it opens many doors for you and assists in your understanding of the world around you.

Attribute Improvement: +1 to Intelligence

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Animal Handling, Craft, and Lore

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Counsel, Healing, or Observation

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION: NATURE

Having rolled a result of "Stoic" for her nature, Samantha increases her character's Willpower attribute by +1. She adds +1 Skill Expertise and +1 Skill Focus to the Discipline, Lore, and Resistance skills (mandatory), and chooses to add +1 Skill Expertise and +1 Skill Focus to her character's Parry and Counsel skills (elective).

She also notes that she gets a talent associated with the Discipline skill; since this is her first talent for this skill, she must pick *Courageous*, the talent at the root of the Discipline talent tree and the only one she qualifies for.

Agility	Awareness	Brawn	Coordination	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
7	7	8	8	10	12	7 + 1 = 8

Skills	Caste	Archetype	Nature	Expertise	Focus	Talents
Acrobatics		Career		2	2	Agile
Athletics		Mandatory		1	1	
Counsel			Elective	1	1	
Discipline			Mandatory	1	1	Courageous
Lore			Mandatory	1	1	
Melee		Elective		1	1	
Parry		Mandatory	Elective	1+1	1+1	
Persuade	Merchant	Mandatory		1+1	1+1	
Resistance			Mandatory	1	1	
Society		Mandatory		1	1	
Thievery		Elective		1	1	

PRACTICAL

You have an eye towards the pragmatic, always seeking the most efficient or reasonable means of achieving your goals.

Attribute Improvement: Add +1 to Coordination

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Discipline, Craft, and Healing

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Alchemy, Animal Handling, or Observation

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

SCHEMING

There's always an easier way to do things, one that does not involve as much risk or effort on your behalf. Furthermore, you always keep your options open, and always have a secondary plan of action.

Attribute Improvement: +1 to Intelligence

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Command, Counsel, and Discipline

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Acrobatics, Lore, or Parry

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

SNEAKY

Information is power, and it is best to keep others in the dark when it comes to you. You have learned to move quietly, speak softly, and keep your true motives to yourself.

Attribute Improvement: +1 to Awareness

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Observation, Stealth, and Thievery

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, or Survival

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

STOIC

There is little in life that cannot be withstood, and no hardship — physical, mental, or even social — is so great that you cannot overcome it.

Attribute Improvement: +1 to Willpower

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Discipline, Lore, and Resistance

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Counsel, Healing, or Parry

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

SUPPORTIVE

In the end, all we have is each other. You have learned that the greatest bonds are those between allies, family, and friends, and thus you do all you can to assist those around you.

Attribute Improvement: +1 to Personality

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Counsel, Healing, and Persuade

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Discipline, or Resistance

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

WRATHFUL

For each action there must be an equal and final reaction, a retribution to those who have done you wrong. You do not forgive slights against you and yours easily, and make sure to strike back with finality.

Attribute Improvement: +1 to Brawn

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Melee, Ranged Weapons, and Resistance

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Acrobatics, Discipline, or Parry

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

STEP SEVEN: EDUCATION

The nature of education varies tremendously across the countries of the Hyborian Age. Literacy is rare and most of what is learned comes at the steep price of experience. Those who are lucky will enjoy what they are taught by their parents, or will be able to find a mentor or tutor able to educate them properly about the world. In the best of cases, education involves instruction in a family tradition, a noble calling passed across generations. Some of the less fortunate are sent into guilds, a service that ranges from near-slavery to relative comfort and status. In less civilized kingdoms, apprenticeship can be formal or less so. Slavery, also, is the all-too-common crucible in which hard lessons are earned.

In this step of character creation, additional skills and talents are provided, based on what the character has learned during the various phases of life described in prior steps. As with prior steps, the bonuses to skills and the new talent are applied in addition to those earned beforehand, further improving and broadening the character's repertoire of skills and improving their competence.

Whether out of a desire for betterment, a means of survival, or a proud inheritance, education can represent a continuation of the career of one's forebears. Some of

the modes of education represent education gained while in the pursuit of archetype skills, and are designated with the words “career skill”. In these cases, you must increase by +1 the career skill your character gained from their archetype. For other educational backgrounds, the words “random skill” indicate that you should roll randomly (do not pick) on the career table presented in *Step Five: Archetype* (on page 23) and increase the career skill from the archetype rolled.

Roll or pick an Education from the table below.

EDUCATION			
Roll	Education	Roll	Education
1-2	Against Your Parents' Will	11-12	From Masterful Tutors
3-4	Apprenticed Abroad	13-14	Largely Absent
5-6	Educated on the Battlefield	15-16	On Your Own Terms
7-8	Elder Mentor	17-18	Traditional
9-10	Family Footsteps	19-20	Under Duress

As with the skills learned from archetype and nature, the skills from education are divided into mandatory and elective skills, each providing a +1 bonus to Skill Expertise and +1 to Skill Focus. Each skill can be selected only once.

In addition to the skills provided and improved, you can pick another talent from any of the associated skills gained from your character's education, assuming your character meets the prerequisites for the talent. Talents are described in the next chapter.

TALENTS

Being confronted with a choice of talents can be difficult when the rules are not known, or when the full picture of how a character will develop is still unclear. This is natural.

When the character is granted more than one talent associated with a particular skill, you can decide to leave the talent unselected. At any later point during game play, should you decide you want to choose one of these unselected talents, you can simply add the talent, assuming that for all intents and purposes your character has always had this talent, but never used it.

In most cases, where a character only has one talent for a skill, this will always be the first talent available to that skill. The specific talent name should be noted on the character sheet.

Finally, some educational backgrounds present appropriate pieces of equipment, earned or given to the character during this learning process. These do not have to be taken, and can be ignored if desired.

In summary, education offers the following:

- **Mandatory Skills:** +1 Skill Expertise and +1 Skill Focus to three skills
- **Elective Skills:** +1 Skill Expertise and +1 Skill Focus to two skills of the player's choice
- **Talent:** One talent, associated with any of the above skills, if prerequisites are met
- **Equipment:** Some educations offer equipment, while some do not.

As with prior steps, the descriptions for the educational backgrounds are meant to be springboards for imagination, and can be modified as desired to better suit a particular homeland or character origin story. However, the bonuses and benefits should remain the same, unless the gamemaster allows otherwise.



AGAINST YOUR PARENTS' WILL

You sought out your own education, defying your parent's wishes. Though they tried to guide you in a particular direction, you practiced secretly. Perhaps it was the path followed by one of your parents, a close relative, or some figure significant to you.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Discipline, Lore, Stealth

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Sailing, Survival

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

Equipment: A broken family heirloom

APPRENTICED ABROAD

As a child, you were sent (or taken) from your home and educated in another land, amidst strangers. You adapted to your home as you learned ways that were strange to you, picking up the rudiments of skills that you scarcely cared about, until you began to grasp their usefulness.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Lore, your character's career skill, and a random career skill (roll on *Archetype* table, page 23)

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Craft, Sailing
Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills
Equipment: A selection of useful maps of the Hyborian kingdoms.

EDUCATED ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Your education was a harsh one, your schoolyard strewn with the dead and dying, the clash and clamor of combat were your lessons. For whatever reason, as a child you were thrust into battle, forced to fight for your survival with your enemies as the strictest of taskmasters.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Acrobatics, Healing, Survival
Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Melee, Parry, Ranged Weapons
Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills
Equipment: A melee weapon of choice and a helmet (Armor 3: Head). If your archetype offers you Armor, gain a battlefield honor instead.

EDUCATED BY MASTERFUL TUTORS

Fortunate was your apprenticeship, and you found yourself able to learn under the tutelage of a true master. Whether sitting on the rough ground beside your teacher, educated in the high halls of nobility, or in a well-appointed workshop, you learned from the very best.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Discipline, Lore, and your character's career skill
Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Resistance, Survival, and your character's career skill
Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills
Equipment: Letter of praise and introduction from your tutor.

ELDER MENTOR

Your mentor was venerable, well-known and respected by peers and associates, but was one whose heyday had passed. It was time for you to pick up your belongings and continue on your mentor's path, continuing that great and respected tradition.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Discipline, Lore, and a random career skill (roll on *Archetype* table, page 23)

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Observation, Parry
Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills
Equipment: A piece of equipment from your mentor's archetype (gamemaster's choice, or roll on *Archetype* table, page 23).

FAMILY FOOTSTEPS

You learned your career directly from one of your family members: whether a parent, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister. This meant that you received additional attention, but also meant that the lessons were longer and the standards were much higher.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Discipline, Resistance, and your character's career skill
Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Society, Survival
Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills
Equipment: A family heirloom of little more than sentimental value.

LARGELY ABSENT

Left to fend for yourself, you had to learn on your own. Perhaps it was through negligence or necessity, or it was tragedy that kept you alone. The end result was the same: hours and even days spent with little to do but study or train, to repeat tasks until you had mastered them.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Athletics, Persuade, and your character's career skill
Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Acrobatics, Observation, Resistance
Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills
Equipment: None.

ON YOUR OWN TERMS

You always knew what you wanted, and sought out your own education when it was clear it would not be offered you. Driven, you chose your teachers carefully, and found other means of learning when there were none to instruct you. Even now, you follow your own path to enlightenment.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Acrobatics, Athletics, Stealth
Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Craft, Lore, Survival
Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills
Equipment: None.

EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION: EDUCATION

Rolling on the *Education* table, Samantha gets a result of 20, indicating that her character was educated "Under Duress".

Her mandatory skills are her Scoundrel career skill, Acrobatics, and two others: Lore and Resistance. For her elective skills, she chooses Animal Handling and Survival, gaining a +1 bonus to all of these skills.

Her character also gains a choice of talent and so Samantha chooses to take an Acrobatics talent; since this is her second talent for this skill, she opts to pick her talent at another time and records it as "To be determined".

Skills	Caste	Archetype	Nature	Education	Expertise	Focus	Talents
Acrobatics		Career		Mandatory	2+1	2+1	Agile, to be determined
Animal Handling				Elective	1	1	
Athletics		Mandatory			1	1	
Counsel			Elective		1	1	
Discipline			Mandatory		1	1	Courageous
Lore			Mandatory	Mandatory	1+1	1+1	
Melee		Elective			1	1	
Parry		Mandatory	Elective		1+1	1+1	
Persuade	Merchant	Mandatory			1+1	1+1	
Resistance			Mandatory	Mandatory	1+1	1+1	
Society		Mandatory			1	1	
Survival				Elective	1	1	
Thievery		Elective			1	1	

The educational background also offers her a piece of equipment: a broken family heirloom. Samantha decides that the item in question is a small carved likeness of the god Mitra, once owned by her father, all she has left of her family, broken into several small pieces and worn in a small leather bag about her neck.

TRADITIONAL

Yours was an unremarkable education, perhaps thankfully. You were either trained in the family trade, apprenticed to a (mostly) benevolent master, or tutored without overmuch drama. As such, your education was well-rounded, if not the most inspired. Looking back, you feel blessed.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Animal Handling, Craft, and your character's career skill

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Melee, Parry, and a random career skill (roll on *Archetype* table, page 23)

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

Equipment: Choose one of the following: heavy cape (Armor 1: Torso/Legs), crafting tools, or a melee weapon.

UNDER DURESS

Whether you were enslaved, apprenticed cruelly, or were simply a reluctant student, your education was a hard-fought battle that you stubbornly resisted, only learning when it

became absolutely necessary (and sometimes even barely so). Others look to these years with fondness: you do not.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Lore, Resistance, and your character's career skill

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Society, Survival

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

Equipment: A broken family heirloom.

STEP EIGHT: WAR STORY

War is a constant throughout the Hyborian kingdoms, a battle of kings and chieftains, empires and armies. Everyone, including your character, has likely encountered war in one form or another, or some sort of conflict that proved instrumental in their current fate. For some, it is their most fearsome encounter or adventure to date, while for others, it is merely the latest in a string of harrowing experiences.

Roll or pick your character's war story from the table below and note the skill improvements. Improvements are added to both Skill Expertise and Skill Focus. These are added to any prior bonuses.

Unlike other steps in character creation, where a description is provided of the experience, your character's war story

is an individual tale of personal excellence or tragedy, its exact nature to be determined by the player.

This does not need to be described in detail at the time of character creation, and can be explored at a later time during play, perhaps as some mystery in the character's past that will become apparent somewhere down the line.

WAR STORY		
Roll	Select War Story	Skill Improvements
1-2	Defeated a Savage Beast	+1 Expertise and Focus to Animal Handling and Melee
3-4	Dispossessed	+1 Expertise and Focus to Resistance and Survival
5-6	Gained (and Lost) a Great Treasure	+1 Expertise and Focus to Observation and Society
7-8	Gained the Favor of a Local Noble	+1 Expertise and Focus to Persuade and Society
9-10	Prevented a Disaster	+1 Expertise and Focus to Craft and Survival
11-12	Shipwrecked	+1 Expertise and Focus to Athletics and Sailing
13-14	Survived a Duel	+1 Expertise and Focus to Parry and Resistance
15-16	Survived a Massacre	+1 Expertise and Focus to Stealth and Survival
17-18	Survived a Stint at Court	+1 Expertise and Focus to Insight and Society
19-20	Survived Witchcraft or Sorcery	+1 Expertise and Focus to Discipline and Sorcery

EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION: WAR STORY

For her character's war story, Samantha rolls and gets a 16, "Survived a Massacre". The benefits from this war story are +1 Expertise and Focus to the Stealth and Survival skills.

Skills	Caste	Archetype	Nature	Education	War Story	Expertise	Focus	Talents
Acrobatics		Career		Mandatory		2+1	2+1	Agile, to be determined
Animal Handling				Elective		1	1	
Athletics		Mandatory				1	1	
Counsel			Elective			1	1	
Discipline			Mandatory			1	1	Courageous
Lore			Mandatory	Mandatory		1+1	1+1	
Melee		Elective				1	1	
Parry		Mandatory	Elective			1+1	1+1	
Persuade	Merchant	Mandatory				1+1	1+1	
Resistance			Mandatory	Mandatory		1+1	1+1	
Society		Mandatory				1	1	
Stealth					Improvement	1	1	
Survival				Elective	Improvement	1+1	1+1	
Thievery		Elective				1	1	

Samantha decides that she will work out the particulars of this experience later, and notes it on her character sheet. She's in the home stretch now, with only two more steps to go.



STEP NINE: FINISHING TOUCHES

Now it's time to add a few finishing touches before finalizing the character for play.

ATTRIBUTES

You can increase two of your character's attributes by +1, or increase one attribute by +2. If this increases an attribute to 13 or 14, your character has the *Ancient Bloodline* talent described on page 11. You cannot increase an attribute above 14.

SKILLS

Choose one of these methods to improve your character's skills:

- Add +1 to Expertise and Focus to three skills of your choice, including skills your character may not already have improved.
- Add +2 to Expertise and Focus to one skill and +1 to another, as above.
- Add +3 to Expertise and Focus for one skill, as above.

During character creation, Expertise and Focus are equal to one another. This does not continue after the character begins play. Once character generation is complete, any points spent to improve Expertise and Focus are separate and each must be raised independently with experience points.

However, you cannot improve any of your character's skills more than +5 total during character creation, including the skill bonuses added by caste, archetype, nature, education, and war story. Additionally, your character cannot have more than three skills with a bonus higher than +3. If more than three skills have bonuses in excess of +3, you should distribute any bonuses in excess of +3 to other skills your character has already received improvements in.

STORY

If you did not use the character story table for your caste as described in *Step Four: Story* (page 16), you must agree upon a trait with your gamemaster, or the gamemaster will choose one for you.

TALENT

You can pick one additional talent for your character at this time, provided the character meets the talent's prerequisites. Alternately, you can increase an existing talent by an additional rank. You may not pick a Fortune talent at this stage.

EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION: FINISHING TOUCHES

Samantha looks at her character now with an eye towards completion. She modifies her Nemedian scoundrel in the following ways:

She adds +1 each to Agility and Awareness. They'll aid her character in surviving the dangers she's likely to find herself in.

Agility	Awareness	Brawn	Coordination	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
7+1	7+1	8	8	10	12	7+1

Looking at skills, she increases her Melee, Society, and Stealth skills each by +1 to Expertise and Focus, as they're exactly the sort of skills a quick-thinking Nemedian scoundrel will need. None of her skills is as high as +5, so she's clear there.

Her story is already established, so no changes here.

She has an additional talent to pick, and decides to pick the other two that have yet to be determined. For Acrobatics, she picks *Nimble as a Cat*, and for Discipline she picks *Courageous*. For the new talent, she broadens and picks *Force of Presence*, associated with the Persuade skill.

Skills	Caste	Archetype	Nature	Education	War Story	Finishing Touches	Expertise	Focus	Talents
Acrobatics		Career		Mandatory			2+1	2+1	Agile, Nimble as a Cat
Animal Handling				Elective			1	1	
Athletics		Mandatory					1	1	
Counsel			Elective				1	1	
Discipline			Mandatory				1	1	Courageous
Lore			Mandatory	Mandatory			1+1	1+1	
Melee		Elective				Imp.	1+1	1+1	
Parry		Mandatory	Elective				1+1	1+1	
Persuade	Merchant	Mandatory					1+1	1+1	Force of Presence
Resistance			Mandatory	Mandatory			1+1	1+1	
Society		Mandatory				Imp.	1+1	1+1	
Stealth					Imp.	Imp.	1+1	1+1	
Survival				Elective	Imp.		1+1	1+1	
Thievery		Elective					1	1	

As for languages, Samantha knows that one of the other characters is Kothic and a few others speak that language, so she picks Kothic as a language the characters can share in common. She does not have the Linguistics skill, so she gains no additional languages. Hopefully between Nemedian and Kothic she can get by.

Samantha utterly dismisses the option to trade a Fortune point for an attribute or skill improvement. Though they are no doubt useful, she thinks that the Fortune point will serve her scoundrel much more directly.

Jumping to the *Personal Belongings and Garments* table, Samantha rolls a 2 and a 13, awarding her with some rough hammered jewelry and an outfit consisting of simple black trousers with a long-sleeved tunic. This works for her, so it goes onto the character sheet.

Another couple of rolls on the *Weapon and Provenance* table yields a 5 and a 16, a saber "newly forged and tested true". That seems to be right up this scoundrel's alley, so Samantha writes these down on her character sheet.

LANGUAGE

You may pick an extra language for your character. Refer to the list from the *Homeland* table (page 8) or in *Languages* on page 62. Furthermore, the character gains another language for every point of Skill Focus in Linguistics your character possesses.

A good aid to language selection is to look at the map of the Hyborian Age kingdoms at the front of this book, find your character's homeland, and pick additional languages based on proximity to other countries. Characters with the *Cosmopolitan* talent should feel free to pick languages from anywhere, though this talent is not required.

When determining languages, it is a good idea to discuss the matter with the other players, establishing a common tongue for everyone to speak.

FORTUNE POINTS

Fortune points are an in-game resource representing good luck, or fate, allowing the players to automatically succeed at skill rolls, and accomplish a variety of other tasks. All characters begin each game session with three Fortune points, and can earn them through the course of play. They are regenerated at the end of each adventure, and return during the next play session. The **Conan corebook** describes these in more detail.

At the time of character creation, you may choose to permanently spend one point of Fortune to increase an attribute by +1 or increase a single skill's Expertise and Focus by +2. If you choose to spend the Fortune point, then no attribute can exceed 14 and no skill can have its bonus exceed +3, even with the *Ancient Bloodline* talent. Points in excess of these totals are lost, or should be redistributed if possible. If this option is taken, the character's new Fortune point total is two. The character will begin each session with only two Fortune points available, making them less lucky than others, but gaining the advantages of a higher attribute or skill bonus.

PERSONAL BELONGING AND GARMENTS

Your character may have been granted some personal items, pieces of equipment, heirlooms, or other keepsakes. You can roll twice using the first table on page 39, picking a result from each column, or just choose results as desired.

WEAPON

Your character may have already been awarded a weapon through one of the character generation steps, but one can never have too many weapons at hand. Roll twice using the second table found on page 39 to determine a weapon and its provenance description, or just pick results that

OPTIONAL RULE: THE WEED OF SORCERY

Sorcery is a rare and dangerous thing, possessed by the very few. Players may notice that the steps of character generation do not guide any characters onto the path of sorcery. Sorcery is not a path that can be found or stumbled onto: it must be chosen.

With the gamemaster's permission, during *Step Nine: Finishing Touches* the player can trade any of the talents gained prior — whether from archetype, education, or nature — on a one-to-one basis in return for Sorcery talents.

A player wishing to play a sorcerer will likely wish to trade as many of these talents as possible, to better ensure that the character is able to cast a spell. However, players who are more interested in attaining the use of sorcery through game play will likely seek only the *Patron* talent, described on page 76.

Players seeking to play sorcerers should read the sorcery chapter carefully prior to character generation, and the gamemaster should decide beforehand if a sorcery-using character is permitted.

appeal to you. Re-roll if any results seem particularly unusual or unlikely.

See *Chapter Four: Equipment* for more details on weapons.

STEP TEN: FINAL CALCULATIONS

Here you can determine the remaining aspects of the character that depend on other attributes, skills, and talents, all of which should be set at this time.

RESOLVE, VIGOR, AND GOLD

Resolve and Vigor represent how much injury — mental and physical — your character can take before being harmed more seriously. Determine Vigor, Resolve, and starting Gold as following:


- **Vigor** is equal to the total of the character's Brawn attribute and Expertise in the Resistance skill.
- **Resolve** is equal to the total of the character's Willpower attribute and Expertise in the Discipline skill.
- Starting **Gold** is equal to the sum of the character's Personality attribute and Expertise in the Society skill.

Write these values on the character sheet in the spaces provided.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND GARMENTS		
Roll	Personal Belongings	Garments
1-2	Rough hammered jewelry	A patched and practical gambeson
3-4	Tribal/ritual/prestige tattoos and/or piercings	Simple undyed cloth, worn in the fashion of your people
5-6	A solid, well-crafted armband made of copper or silver	Cheap fabrics, richly dyed in the fashion of the nearest town or city
7-8	An ancient piece of jewelry, its surface covered in verdigris	Long, flowing dress or robes, embroidered with coarse thread in traditional patterns
9-10	An ornate symbol of your father's faith	Furs and pelts sewn with threads of a quality befitting your station
11-12	A small leather sack containing hair of a loved one, or fragments from their garment	Deerskin leggings and a heavy hooded cloak
13-14	A small leather scroll case containing a parchment, upon which is writ a family secret	Simple black trousers with a long-sleeved tunic
15-16	A ring made of semiprecious stone	Light cloth covered by a tradesman's leather apron
17-18	A necklace of animal teeth or bones	Sandals and tunic befitting a servant
19-20	A small mummified body part, such as an ear or finger	Naked as modesty will allow you






WEAPON AND PROVENANCE		
Roll	Weapon	Provenance
1-2	Knife	Your former master's...
3-4	Sword	A small but heavy...
5-6	Saber	A knight's...
7-8	Broadsword	...battered from years of use
9-10	War Pick	A simple..., humble yet serviceable
11-12	Spear	...engraved with prayers and oaths
13-14	Broad-headed Axe	...ripped from the hands of a brigand you slew
15-16	Length of Chain	...freshly forged and tested true
17-18	Sharpened Rock	...still stained in places with the blood of those it has slain
19-20	Whip	...decorated with polished stones

DAMAGE BONUSES

The higher your character's attributes are, the more damage they can inflict with their attacks, whether hand-to-hand, ranged, or through mental means. When damage is inflicted, it is rolled with combat dice, or .

- All Melee attacks gain bonus damage from Brawn
- All Ranged attacks gain bonus damage from Awareness
- All Mental attacks gain bonus damage from Personality

Determine your character's damage bonuses by referencing the following table:


BONUS DAMAGE	
Attribute	Bonus
8 or less	None
9	1 
10 or 11	2 
12 or 13	3 
14 or 15	4 
16 or more	5 

These should be noted on your character's sheet.

EXAMPLE CHARACTER CREATION: FINAL CALCULATIONS

Samantha is now nearly done creating her character.

She looks at the bonuses from previous steps and consolidates them, starting with attributes, then moving onto skills, then talents. She takes note of her character's languages, and the elements of story and war story, her trait, and lists all of the various bits of equipment, picking from the options granted her from her Scoundrel archetype.

She then determines that her Melee and Ranged attacks will get no damage bonus, as the Brawn and Awareness attributes are 8, which provides no bonus. On the other hand, her Personality attribute is a whopping 12, which means that she will do an additional 3  damage for Presence-based attacks. Samantha figures that her character is excellent at wearing others down with her strong wordplay and force of character.


As for the other aspects, Samantha decides that she likes the name "Athala" from the name list provided on page 48. With no solid idea for an age, other than "youngish," she adds her character's lowest attribute to the highest (8+12), for an age of 20. Good enough. Thinking about the rest, Samantha opts for a quick-witted, charming character, whose mouth occasionally gets her into trouble, and after reading the description of Nemedi, she decides that her character will have green eyes and brown hair, worn long and braided.

- NAME: Athala
- AGE: 20 years old
- APPEARANCE: Long brown hair in braids, green eyes, slender
- PERSONALITY: Quick-witted, charming
- ARCHETYPE: Scoundrel
- HOMELAND: Nemedi
- TRAIT: Well-traveled

Skills	Expertise	Focus
Acrobatics	3	3
Animal Handling	1	1
Athletics	1	1
Counsel	1	1
Discipline	1	1
Lore	2	2
Melee	2	2

Skills	Expertise	Focus
Parry	2	2
Persuade	2	2
Resistance	2	2
Society	2	2
Stealth	2	2
Survival	2	2
Thievery	1	1

Agility	Awareness	Brawn	Coordination	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	8	8	8	10	12	8

- TALENTS: *Agile, Cosmopolitan, Courageous, Force of Presence, Nimble as a Cat*
- LANGUAGES: Nemedian, Kothic
- VIGOR: 10
- RESOLVE: 9
- BONUS DAMAGE: Ranged 0, Melee 0, Presence 3 
- FORTUNE POINTS: 3
- GOLD: 14
- EQUIPMENT: Saber, dagger, brigandine jacket, shield, a small chest of counterfeit goods, family heirloom (small bag with broken figurine of Mitra), rough hammered jewelry, trousers and long-sleeved tunic.

With all of this decided, Samantha decides that Athala, her Nemedian scoundrel, is now ready for adventure, her dagger ready to pry jewels from the thrones of the Earth!

NAME

Every character needs a name. You should pick your character's name as a representation of their personality, ideally chosen from names suitable for the character's homeland. If you do not have an immediate idea about your character's name, see *Sample Character Names* below for inspiration. Generally, it's best to give your character an original name, rather than one from some other source, as it will be less distracting for other players.

AGE

One of Conan's first known adventures occurred in his teens, when he and his fellow Cimmerians stormed the Aquilonian border fortress of Venarium, putting all inside to the sword or flame. In short order he was off to the kingdoms to the south of his homeland, beginning his astonishing and wide-ranged career. Your character, though, does not have to be so young. You can decide that your character is a seasoned veteran, well into middle age or even older, though this certainly limits the number of years the character has to find fortune, much less to claim a throne and a country to rule.

If you don't have a good idea or a preference about how old your character is, add your character's highest attribute and lowest attribute together, and use the result as your character's age.

PERSONALITY

Now that you know what sorts of experiences have shaped your character, what sort of personality does the character have? Is the character angry? Happy-go-lucky? Adventurous? Out for revenge? Wise? Hot-tempered? Calm? Fierce? Cynical? Brooding? Even choosing a few quick adjectives like these can help a lot in identifying the personality of your character. Choosing one of these descriptions doesn't mean the character has to be that way all the time, however. Conan himself went from being fierce to display hints of mirth and gusto for life. Characters can evolve and change personality. However, it's always a good idea to have some sort of idea of how they start, even if it's just for the gamemaster to grasp how others see them.

APPEARANCE

How does your character look? The sections in the setting chapters describe each country and what its inhabitants look like. Is your character typical for someone from that area? Take a look at the character's attributes. Do any (a high or low Brawn, for example) suggest any physical appearance?

Is your character handsome or ugly? Remarkable or average-looking? How does the character dress? Any noticeable habits, tendencies, or behavior quirks? A catchphrase or an oath? You can decide all of these aspects. It's often a good idea to give your character some sort of visual description, especially to help give the other players an idea what your character looks like.



RANDOM CHARACTER CREATION

For fast character creation, a player character can be randomly generated. To use these tables, roll 9d20, arrange the dice into any order desired, and take the options indicated by the results of the dice. This is an entirely optional way to generate characters, resulting in combinations and options you might not have considered at first.

These numbers, however, are not set in stone. You can roll or select any of the various elements that make up your player character. Don't feel that just because you rolled a 17 your character must be a Scholar. If your heart is set on playing a Barbarian, then ignore the dice roll and just choose

SAMPLE CHARACTER NAMES

The names on the following page are provided to help inspire players and the gamemaster when naming characters from the various Hyborian Age kingdoms. They are drawn from history, and can be altered if desired. These are not meant to confine creativity. Many countries (particularly those offering the *Cosmopolitan* talent) are melting pots, and denizens of those countries could have names drawn from neighboring countries, or even from long-extinct naming traditions. Similarly, small differences accumulate across cultures and amidst different ethnic groups within a single country, so these names can have the spelling changed, or even broken apart and combined into new names.

The Conan stories are an obvious source for names, and many names from those stories are commonplace. However, using a well-known name might become confusing to players and the gamemaster, so duplicating names from the stories should be done sparingly.

SAMPLE CHARACTER NAMES		
Homeland	Male	Female
Aquilonia, Gunderland, Bossonian Marches	Aelius, Casca, Cassius, Gaius, Galen, Octavian, Quintas, Severus, Sulla, Tiberio, Varro	Arria, Aurelia, Claudia, Delia, Emilia, Hypatia, Lavinia, Livia, Portia, Vibia
Argos	Actaeon, Agenor, Cepheus, Eteokles, Gordius, Hyllos, Latos, Nisus, Tydeus	Aglaiia, Althaia, Arene, Cythonia, Danae, Diomenia, Ianthé, Ismene, Leda
Black Kingdoms, Darfar, Keshan, Kush, Punt, Zembabwe	Amente, Ayele, Endale, Kagale, Kahero, Kenyatta, Mganga, Mubale, Mwando, Nastasen, Okang, Shanaka, Talharqa	Aluna, Asminia, Chanya, Dalila, Iras, Kanika, Kenyetta, Micere, Mirembe, Nagesa, Nmambi, Nyanath, Qalhata, Sala, Sudati
Border Kingdom	Agron, Edgard, Gavril, Guri, Ilian, Ivo, Korvin, Rikard, Vidian, Vulko	Anila, Edita, Eliza, Lillia, Mara, Mersada, Petya, Vlora, Zabela, Zana
Brythunia	Achila, Alaric, Braga, Gaiseric, Hunulf, Sigeric, Sisbert, Theodoric, Valamir, Videric	Anja, Elfrida, Greta, Hildegard, Natasa, Sabri, Sigrun, Sunilda, Thea, Ulrike, Zlata
Cimmeria	Aidan, Balor, Caith, Cormac, Donal, Ethain, Ingol, Liath, Niall, Roark, Ronan, Tuathal	Adara, Breanne, Dianan, Eithna, Iorwen, Maeve, Marella, Nuala, Urith, Wenna
Corinthia	Adelmo, Ambrosius, Casca, Drusus, Gaius, Lucan, Mallus, Petrus, Servius, Titus	Atia, Camilla, Cordelia, Indara, Luciana, Martina, Narcissa, Sabina, Tiberia, Vinicia
Hyperborea	Arno, Dobromil, Durko, Dusan, Jarek, Karel, Marek, Radek, Velek, Zoryn	Dobriila, Draza, Dusana, Milena, Neda, Rhada, Velina, Vera, Veruska, Zora
Hyrkania	Borogul, Dashyin, Gunsem, Ketei, Khlaiun, Ong, Oqotur, Tuqu, Ulugan, Yesukai	Ajurin, Cheren, Davasuren, Ereden, Nergui, Nyam, Nyima, Oyun, Shria, Udbal
Iranistan	Ahmad, Amir, Haroun, Hasaan, Ibrahim, Khalid, Khemais, Mahmud, Sabah, Wakim	Asra, Ayele, Monira, Nadia, Naesa, Nalyssa, Samiha, Sana, Sureia, Zohra
Khitai	Cheuk, Guang, Heshen, Khosho, Khai, Kogen, Kuan, Quan, Shan, Tenji, Zhang, Zhuo	Feiyan, Hui, Jin-hua, Lai, Lian, Sung, Tse, Xi-lan, Yuan, Zhao, Zhi
Koth	Armenius, Aris, Florian, Leontius, Lothar, Maurus, Ovidio, Palladius, Tiberius, Vetranis,	Amina, Aniella, Etheria, Ghita, Gianna, Meloria, Sarina, Savia, Talita, Zaira
Nemedia, Ophir	Alesso, Armatus, Attalus, Cyril, Dorian, Galenus, Hektor, Isidor, Melitius, Symeon	Althea, Basina, Cyra, Eudocia, Herena, Ionna, Ismene, Nereida, Nyssa, Pasara
Nordheim: Asgard or Vanaheim	Asgrim, Brand, Egil, Einar, Gunnar, Haakon, Hrolf, Mord, Niall, Sigurd, Starkad	Aldis, Astrid, Gerda, Gudrun, Gunnhild, Helga, Ingrid, Sigrid, Thora, Thordis
Shem, Khoraja, Khauran	Aram, Elam, Hanud, Melech, Musa, Ninsun, Obares, Sargon, Zabium	Asiria, Inanna, Lilah, Nahrin, Nira, Rina, Samiria, Shira, Sufia, Urshana, Zabihi
Stygia	Amen-Ophis, Hapu-Seneb, Harkouf, Hetep-Sekhem, Khephren, Khonsa, Ptah-Hotep, Sa-Nekht, Semer-Teph, Seostris	Amendiris, Herit, Itakare, Khamaat, Khnemi, Maatkare, Mereret, Nefertari, Nekhbet, Sekhmet
Turan	Ahmet, Aslan, Azim, Burak, Damad, Irfan, Ishan, Kemal, Mahmut, Nazim, Sadik	Adalet, Damla, Emine, Ferah, Hayat, Nadiye, Nazan, Rana, Semra, Zehra
Vendhya	Arun, Ashok, Chandra, Harnath, Kishan, Murali, Naresh, Raghavan, Ramesh, Sardar	Asira, Bhaina, Challa, Hemanti, Indali, Jhala, Kheli, Mira, Savita, Vimala
Zamora	Ashari, Hazir, Ibrahim, Hamid, Maraphis, Pelagon, Salabus, Sargis, Tolmos, Xanthes	Amestris, Adula, Cyra, Izdihar, Lissa, Natara, Nuriya, Rahna, Sadiya, Tanit
Zingara	Ariando, Alfonso, Baltasar, Dario, Fausto, Isidro, Lazero, Rodrigo, Silvio, Teodoro	Adelina, Celina, Estella, Isabella, Marcela, Marisa, Rosalia, Talita, Yolanda, Zelia

As a note, these names were selected to give a broad range and are not intended to be representative of any real-world culture or etymology.

“Barbarian” as your archetype, rolling everything else, as desired. If a result indicates something you don’t want, just ignore that result and pick one that appeals to you.

Once you’ve finished determining your character, it will be up to you, the player, to establish how these elements make up your player character.

COMBINED RANDOM TABLES

These tables are an abbreviated version of the full character creation process, and the results are presented throughout the rest of this chapter. Sections after each table provide additional information and page references for the information generated. For each, refer to the full tables provided in the equivalent steps.

Roll 2d20 and add the results for your character’s homeland, determining their starting talent and language, as

described in the *Homeland, Talent, and Language* table on page 8. The **Conan corebook** addresses the different homelands in greater detail.

Roll twice or select two attribute aspects from the *Attribute Aspects, Caste, and Archetype* table on page 44. These will modify your character’s starting attributes, and are discussed in greater detail on page 11. Roll or select again for caste and for archetype. Caste is detailed on pages 12-15, and archetypes are covered on pages 23-28.

To determine Nature, Education, and War Story, roll or select each of these attributes separately from the *Nature, Education, and War Story* table on page 44. These describe your player character’s background, the experiences that were formative and provided learning opportunities. Nature is described on page 29, education on pages 31-34, and war stories are detailed on pages 36-37.

HOMELAND					
Roll	Homeland	Roll	Homeland	Roll	Homeland
2-7	Aquilonia	18	Koth	28	Khauran
8-9	Bossonian Marches	19	Argos	29	Zembabwe
10	Keshan	20	Gunderland	30	Punt
11	Kush	21	Brythunia	31	The Black Kingdoms
12	Khoraja	22	Nemedia	32	Darfar
13	Cimmeria	23	Zamora	33-34	Turan
14	Hyperborea	24	Shem	35-36	Hyrkania
15	Border Kingdom	25	Zingara	37-38	Iranistan or Afghulistan
16	Nordheim: Asgard or Vanaheim	26	Corinthia	39	Vendhya
17	Ophir	27	Stygia	40	Khitai

EXAMPLE OF RANDOM CHARACTER CREATION

Samantha decides to randomly roll her character. She rolls 9d20 and arranges them as they fell on the table: with results of 12, 2, 19, 20, 10, 15, 16, 19, and 15. Adding her first two dice results and looking at the *Homeland* table, she sees that her character is from “Nemedia” — the result of 22 (12 + 10).

Applying the next four dice results (19, 20, 10, and 15) to the *Attribute, Aspects, Caste, and Archetype* table, she discovers that her character has the attribute aspect of “Wise and Friendly” (twice) and is from the Merchant caste. The result of 15 defines her character archetype as that of a Scholar. Samantha thinks about it a moment, and realizes that she really wants to play a roguish-type character, so she chooses to ignore the result of “Scholar”, picking “Scoundrel” instead.

Now it’s time to look at the *Nature, Education, and War Story* table with the next three dice results (16, 19, and 15). These give her a “Stoic” nature, indicating that she was educated “Under Duress”, and finally, that she was at one point in her background “Survived a Massacre”. She rolls these ideas around and thinks of how they might come together as an origin for her character.

With a clear picture of the character, she starts on her character sheet as a character concept, and begins looking up the results to see what her character’s attributes, talents, and abilities will be like.

ATTRIBUTE ASPECTS, CASTE, AND ARCHETYPE

Roll	Attribute Aspects	Caste	Archetype
1-2	Acute and Aware	Crafter	Archer
3-4	Brave or Foolhardy	Escaped Serf/Slave	Barbarian
5-6	Charismatic	Farmer	Mercenary
7-8	Dexterous	Herder	Noble Warrior
9-10	Eagle-eyed	Merchant	Nomad
11-12	Fast and Fit	Outcast	Pirate
13-14	Socially Adept	Petty Nobility	Priest
15-16	Strong and Resolute	Priesthood	Scholar
17-18	Warrior-born	Warrior	Scoundrel
19-20	Wise and Friendly	Warrior	Witch/Shaman

NATURE, EDUCATION, AND WAR STORY

Roll	Nature	Education	War Story
1-2	Cautious	Against Your Parents' Will	Defeated a Savage Beast
3-4	Curious	Apprenticed Abroad	Dispossessed
5-6	Inspirational	Educated on the Battlefield	Gained (and Lost) a Great Treasure
7-8	Learned	Elder Mentor	Gained the Favor of a Local Lord
9-10	Practical	Family Footsteps	Prevented a Disaster
11-12	Scheming	From Masterful Tutors	Shipwrecked
13-14	Sneaky	Largely Absent	Survived a Duel
15-16	Stoic	On Your Own Terms	Survived a Massacre
17-18	Supportive	Traditional	Survived a Stint at Court
19-20	Wrathful	Under Duress	Survived Witchcraft

ALTERNATE CHARACTER CREATION

These rules focus on larger-than-life characters capable of standing shoulder-to-shoulder with Conan, Valeria, Amalric, Bêlit, and their like. However, gamemasters wishing for player characters of a different caliber might choose an alternate method of character creation. The following suggestions are provided for the players' and gamemaster's use, or can be used as inspiration for still other alternate methods.

SHADOWS OF THE PAST

Though some of the ancient pre-Cataclysmic bloodlines remain in the Hyborian Age, many have thinned or vanished

almost altogether. As a result, characters without this grand legacy will not be able to achieve the heights of achievement and capability, and have the following limitations:

- Starting attributes begin at 6 (rather than 7). Players can choose to reduce up to two attributes by -1 to increase the same number of attributes by +1. The same attribute cannot be decreased or increased twice.
- The maximum of any attribute is 12, and cannot exceed this through character generation or by subsequent improvement.
- The *Ancient Bloodline* talent is not available.
- Skills are capped at 3 during character creation, but can exceed this maximum through experience or with the gamemaster's express permission. Skill improvements that would increase skills above 3 are otherwise lost.



LEAN TIMES IN TARANTIA

A hard luck campaign might involve player characters who begin poor, with less than the suggested starting equipment and funds. In such a campaign, the player characters begin with only the clothes on their backs and an amount of Gold equal to half their Personality attribute (rounded down!). All this Gold must be spent on equipment prior to play, or is otherwise lost.

- At the gamemaster's discretion, each player character may begin with one or two items, such as a single melee weapon, heavy clothing, or even a pair of manacles (formerly worn).
- Whichever of these methods is used, the gamemaster should communicate the desired method clearly to players before they start to generate their characters.

THE HAND OF FATE

Character generation normally allows players to roll or choose for various aspects that make up the player characters, but here the players must accept the influence of Fate, rolling randomly and accepting whatever result is indicated.


- At the gamemaster's discretion, the players can select their archetype and homeland, but must abide by chance for all other "roll or pick" options.

DOG BROTHERS AND SWORD SISTERS

The freedom of character generation can create a highly diverse group of individuals that the gamemaster may be hard-pressed to combine into a group. To avoid this, the gamemaster may require some or all of the following:

- All player characters must speak a common language of their choosing.
- All characters must have Expertise in a particular skill required by the campaign, such as Sailing for a piracy-themed game, Society for a court- or political-based game, or Survival for a game set on the frontier near the Pictish Wilderness.
- Some archetypes that are unsuitable for the campaign might be disallowed, such as a Pirate for a game set in Cimmeria or Hyperborea, for example.





Conan's fame had preceded him, even into distant Keshan; his exploits as a chief of the black corsairs, those wolves of the southern coasts, had made his name known, admired and feared throughout the black kingdoms. He did not refuse tests devised by the dusky lords. Skirmishes along the borders were incessant, affording the Cimmerian plenty of opportunities to demonstrate his ability at hand-to-hand fighting. His reckless ferocity impressed the lords of Keshan, already aware of his reputation as a leader of men, and the prospects seemed favorable.

— “Servants of Bit-Yakin”

SKILLS AND TALENTS

After attributes, skills and talents determine what you are capable of. This chapter describes the individual skills that characters may be trained in, providing a list of example uses, guidelines for Difficulties that might affect the use of that skill, the effects of Momentum spent, and the associated talent trees for each individual skill.

SKILL DESCRIPTION FORMAT

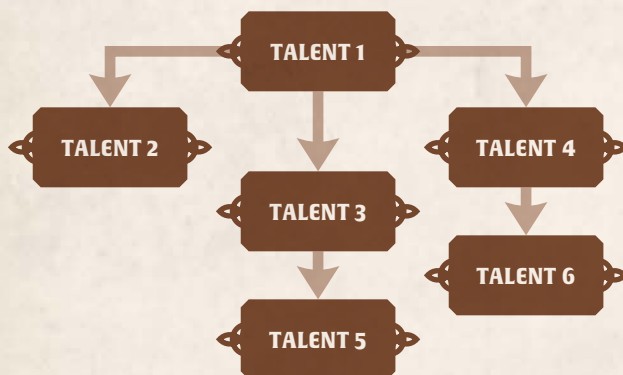
Each skill description is presented in the following format:

TITLE OF SKILL (ASSOCIATED ATTRIBUTE)

The skill is described here, including how it is used in play, what aspects of activity it governs, and how the associated attribute affects it.

- **Common Uses:** A list of specific example uses.
- **Difficulty:** Conditions or situations that might increase the Difficulty of the skill's use.
- **Momentum Spends:** How to spend Momentum to improve the skill's chance of success, and how those Momentum spends affect the way it behaves.

TALENT TREE AND LIST



In this sample layout:

- Talent 1 must be taken before Talents 2, 3, or 4.
- Talent 3 must be taken before Talent 5, and Talent 4 must be taken before Talent 6.

Name of Talent 1

Prerequisite: Talent or Skill X requirements ("X" representing the minimum talent rank, Skill Expertise, or Skill Focus required)

Maximum Ranks: X, where X is the maximum number of ranks allowable in the talent. Treat X as rank 1 if no entry is present.

Many talents can be taken multiple times, with each additional step called a **rank**.

Some talents confer benefits based on the total number of ranks in talents associated with their skill. In these cases, a talent with no Maximum Ranks entry counts as 1 toward this total.



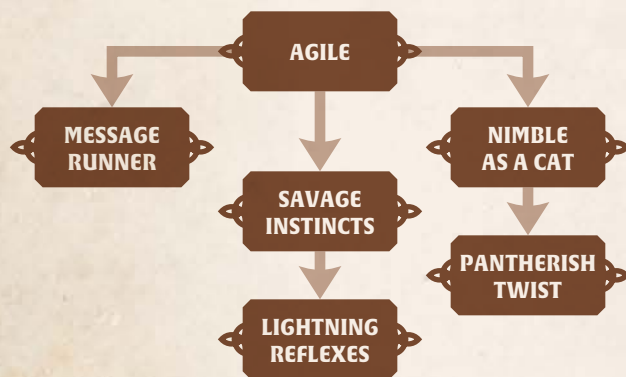
ACROBATICS (AGILITY)

This skill is a measure of body control, covering whole-body movements such as jumping, tumbling, and diving. Attempts to dodge enemy Ranged attacks also fall under Acrobatics. Acrobatics covers any use of reflexes, agility, and coordinated movement to overcome obstacles or avoid attacks.

- **Common Uses:** Evading Ranged attacks and traps, performing acrobatic tricks, landing safely after a fall.
- **Difficulty:** Armor, Difficult Terrain, Disruption or Distraction, Encumbrance, Poor Weather.
- **Momentum Spends:** Momentum is used to determine the overall look and style of the maneuver. Specific Momentum spends vary based on the circumstances of the test. An Acrobatics test made to dodge an attack can benefit from many of the combat-specific Momentum spends (see page 126), while a test to reduce falling damage allows Momentum to be spent to reduce the damage suffered, even allowing your character to land upright.



ACROBATICS TALENTS



Agile

Prerequisite: Acrobatics Expertise 1

You may re-roll one d20 when attempting an Acrobatics test, but you must accept the new result.

Lightning Reflexes

Prerequisite: *Savage Instincts*, Acrobatics Expertise 2

Your quick reactions mean you are rarely caught unawares. When involved in a struggle to resist being surprised, you gain 2 bonus Momentum.

Message Runner

Prerequisite: *Agile*

Maximum Ranks: 2

Couriers and message runners must get through the harshest conditions, across land that even goats would balk at. They learn to recognize the environment and to move naturally in response to it, taking advantage of the terrain's effects. For each rank of *Message Runner*, you can reduce by 1 the Difficulty of any Acrobatics tests made to overcome obstacles, hindrances, hazards, and other forms of difficult terrain.

Nimble as a Cat

Prerequisite: *Agile*

Maximum Ranks: 2

Whether a career thief or just naturally graceful, you can leap extraordinary distances or suffer falls without harm. When making an Acrobatics test to jump or leap, reduce the Difficulty by one step for every rank of *Nimble as a Cat*. This may eliminate the need for the skill test if the result is reduced to Simple (Do). In addition, for each rank of *Nimble as a Cat* you gain 2 additional Cover dice when suffering falling damage.

Pantherish Twist

Prerequisite: *Nimble as a Cat*

You may use your Acrobatics skill in place of Parry when attempting a Defend Reaction, reducing the amount of Doom generated by 1, to a minimum of 0.

Savage Instincts

Prerequisite: *Agile*

You are constantly in motion and difficult to hit with Ranged attacks. If you use a minor or standard action to move during your turn, any Ranged attacks targeted against you increase in Difficulty by one step.

ALCHEMY (INTELLIGENCE)

You are familiar with alchemical theories and philosophies, including both practical applications and theoretical considerations. This encompasses the secrets of materials, the disciplines of chemistry and metallurgy, and philosophical musings upon the nature of existence. Each rank in this skill grants one formula for a petty enchantment (see *Chapter Seven: Sorcery* in the **Conan corebook**).

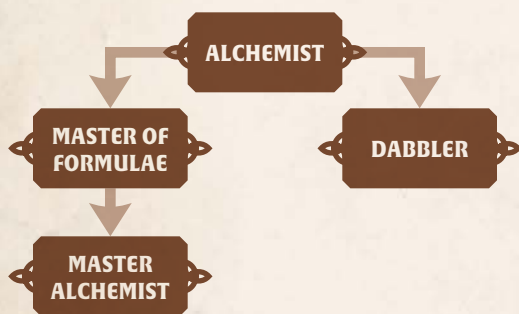
- **Common Uses:** Understanding alchemical treatises, recognizing alchemical philosophies, gathering or analyzing evidence, research of alchemical subjects,

SKILLS, ATTRIBUTES, AND THEIR USES		
Name	Attribute	Uses
Acrobatics	Agility	Moving quickly through difficult terrain. Jumping. Avoiding falling damage. Dodging Ranged attacks.
Alchemy	Intelligence	Performing experiments and constructing petty enchantments. Understanding alchemical language and methods. Analyzing chemicals, plants, and metals.
Animal Handling	Personality	Calming wild animals. Training and caring for domestic animals. Riding beasts of burden. Identifying different animals.
Athletics	Brawn	Moving forcefully through difficult terrain. Climbing. Swimming. Exerting physical strength.
Command	Personality	Issuing orders to subordinates. Coercion through force of will. Coordinating allies.
Counsel	Personality	Treating lost Resolve and Trauma.
Craft	Intelligence	Creating, maintaining, and repairing structures, tools, and devices. Knowledge of armorsmithing, blacksmithing, leatherworking, carpentry, masonry, bowmaking, weaponcrafting, and various fields of engineering.
Discipline	Willpower	Resisting shock in battle. Resisting coercion or persuasion. Maintaining concentration. Recovering from lost Resolve and Trauma.
Healing	Intelligence	Treating physical damage and Injuries. Diagnosing and treating disease and poison. Determining cause of death.
Insight	Awareness	Inspecting people, places, and information closely. Recognizing patterns. Discerning if someone is lying. Recognizing the presence of the unnatural or supernatural.
Linguistics	Intelligence	Speaking additional languages. Literacy. Recognizing languages and accents. Deciphering ancient languages or codes. Translating documents or conversations.
Lore	Intelligence	Basic knowledge useful for day-to-day life. Knowledge of history and current events. Ability to research historical events through sources such as <i>The Book of Skelos</i> .
Melee	Agility	Making Melee attacks. Identifying melee weapons and their Qualities, and caring for them.
Observation	Awareness	Finding hidden things. Noticing things that are unusual or simply out of the ordinary.
Parry	Coordination	Blocking Melee attacks. Identifying combat styles.
Persuade	Personality	Convincing others to do as you wish, by charm or by intimidation.
Ranged Weapons	Coordination	Making Ranged attacks. Identifying ranged weaponry. Maintaining ranged weaponry.
Resistance	Brawn	Recovering naturally from loss to Vigor and Trauma. Resisting the effects of poison, disease, and environmental effects.
Sailing	Coordination	Operating and Identifying boats from the River Styx, the Western Ocean, to the Vilayet Sea.
Society	Personality	Knowledge of economics across the Hyborian kingdoms. Skill at buying and selling items and finding a good deal. Dealing with merchant contracts on the Road of Kings.
Sorcery	Willpower	Recognizing sorcery in action or from its effects. Knowledge of sorcerers and their doings. Casting spells. Identifying the presence of the unnatural.
Stealth	Agility	Moving quietly. Hiding quickly. Hiding objects on one's person. Disguising oneself.
Survival	Awareness	Navigating an unfamiliar environment. Finding shelter. Avoiding environmental hazards. Tracking others.
Thievery	Awareness	Picking locks or disarming traps. Sleight of hand. Identifying strengths and weaknesses in security measures. Understanding crime and criminal activity. Interacting with criminals.
Warfare	Intelligence	Mass combat tactics, logistics, and strategies. Operating and maintaining siege weapons. Commanding groups in combat. Battlefield reconnaissance.

creating and employing alchemical compounds. You may make any of the Simple (Do) petty enchantments (see *Chapter Seven: Sorcery* in the **Conan corebook** for more information).

- **Difficulty:** Disruption or Distraction, Equipment (alchemical equipment, laboratory), Poor Weather, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity. A typical Alchemy test to perform some academic or philosophical activity takes a scene to perform properly, with particularly complex tasks taking even longer. Using alchemical substances takes considerably less time.
- **Momentum Spends:** The majority of Momentum spent on Alchemy tests will be used to provide increased detail when gathering or analyzing evidence or performing research. As with many skills, each point of Momentum spent on a test to investigate, research, or analyze allows you to ask the gamemaster a single related question and expect a truthful answer (though the answer does not have to be complete).

ALCHEMY TALENTS



Alchemist

Prerequisite: Alchemy Expertise 1

You may re-roll one d20 when attempting an Alchemy test, but you must accept the new result. With this talent, you can also substitute Alchemy for ranged weapons when using an alchemical weapon.

Dabbler

Prerequisite: Alchemist

Having studied many alchemical formulas, you are comfortable with making your own discoveries through experimentation. You are not restricted as to which petty enchantments you would make but doing so is very expensive. You must spend three times the number of reagents needed before making any alchemy test to build a petty enchantment for which you do not have the *Master of Formulae* talent.


Master of Formulae

Prerequisite: Alchemist or Patron (from the Sorcery talent tree)

Most alchemists work extensively with a specific formula, which becomes second nature. More exacting measures become the standard. When selecting this talent, you must also select a specific type of petty enchantment: blasting powder, lotus pollen, etc. When using this petty enchantment, you may attempt higher Difficulty tests to increase the power of the particular enchantment. See *Chapter Seven: Sorcery* in the **Conan corebook** for more information.

Master Alchemist

Prerequisite: Master of Formulae

You have refined your measurements to the point of obsession, retesting established formulae, and making unique tools for weighing and separating the resins, fluids, pollens, dusts, and metals of your craft. When working with reagents on any petty enchantment that you have the *Master of Formulae* talent for, you may roll 1 : if you roll an Effect, you have prevented the waste of much of the reagent. This only counts for one reagent: if multiple reagents are used, the rest are consumed as normal.

ANIMAL HANDLING (PERSONALITY)

This skill governs your ability to care for, train, and work with domesticated animals, including steeds, hunting beasts, war animals, and beasts of burden. The skill also provides an understanding of wild animals, and the knowledge about how to safely interact with them.

A trained animal in combat can be controlled without a test, following your commands. Untrained animals cannot be controlled in combat, acting purely on instinct. Outside of combat, a test to command an animal takes one minute,

“Jhebbal Sag?” Balthus repeated the ancient name hesitantly. He had never heard it spoken more than three or four times in his whole life.

“Once all living things worshipped him. That was long ago, when beasts and men spoke one language. Men have forgotten him; even the beasts forget. Only a few remember. The men who remember Jhebbal Sag and the beasts who remember are brothers and speak the same tongue.”

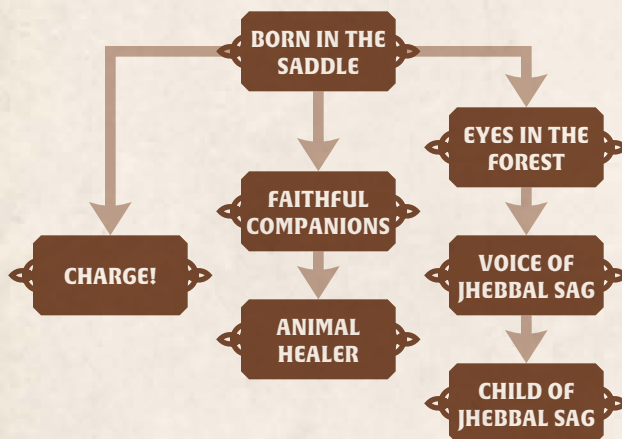
— Conan, “Beyond the Black River”

and will last for ten minutes, plus an additional ten minutes per Momentum spent.

Particularly willful animals may attempt a Response action to resist, opposing the Animal Handling test with the creature's Discipline test.

- **Common Uses:** Controlling animals that are scared, confused, or startled; understanding animal behaviors; riding animals; driving carts, chariots, wagons, and similar vehicles.
- **Difficulty:** Disruption or Distraction, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (more exotic or unusual animals increase the Difficulty). The presence of a dominant animal of the same species, an animal the target creature preys upon, or a natural predator of the target animal all increase the Difficulty by one step, as will dramatic conditions such as the scent of blood, loud noises, smoke, or fire.

ANIMAL HANDLING TALENTS



Animal Healer

Prerequisite: *Faithful Companions*, Animal Handling Expertise 2

Any time you are called upon to make a Healing test upon an animal, you may instead substitute your Animal Handling skill. You may also substitute your Animal Handling skill for Healing tests upon humans, but you must increase the Difficulty of any such tests by one step.

Born in the Saddle

Prerequisite: Animal Handling Expertise 1
Maximum Ranks: 3

You have spent a lifetime in the company of animals and can recognize personality quirks and identify potential sources of distress. On any Animal Handling test where you generate at least one success, you may immediately roll a number of bonus d20s equal to your ranks of *Born in the Saddle*, up to the normal maximum of three bonus

d20s. Any successes generated on these additional dice are added to the initial success total, and Complications on these additional dice may be ignored.

Charge!

Prerequisite: *Born in the Saddle*

You are particularly adept at riding mounts, even those not used to combat. When riding a mount of any kind, the mount is considered combat trained. When riding a horse outside of combat, you can reduce the Difficulty of any tests by one step.

Child of Jhebbal Sag

Prerequisite: *Voice of Jhebbal Sag*

While not literally one of the offspring of this primitive animal god, your character is nonetheless accepted naturally by animals. Any time you encounter a new animal, you may attempt an Average (D1) Animal Handling test as a Minor Action. On a success, the animal immediately considers you to be a friend. If the target is a guard animal, it does not alert its handlers to your presence.

Eyes in the Forest

Prerequisite: *Born in the Saddle*

You have come to recognize when animals are reacting to the environment. Any time you are in the company of animals and need to make an Observation test, you may substitute the Animal Handling skill instead, if desired.

Faithful Companions

Prerequisite: *Born in the Saddle*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You recognize the needs of your animal companions and are rewarded with devotion. When this talent is purchased, you must nominate a single animal you own. This becomes an animal companion. Generally you can control your companion, though the gamemaster may guide its behavior in some instances. Each additional rank allows you to nominate one additional animal companion. Whenever you succeed at a Survival test to find food, water, or shelter, you automatically find adequate food and shelter for your animal companion(s) as well, without needing to spend Momentum or increase the Difficulty of the task. In addition, when in combat, if you have one or more animal companions within reach, you gain a bonus d20 on your Defend Reactions made against Melee and Threaten attacks. Unlike other groups (Squads or Mobs) your animal companions may make Defense Reactions.

Voice of Jhebbal Sag

Prerequisite: *Eyes in the Forest*, Animal Handling Expertise 2

Wild or tamed matters not to you: all animals are kin and to be afforded due respect. Any time you attempt to direct

an animal to take an action that goes against its instinct or training — including instances when the animal is in service of another — you can pay 1 Doom to reduce the Difficulty of the test by one step. Additionally, if Momentum is spent to obtain information using an Animal Handling test (based on interpreting an animal's behavior) you get additional questions equal to your Animal Handling Focus. While this is not actual speech, the connection with the animal is uncanny.

ATHLETICS (BRAWN)

While the Brawn attribute measures raw strength, the Athletics skill represents how well you are able to use that strength. This skill is a measure of how well you can apply overall body strength, using leverage, brute force, or a combination of both. A high Athletics skill does not necessarily mean your character is covered with muscles, but emphasizes how well the muscular strength is used.

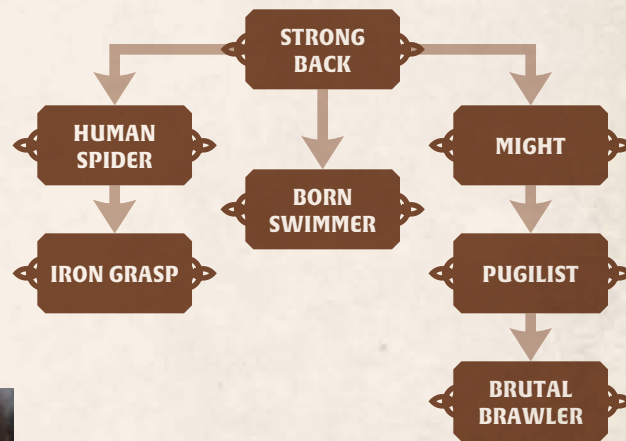
- **Common Uses:** Any form of expressed strength is covered by Athletics. Lifting weights up to your encumbrance value is an Average (D1) Athletics test. Climbing, swimming, and running are activities



covered by this skill. Athletics can also be used in opposed tests when two characters are pitting athletic prowess against one another: wrestling, races, kicking open a door being held shut by someone else.

- **Difficulty:** Difficult Terrain, Disruption or Distraction, Encumbrance, Poor Weather.
- **Momentum Spends:** Momentum from Athletics tests is commonly banked to help other (possibly less able) characters perform the same task. Alternatively, Momentum can be used to run, climb, or swim more quickly, or to continue a tiring Athletics task for longer.

ATHLETICS TALENTS



Born Swimmer


Prerequisite: *Strong Back*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You are as comfortable in water as you are on land. You can reduce the Difficulty of any swimming test by one step per rank of *Born Swimmer*, and can ignore any penalties for acting in water.

Brutal Brawler

Prerequisite: *Pugilist*, Athletics Expertise 2, Melee Focus 2

You can ignore the effects of the Improvised Quality, and increase the damage of the basic Improvised Attack by +1 .

Human Spider

Prerequisite: *Strong Back*

You have spent a significant portion of your life in an environment that involves a great deal of climbing, often in the presence of sheer drops. You are very comfortable acting in these environments and never suffer from vertigo or fear of heights. In addition, you never suffer a penalty for a lack of climbing equipment and may reduce the Difficulty of any climbing test by one step.

Iron Grasp

Prerequisite: *Human Spider*

You never drop or surrender an object unless you wish it. You are immune to the Disarm Momentum spend, and cannot drop your weapon(s) as a result of Complications.

Might

Prerequisite: *Strong Back*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You are able to perform feats of strength that seem at odds with your physique, due to a combination of training and expertise. On any test to lift or move an inanimate object, you may roll a number of bonus d20s equal to your ranks in *Might*, though the normal limit of three bonus d20s still applies.

Pugilist

Prerequisite: *Might*, *Athletics Expertise 2*

You can add the Knockdown Quality (see *Chapter Six: Action Scenes*, page 129) to all Melee attacks.

Strong Back

Prerequisite: *Athletics Expertise 1*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You are a magnificent example of human physical prowess, all-too-frequently abused for this ability. For any *Athletics* test that generates at least one success, you generate one additional success for each rank of *Strong Back*. Further, your *Encumbrance* limit is increased by 1 for each rank of *Strong Back*.



**COMMAND
(PERSONALITY)**

Command is the measure of your ability to manipulate groups of people, including, but not limited to, those expected to defer to you, such as those of a lower military rank or social status.

- **Common Uses:** Commanding a group of non-player characters, bolstering subordinates in the face of horror or disaster, conveying orders and objectives clearly and with the correct emphasis. A simple use for *Command* can use the *Assist* action to bolster another character's task through clear instruction and direction.

- **Difficulty:** Disruption or Distraction, Distance (distance to commanded allies), Foreign Language, Noise, Social Factors (normal chain of command, differences in faction, etc.), Unfamiliarity or Complexity (giving complex orders is more difficult).

Straightforward orders to direct followers that are within their normal expected duties are considered to be Simple (Do), and require no test unless some other factor increases the Difficulty. Holding no official or recognized authority over the non-player characters increases Difficulty by one step. Orders that require significant risks to be taken increase the Difficulty by one step, as do any orders that do not fall within the non-player characters' normal expected duties. An order that is both dangerous and not an expected part of the non-player characters' duties is two steps more difficult. Issuing an order in combat is a Standard Action.

- **Momentum Spends:** Momentum can be spent to communicate additional orders (one Momentum, Repeatable), or to issue the order(s) as a Minor Action instead of a Standard Action (two Momentum). It may also be added to the Momentum pool to help those subordinates carry out the orders given. You may spend one Momentum from a Command test to grant an ally *Morale Soak* against the mental damage inflicted by a *Threaten* attack (this is Repeatable, with each Momentum affecting another ally). The targeted ally gains ☞ of *Cover Soak* equal to your *Command Focus*.

COMMAND TALENTS



Captain

Prerequisite: *Command Expertise 1*

You have learned to issue orders in such a way that they are clear to the recipient, with little margin for misinterpretation. You may re-roll one d20 when making a *Command* test, but you must accept the new result.

Commanding Mien

Prerequisite: *Heed My Words*, Command Expertise 2

You speak in such a way that even those who do not know you or fully understand your language recognize your charisma and persuasive abilities. When speaking with a non-player character you can substitute Command for Persuasion and Linguistics tests to communicate with that character.

Guardsman's Eye

Prerequisite: *Captain*

You are very familiar with the way a crowd would normally act, and recognize actions that are unusual. When dealing with places full of people — even if the people are not organized — you may substitute your Command skill for any Observation or Insight tests that deal with the crowd or the area. You may also use Command to resist against Thievery tests in a crowded area.

Heed My Words

Prerequisite: *Captain*

Your bearing, presence, and voice grab attention and give enemies pause. This counts as a Display which must always use the Command skill. It has a range of Close, and inflicts 4 mental damage with the Area and Stun Qualities. This Display has no specific requirements, but it can only be used once in any scene. Outside of an action scene, you may instead add 1 point to Doom to seize the attention of a crowd of people and compel them to listen to you, though getting the crowd to do anything for you will still require Command or Persuade tests as normal. Toughened foes add one step of Difficulty to the Command test, and Nemesis foes add two steps.

Inspiring Leader

Prerequisite: *Captain*

You are an inspiring presence to those who follow you. All of your allies and subordinates gain 2 Morale Soak while they can see or hear you. Any characters who are within close range gain 4 Morale Soak instead.

Minions

Prerequisite: *Commanding Mien*

Individuals under your authority become extremely loyal to you, perhaps even willing to sacrifice themselves. Any time you come under attack and have a non-player character minion under your command within Reach, that minion may generate one point of Doom. In return, one of your minions also immediately attempts a Protect Reaction. These non-player character minions do not need to be the same, but both must be under your command.

Wise Veteran

Prerequisite: *Guardsman's Eye*, Command Expertise 2

You have become proficient in making certain that the actions of a group are well-coordinated. Any time you are involved in a teamwork test — even if you are not the leader for the test — all characters involved may choose to re-roll any die on the initial roll that results in a failure. They must accept the results of the re-roll, even if they are worse than the initial roll.



COUNSEL (PERSONALITY)

This skill governs your ability to provide sound advice and reassurance, calming the fears and easing the minds of others. A skilled counselor is a valuable asset in a dangerous world, and can help allies weather the terrors of a harsh and brutal life.

- **Common Uses:** See *Damage* on page 122 and *Recovery* on page 124.
- **Difficulty:** Disruption or Distraction, Distance, Foreign Language, Noise, Social Factors, Time.
- **Momentum Spends:** See *Damage* on page 122 and *Recovery* on page 124.

COUNSEL TALENTS



An Ear to Listen

Prerequisite: *Quiet Wisdom*

You listen patiently to the problems of others, and few can dispute that hearing your voice steadies the nerves

and stills doubts. When making a Counsel test to recover Resolve or treat Trauma for another character, every point of Momentum paid or point of Doom generated to add dice to the Counsel test provides two d20s instead of one, though the normal limit of three bonus d20s still applies.

Calming Oratory

Prerequisite: *An Ear to Listen*, Counsel Expertise 2

You can speak to people and calm any situation. When making Persuade tests to convince someone to engage in conversation or to avoid violence, you may substitute Counsel for Command, Discipline, or Persuade. If a Struggle emerges from this attempt, the opposing side gains no bonus Momentum for having greater numbers. Once violence has been prevented this talent does not help with further negotiation.

Comforting Lies

Prerequisite: *Quiet Wisdom*

You know that often, the greatest reassurance comes from denial, and while it is not always the best way to give counsel, it can be valuable in dire times. When you successfully treat one or more Traumas another character has suffered, that character may add 3 points to Doom; the Traumas treated are now healed instead of simply being treated.

Motivate

Prerequisite: *Comforting Lies*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You have a way of hastening the recovery of your allies, quickly and effectively restoring their determination and morale. When treating another character to recover their Resolve, you gain 1 bonus Momentum per rank of *Motivate*, which must be used to recover additional Resolve.

Overcome Dark Powers

Prerequisite: *Calming Oratory*, Counsel Expertise 3

Truly wise counselors know that while most traumas come from the mortal world, some come from more nefarious sources. When treating Trauma caused by Sorcery or a creature summoned by Sorcery, you may take on some of your patient's burden. To do this, add 2 points to Doom and suffer a single Trauma. The patient then heals a single Trauma completely. You must heal your newly gained Trauma as normal. This can be used repeatedly on the same patient.

Quiet Wisdom

Prerequisite: Counsel Expertise 1

You may re-roll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll when making a Counsel test, but you must accept the new result.

Sophist

Prerequisite: *Quiet Wisdom*

You have become known for your wisdom and council, and many are happy to hear you speak. You may substitute Counsel for Persuade or Society.

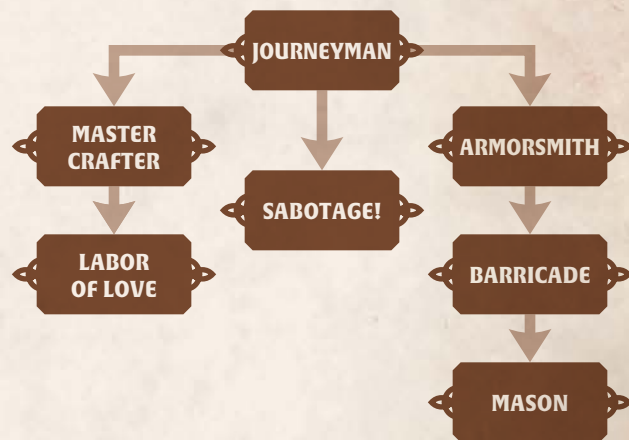
**CRAFT
(INTELLIGENCE)**

This skill covers an understanding of the creation and maintenance of tools and structures. This covers a wide range of fields of expertise, including the disciplines of blacksmithing, carpentry, and masonry.

Craft is a broad skill, encompassing a wide range of tasks and situations. The gamemaster has a considerable amount to take into consideration when adjudicating a given use of the skill, to ensure that it is not overly effective or a waste of effort.

- **Common Uses:** This skill also covers identifying, building, repairing, maintaining, or disabling tools, structures and other manufactured items. The Craft skill may substitute for the Healing skill when attempting to repair, or "heal", damage to inanimate objects, tools, and structures.
- **Difficulty:** Lighting, Disruption or Distraction, Distance (identifying only), Equipment (tools, workshops), Random Motion, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity.
- **Momentum Spends:** The main uses of Momentum on Craft tests are to reduce the time taken, and to improve the quality of success.

CRAFT TALENTS



Armorsmith

Prerequisite: *Journeyman*

You have the knack for repairing armor in the field; making do with whatever is available to repair your armor and that of your allies, even when resources are scarce. When repairing armor away from proper tools and materials, you may add 2 points to Doom in order to attempt a repair on a single hit location's armor, without the use of materials.

Barricade

Prerequisite: *Armorsmith*

You have learned to put up barricades or small structures quickly and efficiently. If you take a Standard Action to create a barricade, you can find or create light cover enough for one character. If given suitable time, you can find or create protections for an entire zone.

Journeyman

Prerequisite: Craft Expertise 1

You have passed apprenticeship and passed its trials. When making a Craft test, you may either roll one extra d20 or spend 1 Doom to reduce the Difficulty of the test by one step, to a minimum of 0.

Labor of Love

Prerequisite: *Master Crafter*

Master crafters can create truly beautiful works. When you have access to your tools and create a labor of love, you can use any bonus Momentum granted by *Master Crafter* to increase the attractiveness of your work. This offers little functional difference to the finished item itself, but will increase your wealth and influence. With *Labor of Love*, you can use Craft in place of Society tests and gain 1 extra level of Renown for every rank of *Master Crafter*.

Mason

Prerequisite: *Barricade*, Craft Expertise 2

You have been apprenticed to a skilled mason, and have learned the specialised and highly-valued skills necessary to oversee the construction of important buildings: temples, castles, palaces, and similar monuments. When overseeing a team of laborers during a construction project, you may use your Craft skill instead of Command. With a Standard Action, you can find or create heavy cover adequate for one character. Given suitable time and resources, you can create this level of protection for an entire zone.

Master Crafter

Prerequisite: *Journeyman*, Craft Expertise 2

Maximum Ranks: 3

You work faster than lesser workers and have the vision to recognize alternative uses of common items. With success on a Challenging (D2) Craft test, you can adapt existing items at hand in order to solve a problem. This adaptation is only good for a single use. Any Momentum from the test can be spent to provide an additional use, 1 extra per point of Momentum. After the final use has been completed, the item is ruined for both the alternative use and its originally intended use.

When you have access to your tools you gain bonus Momentum equal to your ranks in *Master Crafter*, which may only be spent on reducing the time taken to complete the task.

Sabotage!

Prerequisite: *Journeyman*

You are able to identify the problem with any broken item or structure, or to recognize a vulnerability that could be used to cause such a break. You reduce by one the Difficulty of any Craft test to perform repairs or maintenance. When an Exploit Action is taken using the Craft skill, *Sabotage!* grants bonus Momentum equal to your Craft Skill Focus.



DISCIPLINE (WILLPOWER)

This skill provides you with the ability to withstand mental damage, as well as the self-discipline to avoid succumbing to interrogation, coercion, or fear.

- Common Uses:** Resisting persuasion, resisting mind-influencing effects. See *Damage* on page 122 and *Recovery* on page 124.
- Difficulty:** The Difficulty of a Willpower test is set primarily by its circumstances: a test to avoid a mental assault is set at a particular value based on the severity of the assault. In addition, Lighting, Disruption, Distraction, or Poor Weather can all influence your resistance to coercion, influence, and terror: the uncertainty of darkness, an inability to concentrate fully, or the simple depressing nature of torrential rain and freezing winds easily can sap one's will.
- Momentum Spend:** Momentum on Discipline tests is typically stored for later use: the bolstered determination that comes from overcoming a Doom is often sufficient to boost your resolve and performance.



DISCIPLINE TALENTS



Blessed

Prerequisite: *Healthy Superstition*, Discipline Expertise 2

You are particularly resistant to supernatural attempts to manipulate your perceptions, beliefs, and mental processes. Any time you attempt to resist supernatural powers that target your mind, you may re-roll any d20s that did

not generate at least one success, though the second roll stands. Further, each d20 that you roll a 1 on will cause a single Complication for the attacker.

Courageous

Prerequisite: Discipline Expertise 1


You may re-roll a single d20 on any Discipline test, though the second result stands. For every point of Discipline Focus, you gain 1 Courage Soak.

Conan shook his head, more in doubt than in denial. He came of a barbaric race, and the superstitions and instincts of his heritage lurked close beneath the surface of his consciousness.

— *The Hour of the Dragon*

Healthy Superstition

Prerequisite: *Courageous*

Some superstitions are just common sense, and you hold many of those beliefs. This superstition allows you to stand firm in the face of the unnatural, even if doing so would seem foolhardy. When facing supernatural threats, you are empowered by this belief. When a supernatural threat manifests, you may spend one Momentum (Immediate, Repeatable) to immediately gain 1  Morale Soak, which lasts until the end of the current scene.

Iron Will

Prerequisite: *Courageous*

You have survived countless challenges and are prepared to face even more. You don't cry out when struck or startled, and you quickly rebound from Stress. Rather than having to choose a particular stress when you take a Recover Action, you recover both Vigor and Resolve, regaining the same amount of each (two points, plus two per Momentum spent). In addition to this you can add 2 points to Doom in order to perform the Recover Action as a Minor Action. If you use this option, you do not get to re-roll Cover dice, as outlined in the Recover Action (see page 125).

Jaded

Prerequisite: *Courageous*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You have repeatedly observed and suffered cruelties, and have built up a tolerance to mental suffering. Increase your maximum Resolve by one for each rank of *Jaded*.

DESPAIR

*Despair and bewilderment shook his voice.
The girl murmured pityingly, not understanding it all,
but aching in sympathy with her lover's suffering.*

— Valerius and Ivga, "A Witch Shall Be Born"

The world is filled with horrors that can sap the resolve of even the hardest soul. The Discipline skill allows characters to endure the things that spread fear and doubt, but such perils can wear at your very strength of purpose.

These effects all work in a similar way — tracking Despair. Characters can gain Despair from Complications on some Discipline tests, and in other situations at the gamemaster's discretion. Despair affects a character's Resolve, but does not inflict damage. Instead, each point of Despair reduces your maximum Resolve by 1, causing you to become more vulnerable to the doubts and fears that plague mortal minds.

If your maximum Resolve would be reduced to zero, you give up hope entirely, and become both unwilling and unable to continue. Any further Despair beyond that, and you will become insensate, comatose for all practical purposes.

Recovering from Despair does not take long. Once you have found something to revive your spirits (good food, a good night's sleep, a warm hearth, a night's companionship, or something else that brings satisfaction and comfort), after eight hours of rest you may attempt an Average (D1) Discipline test. Success will remove 1 level of Despair, plus 1 per Momentum spent (Repeatable). Any characters with the Counsel or Persuade skills may assist you with this Discipline test.

Wary

Prerequisite: *Jaded*

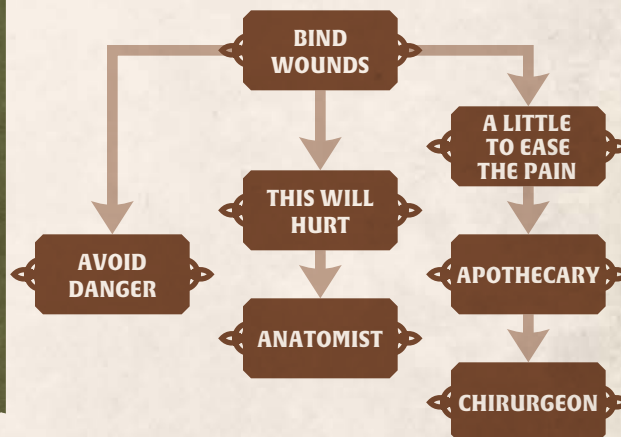
You have seen countless attempts at manipulation, and no longer trust easily. Whenever you are the target of a Persuade or Command action by another character or non-player character, any Momentum spent (or points added to Doom) to add bonus d20s to the Willpower test adds two dice instead of one, though the normal limit of three bonus d20s still applies. Further, if you resist the manipulation attempt, any other characters who have been convinced may each spend 1 Momentum (Immediate) to see through the manipulation, inspired by your example.

HEALING (INTELLIGENCE)

This skill provides the ability to give care to someone who has suffered injury or sickness, as well as all the knowledge that accompanies such skill.

- **Common Uses:** See *Damage* on page 122 and *Recovery* on page 124. Healing may also be used to identify and treat sicknesses and poisons, and to determine the nature of injuries.
- **Difficulty:** Lighting, Disruption or Distraction, Equipment (medicine bag, poultice, bandages, etc.), Random Motion, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity.
- **Momentum Spends:** See *Damage* on page 122 and *Recovery* on page 124. As a skill that involves lots of knowledge, the Obtain Information Momentum Spend is a particularly common choice when attempting to identify ailments or study advanced healing lore.

HEALING TALENTS



"The guard is here, you old fool!" cavalierly snapped Pallantides, commander of the Black Dragons, forgetting Publius' rank in the stress of the moment. "Best stop your caterwauling and aid us to bind the king's wounds. He's like to bleed to death."

"Yes, yes!" cried Publius, who was a man of plans rather than action. "We must bind his wounds. Send for every leech of the court! Oh, my lord, what a black shame on the city! Are you entirely slain?"

— "The Phoenix on the Sword"


A Little to Ease the Pain

Prerequisite: *Bind Wounds*

In your past you worked with extremely limited resources, and have learned to take full advantage of them when available. When using medicine from a healer's bag, each load adds two d20s to the Healing test, instead of the usual one, though the normal limit of three bonus d20s still applies. In addition, if you have access to narcotics or alcohol you can make a Daunting (D3) Healing test to convert a dose of either into a dose of medicine.

Anatomist

Prerequisite: *This Will Hurt*

You know the human body like no other and can exploit this in many ways. When making a Healing test to treat injuries, you can reduce the Difficulty of any test by one step, to a minimum of Average (D1). In addition to this you may add +1  and the Vicious 1 Quality to any Melee or Threaten attack you make, as your knowledge of the body makes your cuts and your threats alike all-the-crueler and more specific.

Apothecary

Prerequisite: *A Little to Ease the Pain*

You are well-versed in treating poisons. You can attempt an Average (D1) Healer test any time you encounter a poisoned or drugged patient. On success, you are able to identify both the poison or drug and the antidote necessary to relieve its symptoms. You may spend Momentum to have the antidote at hand, though the amount required is subject to the gamemaster's discretion, based upon the rarity and toxicity of the poison or drug. You can use the Healing skill instead of Alchemy or Animal Handling when treating or procuring venoms.

Avoid Danger

Prerequisite: *Bind Wounds*

You recognize various environmental risks and know how to mitigate them. You may substitute your Healing skill for Survival for the purpose of avoiding hazards.

Bind Wounds

Prerequisite: Healing Expertise 1

You may re-roll one d20 when using the Healing skill, but you must accept the new result.

Chirurgion




Prerequisite: *Apothecary*, Healing Expertise 2

You have encountered a variety of sicknesses, plagues and injuries, and have learned many effective ways of treating these maladies. You can attempt an Average (D1) Healing test

to identify the best course of treatments for any patient you encounter. On a success, you are able to prescribe a suitable remedy. You may spend Momentum to have the necessary treatments on hand, though the cost in both money and time is subject to the gamemaster's discretion. You are a figure of authority and can substitute Healer for Command Tests. If you command another character to assist you or to act in your stead, that character can re-roll a single d20 of their own Healing test. Given suitable downtime, you can completely heal the injuries of others. See *Diseases* on page 127 in the **Conan corebook** for more information.

This Will Hurt

Prerequisite: *Bind Wounds*

You know that setting bones and tending to injuries will cause plenty of pain, and there's little good that comes from being gentle when trying to save a life. Better that they suffer pain now and live to tell of it. When you attempt to treat a patient's injuries, you may choose to reduce the Difficulty of the test by up to three steps. However, if you do this, you inflict mental damage depending on the number of steps reduced. 1 step inflicts 3  2 steps 4  and 3 steps 5 .

INSIGHT (AWARENESS)

Insight represents your ability to recognize if someone is lying, or to discern someone's true intentions. It also governs the instincts and perceptions needed to notice signs of unnatural presences and sorcery.

Insight is often an opposed test, taken to oppose a Persuasion test made by another character attempting to lie, or opposed by the Willpower test of someone attempting to conceal a supernatural nature. In other cases, an Average (D1) Insight test is used to detect the presence of a supernatural presence nearby, requiring one minute of concentration/one action in combat, unless the gamemaster rules that a presence is sufficiently strong that you can detect it without taking an Action. Subtler effects — or abilities that deliberately obscure supernatural presences — will increase the Difficulty.

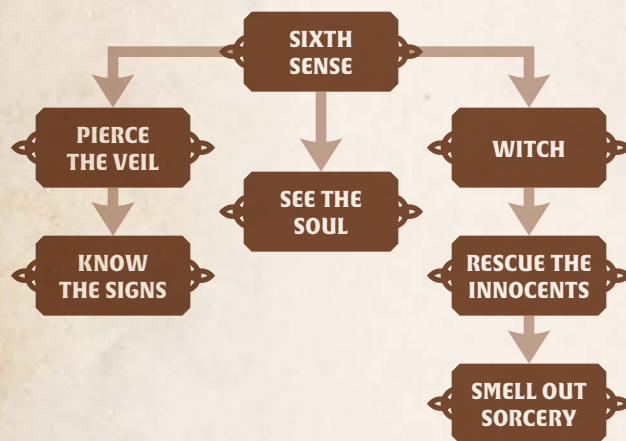
Some effects are obviously supernatural — powerful instances of sorcery or baleful creatures from beyond — but a test may be required to determine a source, or to distinguish other supernatural presences in an area awash with unnatural phenomena.

- **Common Uses:** Detect lies, discern supernatural presences.
- **Difficulty:** Disruption or Distraction, Distance.



- Momentum Spends:** Insight tests can use Momentum to perform other activities at the same time — such as alerting allies to suspicious members of a crowd, or moving to intercept an assassin — or provide additional detail about a character's state of mind.

INSIGHT TALENTS



Know the Signs

Prerequisite: *Pierce the Veil*

You have personally dealt with the effects of the supernatural, and recognize the signs of its activity. Whenever you are in

the presence of a person or object that was affected by supernatural abilities within the last six hours, you may attempt an Insight test, with a Difficulty equal to the number of hours ago the person or object was affected. On success, you can recognize the taint of the supernatural. By spending 2 points of Momentum, you can identify the specific powers in use.

Pierce the Veil

Prerequisite: *Sixth Sense*

You have a knack for recognizing the subtle cues of supernatural ability. Whenever you are in the presence of the supernatural or beings with unusual powers — particularly if you are not aware of them — the gamemaster should call for you to attempt an Average (D1) Insight test. On success, you recognize that the other being (or presence) has supernatural abilities, and may spend 2 Momentum to identify the type of abilities. This test should be made even if the target does not have any active abilities.

Rescue the Innocents

Prerequisite: *Witch*

Instead of using the ability from *Witch*, prior to combat you can attempt a Simple (D0) Insight test to evacuate innocents from the scene. For every Momentum spent, you can earmark three chosen non-player characters and ensure that they get to safety. These non-player characters cannot be targeted by combat unless the gamemaster pays three points of Doom for each attack.

See the Soul

Prerequisite: *Sixth Sense*

While you might not literally see the human soul, you can intuitively relate your alternate senses to the physical world. When dealing with mortal humans you may use your Insight skill for Society and Thievery.

Sixth Sense

Prerequisite: Insight Expertise 1

You may re-roll one d20 when making an Insight test, but you must accept the new result. In the event of an ambush, you gain 1 additional bonus point of Momentum. If the Insight test was requested because of sorcerous or otherwise unnatural phenomena, the gamemaster must reveal this.

Smell Out Sorcery

Prerequisite: *Rescue the Innocents*

Instead of using the ability from *Witch* prior to combat, you can attempt a Challenging (D2) Insight test to sense any sorcery, whether a sorcerer, summoned creature, ruin or artifact within medium range. However, this test is highly inaccurate and its consequences may target innocent victims.

Witch

Prerequisite: *Sixth Sense*
Maximum Ranks: 3

Whether from dire sorcery or human cruelty, you have learned to discover when matters will escalate. Prior to any combat, you can attempt a Dire (D4) Insight test to gain an additional Standard Action. This Action takes place as if you had spent a Fortune point. Each additional rank of this talent beyond the first reduces the Insight test by one Difficulty step.

LINGUISTICS (INTELLIGENCE)

The skill indicates your familiarity with foreign, obscure, or dead languages. Training in this skill indicates fluency, as well as an understanding of cultural contexts, nuances, and idioms. It also covers a degree of code-making, and the use of language to conceal or alter lore. Anyone with one or more ranks of training in Linguistics is assumed to have a basic working knowledge of all common languages spoken across the known world, as well as a passing familiarity with dead or lost languages like Atlantean or Ancient Stygian. Characters gain additional fluency learning additional languages equal to their Linguistics Focus.

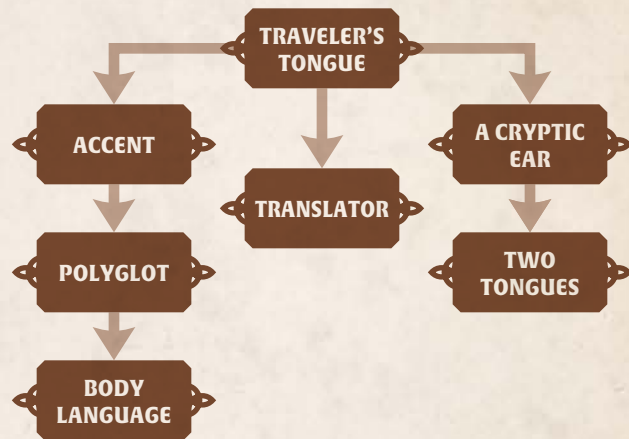
The simplest translations require only a minute, or as long as the text takes to read, as does interpreting obscured or misleading language. Deciphering complex codes, translating ancient languages, or writing texts of any sort, takes significantly longer.

- **Common Uses:** Reading foreign languages, creating or deciphering codes, composing or interpreting misleading language, translating ancient texts, real-time translation of conversation between two parties.
- **Difficulty:** Equipment (research materials, libraries), Foreign Language (obscure dialects, dead languages), Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (deliberately obscure texts, complex codes, or ciphers).

Most uses of a language are Simple (Do) Linguistics tests for those who are fluent. When dealing with languages you are not fluent in, the Difficulty is increased by one step, with ancient, dead, or anachronistic forms of language increasing the Difficulty by one additional step. Obscure dialects or accents, or the use of obscure or specialized words can increase the Difficulty further.

- **Momentum Spends:** The main Momentum spends for Linguistics tests will either increase the quality of the translation — providing more information with the Momentum spent — or reduce the time made to perform the task.

LINGUISTICS TALENTS



Accent

Prerequisite: *Traveler's Tongue*

You are familiar with the idioms and speech patterns of a broad range of different populations. You know not just how to speak a language, but how to speak it in a fashion that sets a native speaker at ease, often even utilizing a local dialect. You can substitute Linguistics for Persuade.

A Cryptic Ear

Prerequisite: *Traveler's Tongue*

You have a knack for spotting and solving word and number ciphers, even those hidden in plain sight. So long as you are fluent in the language spoken, the Difficulty of any test to decipher the hidden meaning is reduced by one step. In addition, you can add 1 to Doom in order to reduce the Difficulty of the test by one step further. This may eliminate the need for a test, if it becomes Simple (Do).

Body Language

Prerequisite: *Polyglot*

You are a master at understanding people. You can speak with any living person so long as there is no immediate distraction that would prevent communication, at which point the Linguistics skill must be used as normal. This communication requires a Standard Action but no test is needed. You can also substitute Linguistics for Insight.

Polyglot

Prerequisite: *Accent*, *Linguistics Focus 2*

You are a master at understanding languages. You speak the active languages of all the locations you have traveled to, and will immediately learn the active languages of anywhere you visit. Learning the language(s) costs 1 Fortune point, which can be spent at any time during the visit.

Translator

Prerequisite: *Traveler's Tongue*

You can read more languages than you can speak. For every Linguistics talent possessed, you can add one language that you can read with fluency. You do not count as fluent when hearing or speaking the language, though you can still communicate fluently through writing should you find a literate character to converse with.

Traveler's Tongue

Prerequisite: Linguistics Expertise 1

You gain one additional language fluency for every Linguistics talent you possess.



Two Tongues

Prerequisite: *A Cryptic Ear*, Linguistics Focus 2

You are a master at expression and can transmit a private message at the same time as a public one. You can take two Speak Actions at the same time. For others, cracking your spoken code is a Daunting (D3) Linguistics test, though for the expected recipient it is an Average (D1) Linguistics test to understand the message.

LORE (INTELLIGENCE)

This skill is a measure of your familiarity with the lands beyond your personal experience, as well as knowledge gained from books, scrolls, and tutors. This includes an understanding of history, politics, current events, and places both near and far.

LANGUAGES

In his roaming about the world the giant adventurer had picked up a wide smattering of knowledge, particularly including the speaking and reading of many alien tongues. Many a sheltered scholar would have been astonished at the Cimmerian's linguistic abilities, for he had experienced many adventures where knowledge of a strange language had meant the difference between life and death.

— Conan, "Servants of Bit-Yakin"

All player characters are fluent in one or more languages. However, they are not limited solely to those languages when communicating. Most people know a few common words and phrases from the languages of their neighbours, enough to convey basic meaning, and some languages are similar enough that their speakers can be mutually understood.

The languages commonly spoken in the Hyborian Age are as follows: Aquilonian, Argossean, Brythunian, Cimmerian, Corinthian, Darfari, Hyperborean, Hyrkanian, Iranistani, Keshani, Kothic, Kushite, Nemedian, Nordheimer, Ophirean, Pictish, Punt, Shemitish, Stygian, Turanian, Zamorian, Zembabwein, and Zingaran.

Obscure, regional tongues include Himelian, Kambujan, the Vilayet argot, and Zuagir, and countless dialects and minor tongues.

Ancient and long-dead languages include Acheronian, Ancient Stygian, and even the tongues of the long-vanished Thurian Age: Atlantean, Ligurean, Lemurian, Valusian, and others.

Of these, the following languages are roughly similar enough that with a little patience and careful attention, speakers are able to understand one another, as mentioned above. Some similarities between other languages exist, but these are the most directly similar.

- MIDDLE KINGDOM LANGUAGES: Aquilonian, Corinthian, Nemedian, Ophirean, and Zingaran
- BORIAN LANGUAGES: Brythunian, Hyperborean, and Nordheimer
- ZHEMRIAN LANGUAGES: Argossean, Kothic, Shemitish, Zamorian, and Zhemri
- SOUTHERN LANGUAGES: Darfari, Keshani, Kushite, Punt, and Zembabwein

Lacking a common language does not prevent communication between two or more parties. However, it increases the Difficulty of all skill tests that involve communication — typically Command, Counsel, and Persuade — by one Difficulty step for basic communication, and two steps for unusually complex topics or dialects.

Characters with any Expertise in the Linguistics skill have a better grasp of how languages work, and can attempt to decipher foreign or unfamiliar languages, given a little time and study.

Furthermore, as described in *Step Nine: Finishing Touches* for character generation (page 44), a character is fluent in one additional language for every rank of Linguistics Focus possessed.

The Lore skill represents in some part your general knowledge about the Hyborian kingdoms and their inhabitants, and the gamemaster is encouraged to provide you with the kind of information that ordinary people in the setting would know.

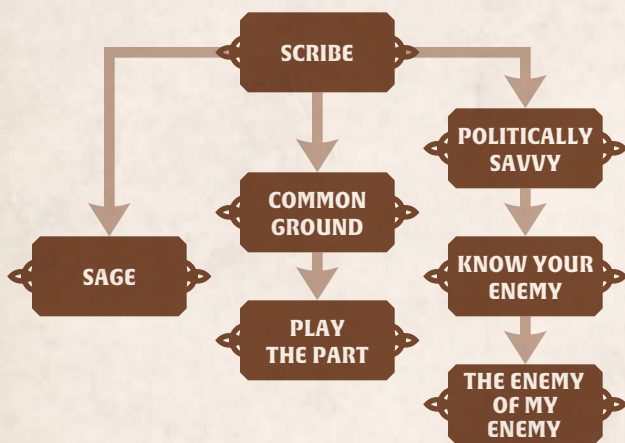
- **Common Uses:** Researching general knowledge topics, knowledge of recent history and facts about the local area.
- **Difficulty:** Equipment (records and histories), Foreign Language (learning of a culture is more difficult if you do not understand the language), Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (more complex subjects are more difficult to learn about).

Your distance from events or locations increases the Difficulty. Researching events that occurred in another country increases the Difficulty by one step. Events that occurred a decade ago increase the Difficulty by one step, a century ago by two steps, or a millennium or more ago by three steps. Widely-known events, such as major wars, can reduce or eliminate these increases in Difficulty. Similarly, obscure events that influenced only a small group of people increase their Difficulty by one step. Censorship of particular information increases the Difficulty by one. Availability or lack of a library or other archive may decrease or increase the Difficulty of a given test, at the gamemaster’s discretion.

- **Momentum Spends:** In general, when you succeed on a Lore test, the gamemaster should answer one question on the subject per point of Momentum spent.



LORE TALENTS



Common Ground

Prerequisite: *Scribe*

You have a broad education that includes an understanding of history and culture from a variety of different

Arus was a practical man. He appealed to the savage’s sense of material gain; he pointed out the power and splendor of the Hyborian kingdoms, as an example of the power of Mitra, whose teachings and works had lifted them up to their high places. And he spoke of cities, and fertile plains, marble walls and iron chariots, jeweled towers, and horsemen in their glittering armor riding to battle. And Gorm, with the unerring instinct of the barbarian, passed over his words regarding gods and their teachings, and fixed on the material powers thus vividly described.

— “The Hyborian Age”

perspectives. When interacting with an opponent, you may attempt an Average (D1) Lore test as a Minor Action. On success, you recognize within your opponent an element of common ground for discussion. Any Momentum from the Lore test may be immediately added to a Persuade or Command test, taken as a Standard Action.

The Enemy of My Enemy

Prerequisite: *Know Your Enemy*

You have come to recognize the reasons why an opponent is acting in a particular way, and can use that to dissuade them from acting. You may substitute your Lore skill for Command, Counsel, or Persuade when making a test against an opponent whose motivations you understand.

Know Your Enemy

Prerequisite: *Politically Savvy*, Lore Expertise 2

When analyzing an opponent's pattern of actions — including combats, social interactions, and rumors — you have learned to recognize your foe's overall strategy. Once you have assembled the available clues, you may spend 1 Doom point. The gamemaster must then truthfully reveal your opponent's short-term goals.

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

Many skills are geared towards allowing a character to gain information on a given subject. Even skills that are primarily used for combat or other active tasks may be used for study and research purposes, as the physical proficiencies are typically accompanied by familiarity with and understanding of the lore and traditions associated with the skill. For example, a character skilled in Athletics will likely have a decent understanding of training regimes, nutrition, and other information that supports their physical activities, while a character with training in Ranged Weapons will understand how bows and crossbows work, as well as how to use them.

For this reason, almost any skill can be used to obtain relevant information. This is a relatively simple matter — when using a skill to obtain information, a success means that you are allowed to ask the gamemaster a single question about the subject, and an additional question on the subject for each Momentum spent, as per the Obtain Information Momentum spend. If you need assistance coming up with questions, other players are encouraged to assist, and the gamemaster should be liberal in supporting players who find themselves at loose ends.

If the gamemaster is feeling particularly ambitious and creative, and everyone at the table is amenable to the idea, the gamemaster may even permit Momentum spends to define interesting facts on the subject, rather than merely posing questions. This can help some players feel more immersed in the setting, by allowing some measure of creative control over the details, and relieves some of the burden on the gamemaster to have an answer for everything, at the cost of having to figure out how all those crazy ideas fit together.

Play the Part

Prerequisite: *Common Ground*, Lore Expertise 2

You are so familiar with foreign cultures that you have learned to impersonate the members of a broad range of cultures. This includes style of dress, speech, and other mannerisms. When attempting to make use of a disguise, you may substitute your Lore skill for Stealth.

Politically Savvy

Prerequisite: *Scribe*

You are familiar with the philosophies, styles, and motivations of various political entities. When interacting with an opponent, you may attempt a Simple (Do) Lore test as a Minor Action. One Momentum is enough to recognize the foe's significant political and personal affiliations, based upon their apparent mannerisms and actions. Additional Momentum provides more detailed information.

Sage

Prerequisite: *Scribe*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You have an impressive amount of knowledge at an academic level. When performing research on any topic covered by the Lore skill you may reduce the Difficulty by one step per rank of *Sage*. This may eliminate the need for the test.

Scribe

Prerequisite: Lore Expertise 1

You have had access to at least a small library of books, scrolls, or tablets, and gained a fascination with learning and knowledge. When rolling a Lore test you gain one bonus Momentum for every d20 that rolls less than your Lore Focus. This bonus Momentum can only be used for the Obtain Information Momentum spend.

MELEE (AGILITY)

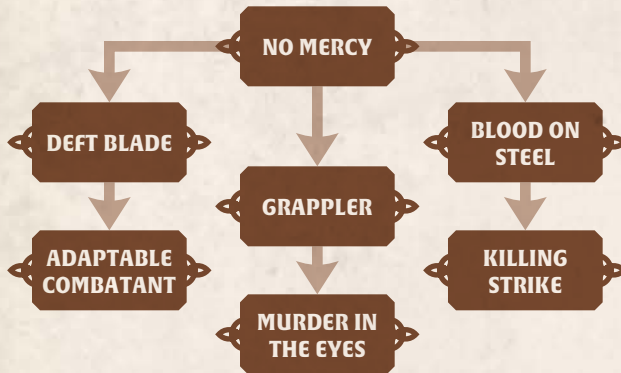
This skill governs the ability to attack in melee combat. It covers all melee weaponry, from the rawest improvised weaponry to the most finely-honed implements of combat.

- **Common Uses:** See *Chapter Six: Action Scenes* for more information. In addition, the skill can also be used to identify various types of hand-to-hand weaponry and the injuries they cause, recognizing weapon-based combat styles, proper maintenance of melee weapons, and other related topics.
- **Difficulty:** See *Chapter Six: Action Scenes* for more information. Noncombat uses are affected by

Distance (distance to the weapon, or injury being identified), Unfamiliarity or Complexity (obscure forms of weaponry).

- **Momentum Spends:** See *Chapter Six: Action Scenes* for more information. Noncombat uses gain more detailed or more specific information with Momentum spent.

MELEE TALENTS



Adaptable Combatant

Prerequisite: *Deft Blade*, Melee Expertise 3

You can adjust your fighting style to suit a range of circumstances. When making or defending against an attack, you may increase or decrease the Reach of your weapon by 1. A weapon's Reach may not be reduced below 1.

Blood on Steel

Prerequisite: *No Mercy*, Melee Expertise 2

You do not hesitate to bloody your weapons. When rolling for damage with a Melee attack, you may spend one Momentum in order to add the Vicious 1 Quality to the weapon, or increase the weapon's Vicious Quality by 1 if it already possesses the Quality.

Deft Blade

Prerequisite: *No Mercy*, Melee Expertise 2

You wield a blade as if it were an extension of your arm. Whenever you make a Melee attack, any Momentum spent or points added to Doom to add bonus d20s to the Melee test adds two dice instead of one, though the normal limit of three bonus d20s still applies.

Grappler

Prerequisite: *No Mercy*

You know that a mobile foe is a dangerous one, and the easiest way to stop someone moving is to grab hold of them. After making a successful Melee attack, you may

spend 1 Momentum to gain the Grappling Quality on an unarmed attack.

Killing Strike

Prerequisite: *Blood on Steel*, Melee Expertise 3

Your strikes are deadly, making corpses of all who cross you. When you inflict 1 or more Wounds as a result of a Melee attack, you may spend 2 Momentum in order to inflict an additional Wound immediately. Against a mob or squad of enemies, this additional Wound may be applied to another member of that mob or squad.

Murder in the Eyes

Prerequisite: *Grappler*

You are a savage up close, where your foes can feel the wet heat of your breath and see the savagery in your gaze. When attacking an opponent that does not have Guard, add +2 to your damage roll.

No Mercy

Prerequisite: Melee Expertise 1

When making a Melee attack, you may re-roll a number of damage dice equal to the total number of Melee talents (and ranks in those talents) you have acquired, if desired. You must accept the results of the re-rolls.

OBSERVATION (AWARENESS)

This skill governs your ability to notice details and discern subtle environmental cues. To notice that a search has been undertaken, observing characters must engage in a Struggle with the spy, with the spy gaining bonus Momentum equal to their Observation Focus.

- **Common Uses:** Searching for physical clues, detecting ambushes and other threats, noticing small details.
- **Difficulty:** Lighting (sight-based Observation), Distance, Noise (hearing-based Observation), Poor Weather.

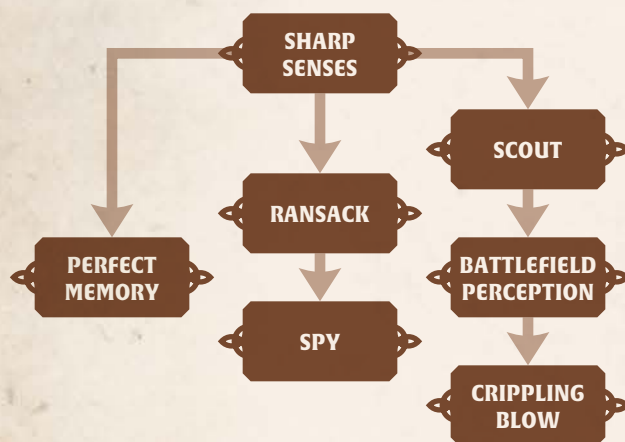
Observation tests are frequently used to oppose Stealth or Thievery tests. The Difficulty of Observation tests can also be influenced by the size of the object or threat being spotted.

- **Momentum Spends:** Observation tests can use Momentum to perform other activities at the same time — such as alerting allies of threats spotted, or moving to take cover in response to an ambush — or to provide additional detail.

Yet it was Conan who halted them as they were crossing an unusually wide chamber. His wilderness-bred ears were keener even than the ears of Techotl, whetted though these were by a lifetime of warfare in those silent corridors.

— “Red Nails”

OBSERVATION TALENTS



Battlefield Perception

Prerequisite: *Scout*, Observation Expertise 2

During combat, you may choose one enemy and make an Average (D1) Observation test as a Minor Action. If successful, you can determine how much of the target's Stress remains, and how many Harms the target is suffering from. For one Momentum (Repeatable), you may choose one additional foe.

Crippling Blow

Prerequisite: *Battlefield Perception*

You know how to place your blows to deal crippling harm. After making a successful attack, you may add 1 point to Doom in order to make the attack particularly effective. Add a number of additional damage dice to the attack equal to your Observation Focus. Each time this ability is used in a single scene, the cost of using the ability increases by 1: the first time adds 1 to Doom, the second adds 2, the third adds 3, etc.

Perfect Memory

Prerequisite: *Sharp Senses*

You have a knack for recalling information, even if it was irrelevant at the time. You can make an Observation test

to investigate any area you've been to, even if you are not in that location any more. You cannot change any of the physical features of the area, meaning that your memory is limited to what you actually experienced. For example, if you didn't look behind a tapestry or open a door, you have no idea what they conceal. However, if you also have the *Ransack* talent, it should be assumed that you opened/closed all doors and looked at the scene from multiple points of view.

Ransack

Prerequisite: *Sharp Senses*

You are adept at thoroughly searching an area quickly. The search is obvious to any onlookers and any who examine the area searched, with a Difficulty determined by the size of the area to be searched. Searching within Reach requires an Average (D1) Observation test, while searching within Close range becomes a Challenging (D2) test. With a successful Observation test, you identify all of the clues that you currently consider important in that area. *Ransack* takes a Standard Action and can be attempted multiple times.

Scout

Prerequisite: *Sharp Senses*

You can survey a new environment quickly. The first time you attempt an Observation test in a location you've never been before, you gain 1 bonus Momentum, which must be used on the Obtain Information Momentum spend.

Sharp Senses

Prerequisite: Observation Expertise 1

You may re-roll one d20 when making an Observation test, but you must accept the new result.

Spy

Prerequisite: *Ransack*, Observation Expertise 2

You can perform the *Ransack* talent without leaving tell-tale evidence of the search. To notice that a search has been undertaken, you must engage in a Struggle with the character that used this talent upon the space, gaining bonus Momentum equal to your Observation Focus.

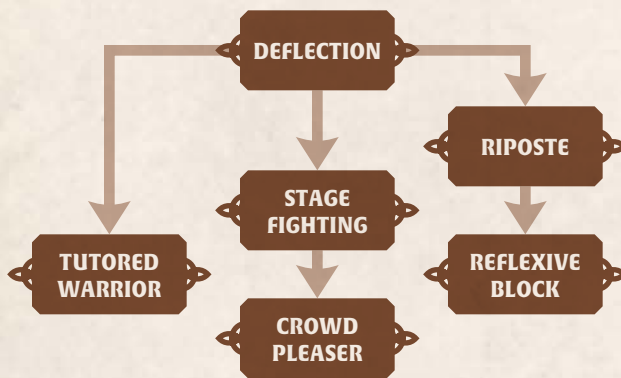
PARRY (COORDINATION)

Parry is used to defend from blows, and constitutes most of the training a beginner gets in swordplay, using a weapon or shield to protect oneself. It is most often used in an opposed test against Melee, preventing hand-to-hand weapons from striking you. It can also be used when trying

to put on a performance or engage in “stage fighting”. Stage fighting is resolved as a teamwork test using the Parry skill to ensure that the fight seems realistic to those observing. When used in this manner, the Insight skill is used to spot the false combat.

- **Common Uses:** See *Chapter Six: Action Scenes* for more information. Outside of combat, it is also used to perform feats of martial spectacle, showing off to onlookers, as well as to spot flaws in the defenses of an enemy.
- **Difficulty:** See *Chapter Six: Action Scenes* for more information. Noncombat uses are affected by Distance (distance to the weapon, or injury being identified), Unfamiliarity or Complexity (obscure forms of weaponry).
- **Momentum Spends:** See *Chapter Six: Action Scenes* for more information. Noncombat uses gain more detailed or more specific information with Momentum spent.

PARRY TALENTS



Crowd Pleaser

Prerequisite: Stage Fighting

You have become adept at gauging your attacks to create more spectacular results that are less lethal than they appear. After successfully hitting with a Melee attack, but before rolling for damage, you can reduce the damage of the attack by up to 3 . You gain 1 bonus Momentum for each of damage reduced.

Deflection

Prerequisite: Parry Expertise 1

You know the importance of keeping your weapons up and ready to defend. When making a Defend Reaction using the Parry skill, you can reduce the number of points added to Doom by 1, to a minimum of 0. This stacks with the weapon's Parrying Quality.

Reflexive Block

Prerequisite: Riposte

You have become so attuned to your Parry skill that you may use your Parry skill when attempting a Defend Reaction against a Ranged attack, which is normally not possible.

Riposte

Prerequisite: Deflection

The instant after an attack is the moment when the attacker is the most vulnerable. After successfully making a Defend Reaction using the Parry skill, you may immediately add 1 to Doom in order to make a Melee attack against the foe you just parried. Momentum remaining from the Parry Action may be carried over to this Melee attack.

Her eyes danced and her lips smiled without mercy. Again she was Valeria of the Red Brotherhood and the hum of her steel was like a bridal song in her ears.

Her sword darted past a blade that sought to parry and sheathed six inches of its point in a leather-guarded midriff.

— “Red Nails”

Stage Fighting

Prerequisite: Deflection

You can believably fake combat with others, presenting no risk to those facing you. You may substitute the Parry skill for Melee Tests but, when you do so, all Melee attacks gain the Nonlethal Quality. In addition, all tests to spot your fakery are 1 step more difficult.

Tutored Warrior

Prerequisite: Deflection

You can study human foes to learn their weaknesses, drawing them out in combat to see how they react, and thus, learning how to exploit those moments when they are unintentionally defenseless. As a Standard Action, you may attempt a Daunting (D3) Parry test to learn one particular enemy's patterns and weaknesses. If successful, for the remainder of the scene, you may re-roll a single d20 on every Melee or Parry skill test made against that enemy.



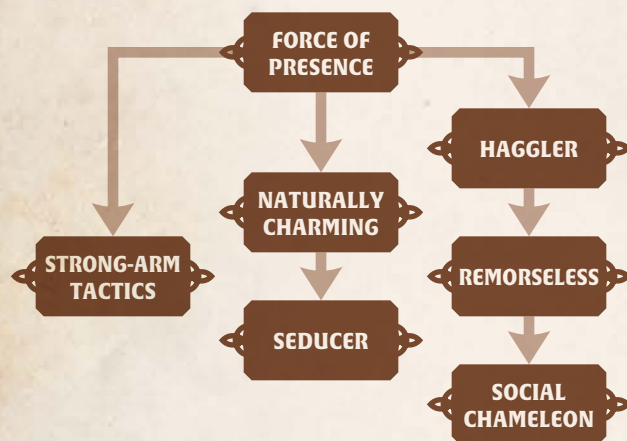
PERSUADE (PERSONALITY)

This skill governs your ability to convince others, to make them believe what you wish, or even to assume one of your beliefs for a short while. It covers a wide range of interpersonal skills, such as the ability to charm, deceive, coerce, bribe, seduce, or haggle.

Persuade is often opposed by a target's Willpower test. Non-player characters will eventually shake off the effects of a Persuade test, whether having second thoughts, seeing through a lie, or overcoming a scare. The gamemaster should set the duration of the effect and the time required for the test when setting the Difficulty: a brief scare meant only to distract for a minute should only take a minute or so to perform, but a complex lie meant to last for days or weeks should be more difficult and take longer to attempt. As a rule of thumb, a Persuade test should take as long to attempt as you wish the effects to last.


- **Common Uses:** Lying to, negotiating with, intimidating, seducing, or befriending others to gain assistance, access, or information.
- **Difficulty:** Distance, Foreign Language, Noise, Social Factors, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (unfamiliar target or subject matter, complex lies, etc).
- **Momentum Spend:** Momentum spent for Persuade tests is often used to reduce the time taken to persuade a character, or to make the effects of a Persuade test last longer.

PERSUADE TALENTS



Force of Presence

Prerequisite: Persuade Expertise 1

Your damage bonus on mental attacks is increased by +1 .

Haggler

Prerequisite: *Force of Presence*, Persuade Expertise 2

You are particularly proficient at striking a bargain, either to obtain goods or favors. After making a Society test to purchase an item, you may roll a Simple (Do) Persuade test and reduce the cost by 1 by spending 2 Momentum (Repeatable).

Naturally Charming

Prerequisite: *Force of Presence*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You have a warm personality and a winning smile. People trust you. A successful Persuade test yields 1 point of bonus Momentum per rank of *Naturally Charming*.

Remorseless

Prerequisite: *Haggler*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You are willing and able to tell any lie that you feel is necessary to overcome an opponent's social defenses. When lying to an opponent, you gain one additional d20 per rank of *Remorseless* to your Persuade or Command test, up to the normal maximum of three bonus d20s.

Seducer

Prerequisite: *Naturally Charming*

You are particularly adept at seducing others. When attempting a seduction, you gain two additional d20s to your Persuade test per Momentum spent or Doom generated, instead of one, though the normal limit of three additional d20s still applies.

Social Chameleon

Prerequisite: *Remorseless*

It is one thing to be convincing for a minute, it is another to be convincing for a lifetime. When impersonating a different social caste, this talent lets you substitute your Persuade skill in place of Animal Handling, Craft, Insight, Society, Survival, or Thievery, though only when convincing others that you have this expertise. Any practical application of the skill that requires actual knowledge relies on your existing relevant skill, if any.

Strong-arm Tactics

Prerequisite: *Force of Presence*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You recognize others' limitations and can easily exploit them. When attempting to intimidate an opponent, you are able to recognize the most effective strategies to use.

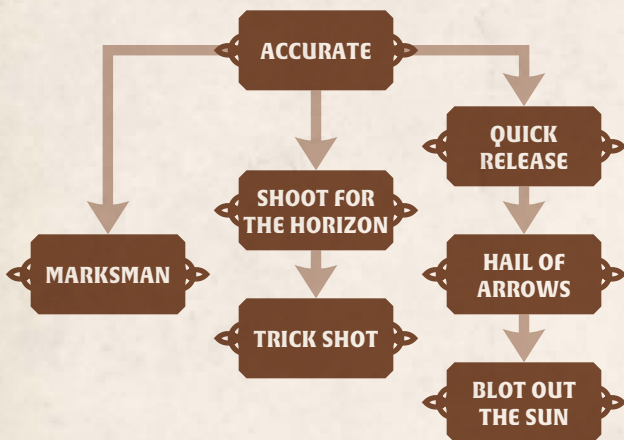
You gain one additional d20 to any Persuade or Command test per rank of Strong-arm Tactics, up to the normal maximum of three bonus d20s. Further, you gain Piercing X on your Threaten attacks, where X is equal to your ranks in Strong-arm Tactics.

RANGED WEAPONS (COORDINATION)

This skill covers the use and maintenance of ranged weaponry, as well as a familiarity with the damage such weapons inflict. This skill encompasses thrown weapons, bows, crossbows, and slings.

- **Common Uses:** See *Chapter Six: Action Scenes*. In addition, identifying ranged weaponry and the injuries they cause, identifying weapon-based combat styles, proper upkeep of these weapons and their ammunition.
- **Difficulty:** See *Chapter Six: Action Scenes*. Non-combat uses are affected by Distance (distance to the weapon or injury being identified), or Unfamiliarity or Complexity (obscure forms of weaponry).
- **Momentum Spends:** See *Chapter Six: Action Scenes*. Non-combat uses gain more detailed or more specific information with Momentum spent.

RANGED WEAPONS TALENTS



Accurate

Prerequisite: Ranged Weapons Expertise 1

When making an attack with a ranged weapon, you may re-roll a number of damage dice equal to the number of Ranged Weapon talents (and ranks in those talents) you have acquired. You must accept the result of these re-rolls.

Blot Out the Sun

Prerequisite: Hail of Arrows

When you target a mob or gang with a Ranged attack, the Secondary Target Momentum spend deals full damage to each additional target, rather than half damage.

Hail of Arrows

Prerequisite: *Quick Release*

When you attempt a Ranged attack with a weapon with the Volley Quality, you can spend 1 Load to use the Secondary Target Momentum spend for 1 Momentum (repeatable).

Marksman

Prerequisite: *Accurate*

You perform Ranged attacks with precision. You may spend a Minor Action before attempting a Ranged attack, putting a little more time and effort into your attack. When you do this, you gain 1 additional Momentum for the attack.

Quick Release

Prerequisite: *Accurate*, Ranged Weapons Expertise 2

You are able to ready a shot almost as soon as you've loosed the previous one. When using a ranged weapon with the Volley Quality, you may spend a Minor Action to increase your rate of attack, allowing you to spend two Loads, gaining a bonus d20 and +1 damage for each Load spent.

Shoot for the Horizon

Prerequisite: *Accurate*

You have learned to take shots at any range compensating instinctively for variations in weapon manufacturing, weather conditions, and other anomalies that could affect the trajectory of an attack. You can reduce the penalty for firing at a range other than the weapon's optimal range by one step, to a minimum of 0.

Trick Shot

Prerequisite: *Shoot for the Horizon*, Ranged Weapons Focus 3

You are an extremely precise shot. You gain 1 bonus Momentum on Ranged attacks, though this may not be used to increase the attack's damage and may not be saved in the group pool.

RESISTANCE (BRAWN)

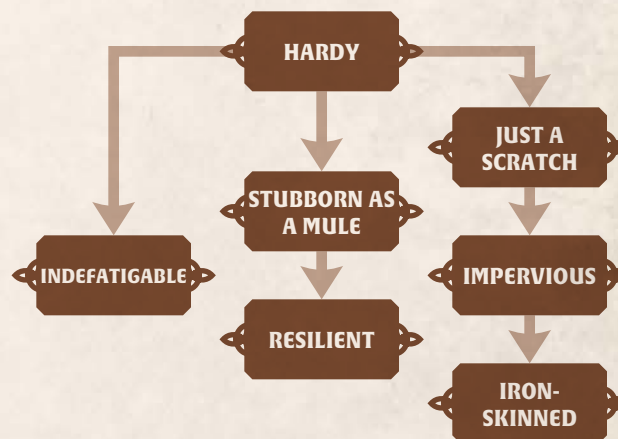
Resistance covers both natural resilience and physical conditioning to better endure conditions, activities, and events that would otherwise impair a character. This might include sensory deprivation, extremes of environment, poisons, diseases, physical deterioration, or extreme pain.

- **Common Uses:** See *Damage* on page 122 and *Recovery* on page 124. Primarily, the skill is used in resisting or recovering from physical status conditions, enduring physical hardships, or extremes of physical effort.

Resistance is primarily used in response to threats or combat situations, or to recover from injury naturally.

- **Difficulty:** *Armor*, *Poor Weather*. The Difficulty of Resistance tests is normally set by whatever situation or effect is forcing the Resistance test to be taken in the first place. Outside of those situations, if confronted with an ongoing situation — such as extremes of environment or prolonged strenuous activity — the Difficulty of the test starts at Average (D1), and increases by one step with every successive test required. *For example, enduring the extreme cold of an arctic wasteland may require a Resistance test each hour, inflicting Fatigue on a failed test.* The first test is Average (D1), the second increases to Challenging (D2), etc., to a maximum of Epic (D5).
- **Momentum Spends:** See *Damage* on page 122 and *Recovery* on page 124. It is common to use Momentum from Resistance tests to recover Stress, or to bank it for later use offensively. For ongoing situations, Momentum can be spent to delay the next test, with the first point of Momentum doubling the time before the next test, the second point tripling it, and so forth.

RESISTANCE TALENTS



Hardy

Prerequisite: Resistance Expertise 1

When making a Resistance test, you may re-roll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll, but you must accept the new result.

Impervious

Prerequisite: *Just a Scratch*, Resistance Expertise 2

Past injuries make it easier for you to shrug off pain. When you suffer a Wound, you may pay 1 Fortune point to ignore that Wound entirely.

FATIGUE

Even his wolfish vitality was ebbing under the terrible strain. He gasped for breath and there was a sharp pain in his side. His legs trembled with weariness and the lame one ached like the cut of a knife in the tendons each time he set the foot to earth. He had followed the instincts of the wilderness which bred him, straining every nerve and sinew, exhausting every subtlety and artifice to survive. Now in his extremity he was obeying another instinct, looking for a place to turn at bay and sell his life at a bloody price.

— Conan, "The Black Stranger"

There are many threats beyond combat. Even the climate can present a challenge, from the intense heat east of the Stygian deserts that can sear unprotected skin, to the uttermost cold of the tundra beyond Hyperborea, where life is nearly impossible. If you are isolated for too long from shelter, you may face the threat of thirst or starvation. Another threat is of overexertion: if forced to go without sleep or rest for long periods, you will suffer. Life is at risk for anyone exposed to one or several of these problematic conditions for too long.

The Resistance skill allows you to endure, and even function, while inhabiting these dangerous climes or suffering these intense conditions. All of them — whether exposure, starvation, dehydration, or exhaustion — work in a similar fashion, affecting a value called Fatigue. You gain levels of Fatigue for failing Resistance tests against environmental conditions and similar effects. Fatigue affects Vigor, but does not inflict damage. Instead, each level of Fatigue reduces your maximum Vigor by 1, causing you to tire faster in battle.

If your maximum Vigor is reduced to 0, then you are exhausted beyond any ability to continue, and you will fall unconscious immediately. If you take any further Fatigue once you have reached 0 Vigor, you will die.

Recovering from Fatigue does not take long. Once removed from the source of the Fatigue (taking shelter from heat or cold, finding food or water, sleeping, etc.), you may attempt an Average (D1) Resistance test after eight hours of rest. This removes 1 level of Fatigue, plus 1 per Momentum spend (Repeatable). Someone with the Survival or Healing skills may assist you in this Resistance test (and you may assist someone else with their Fatigue). If you have received Fatigue from more than one source — for example, heat and thirst from prolonged exposure while in a desert — you must remove yourself from all sources of Fatigue before recovery can begin.

Cold and Heat

As the millennia have passed, the extremes of temperature have been the eternal threat to plague humanity, herding humankind across the world in search of refuge from intolerable climes. Extreme cold or heat poses a

serious risk to the unwary, and those exposed for too long without proper protection (shelter, protective clothing, etc.) can be incapacitated or killed. Failure on any test related to extreme temperatures inflicts 1 level of Fatigue.

If unprotected in an extraordinarily cold or hot environment (temperatures below 0° Celsius/32° Fahrenheit or above 35° C/95° F), you must take an Average (D1) Resistance test after the first hour of exposure, plus an additional test for every full hour of exposure after that. These additional tests increase the Difficulty by one for each test: the second test is Challenging (D2), while the third is Daunting (D3), etc. Severe cold or heat (below -20° C/-4° F or above 45° C/113° F) requires a test every ten minutes instead. Extreme temperatures (below -30° C/-22° F or above 60° C/140° F) require a test every minute.

Starvation and Thirst

Lack of basic sustenance is a major concern in the wilds, particularly if you are unskilled in survival techniques. Depending on your body mass and level of activity, you will require at least half a gallon of water a day (or its equivalent) to avoid suffering from the effects of thirst. Going without adequate water for a prolonged period (Brawn + 24 hours) requires an Average (D1) Resistance test, with a further test after each additional four hours. These additional tests increase the Difficulty by one for each successive test. Failure on any test inflicts 1 level of Fatigue. This requirement is tripled in extremely hot environments, though natives to these areas have various means of alleviating this need. Furthermore, the game-master may choose to adjust the Difficulty if a minor, but less-than-adequate, amount of water is consumed.

Starvation is a little more forgiving. After three days without food, you must attempt an Average (D1) Resistance test, and a further test after each additional day. These additional tests increase the Difficulty by one for each successive test. Failure on any test inflicts 1 level of Fatigue. An adult human requires at least one reasonable meal (or its equivalent) each day in order to avoid the risk of starvation.

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Forced March

Pushing yourself to travel further or faster than normal can overwhelm you with Fatigue. You can travel at a normal pace for a number of hours per day equal to your Brawn, or up to half your Brawn (rounded up) in hours at double pace. For each additional hour, you must attempt an Average (D1) Resistance test. These additional tests increase the Difficulty by one for each successive test. Failure on any test inflicts 1 level of Fatigue. You must rest for at least eight hours to recover from a forced march.

Sleep Deprivation

Lack of sleep is perhaps the easiest source of Fatigue to recover from, but it comes with its own risks. If you have been awake constantly for 48 hours, you must attempt an Average (D1) Resistance test, and a further test after every additional eight hours of sleeplessness. These additional tests increase the Difficulty by one step for each successive test. Failure on any test inflicts 1 level of Fatigue and 1 level of Despair (see page 58) on you, as your mind and body weaken. You will require eight hours of sleep in order to begin recovering from sleep deprivation.

Indefatigable

Prerequisite: *Hardy*, Resistance Expertise 1

You are tireless, able to press on when others would falter. Whenever you would suffer Fatigue, you may ignore it by adding a number of points to Doom equal to the Fatigue suffered.

Iron-skinned

Prerequisite: *Impervious*

You are so used to taking injuries that it now takes an impressive amount of damage to actually hurt you. You increase your Armor Soak on all locations by 1, and you still benefit from this Armor Soak if you are not wearing armor on that location (even if the armor was sacrificed).

Just a Scratch

Prerequisite: *Hardy*
Maximum Ranks: 2

You have a knack for shrugging off injuries that would fell a lesser mortal. The amount of physical damage needed to inflict a Wound is increased by 1 per rank of *Just a Scratch*. For example, if you have *Just a Scratch* 1, you will suffer a Wound if 6 or more points of damage are inflicted, rather than the normal total of 5 or more.

Resilient

Prerequisite: *Stubborn as a Mule*
Maximum Ranks: 3

Your physique is particularly sturdy and resilient. Whenever you suffer a condition that may be avoided by adding to Doom, you can reduce the amount of Doom you need to pay by your rank in *Resilient*, to a minimum of 0.

Stubborn as a Mule

Prerequisite: *Hardy*

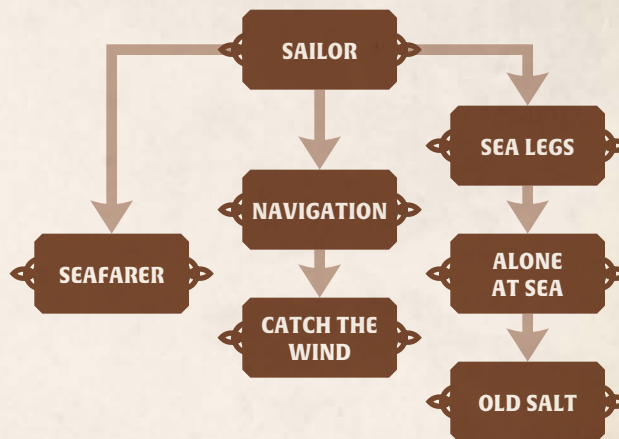
You have gone through grievous injuries and survived truly epic quantities of ale and mead. You have learned how to face down the seemingly insurmountable, and rely on your physical stamina to do so. When already suffering from an injury, you may substitute your Resistance skill for Discipline, if desired.

SAILING (COORDINATION)

This skill covers the ability to operate, maintain, and pilot a variety of watercraft. This covers boats and ships of many sizes and shapes, both oar-driven and sail-driven.

- **Common Uses:** See Watercraft in *Chapter Four: Equipment*.
- **Difficulty:** Difficult Terrain (rocks, reefs, strong currents), Poor Weather (rough water, strong winds, poor visibility), Unfamiliarity or Complexity. Damage to a vessel may also impose additional Difficulty increases.
- **Momentum Spends:** Momentum on Sailing tests is normally used to improve the quality of a test, allowing the maneuver to be performed with greater efficiency or style. Specific maneuvers may have their own unique Momentum spends. See Watercraft in *Chapter Four: Equipment* for more information.

SAILING TALENTS



Alone at Sea

Prerequisite: *Sea Legs*

When a ship is damaged on the water, it is often unable to reach a port where repairs can be made, requiring a temporary solution. You are familiar with the methods of repairing a ship in the short-term so that it can survive long enough to undergo proper repairs. You may substitute your Sailing skill for Craft when attempting repairs on watercraft. However, those repairs will only last for a scene, plus an additional Scene per Momentum (Repeatable), before proper repairs are required.

Catch the Wind

Prerequisite: *Navigation*, Sailing Expertise 2

Maximum Ranks: 3

You know the nuances of sailing, and can guide a vessel safely through difficult and dangerous situations. Decrease the Difficulty for any Sailing tests by one step per rank of *Catch the Wind* when you are piloting.

Navigation

Prerequisite: *Sailor*

You have learned to navigate watercraft through the many hazards of the sea. You may ignore any penalties to the Difficulty of a Sailing test incurred by situational hazards, including harsh weather, magical impediments, and similar dangers.

Old Salt

Prerequisite: *Alone at Sea*, Sailing Expertise 2

You are a veteran ship-hand: you've weathered storms, survived pirates, and struggled through the foulest misfortune. Through all of it, you've learned to trust your own skills and those of your shipmates, and learned to spot the wide range of expertise available on a ship's crew. While onboard a ship with a reasonably sized crew, you may add 1 to Doom in order to substitute your Sailing skill for any skill, except for Alchemy or Sorcery.

Sailor

Prerequisite: Sailing Expertise 1

You are an experienced sailor, accustomed to river, sea, or ocean. You may re-roll one d20 when making a Sailing test, but you must accept the new result.

Sea Legs

Prerequisite: *Sailor*

You have been at sea for a long time, and are more-than-familiar with the swaying and shifting of the deck, so much so that you may even be a little out of sorts when on dry

land. You no longer suffer any penalties caused by the random motion of being aboard a ship when taking any test. Additionally, you may substitute Sailing for Acrobatics, Athletics, or Resistance while onboard a ship or when using a rope.

Seafarer

Prerequisite: *Sailor*

You are a reputable sailor with a name known in many ports. You can add 1 to Doom in any port to find someone who will vouch for you, including ports you have not yet traveled to. For the duration of the stay, this allows you to substitute Sailing for Society and grants a bonus d20 on any tests using Sailing in place of Society. If you are asked for a favor by another sailor at any time during your stay, you must grant it, or the effects of *Seafarer* can no longer be used for that stay.

SOCIETY (PERSONALITY)

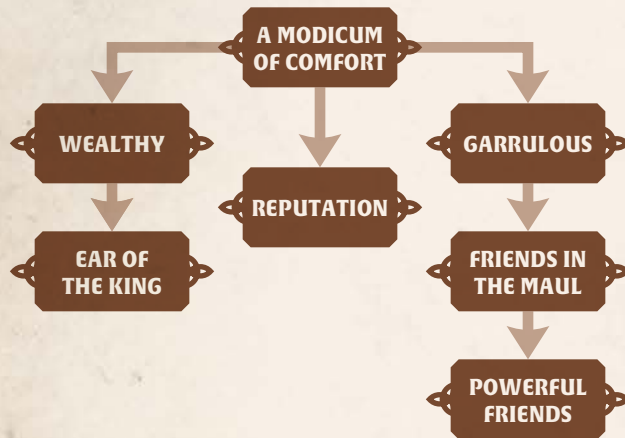
Society represents your access to social influence, status within civilized culture, and access to resources such as cash and goods, as well as the ability to wield those assets effectively to get what you want. As *Survival* helps you function in the wilderness, *Society* helps you survive within the vicious circumstances of city life.

When attempting to maintain the appearance of a particular social class (including your own), it requires an Average (D1) Society test, plus one Difficulty step for every level of Social Standing above or below your own. Social Standing is described on page 12 of *Chapter Two: Characters*. When attempting to avoid social embarrassment, a Society test with a Difficulty determined by the gamemaster (based on the scale of the gaffe) is required to smooth the situation, achieved by paying off witnesses or simply passing yourself off as wealthy and eccentric. Most Society tests take much longer than one minute to perform: even simple financial or social activities on this scale take at least an hour of effort.

- **Common Uses:** Purchasing goods and services (see *Finding and Purchasing Items*, page 87), fitting in with a particular social class, avoiding social embarrassment, interpreting business or financial information.
- **Difficulty:** See *Chapter Nine: Gamemastering* in the **Conan corebook** for more information. For other uses: Equipment (access to funds and accounts), Social Factors, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (unfamiliar social or financial systems).

- Momentum Spends:** See Chapter Nine: *Gamemastering in the Conan corebook* for more information. For other uses, the main Momentum spend for Society tests is to reduce the time taken to attempt the test. Beyond that, Society tests to obtain or interpret information can provide greater clarity and detail with Momentum spent.

SOCIETY TALENTS



A Modicum of Comfort

Prerequisite: Society Expertise 1

You have a legacy of wealth or substantial funds available to you, and can leverage old debts into sustaining you. Reduce your Upkeep by 1, to a minimum of 1.

Ear of the King

Prerequisite: *Wealthy 3, Reputation 2*

You know the best way to raise awareness of an issue with the proper authorities. When attempting to spread a message across a large group of people, or even a region, you can use your Society skill in place of your Command skill. In addition, the Difficulty for all skill tests dealing with civic figures is reduced by one step, to a minimum of Simple (Do).

Friends in the Maul

Prerequisite: *Garrulous, Society Expertise 2*

Once you have lived in any place for any length of time you pick up a variety of hangers-on and informants. In any location where you have had downtime, you have at least one useful contact on tap. All skill tests made during downtime gain a d20 so long as the skill test does not involve combat of any kind.



Garrulous

Prerequisite: *A Modicum of Comfort*
Maximum Ranks: 3

You have an ever-expanding range of transitory contacts. Any time you need assistance from other individuals, you may reduce the Difficulty to find a contact by one step per rank of *Garrulous*.

Powerful Friends

Prerequisite: *Friends in the Maul*

You know many powerful people in positions of significant authority. When selecting this talent, you gain a number of powerful friends equal to your current Society Focus. You must specify the type and allegiance of each influential contact, but must also obtain the gamemaster's approval for that selection. You may attempt a Daunting (D3) Society test to ask the selected contact for a favor. On a success, the contact responds with resources proportionate to their level of importance and the nature of the request. Any goods provided must be returned within a reasonable time limit: a period decided by the gamemaster but usually at the end of an adventure. You can attempt one such skill test during each period of downtime or in-play visit, taking a suitable amount of time to pleasantly broach the topic. *Powerful Friends* may be purchased multiple times, with each purchase establishing new contacts equal to your current Society Focus.

Reputation

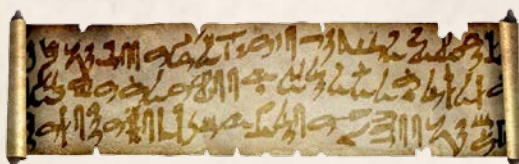
Prerequisite: *A Modicum of Comfort*
Maximum Ranks: 3

You have gained something of a reputation, and are often recognized by friends and foes alike. Each rank of *Reputation* increases your Renown by 1 (see *Downtime and Carousing* in the *Conan corebook*).

Wealthy

Prerequisite: *A Modicum of Comfort*
Maximum Ranks: 3

You have squirreled away significant resources in long-term investments with multiple merchant families. Each rank of *Wealthy* grants 1 bonus Momentum for the express purpose of reducing the cost of any purchase, to a minimum of 1 Gold.

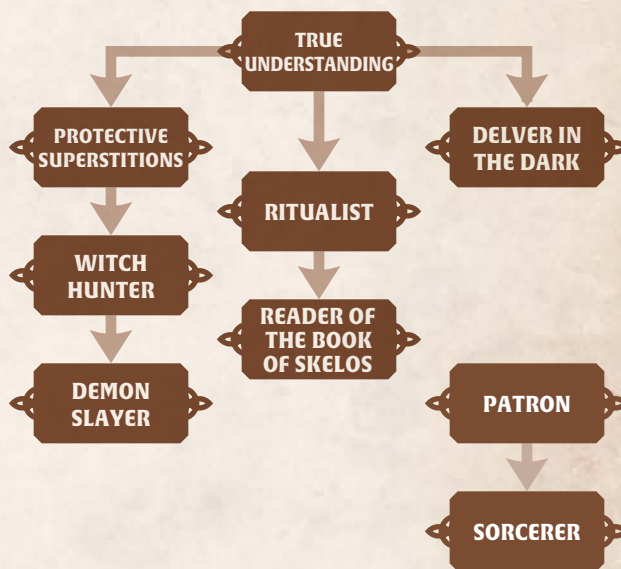


**SORCERY
(WILLPOWER)**

This skill covers a knowledge and understanding of the unnatural arts of sorcery and the effects it can produce. It is a deeply sinister field of study, and few can stomach it. Sorcery and its effects and uses are described further in the *Conan corebook*.

- **Common Uses:** Identifying supernatural powers; studying and identifying creatures and abilities of sorcerous or unnatural origin; casting spells.
- **Difficulty:** See *Chapter Seven: Sorcery* in the *Conan corebook*. For uses other than casting spells, Equipment (research materials, library), Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (subjects that are more complex are more difficult to research).
- **Momentum Spends:** See *Chapter Seven: Sorcery* in the *Conan corebook*. For other uses, Momentum will provide increasingly detailed information, or make a research project take less time.

SORCERY TALENTS



Delver in the Dark

Prerequisite: *True Understanding*

You have paid attention to the votaries of Skelos and know many secrets about dark forgotten places. When exploring old ruins, you may substitute Sorcery for Insight, Lore, or Thievery. Additionally, you may add 2 to Doom in order to substitute Sorcery for Athletics.

Demon Slayer

Prerequisite: *Witch Hunter*

You have learned how to most effectively harm and kill unnatural beings. When using the *Witch Hunter* talent, you can spend 1 Momentum to add Vicious 1 to your weapons (or increase the Vicious Quality by 1 if your weapon already has the Quality) against any sorcerers and unnatural entities present in the scene.

Patron

Prerequisite: Sorcery Expertise 1

You have obtained a patron, who will teach you the arts of sorcery. You may now purchase the *Sorcerer* talent and can begin to learn spells (see *Chapter Seven: Sorcery* in the *Conan corebook* for a list of all spells).

Protective Superstitions

Prerequisite: *True Understanding*

Maximum Ranks: 3

When involved in a Struggle to resist the effects of a spell, you gain one bonus Momentum per rank of *Protective Superstitions*.

Reader of The Book of Skelos

Prerequisite: *Ritualist*

Your mind has been corrupted with detailed knowledge of places and deeds both foul and terrible. When using the *Ritualist* talent to assist another character, you may spend Momentum to buy bonus d20s to add to your roll for the teamwork test.

Ritualist

Prerequisite: *True Understanding*

You are well-versed in the sorcerous arts, understanding enough to assist true masters with their work. When performing teamwork tests or rituals using the Sorcery skill, you can assist with 2d20 rather than the normal d20 teamwork provides.

Sorcerer

Prerequisite: *Patron*, Sorcery Expertise 2

Your character's eyes are open to the horrible realities of the cosmos. Gain 1 spell and reduce the character's resolve permanently by 2. See *Chapter Seven: Sorcery* in the *Conan corebook* for more details about Sorcery.



True Understanding

Prerequisite: Sorcery Expertise 1

Maximum Ranks: 3

You may pay 2 points of Resolve to gain 1 bonus Momentum on any Sorcery test other than tests to cast a spell. You may do this once per rank in this talent, paying up to 6 Resolve in this fashion.

Witch Hunter

Prerequisite: *Protective Superstitions*, Sorcery Expertise 2

You have turned your knowledge of the unnatural to the practical concern of saving your own life. In a combat where there is at least one sorcerer or unnatural creature on the opposing side, you may attempt a Daunting (D3) Sorcery test as a Standard Action. If successful, you gain 1 extra Cover Soak against your foes' attacks and powers. Momentum increases this Soak by +1 (Repeatable).

ADVANCED SORCERY TALENTS



The basic Sorcery talents described prior cover the rudiments of the ability, but do not go into depth. The advanced Sorcery talent tree expands these talents considerably. Sorcerers can add these talents to their abilities if desired, using the same prerequisites and restrictions as with other skills and talents.


The most important of these is the Patron talent (see above), selected during character creation, or later earned through advancement.



Sorcery talents often add to or change the effects of spells. All Sorcery talents can be used with all spells, unless specifically mentioned otherwise.

Barter Your Soul

Prerequisite: *Pact*

By entertaining the dark forces, your patron introduces you to your patron's own fell lords. The rituals involved are harrowing and sanity-destroying, but ultimately rich in knowledge. Gain one spell. **Reduce your character's Resolve permanently by $X+2$** , where X is the total number of spells you will know once you gain an additional spell from this bargain. *Barter Your Soul* can be taken multiple times, representing multiple deals to supernatural entities, selling your soul piecemeal, or selling fealty in the afterlife in terms of millennia of servitude.

Curse

Prerequisite: *Barter Your Soul*, *Everlasting Sorcery*

You must permanently sacrifice 1 Fortune point to house a spell within a living creature, usually to inflict some negative effect or condition upon the desired subject of the spell. The resource cost for doing this is twenty times that of a regular petty enchantment. You must have a trigger that will activate the spell's effects, which may cost additional Momentum. The amount of Momentum should be determined by the gamemaster based on how subjective or narrow the focus of the trigger is. The more

specific, the more expensive the Momentum cost should be, and the more general and outside human intervention, the less expensive the spell will be. For example, "When the moon turns full" is specific but is general and predictable, with no human intervention whatsoever, so it would cost no extra Momentum. A trigger such as "When the name Aktur Ashmal is spoken" would be an easily controllable event, and could cost as much as 3 additional Momentum. Once the curse's effects are complete or have otherwise passed, the spell is done.

Enchanter

Prerequisite: *Enduring*

You have learned to bind spells into treasures. Every success or Momentum stored requires one offering and a single "named" treasure of value equal to the total Momentum of the spell. These offerings can be any item of portable wealth such as jewels, golden statuettes, or similarly valuable objects. Weapons, armor, and the like are never counted as offerings, but adornments on such items can be added to them to fulfill this function. The named treasure must be something of relative fame and uniqueness, with a specific name (or names) it is known by, and might even be considered an item of legendry, coveted by many.

Preparing this spell is a Minor Action, needing only a rudimentary understanding of sorcery (Sorcery Expertise 1). The spell is otherwise a normal spell, and the treasure becomes non-magical once the spell is cast. Discovering whether an item or person has been enchanted is a Challenging (D2) Sorcery test for a character with this talent. This Difficulty is increased to Dire (D4) for those who do not have this talent.

Enduring

Prerequisite: *Sorcerer*

Maximum Ranks: 3

By tying your character's spells to the ephemera of the mortal world, you have begun learning how to give them breath. With this talent, all of your spells and petty enchantments gain 1 extra Momentum to be used solely for the spell's duration.

"First he sat at my feet and learned wisdom. But he was not satisfied with what I taught him, for it was white magic, and he wished evil lore, to enslave kings and glut a fiendish ambition. I would teach him none of the black secrets I had gained, through no wish of mine, through the eons."

— Yag-Kosha, "The Tower of the Elephant"

Everlasting Sorcery

Prerequisite: *Enchanter*

You must permanently sacrifice 1 Fortune point in order to house a spell within an inanimate vessel. The cost for doing this is ten times that a regular enchantment in both offerings and treasure. Preparing the spell is a Minor Action, needing only a rudimentary understanding of sorcery (Sorcery Expertise 1). Once invoked, the spell uses its Momentum as decided by the caster preparing the vessel. The spell can be invoked once per scene, although there is no limit to the number of spells a vessel might contain, assuming you have made the requisite Fortune point sacrifices.

Life Eternal

Prerequisite: *Barter Your Soul*

You may petition the scribes of your dark masters, beseeching them to disregard your mortal form, sparing you the chastisement of time and the degradation of the self and soul. You will not die, no matter how old you get or how many injuries you suffer. These hurts will affect you, however. You will feel them just as much, and they will heal as normal. If your body is completely destroyed, you will be an insensate, unmoving, unending presence, a fate only spared to you if you have the *Astral Wanderings* spell. It is rumored that some have bargained for eternal youth as well, drinking life deeply from victims ensnared in dark rituals. For some sorcerers, seeking out the means of learning this talent is the sole ambition of their enfeebled immortality.

Pact

Prerequisite: *Sorcerer*

Maximum Ranks: 2 per sorcerer (see below)

Your character selects a second teacher. This is a permanent addition, a new master that must be kept appeased. In return for such appeasement, the sorcerer teaches you one spell or petty enchantment. The sorcerer can be your *Patron*, but your *Patron* will only enter into one Pact (not the usual two). After the Pact has been taken twice with a particular sorcerer, there is little else you can offer that sorcerer, and thus you must seek another if you wish to learn additional ranks in this talent.

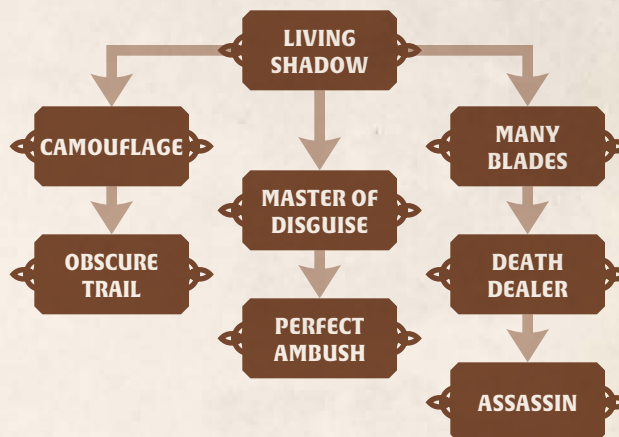
You may have as many or as few Pacts as you wish, with as many sorcerers as you wish, but the Upkeep for every pact must be met every time Upkeep is called for. Sorcerers often choose to deal with more esoteric teachers as they progress. Consider the *Barter Your Soul* talent, as too much reliance on other sorcerers makes it difficult to form a reputation as anything more than an apprentice while standing in the shadow of others.

STEALTH (AGILITY)

The art of going unnoticed, such as staying hidden within shadows or moving silently. This skill also governs the creation and use of camouflage and disguises, and the ability to cover one's tracks.

- Common Uses:** Moving quietly or silently, hiding from observers, setting up an ambush, creating camouflage, creating and employing disguises, concealing tracks.
- Difficulty:** Stealth is commonly opposed by an Observation test. Other problems may include Armor (heavier armor makes it harder to move quietly), Lighting (bright light hinders stealth), Difficult Terrain (impedes stealthy movement, may cause noise), Encumbrance (heavy-laden characters make more noise), Noise (loud noises aid stealth). Penalties should only be applied once to either the observer or the character attempting Stealth. Stealth tests to create camouflage to hide a larger object, or to create a convincing disguise, take at least ten minutes. Stealth tests for moving unnoticed are different: you declare that you are moving stealthily, but no test is required until another character or being (a guard passes nearby, etc.) is present to oppose it with an Observation test. At this point the test takes no time whatsoever.
- Momentum Spends:** Momentum on Stealth tests is typically carried forward onto other tests, the advantages of a stealthy approach allowing you to focus on your intended task without distraction.

STEALTH TALENTS





Assassin

Prerequisite: *Death Dealer*

You are practiced in the art of murder, and taking lives no longer carries any emotional weight. When rolling damage with a melee weapon that has the Hidden Quality, you may spend 2 points of Momentum in order to count every die in the pool as an Effect, instead of whatever was actually rolled. Additionally, you gain +2 🐾 Courage Soak.

Camouflage

Prerequisite: *Living Shadow*, Stealth Expertise 2
Maximum Ranks: 3

It is important for you to remain concealed, but at times it is also important that your allies and any equipment they may be using also go unseen. You can apply your Stealth skill result to a number of other creatures or large objects equal to your Stealth Focus plus your ranks in Camouflage.

Death Dealer

Prerequisite: *Many Blades*

You are a proficient killer, relying on trickery and misdirection. When armed with any weapon that has the Hidden

Quality, you may substitute Stealth for your Melee and Ranged Weapons skills, and increase the damage of the weapon by +1 🐾.

Living Shadow

Prerequisite: Stealth Expertise 1
Maximum Ranks: 3

You are adept at using terrain effects and social cues to remain unnoticed by observers. When attempting to remain unseen or unnoticed, you gain bonus Momentum equal to your ranks this talent.

Many Blades

Prerequisite: *Living Shadow*

You always carry at least a dagger concealed somewhere. Even if you lose all your weaponry, you can add 1 to Doom and produce a concealed dagger as a Minor Action.

Master of Disguise

Prerequisite: *Living Shadow*

You know how to impersonate others, whether to blend into the background or to appear as a specific person. When you

succeed at a Stealth test to create a disguise, you gain bonus Momentum equal to the amount of Momentum generated on that test (in essence, every point of Momentum generated by the test is doubled). In addition to this, if the disguise is to impersonate another, you may substitute your Stealth skill for Persuade or Command.

Obscure Trail

Prerequisite: *Camouflage*

You know a variety of tricks to make it substantially harder for someone to follow you. When you suspect (or fear) that you might be followed, you may make an Average (D1) Stealth test. The Difficulty for any pursuer's test to follow you is increased by one step, plus an additional step for each Momentum spent (Repeatable).

Perfect Ambush

Prerequisite: *Master of Disguise*

You have such mastery of stealth and subterfuge that you can perform an ambush with little-to-no preparation. When you perform an ambush, you can voluntarily make the ambush harder to pull off, and in doing so make it almost impossible to detect. When you attempt an ambush or surprise, you may increase the Difficulty of your Stealth test by one or two steps. The Difficulty of the enemy's Observation test to spot the ambush increases by two steps for every step of increase you accepted.



SURVIVAL (AWARENESS)

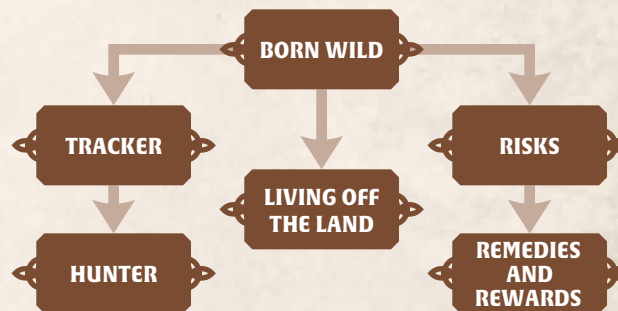
This skill covers the ability to find resources such as food and shelter in harsh environments, from hostile wilderness, crumbling ruins, caverns underground, through the lawless reaches of corrupt cities. It also governs the ability to find tracks and follow a target through such environments.

- **Common Uses:** Avoid environmental hazards, find daily sustenance, track movement through an area, setting traps, and determine likely weather forecasts for the next day.
- **Difficulty:** Lighting, Difficult Terrain, Equipment (survival kits), Poor Weather, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity.

Most hazards and challenges involving the Survival skill are Average (D1) tests, but certain perils and situations can be more challenging, particularly if you are unfamiliar with the area or the conditions you're plunged into. With this skill, you can avoid hazards by finding or creating shelter, locating food and water, and finding secure sites to rest, removing or reducing the need for Resistance tests against exposure, starvation, thirst, or sleep deprivation. You can use Survival to determine the likely locations of animals and other wild creatures, and influence your chances of encountering such creatures (reducing the chance of crossing a predator, or increasing it to find prey). Spotting and hiding from creatures is governed by Observation and Stealth, respectively.

- **Momentum Spends:** Each Momentum spent allows you to provide assistance for one additional character: finding food or shelter for four people is harder than finding it for one. Momentum can also be spent to ask the gamemaster questions about the environment, obtaining information about other local hazards or threats, good places to shelter, or other interesting features in the area.

SURVIVAL TALENTS



Born Wild

Prerequisite: Survival Expertise 1

You can reduce the Difficulty of any Survival test to find food and shelter by one step, to a minimum of Simple (D0). *Born Wild* is factored into the difficulties of all Survival talents.

Hunter

Prerequisite: *Tracker*

Maximum Ranks: 2

You have learned to anticipate the movements of prey. When making a Survival test to track a creature or group of creatures, you may spend 2 Momentum or add 2 to Doom to find a shortcut or other way of intercepting the creatures being tracked. You may also substitute Survival for Stealth when

attempting to ambush creatures being tracked. If purchased twice, the cost is reduced to 2 momentum and 1 Doom.

Living Off the Land

Prerequisite: *Born Wild*

You are particularly capable of finding the necessities of life. When attempting a Survival test to find food, water, or shelter, each point of Momentum spent (Repeatable) provides these necessities for two other creatures (allies, tame animals, etc.). If you are in your own homeland or some other territory you are extremely familiar with, the basic Difficulty of Survival tests to find food, water, and shelter is reduced to Simple (Do), and every point of Momentum spent (Repeatable) finds these necessities for three additional creatures, rather than two.

Remedies and Rewards

Prerequisite: *Risks, Survival Expertise 2*

You know various natural or traditional remedies for illness and sickness that can be found in the wild. When outside of the city, you may substitute your Survival skill for Healing or Alchemy. Additionally, when traveling through the wilderness, you may make a Challenging (D2) Survival test once per journey. Each point of Momentum achieved provides 1 poultice for use in treating wounds (see *Chapter Six: Equipment* for more information).

Risks

Prerequisite: *Born Wild*

Maximum Ranks: Special, see description

You are familiar with various environmental hazards presented by the wilderness. Choose one environment when this talent is purchased, and any time you travel within a particular kind of environment you may attempt an Average (D1) Survival test. On a success, you are able to avoid all implicit dangers, potentially avoiding dangerous encounters. Each point of Momentum may be spent to protect one of your allies from these same risks. Further ranks in this talent add new environment types. Possible environments are: Arctic, Coastal, Desert, Jungle, Marsh/Swamp, Mountain, Forest, Plains, Steppes, Subterranean, Urban, or another if permitted by the gamemaster.

Tracker

Prerequisite: *Born Wild*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You can recognize all the signs of passage, from the subtle to the obvious, and have become particularly adept at following a target. When attempting a Survival test to track a creature or group of creatures, you may reduce the Difficulty of the test by one step for every rank of *Tracker*.



THIEVERY (AWARENESS)

Thievery allows you to engage in criminal activities with a reasonable expectation of success, providing an understanding of the nuances of the criminal underworld that exists beneath every ordered society. You may not necessarily be a thief or outlaw — knowing the tricks of this illicit trade is a valuable skill for the law-abiding as well — but it brings an understanding of how criminals act and think, as well as a familiarity with the techniques they employ.

- **Common Uses:** Picking locks, picking pockets, bypassing traps and alarms, assessing a target of criminal activities, obtaining or selling items through illicit channels.
- **Difficulty:** Disruption or Distraction, Distance, Equipment (lockpicks, toolkit), Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity.

Thievery tests performed upon (or in the vicinity of) a potential target are opposed by that target's Observation test: attempting to pick a pocket or unlock a door is trickier when there are others

“Why can you not slay the soldiers in the tower in the same way?” he asked.

“Because that was all the powder I possessed. The obtaining of it was a feat which in itself was enough to make me famous among the thieves of the world. I stole it out of a caravan bound for Stygia, and I lifted it, in its cloth-of-gold bag, out of the coils of the great serpent which guarded it, without awaking him. But come, in Bel’s name! Are we to waste the night in discussion?”

— Conan and Taurus,
“The Tower of the Elephant”

present to observe you. Other Thievery tests are taken against static Difficulty values. The gamemaster should set a basic Difficulty for a given lock or trap. When assessing a potential target, the Thievery skill is treated similarly to the Survival skill, though in this case, the threats and hazards it identifies are guards, alarms, and similar impediments to crime, or the weaknesses in those wards that can be exploited.

- **Momentum Spend:** Most Momentum spends for Thievery tests reduce the time taken — a faster thief is less vulnerable to being caught — or to hide the fact that something was stolen, making it harder to detect. *For example, a pickpocket may spend Momentum to put a target’s coin purse back in his pouch after emptying it.* When assessing a target, Momentum may be spent to ask the gamemaster questions about threats or vulnerabilities that may be avoided or exploited, respectively.

THIEVERY TALENTS



Appraisal

Prerequisite: *Easy Money*

You have robbed many people, and over time learned the difference between valuable items and those that merely look valuable. You instinctively know the difference between real treasure and fake baubles and know to forgo lesser rewards for greater ones. When looking over valuable items to determine their worth and provenance, you may substitute Thievery for Insight or Lore. Further, when using the *Easy Money* talent, you may gain one additional Gold by adding 2 to Doom instead of 3, and you may use this benefit twice on any given criminal act.

Burglar

Prerequisite: *Walk In, Walk Out; Thievery Focus 2*

You have made a career of entering the towers, homes, and palaces of the wealthy. You’ve experienced tall walls, cunning traps, and strange locks, and have developed a broad range of different techniques to overcome them all. Any time you attempt to enter or leave a property with larceny in mind, you may add 1 to Doom in order to substitute Thievery for any other skill except Alchemy or Sorcery.

Easy Money

Prerequisite: *Thief*

You are particularly astute at recognising profitable opportunities such as picking pockets, short cons, and other minor crimes. You may substitute your Thievery skill for Observation on any tests that are related to committing a crime. In addition, whenever you steal or otherwise obtain money by illicit means, you may add 3 to Doom in order to gain 1 additional Gold from that particular crime (and only one additional Gold).

Master Thief

Prerequisite: *Thief*

You may re-roll one d20 when making a Thievery test, but you must accept the new result.

Thief

Prerequisite: *Thievery Expertise 1*

After years of dealing with the criminal underworld, you have a basic familiarity of how to interact with this segment of the population. You may use Thievery in place of Society when dealing with criminals. When you generate at least one success on a Persuade or Lore test to relate to or interact with the criminal element, you may immediately roll one additional d20 and add the result to the skill test.

Underworld Lore

Prerequisite: *Thief*

You have listened to your elders and know many tales of amazing scores and terrible calamities. When considering a theft of any sort, you may spend 1 Momentum (Immediate) to know the fate of the last thief who attempted a similar act, and any precautions the target is likely to have taken since. Additionally, whenever studying the activities, traditions, taboos, and histories of a region’s criminal underworld, you may substitute Thievery for Insight, Lore, or Observation.

Walk In, Walk Out

Prerequisite: *Master Thief*

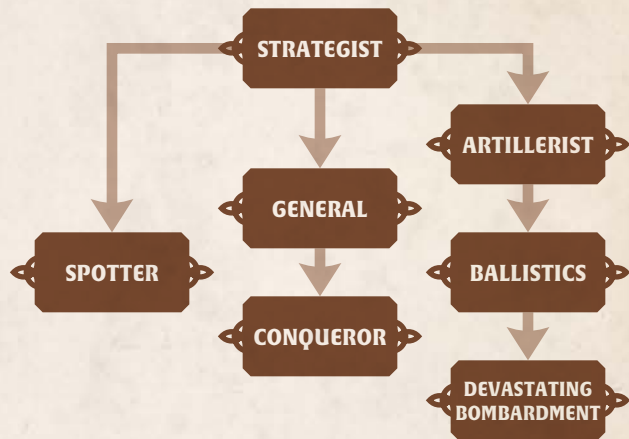
Committing a crime is easy: getting away with it is harder. Through practice, you have learned how to avoid notice by blending in with the crowd. You may substitute your Thievery skill for Stealth when attempting any criminal act.

WARFARE (INTELLIGENCE)

This skill governs the ability to use the tools and weapons intended for waging war around a fortification, whether inside or outside it. Siege weapons are far too large to be carried by a human being: even the smallest are colossal, heavy constructions. You are able to employ these powerful weapons, as well as having an understanding of the principles and strategies of battle, both as attacker and defender.

- **Common Uses:** See *Chapter Four: Action Scenes* for more information. Also, identification of siege weaponry, detecting weaknesses in fortifications, and understanding the tactics of large battles.
- **Difficulty:** See *Chapter Four: Action Scenes*. Noncombat uses are affected by Distance (distance to the weapon, fortification, or stratagem being identified), or Unfamiliarity or Complexity (obscure or unusual weapons, fortifications, or stratagems).
- **Momentum Spend:** See *Chapter Four: Action Scenes*. Noncombat uses gain more accurate or detailed information with Momentum spent.

WARFARE TALENTS



Artillerist

Prerequisite: *Strategist, Warfare Expertise 1*

You have learned how best to operate siege weaponry. When making an attack with a siege weapon, you may re-roll a number of damage dice equal to the number of Warfare talents (and ranks in them) you have acquired. The results of these re-rolls must be accepted.

“You have seen much war?”

“I was born in the midst of a battle,”
he answered, tearing a chunk of meat from
a huge joint with his strong teeth. “The first
sound my ears heard was the clang of swords and
the yells of the slaying. I have fought in blood-
feuds, tribal wars, and imperial campaigns.”

“But can you lead men and arrange
battle-lines?”

“Well, I can try,” he returned imperturbably.
“It’s no more than sword-play on a larger scale.
You draw his guard, then—stab, slash! And
either his head is off, or yours.”

— Yasmela and Conan, “Black Colossus”





Ballistics

Prerequisite: *Artillerist*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You have experience firing large and inaccurate weapons over long distances, and have learned the techniques that make these weapons truly effective. For each rank of Ballistics, you can reduce the Difficulty of a Warfare test to attack with a siege weapon by one step, to a minimum of Average (D1). Each rank of Ballistics also increases the damage of a siege weapon used by +1☞.

Conqueror

Prerequisite: *General*, Warfare Expertise 2

With this talent, you have learned how to bring your retinue (generated with the *General* talent, below) to bear with explosive force; any warrior in your retinue adds a bonus d20 to all Melee, Parry, Ranged Weapons, and Warfare tests. Warriors in your retinue no longer need to be within earshot to gain the benefit of your leadership. As with the *General* talent, this benefit does not apply to other player characters, even if they are under your control.

Devastating Bombardment

Prerequisite: *Ballistics*, Warfare Expertise 2

You have learned how to get the greatest effect from siege weaponry, using shots to shatter morale as well as masonry.

After making a successful attack with a siege weapon, you may spend 2 points of Momentum to unleash a *Devastating Bombardment*. A *Devastating Bombardment* forces all creatures within Close range of the attack's target to attempt an Average (D1) Discipline test or suffer mental damage equal to the attack's damage rolled. Additionally, any Momentum spent to add damage to the *Devastating Bombardment* adds 2 points of damage rather than 1.

General

Prerequisite: *Strategist*

Maximum Ranks: 3

You have become particularly adept at coordinating the actions of soldiers. When leading an army or unit of warriors in battle you can substitute Warfare for Command, Counsel, or Persuade. In addition, you can create a retinue (warband, squad, etc.) of dedicated and highly loyal warriors of a size equal in number to your Warfare Focus times your rank in this talent. *For example, if you have General 2 and Warfare Focus 2, you can have up to four warriors in your retinue.* The warriors in your retinue must be chosen prior to combat, must be dedicated followers who have trained with you, and must be within earshot to gain any benefits. This benefit does not apply to other player characters, even if they are under your control. These are considered to be Elites, whereas normal soldiers or warriors are Minions.

FORTUNE TALENTS

Though not associated with a particular skill, there are a small selection of talents you may obtain which pertain to your luck, daring, and determination in ways not easily covered by specific skills. These are Fortune talents, described below. Unlike normal talent costs, the first talent in the tree costs 400 experience points, and each within the second row cost 600 experience points apiece.



BETTER LUCKY THAN DEAD

PREREQUISITE: *Make Your Own Luck*

Whenever you suffer a Wound or Trauma, you may spend 1 Fortune point to ignore it entirely. In this case, the Wound or Trauma simply does not happen, though the attack inflicts damage normally in all other regards.

FICKLE FORTUNE

PREREQUISITE: *Make Your Own Luck*

You are always gambling with fate and fortune, and willing to take a chance on a better reward. You may

spend 1 Fortune point to gain three bonus d20s on a skill test, rolled normally (the normal limit of three bonus d20s still applies), instead of simply specifying a single d20 with a "1" for a result. This choice can be made on a case-by-case basis: 1 Fortune point is spent for each instance.

LUCKY CHARM

PREREQUISITE: *Make Your Own Luck*

You carry a trinket, talisman, or some other small item of superstitious worth, which must be specified when this talent is purchased. It may not be anything so large that it cannot be carried in one hand. While this item is on your person, whenever you spend a Fortune point, roll 1 . If an Effect is rolled, you gain the benefit of the Fortune point, but the Fortune point itself is not spent and returns to you.

MAKE YOUR OWN LUCK

PREREQUISITE: None

You have little care for the vagaries of luck, and create your own advantages in life, whatever the cost or risk. You may spend 3 Momentum (Immediate) to gain the benefits of 1 Fortune point. Remember that Immediate Momentum spends can be paid for by adding to Doom instead of spending Momentum.

Spotter

Prerequisite: *Strategist*


You are familiar with discovering enemy positions and communicating this back to your leader. When assisting in setting up or seeking out an ambush, or when assisting an artillery crew as a spotter, you may add your Warfare dice pool rather than only a single d20.

Strategist

Prerequisite: Warfare Expertise 1

You are an experienced soldier that has fought in significant battles, skilled in assaulting and defending buildings. When crossing an obstacle or hindering terrain, or while skirting a hazard, you gain the benefit of Light Cover (2 Cover Soak) from any Ranged weapon attack, including siege weapons.



An aerial, high-angle view of a city with a grid-like street pattern. The buildings are rendered in a stylized, painterly manner with muted colors. A large, dark brown, torn-paper-like shape is superimposed over the center of the image, containing white text. The entire scene is framed by a decorative, repeating patterned border at the top and bottom.

*“Then, by Crom, fortune has at last thrown the dice for me!
A horse, Trocero, and the harness of a Free Companion!
Zorathus has a long start, but not too long for me to
overtake him, if I follow him to the end of the world!”*

— Conan, The Hour of the Dragon

EQUIPMENT

Whether a keen-edged broadsword, a sturdy steel-bound shield, a leather pouch filled with healing herbs, or a sturdy Bossonian longbow, your character's equipment and other possessions can be the difference between life and death. These tools and items can improve your ability to perform tasks, or grant you new opportunities you would not have otherwise. That said, while naked steel and a water skin can get you through the plainest of survival challenges, many challenges require special equipment and specific weapons. This chapter covers a wide variety of equipment items available to the folk of the Hyborian Age, though it is by no means an exhaustive list.

Future **Conan** supplements will describe more weapons, armor, gear, mounts and beasts of burden, kits, and other items appropriate to different regions or aspects of the world.

GOLD AND CURRENCY

The Hyborian kingdoms boast a bewildering range of currencies: coinage of different metals, alloys, weights, and denominations, ranging from copper, bronze, silver, and gold, stamped with the likenesses of royalty or scratched with rough glyphs, even hacked into smaller parts and spent piecemeal. Keeping track of all of this currency is hardly the stuff of high adventure, and in **Conan** the default unit of currency your character will deal with is **Gold**.

Each unit of Gold represents a number of smaller coinages and denominations, and a dozen Gold can be imagined as enough loose coinage to fill a small coin pouch. One Gold is roughly equivalent to a Resource, such as those described in *Improvement Items* on page 89, a default amount of some useful item that can be spent to improve a skill roll attempt. While the gamemaster may describe chests of gleaming gold and silver coins, scuffed copper pieces, or even Aquilonian golden lunas, all of this essentially boils down to its value in Gold.

Generally, your characters will not have to spend Gold on minor things like room and board, travel short distances, or the casual expenses that occur day-to-day. These are assumed to be covered as part of your character's Upkeep phase (a variable amount of time occurring between adventures). Trifling exchanges of currency like this come out of loose coinage and are part of the practicalities of daily life, beneath concern. However, to live at a higher standard or spend without reservation, the gamemaster may require

Society rolls to succeed in living beyond your character's means, or may choose to simply assume that 1 Gold is used every week or more frequently, depending on the situation and area.

FINDING AND PURCHASING ITEMS

Most common items are replenished as part of your character's Upkeep. However, obtaining something new or more significant (a fine new sword, a mighty Aquilonian steed, a new suit of plate armor, etc.) is one goal of acquiring wealth. These acquisitions take more time and more effort to obtain, often requiring an item be crafted to individual specifications, or requiring heated haggling and negotiation to get to an acceptable final price. It may take hours or days to find the right trader, and if an item is to be made specially or customized to your character's specifications, it may take days or even weeks more to complete.

In order to actually find a new or different item outside your character's current range of gear, the gamemaster must first set a Difficulty for the item, represented by a variety of factors —availability in the area, rarity, quality, relative expense, nature, legality (or illegality), even current events in the area such as war or famine — rated at Average (D1) through Epic (D5). A simple, well-made poniard might be Average (D1) in a relatively prosperous or civilized area, while it might be Daunting (D3) to find its like in the Pictish Wilderness or the tundra to the east of Hyperborea. A battle-trained warhorse might be Epic (D5) in Nordheim. Similarly, arms and armor might be easier to find in war-ravaged areas, due to battlefield scavenging or soldiers mustering out and selling their gear. The Difficulty can also be modified by other factors described in the **Conan corebook**, especially Foreign Language and Social Factors.

Your character must make a Society skill test to match or exceed the Difficulty. If the item is legal, you may instead attempt a Persuade test, but the Difficulty is increased by one step. Otherwise, you may attempt a Thievery test instead, reducing the Difficulty by one step, but marking the item's origin as illicit, even if the item itself is normally legal. This means that the item in question was probably stolen, or that your character is dealing with the criminal underworld to obtain it.

If this test is successful, your character locates someone willing to sell the item in question, or someone who can

point your character at a source for the item. Once the item has been located, your character should pay for it (if not, see *Gaining Items by Theft or Violence*, below). Each item has a distinct cost, reflected in the amount of Gold needed to afford the item. For each Momentum spent (Repeatable), you can reduce the Cost of the item by 1. In such a case, your character has found a better deal or haggled for a better price. This price is modified by your character's *Reputation*, which may reduce the cost of the item to 0. In these cases, your character's reputation is so great that the trader or artisan may wish to give your character the item as a gift, to curry favor or gain your patronage.

Generally, your gamemaster should limit the number of these item acquisition rolls to one per Upkeep session, and failure with one increases the Difficulty should it be attempted again. For longer periods of Upkeep, the gamemaster may choose to allow additional searches, with lower Difficulty searches taking less time than those with higher Difficulty ratings.

GAINING ITEMS BY THEFT OR VIOLENCE

If your character does not wish to pay for the item, then it is up to the gamemaster to determine the conditions by which it can be stolen or taken, and what efforts would be required to get away with it. Using *Society* or *Thievery* to find an item and then stealing it (or killing the one possessing it) instead of buying it outright will mark your character as a thief or murderer in most places, untrustworthy or even to be feared. Honest merchants — and even thieves — do not like to deal with those they think will rob them, so the Difficulty should be increased one step for any further attempts at locating and purchasing items in the area, for cases of theft, and when violence was involved, the Difficulty should be increased by two or more steps, depending on

OPPORTUNISTIC THIEVERY

Adventure is not the only way to earn fortune: as a quick means of gaining Gold, your character can spend a scene engaging in acts of petty theft, once per session. Working a marketplace or similar crowded area is a Challenging (D2) *Thievery* test with success granting 1 Gold, plus an additional 1 Gold for every two Momentum (Repeatable). Working less crowded locations is more difficult, increasing the Difficulty by one or more steps. Complications usually mean that your character has been spotted and that guards may be on their way. More than one Complication could indicate that your character has inadvertently pilfered something that is more trouble than it's worth, or has stolen from a powerful and antagonistic foe.

the situation, as well as the parties and item(s) involved. This increase in Difficulty may be reflected in all social and financial dealings for a period of time and scope of area to be determined by the gamemaster.

SELLING ITEMS

Your character can choose to sell valuable items as well; this requires a similar *Society* test, with a Difficulty identical to that for finding the original item. If this item was not searched for, the gamemaster should set the Difficulty based on the same criteria above. Success with this test allows your character to find a buyer, rather than a seller, and grants your character Gold equal to half the item's Cost (rounding up), plus one Gold per Momentum (Repeatable) up to a maximum of the item's listed price.

However, too much selling can be problematic: each successive attempt to sell an item increases the Difficulty of the *Society* test by one step during that downtime period as finding other buyers becomes increasingly difficult. When your character is attempting to sell a number of things at once, the gamemaster may assign a Difficulty to the whole lot of items. Success means that everything is sold, while failure means that no buyer(s) could be found, that the asking price was too steep, or that the goods were just unappealing. Breaking up the lot and trying again later is possible, but each subsequent attempt at selling the item(s) will also increase the Difficulty by one step.

As with finding and purchasing, the gamemaster may wish to limit the number of attempts to sell off goods during the Upkeep phase, but generally the focus of Upkeep is restorative, rather than being focused on issues of trade and haggling.

ENCUMBRANCE

Your character cannot carry an endless amount of gear. Equipment can be heavy, awkwardly balanced, inconvenient to carry on one's person, or otherwise unwieldy. Each item of note is rated by its **Encumbrance**, a value that describes its weight and portability, as well as its ease of use. Encumbrance does not equate directly to a particular weight or volume: a broadsword is Encumbrance 1, and an average human is considered to be worth $\text{Brawn} \times 2$ points of Encumbrance. Generally a human weighs much more than ten broadswords, but for practical purposes they can take up just as much space, or be equally awkward to carry.

Your character can carry up to double the attribute Brawn in encumbrance with minimal effort and no inconvenience.

This value — $\text{Brawn} \times 2$ — is your character's Encumbrance Limit, and carrying more than that value means your

character is encumbered. An encumbered character accrues more Fatigue in any situation where your character gains one or more Fatigue (see page 71 for more about Fatigue). A forced march for a soldier bearing a heavy pack is no small feat, and the gamemaster can spend Doom at any time to inflict Fatigue on, or require resistance tests of, any characters carrying heavy loads for longer than a few minutes.

The Encumbrance and Fatigue chart (below) lists the limits of Encumbrance that can be carried and the additional penalties to Fatigue. When calculating the amount of Encumbrance your character is carrying, round up, so any Encumbrance carried in excess of $Brawn \times 2$ becomes a load of $Brawn \times 3$, etc.

ENCUMBRANCE AND FATIGUE	
Encumbrance Carried	Additional Fatigue
Less	—
Above $Brawn \times 2$	+1
Above $Brawn \times 3$	+2
Above $Brawn \times 4$	+3
Above $Brawn \times 5$	+4

Your character can carry up to $Brawn \times 5$ Encumbrance in total. Attempting to carry more than this and your character becomes immobile, or must succeed in Athletics tests to even perform basic movement, with the Difficulty set at (D1) plus one step per additional multiple of $Brawn$ above



$Brawn \times 5$. For example, moving normally with $Brawn \times 7$ in Encumbrance would require a Daunting (D3) Athletics roll every scene, your character suffering an additional 6 points of Fatigue incurred whenever Fatigue is earned.

Some items are rated with an Encumbrance value of “—”, indicating that they are generally too light to count against the Encumbrance Limit. This is a simplification, and the gamemaster may choose to limit the number of items without Encumbrance values that can be carried without incurring additional Fatigue.

BELONGINGS

Belongings are, broadly speaking, any items of equipment that don't fall into another category. The majority of belongings fit into one of three categories: items that improve your character's ability to perform certain tasks; items that allow your character to perform tasks that would otherwise be impossible; and items that exist purely for background or descriptive purposes.

IMPROVEMENT ITEMS

Items that improve your character's ability to perform certain tasks are commonplace; indeed, such items are the hallmark of a character skilled in particular specialty fields. These **kits** allow a character to perform tests using a particular skill without a penalty, or represent tools that grant additional benefits when attempting certain types of tasks relating to a single skill.

Kits are usually associated with specific skills. For example, a healer's bag is connected to the Healing skill, as described on the table below. Attempting to use those skills for practical tasks (as opposed to knowledge-based or theoretical uses) without the associated kit can increase the Difficulty by one step, depending on the nature of the task being attempted and the particular skill. Using a kit avoids this Difficulty increase. Furthermore, kits are often used in conjunction with limited **Resources** that can be used to gain bonus d20s on skill tests using the kit: each unit of a Resource used adds a single bonus d20 to the skill test, with the normal limit of three additional d20s per skill attempt, after which it is gone. Some particularly involved tasks may require that a single use of a Resource be expended, without its normal bonus, in order for the task to even be attempted. When new, kits typically come with three uses of the associated Resource, though once used up these must be replenished separately.

For entries marked with an asterisk (“*”) in Availability, the value provided is a rough estimate. However, the gamemaster is encouraged to make seeking out such libraries adventures in their own right. Gaining access to an academic library full of Stygian lore may require joining the cult of Set and proving

KITS					
Skill	Item	Type	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Alchemy	Laboratory	Facility	5	25	—
Alchemy	Laboratory, Field	Kit	3	8	5
Alchemy	Library, Academic	Library	5*	30	—
Alchemy	Library, Personal	Library	2	10	5
Alchemy	Library, Reference	Library	5*	15	—
Alchemy	Ingredient	Resource	1	2	1
Alchemy	Test Kit	Tools (1 use)	2	3	1
Animal Handling	Handler's Kit/Bridle/Tack	Kit	2	2	5
Animal Handling	Rewards	Resource	1	1	1
Animal Handling	Stable/Menagerie	Facility	3	50	—
Athletics	Climbing Gear (climbing only)	Kit	1	4	2
Athletics	Spikes	Resource	1	1	1
Counsel	Calming Herbs and Perfumes	Resource	2	2	1
Counsel	Private Chambers	Facility	3	22	—
Craft	Coal	Resource	1	2	1
Craft/Thievery	Tool Kit	Tools	2	8	5
Craft	Workshop	Facility	3	15	—
Healing	Healer's Bag	Kit	2	8	5
Healing	Chirurgeon's House	Facility	3	22	—
Healing	Ligation Kit	Kit (1 use)	1	1	1
Healing	Medicine	Resource	2	2	1
Ranged Weapons	Arrows, Bolts, etc.	Reload	1	1	1
Sorcery	Sorcerous Garb and Talismans	Tools	4	11	5
Sorcery	Circle of Power	Facility	5	30	—
Sorcery	Library, Academic	Library	5*	50	—
Sorcery	Library, Personal	Library	4	20	5
Sorcery	Library, Reference	Library	5*	30	—
Sorcery	Offerings	Resource	2	3	2
Stealth	Appropriate Clothing (by region/season)	Tools (1 use)	1	2	1
Stealth	Makeup and Scent Oils	Resource	1	1	1
Stealth	Wardrobe of Appropriate clothing (by region/season)	Tools	1	6	3
Survival	Day Bag (by region)	Kit (1 use)	0	1	1
Survival	Outpost (by region)	Facility	2	8	—
Survival	Provisions	Resource	1	1	1
Survival	Survival Kit (by region)	Tools	1	4	5
Thievery	Thief's Kit	Tools (1 use)	2	2	1
Any one skill	Library, Academic	Library	5	15	—
Any one skill	Library, Personal	Library	1	5	5
Any one skill	Library, Reference	Library	3	10	—

your loyalty. Likewise, gaining access to a personal library for a single night might be the goal of a sage seeking to answer a very peculiar question. Remember, the narrative usually supersedes raw mechanics in abstractions such as these.

In some cases, smaller and larger versions of kits may exist as well. Smaller versions contain no uses of the associated Resource, and can only be used once before their components are expended.

Larger versions are **Facilities** or **Libraries**, essentially kits that are fixed in place, built into rooms or buildings, and can provide a greater benefit. These provide an array of useful devices and consumables that allow more involved and more challenging tasks to be attempted. In addition to all the benefits of a kit, a facility allows a character to reduce the Difficulty of tests using the associated skill by one step, down to a minimum of Simple (Do). Facilities, when fully-stocked, also come with ten uses of the associated resource, though these must be replenished separately once used.

Tools provide a benefit when using a specific skill in a specific way. Tools provide benefits in a number of ways. Sometimes the benefits come by themselves, while at other times the advantages may be tempered by a disadvantage.

- **Bonus Momentum** is a simple way to bolster a character's effectiveness. It does not directly impact your character's chance of succeeding at the task, but it does improve the benefits of succeeding. Sometimes, bonus Momentum provided by tools may only be used for a specific spend. In these cases, this extra Momentum cannot be saved for later but must be used there and then for the spend listed.
- **Re-rolls** are another straightforward benefit, allowing your character to re-roll one or more d20s when making a skill test under specific circumstances.
- **Reduced Difficulty** is the other way a tool can boost a character's effectiveness. Items that reduce the Difficulty of particular tasks are a powerful asset, particularly if they can reduce the Difficulty by several steps. An alternative form of reduced Difficulty is removing Difficulty increases — a specific source of Difficulty increases will be noted, and that source of increase cannot be applied to the skill test being attempted.

CAMOUFLAGE GEAR

This consists of clothing made to aid concealment in a particular environment, as well as tools and supplies to assist the breaking up the wearer's silhouette. The basic clothing is sufficient for most purposes, but the supplies in the kit allow the character to spend time and effort creating something more effective.

Camouflaged clothing is also used whenever a character wishes to dress appropriately for a location without standing out. Should a character wish to make a statement with their dress, additional funds can be spent to make it truly noteworthy. It is not unheard of for nobles spending two to five times the cost of a courtier's robe, although care should be taken not to outshine the king.

The possible environment categories are Arctic, Desert, Forest, Jungle, Marine, Mountain, Palace, Plains, Subterranean, Swamp, Temple, and Urban.

Wearing camouflaged clothing appropriate to the environment grants a character one bonus Momentum for use on Stealth tests to avoid being seen. If your character is willing to spend ten minutes preparing a hiding place and is utilizing camouflage wear, this increases to three bonus Momentum so long as your character remains stationary.



PRY BAR

This is a solid steel bar with curved, narrow ends, used as a lever for prying open sealed containers, removing heavy-duty nails, breaking rocks, and for other tasks requiring brute force and leverage. A character using a pry bar to break something reduces the Difficulty of the Athletics test by two steps. A pry bar can be used as a club (see Club on page 96).



MAGIC ARTIFACTS

Aside from petty enchantments (see *Chapter Seven: Sorcery*) items with true magical properties should be unique, the focus of campaigns rather than mere pieces of special equipment. A magic artifact — weapon, jewelry, or other item — may have these improvements:

- **EFFICACY:** An item may have one or more capabilities increased, whether adding a  for damage, adding d20s to tests, allowing re-rolls of failed  or d20s, or finally, adding points of Momentum when a roll is successful.
- **SORCERY:** An item may have the ability to cast a single spell in a particular way. This should be expressly controlled with the wielder having little to no control over the way the spell manifests.
- **QUALITIES:** A weapon or item may have one or more additional Qualities added.
- **APPEARANCE:** The item may gleam unnaturally, feel strange to the touch, or have some other unusual aspect to its appearance.
- **DURABILITY:** An item might be especially durable, perhaps even invulnerable. This is not recommended for armor, but would work for most other items.

SORCEROUS GARB AND TALISMANS

Rare is the sorcerer encountered without the many talismans and trinkets used in the magical trade. While far from helpless, such a sorcerer will find the practice of sorcery to be even more difficult than usual and all Sorcery tests increase in Difficulty by one step. A sorcerer's garb is a personal collection of items that reaffirms the sorcerer's role, both to themselves and to onlookers. Such an outfit might consist of anything from rings and amulets carved from human bone to an elaborate mask and headdress. Garb is often built up over many years of tutelage, and its loss can be devastating.

LIBRARY

Libraries can vary dramatically in size, a range spanning from a handful of scrolls to magnificent archives of learning and knowledge. Libraries are determined by two functions: size and subject. The size determines the breadth and depth of the library's contents, while the

subject determines the scope of those contents. Libraries can cover a variety of subjects, but generally each library is linked to a single skill (though contents relating for other skills may be present). All libraries grant one or more bonus Momentum when using that skill to perform research. This bonus Momentum may only be used for the Obtain Information Momentum Spend.

Libraries come in three sizes: personal, reference, and academic. A **personal** library may only be a bag of books and scrolls granting one bonus Momentum. A **reference** library is an independent building, sometimes open to the public or part of a temple, with a wider range of materials and a small staff of researchers and curators — it grants two bonus Momentum. An **academic** library has rarer and more expensive materials, access to specialist publications, and a dedicated staff of librarians — it grants three bonus Momentum, though these are extremely rare, generally existing in only a few places and quite exclusive when it comes to who will be allowed to visit.

Libraries devoted to obscure information such as Alchemy and Sorcery are extremely rare, and are much more expensive than libraries focusing on simpler and more universally useful topics such as Animal Handling. Libraries are not common, and even the simplest of libraries is seen by the illiterate masses as evidence of black magic. As such, these subjects are noted independently of regular libraries. Libraries are also minor parts of facilities, and the bonuses for each are cumulative as are libraries and tools.

Costs for reference and academic libraries assume a lifelong membership or permission to visit rather than actual ownership. Purchasing a private reference library and maintaining its associated caretakers is possible only with the gamemaster's permission, and even then it runs ten times the usual cost, at the very least, and requires a considerable amount of effort finding an available trove of reference materials or assembling and curating one from scratch. Private libraries such as these may be viewed with a dim eye from superstitious neighbors, and it is often crucial that good relations or secrecy be maintained. Some countries discourage open practice of sorcery, while in others it attracts less concern. Founding an academic library is a task on par with founding a fiefdom and might constitute the basis of a sorcerer or scholar's entire focus in life, seeking out and procuring rare volumes from across the continent.





CIRCLE OF POWER

The world is filled with occult and secret places where the flow of magic energy is especially strong, or the conditions are ripe for the use of occult power. If aligned through the proper rites and placement of materials, these places can be attuned to the dark works of sorcery. Sometimes these places are high above the ground, with a tower constructed to reach them, while at other other times they are deep within ancient wells, hidden beneath the surface of the world.

WEAPONS

Weapons are defined by a number of different aspects, each of which determine the weapon's effectiveness in combat, any special abilities it may possess, and other relevant information. They are broadly divided into two categories: ranged and melee. Melee weapons are only effective against targets within Reach, while ranged weapons are effective at greater distances, though not all ranged weapons are effective at the same distances. A melee weapon has the following aspects: **Reach**, **Damage**, **Size**, and **Qualities**. Ranged weapons have those values, plus **Range**.

Damage

As discussed in the section on attacks, this entry determines the weapon's basic damage before any other factors — such as a character's damage bonuses — are applied. This basic damage is expressed as a number of  to be rolled upon a successful strike, such as 3 .

Size

This entry determines the size of the weapon and how easy or challenging it is to wield. A weapon's size falls into one of six categories:

- **One-handed (1H):** The weapon can be used without penalty in one or two hands.
- **Two-handed (2H):** The weapon is used with two hands without penalty. Any time the weapon is used in one hand, the Difficulty is increased by two steps.

GAMEMASTERING RANGED WEAPONS

Non-player characters do not track individual shots or loads. Instead, the gamemaster spends Doom to produce additional shots or loads for non-player characters to use when required.

- **Unbalanced:** The weapon is heavy and difficult to wield for any but the strongest people. If the wielder has a Brawn of 9 or higher, the weapon is considered to be one-handed. If the wielder has a Brawn of 8 or lower, then the weapon is considered to be two-handed instead.
- **Unwieldy:** The weapon is extremely bulky, cumbersome, and not particularly portable. Any attack made with an unwieldy weapon increases the Difficulty by two steps and generates a Complication on a 19 or 20 (instead of only on a 20). These penalties can be removed by taking the Brace action (see page 124). Unwieldy weapons cannot be wielded in one hand.
- **Fixed:** The weapon is too large for a character to use. It is fixed into position, attached to a ship, or otherwise immobile.
- **Monstrous:** The weapon is massive, designed to be wielded by creatures larger than ordinary people. Creatures with the *Monstrous Creature* Quality may wield the weapon in two hands freely, or in one hand by increasing the Difficulty of skill tests to use the weapon by two steps. It cannot be wielded by human-sized characters.

Qualities

Weapons, like any attacks, may have a number of special Qualities that grant additional advantages or properties when the weapon is wielded. Weapons use the same Qualities available to all forms of attack, as described on pages 100-103.

Range

All ranged weapons have an effective range category. This functions as described in *Attacks* on page 121.







Availability, Cost, and Encumbrance

These values are discussed elsewhere and apply equally to weapons and armor as they do equipment. The cost for a weapon includes a sheath, quiver, and the relevant harness to carry it, as well as a normal load of ammunition.




MELEE WEAPONS

The majority of combat in which player characters engage is likely close quarter melee combat. While arrows fly, seeking targets at a distance, generally the most critical battles are the more visceral ones: face-to-face, steel-against-steel skirmishing. Though battle prowess is an essential part of the complex calculation of survival versus death, the weapon your character wields is a huge part of that equation. Weapons must be as much tool as killing device, and

SWORDS

Weapon	Reach	Damage	Size	Qualities	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Broadsword	2	5 	Unbalanced	Parrying	1	5	1
Cutlass	2	4 	Unbalanced	Vicious 1	1	5	1
Scimitar or Saber	2	3 	1H	Cavalry 1, Parrying	1	5	1
Shortsword	1	4 	1H	Parrying	1	5	1
Sword	2	4 	1H	Parrying	1	5	1
Tulwar	2	4 	Unbalanced	Cavalry 1, Parrying	1	5	1
Two-handed Sword	3	5 	2H	Vicious 1	1	8	2

DAGGER AND KNIVES

Weapon	Reach	Damage	Size	Qualities	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Dagger, Dirk, Poniard, or Stiletto	1	3 	1H	Hidden 1, Parrying, Thrown, Unforgiving 1	1	5	—
Ghanata Knife	1	3 	1H	Hidden 1, Vicious 1	2	4	—
Knife	1	3 	1H	Hidden 1, Improvised, Unforgiving 1	1	2	—
Yuetshi Knife	1	3 	1H	Hidden 1, Intense	1	5	—
Zhaibar Knife	2	4 	1H	Unforgiving 2	1	5	1
Throwing Knife	C	3 	1H	Hidden 1, Volley	1	5	—



From Left to Right:
Zhaibar Knife,
Cutlass, Broadsword,
Tulwar, Yuetshi Knife

for this reason there is no consensus about which is best and the most effective for that purpose.

The following sections describe weapons common to the lands and kingdoms of the Hyborian Age, and subsequent **Conan** sourcebooks and expansion materials will present even more.

Swords

The most popular (though not the most common) weapon across the continent is the sword. The weaponsmiths of each region have their own traditions for swordmaking, whether straight or curved, heavy or light, one- or two-handed. No matter its size, weight, or form, the most sought-after characteristics of a sword are balance, sturdiness, and performance.

While swords might falter in the face of heavy armor, they are quick to handle and can intercept blows with ease, making them the most sought-after weapons for most who trade in steel. This defensive aspect makes the sword very useful to those who prefer not to wear armor. In cities, swords are often a means of keeping thieves at bay, as well, and they are either decorated with jeweled hilts or are serviceable weapons, plain and without ornamentation.

He inspected the weapon the girl had given him, and smiled grimly. Whatever else she might be, she was proven by that dagger to be a person of practical intelligence. It was no slender stiletto, selected because of a jeweled hilt or gold guard, fitted only for dainty murder in milady's boudoir; it was a forthright poniard, a warrior's weapon, broad-bladed, fifteen inches in length, tapering to a diamond-sharp point. He grunted with satisfaction. The feel of the hilt cheered him and gave him a glow of confidence. Whatever webs of conspiracy were drawn about him, whatever trickery and treachery ensnared him, this knife was real. The great muscles of his right arm swelled in anticipation of murderous blows.

— *The Hour of the Dragon*

The most common sword is a straight, one-handed, yard-long weapon, often single-edged (but sometimes double-edged), with a simple crosspiece and hilt, though sometimes with hilts designed to protect the hands. City guards are often equipped with shortswords, used as a secondary weapon when their polearms or arbaests are of no use, a similar arrangement to soldiers and pikemen, whose primary weapon is often a long two-handed affair, and their backup a short stabbing sword to be used in the

crush of a battle. Likewise, on the deck of a ship there is little room to wield a larger weapon such as the two-handed sword, making it almost exclusively the weapon of the battlefield, where its weight makes it ideal for crushing through heavy armor, the pointed blade serving as a spear, punching through plate with devastating force. The default shipboard weapon, the cutlass, is ideal for severing ropes or limbs in an emergency, although its heavy blade makes it less serviceable in defense, due to its weight. The broadsword is a common variation of the sword, and can be found both in moldering armories or ruins of old, as well as freshly forged for the field. In the east, curved blades are preferred over straight. Sabers or scimitars are often wielded from horseback with devastating effect, though a mightier warrior might prefer a straighter and heavier blade such as the tulwar.

Daggers and Knives

A dagger is a double-edged thrusting blade that, while smaller than a sword, can be just as deadly in the hands of a skilled and opportunistic fighter. Often considered a secondary weapon, there are few seasoned knights who do not carry a dagger or knife as a last resort. For those with the funds to indulge their taste in arms, daggers are often made as companion blades to swords, matching the design of an arming sword or other similar blade. This "little cousin" of the sword is often a great equalizer on the battlefield, able to find a gap in plate armor and slip inside to do deadly work, sending more than one unhorsed knight to hell, escorted there by a simple peasant with a dagger and fell intent.

In addition to daggers, many common knives are often pressed into service in combat. Common knives are seldom constructed with combat in mind and usually lack a guard to prevent the hand cutting itself by accident, while others skip such refinements to make them more easily concealed, or lighter.

There are some knives of particular note that, while not daggers in the traditional sense, are of a step above the common knife. The Ghanata knife is a blade borne by members of the tribes that dwell in the deserts to the south of Stygia. It is a broad, heavy, slightly curved blade of fine steel, edged like a razor and long enough to dismember a man. While imperfect in defense and difficult to hide, it excels as a tool for murder and is a weapon much feared by caravan guards and soldiers alike. The Yuetschi knife is a blade designed in the distant past that recalls its origin, when fishermen tied teeth to wooden hafts and called the result a knife. A serrated blade, it is less-than-ideal for combat, being slow to draw and difficult to sheath. Yet, when it lands a blow, it is unparalleled in the violence it inflicts upon flesh. A hearty blow from a well-made Yuetschi blade in the hands of a skilled user will easily eviscerate or disembowel. The Zhaibar knife is more sword than



Bearded Axe



Pictish Hatchet

CLUBS, FLAILS, AND WARHAMMERS

Weapon	Reach	Damage	Size	Qualities	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Club	2	3	1H	Stun, Knockdown	0	2	1
Flail, Farming	2	4	2H	Improvised, Knockdown, Piercing 1	1	2	1
Flail, Military	2	4	Unbalanced	Knockdown, Piercing 1	1	5	2
Great Hammer	2	4	2H	Improvised, Knockdown, Stun	1	2	2
Mace	2	3	Unbalanced	Knockdown, Stun, Piercing 1	1	5	1
Maul	2	5	2H	Knockdown, Stun	1	5	2
Morning Star	2	3	1H	Vicious 1	1	4	2
Pick, Horseman's	2	3	1H	Vicious 1	2	6	1
Pickaxe	2	5	2H	Improvised, Vicious 1	1	4	1
Sap	1	3	1H	Hidden 1, Stun, Unforgiving 1	0	0+	—
Staff	2 or 3	4	2H	Knockdown	0	3	1
Warhammer	2	4	Unbalanced	Knockdown, Vicious 1	2	5	1

AXES

Weapon	Reach	Damage	Size	Qualities	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Axe, Throwing	2	3	1H	Thrown, Vicious 1	1	5	1
Axe, Wood	2	4	2H	Intense, Vicious 1	1	4	1
Battleaxe	2	4	Unbalanced	Intense, Vicious 1	1	5	1
Hatchet	2	4	1H	Vicious 1	1	5	1
Poleaxe or Halberd	3	4	2H	Intense, Piercing 1, Vicious 1	2	6	2

knife, a yard long blade with a vicious narrow point that allows it to make mockery of armor, while its firm wide base allows for murderous strikes. However, its absence of a traditional hilt makes parries riskier than with a traditional blade.

Clubs, Flails, and Warhammers

Perhaps the oldest of all weapons other than the rock, the club is a simple and brutal extension of the human arm, originally a tree branch, the first improvement being a rock affixed to that tree branch. No matter how refined and diverse the weapons descended from the club, they are all united in their singular, simple purpose of delivering a powerful, crushing blow with maximum speed and force.

In the time of the Hyborian Age, a club is a simple and often improvised weapon, with a heavy head at the end of a handle, used to land solid blows. A similar weapon is the morning star, a club with spikes arranged around the head. A mace is a metal or stone club that has a solid studded head forged from the same material as the handle. Maces are commonly found amongst untrained conscripts in various armies. Standing at two to three times the length of a club is the quarterstaff. This mighty length of wood is perhaps the most versatile of all weapons, capable of subduing, defending, or even killing with equal efficiency. The flail is a weapon found amongst peasant levies, as the addition of metal studs to the agricultural flail is a quick modification that can ready a large number of peasants without great expense. Some military flails use a longer chain and a heavy, spike-encrusted ball to provide the same crushing momentum as the regular two-handed flail. A warhammer is similar to a mace, although the head is an asymmetric mass with a striking head and a sharp spike. Warhammers are infrequently used by the noble knights of Poitain, but the weapon is often found among more brutal warlords and vagabonds, as is the horseman's pick which exaggerates the warhammer's spike and minimizes the striking head to an afterthought. Hammers are two-handed affairs, used in close quarters and often in desperation, useful against shields and plate armor. Mauls are longer-handled hammers, also wielded two-handed, with heads of lead or iron. Archers — in particular light bowmen — are often equipped with mauls that allow them to be employed constructing light stockades and barriers when ranged combat is less effective, such as when armies are intermingled on the battlefield. Pick axes and sledge hammers are also often used when the need arises. The pick axe in particular is featured in numerous uprisings, used when traditional weapons have been confiscated and laborers are using their tools to fight for their beliefs, or their very survival. Smallest of all these is the sap, an often-improvised weapon scarcely the size of the palm of a hand, used to deliver powerful blows to the skull of

targets, capable of knocking someone out or, when used to murderous intent, killing them. Purpose-made saps are often small leather purses with handles, while improvised ones are usually rocks or pieces of lead placed in a small bag that has been tied off tightly.

Axes

The second most common weapon throughout the continent, the axe is favored by Nordheimers, Gundermen, and civilized soldiers alike. With its heavy blade, the battleaxe is an uncompromising weapon capable of hideous wounds. Powerful attacks with one can leave the wielder momentarily exposed, as axes are likely to stick fast in the wounds they make. Wood axes are often used as improvised weapons in places where peasants are forced to defend themselves. Throwing axes are smaller axes that vary from simple hatchets to bizarre multibladed throwing weapons used in the southernmost of the Black Kingdoms. The hatchet is a surprisingly versatile weapon, a reliable backup weapon as well as a tool for woodcutting and other utilitarian uses. Second to the knife and the cutlass, the hatchet is the preferred weapon on a ship, or in the Bossonian Marches. The poleaxe, grandest of axes (also called a halberd), is traditionally used by standing guards or by heavy infantry soldiers, though sometimes these powerful weapons are wielded by and against armored knights.




Flexible Weapons

While not weapons in the classical sense, whips and nets fulfill the vital function of capturing opponents without causing them unnecessary harm. Whips are lengths of cured and treated leather swung in such a fashion that they strike like a knife blade or a dagger tip, capable of long bleeding wounds or even precise strikes that can blind or disfigure. Though mostly used to handle untrained animals, they are predominantly a weapon of fear, wielded to discipline or intimidate. Nets are often used to catch an attacker's weapon but can also be thrown over an opponent in an attempt to ensnare him. While not strictly a weapon, lengths of iron chain — such as those found on manacles — can be put to good use in an emergency, causing nasty wounds and knocking foes prone.

Spears and Polearms

Polearms cover any type of weapon affixed to a haft of considerable length. Common polearms include the quarterstaff, spears, lances, pikes, and others too numerous to name. The second most primitive weapon after the club, the spear is used throughout the Hyborian kingdoms in a variety of shapes, ranging from elaborate polearms in the most civilized of cities to simple sharpened poles in the most desolate of places, wielded by beings barely above the level of ape.




FLEXIBLE WEAPONS

Weapon	Reach	Damage	Size	Qualities	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Chain	3	3 	Unbalanced	Grapple, Improvised, Knockdown, Vicious 1	1	5	1
Net	2	3 	1H	Grapple, Non-Lethal, Parrying, Thrown	1	5	—
Whip	3	3 	1H	Fearsome 2, Grapple	1	5	—

SPEARS AND POLEARMS

Weapon	Reach	Damage	Size	Qualities	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Spear	3	4 	Unbalanced	Piercing 1	1	5	2
Javelin	2	3 	1H	Fragile, Piercing 1, Thrown (Medium)	1	3	2
Lance	3	4 	Unbalanced	Cavalry 2, Fragile	2	7	2
Pike	4	4 	Unwieldy	Piercing 2	2	6	3
Polearm	3	4 	2H	Knockdown, Vicious 1	1	5	3

SHIELDS

Weapon	Reach	Damage	Size	Qualities	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Buckler	1	3 	1H	Parrying, Stun	1	4	1
Shield	2	2 	1H	Knockdown, Shield 2	1	5	2
Shield, Tower	2	2 	Unbalanced	Knockdown, Shield 4	2	6	3



Aquilonian Knight's Shield



Target Shield



Kushite Spear

The most commonly used weapon in the world, the spear is a close-combat weapon, essentially a blade at the end of a pole, used for thrusting or stabbing attacks, or in some cases slashing, allowing the user to parry with a spear as adroitly as if with a quarterstaff. Though balanced for throwing, the spear as a ranged weapon is a case of last resort, as the range is relatively short due to the spear's weight, and throwing it robs the user of the weapon for immediate use. The lance tends to be both longer and stouter than a regular spear, and is fairly unsuitable for throwing or for use in melee. The lance excels when used in a cavalry charge, the extra mass amplified by the speed of the mount to create devastating wounds, though the force of impact often renders the lance useless after one or two hits. Pikes are long spears often deployed in close formations, such as while defending a city's walls or protecting archers from cavalry. The javelin is a type of spear, sometimes as short as a yard in length, rarely much longer than two yards. Unlike the others, its primary purpose is to be thrown, as its construction makes it less than ideal in melee. Some javelins are only half wood, with long necks behind the blades. A javelin user usually carries several of these weapons, and charioteers or mounted riders will usually have a small quiver or pannier of them at hand, ready for rapid use.

Shields

A shield is a defensive tool with a wide face designed to prevent blows from landing on the wielder. The most common shields are about a foot and a half across, are usually made of wood and leather with a central boss of bronze or steel, and are designed for use in one hand. The buckler is a smaller shield, barely a foot across, usually sturdily affixed to the forearm of its user, while the tower

shield is the largest of shields, sometimes as much as two yards high and one wide, more than enough space for a full-grown warrior to crouch behind. These are primarily a weapon for formation combat, used in conjunction with spears or pikes. Shields of other shapes and sizes are used across the continent, vital tools for self-defense, especially for unarmored warriors.

Most shield training includes the art of fighting with one, and users traditionally learn to push foes back with the shield, strike and unbalance them, and even use the edge as an improvised weapon. Some weapons even have spikes projecting from the central bosses, though these are irregular and less-than-ideal for parrying, as they can knock the shield out of line.

MISSILE WEAPONS

While the vast majority of battles are settled with the use of melee weapons, missile weapons are by no means uncommon. From the horn-and-wood Hyrkanian riding bow to the sturdy Bossonian longbow, ranged weapons can change the tide of a battle and influence the formation of armies. There is great (and obvious) advantage in killing your enemy at range, as well as a means of suppression, blanketing an area with a rain of arrows and then switching to more precise fire when the enemy draws near.

Bows

The following bows are most commonly found in service. The hunting bow is a recurved bow that is usually kept for hunting game throughout the Hyborian kingdoms, from the Black Kingdoms all the way up to the Pictish Wilderness, as well as in Nordheim, Cimmeria, and Hyperborea. It has



a light draw and is quite fast to use. The Hyrkanian horse bow is used to dramatic effect by those steppe nomads and the Turanian cavalry, a prized addition to any arsenal. Hyrkanian bows are usable from horseback without penalty. The Bossonian longbow is an excellent example of its type: a long straight bow as tall as a man, its size adding extra velocity and range to its arrows. The Stygian short bow, on the other hand, is relatively compact, devastating at close quarters but relatively ineffective at extended range. Greatest among all is the range of the Shemitish bow, but it pales compared to the Bossonian longbow in terms of both accuracy and force. While other nations have different variations on the bow, they differ more in size and make than effectiveness.

Crossbows

A crossbow is a bow affixed to a stock with a trigger built into the stock, firing shorter thicker arrows called bolts. Most crossbows are made of wood or layers of different material glued together and bound with animal tendon or wire. Light crossbows are drawn by a mechanical cocking device attached to a belt or with a stirrup at the end of the crossbow which the user steps in while drawing the crossbow upwards, while heavier crossbows (called arbalests) take considerable time and effort to draw, and often are accompanied by mechanical cocking mechanisms or cranks.

Slings



The sling is one of the most ancient and powerful ranged weapons known to humankind, hurling a smallish stone or shaped “bullet” with tremendous force at a target. Primarily a hunting weapon, slings are nonetheless common on the

The Shemites opened fire at five hundred yards, and arrows flew like hail between the hosts, darkening the sun. The western archers, trained by a thousand years of merciless warfare with the Pictish savages, came stolidly on, closing their ranks as their comrades fell. They were far outnumbered, and the Shemitish bow had the longer range, but in accuracy the Bossonians were equal to their foes, and they balanced sheer skill in archery by superiority in morale, and in excellency of armor.

— “The Scarlet Citadel”

battlefield due to their relative cheapness and unmistakable effectiveness. Despite this, the sling is strictly a weapon for peasant auxiliaries, or improvised by those without other ranged options.

WEAPON QUALITIES

As noted in the description of Combat Dice  on page 122, when rolling damage, results of a 5 or 6 on each  are referred to as Effects. Effects add 1 to the total rolled and work in conjunction with Qualities that influence the damage of attacks and hazards.

Not all Qualities trigger on the roll of one or more Effects — some provide passive or ongoing benefits, while others inflict alternative Harms — but the majority of Qualities are tied to Effects rolled. If one or more Effects are rolled when rolling for damage, then all Qualities that trigger on an Effect will trigger. With any Quality marked with

MISSILE WEAPONS							
Weapon	Range	Damage	Size	Qualities	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance*
Arbalest	M	5 	2H	Unforgiving 1, Vicious 1	2	10	3
Bow, Hunting	C	3 	2H	Volley	1	6	2
Bow, Hyrkanian Horse	C	3 	2H	Volley	3	6	2
Bow, Shemite	L	3 	2H	Piercing 1, Volley	2	7	2
Crossbow	M	3 	Unbalanced	Unforgiving 1, Volley	1	6	2
Longbow, Bossonian	M	5 	2H	Piercing 1, Volley	4	8	2
Short Bow, Stygian	C	3 	2H	Volley	2	6	2
Sling	M	3 	1H	Stun, Volley	1	1	1

*For each of these weapons, the Encumbrance value and cost includes the weapon as well as quiver containing 1 Load of arrows or bolts, or a pouch of slingstones or bullets. The arbalest comes with a quiver of five bolts. Additional pouches, loads, and quivers can be purchased for 2 Gold and have an Encumbrance value of 1.

an X, the X is the rating of the Quality which determines the potency of whatever benefit it provides. If an attack would gain the same Quality multiple times, there is no benefit unless that Quality is marked with an X. In that case, the values are added together. *For example, an attack with Piercing 1, that gains Piercing 1 from another source, would instead have Piercing 2.*

Area

The attack affects a wide area and can affect several targets at once. The attack automatically affects any target within Reach of the initial target, and then one additional target within Close range for each Effect rolled, starting with the next closest target (at the gamemaster's discretion if it is not obvious). If one or more Complications are rolled when using an Area attack, the gamemaster may choose to use one of those Complications to have the attack affect an ally within the area. Individual targets may attempt Defend Reactions against an Area attack, but resolve them differently. These targets attempt a Challenging (D2) skill test, and if successful they are not hit by the attack. However, the success of one target avoiding the attack does not prevent others being hit.

Backlash X

Attacks with this Quality are dangerous to the attacker as well as the enemy. An attack with this Quality inflicts X damage to the attacker for each Effect rolled. This damage ignores Soak and will be of whatever kind of damage the attack inflicts, unless otherwise stated.

Blinding

If an attack with this Quality inflicts one or more Harms, it instead inflicts the Blind condition (see page 127), lasting until the end of the scene or until cleared by other means.

Cavalry X

The attack is launched from horseback and inflicts tremendous damage. The attack inflicts X additional damage to the target for each Effect rolled so long as the attack was made as part of a mounted character's Charge Action.

Fearsome X

The attack spreads doubt and panic, inflicting mental damage as well as physical damage. The attack inflicts X mental damage to the target for each Effect rolled, in addition to whatever physical damage was inflicted.

Fragile

These attacks can become less effective over time. For each Effect rolled, reduce the number of ☹ in the attack's damage rating by 1 ☹ after the attack concludes. If this would reduce

the number of ☹ to 0, then the attack cannot be used again until it has been replaced or replenished.

Grappling

In addition to dealing damage, if one or more Effects are rolled the weapon may ensnare the target. An ensnared target is unable to move or take action except to attempt an Acrobatics or Athletics test with a Difficulty equal to the number of Effects rolled. Against an ensnared target, the Difficulty of the Exploit Action is reduced by one step. If the Grappling weapon is a melee weapon, the weapon's wielder may not attack with the grappling weapon against anyone else while the target is ensnared. Further, the attacker may not move away from the target without releasing that target; the target may be released as a Free Action.

IMPROVISED WEAPONS

When unarmed, either due to combat beginning unexpectedly or losing one's weapons, player characters may want to improvise weapons from their immediate surroundings. The basic form of attack — Melee and Ranged — is an improvised attack, covering unarmed strikes as well as whatever small objects come to hand, such as throwing small rocks or tankards. However, larger, heavier, or sharper improvised weapons require additional consideration.

Improvised weaponry is easy to come by, often snatched up from whatever is nearby. The basic Improvised Attack has a Reach of 1, 2 ☹ damage, 1H, and has the Improvised, Stun, and Thrown Qualities, the latter representing small objects picked up and hurled. With the gamemaster's permission, a player character may add 1 or more points of Doom in order to establish a different improvised weapon. A weapon with the Qualities listed above costs 0 Doom; each additional ☹ of damage or additional Quality (or rank of a Quality) added increase the cost by 1 Doom. Removing Qualities or making the weapon two-handed instead of one-handed reduces the cost by 1 each, to a minimum of 0. The Improvised Quality cannot be removed.

For example, a broken bottle may replace the Stun Quality with Vicious 1, requiring 0 Doom be spent (adding one Quality, removing another). A barstool may increase the damage to 4 ☹ but become two-handed, costing 1 Doom.

When determining what can be used as an improvised weapon, the gamemaster's ruling is final.


Hidden X

The attack is easy to conceal or designed to be disguised as something else. When the weapon is hidden, any search of the owning character requires an Observation test, with a Difficulty of X, to locate the hidden weapon. Immediately after using this attack, a character may spend Momentum to conceal it quickly, hiding it. This costs two Momentum for attacks with Hidden 1 or Hidden 2, and 1 point of Momentum for attacks with Hidden 3 or higher. This differs from the Subtle Quality in that it is used when the weapon is concealed, not when it is in use.

Improvised

This item is not designed as a weapon but can be used as such in an impromptu manner. It could be a heavy rock, a wooden torch, or a thick leg bone. When damage is rolled with this weapon, it does not score damage when an Effect is rolled. It is possible for an item to have both the Improvised and Vicious Qualities, cancelling out their effects, but both will be noted in case some factor causes the attack to increase its Vicious Quality, or to lose Improvised.

Incendiary X

The target is set ablaze and gains the burning condition for a number of rounds equal to the number of Effects rolled. At the end of each of the target's turns, the target suffers X  physical damage to a random hit location and suffers the same amount of mental damage (roll once for both). Damage inflicted by Incendiary X ignores Soak. Any Effects rolled on this additional damage increase the number of rounds that your character is aflame, though a character can attempt to remove this condition early as normal.

Intense

These attacks are designed to inflict massive harm on a target, incapacitating them far more swiftly. If an Intense attack inflicts one or more Harms upon the target, then it inflicts one additional Harm.

Knockdown

The attack knocks the target prone if one or more Effects are rolled. The target may ignore this if they add 1 Doom for each Effect rolled, or in the case of non-player characters, at the cost of 1 Doom per Effect rolled.


Non-lethal

The attack doesn't inflict lasting damage, instead inflicting a temporary penalty. The attack cannot inflict a normal Harm effect, but rather may only inflict temporary conditions. If the attack has no other Qualities that inflict an alternate Harm, then it inflicts the Dazed Condition (see page 127) until the end of the target's next turn.

Parrying

This weapon is extremely effective at deflecting other attacks. When wielding one or more weapons with this Quality, the Doom cost of making a Defend or Protect Reaction with the Parry skill is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 0.


Persistent X

The attack has a lingering, deleterious effect. If one or more Effects are rolled, the target will suffer X  damage at the start of each subsequent turn for a number of rounds equal to the number of Effects rolled. Each effect rolled on the ongoing damage adds one additional round of duration. This condition can be avoided entirely at the time it is inflicted by adding a number of points to Doom equal to the number of Effects rolled; after this, it can only be removed by waiting for the duration to end or by taking the Clear action.

Piercing X

This attack ignores X points of the target's total Soak for each Effect rolled.

Shield X

Shields are extremely effective at affording protection from a range of different attacks. A shield counts as having the Parrying Quality (above). A shield also allows the wielder to use the Parry skill to make Defend Reactions against ranged attacks in addition to Melee attacks. Further if the Wielder has Guard, a shield grants the wielder X  Cover Soak against Melee and Ranged attacks. Finally, shields may be sacrificed in order to avoid suffering a Wound, as described in *Chapter Five: Action Scenes* of the **Conan corebook**.

Spread X

This weapon is designed to affect a larger area. For each Effect generated, roll X additional hit locations. These additional hit locations suffer half of the attack's final damage, rounding up. In the case of non-player characters or beings where hit locations are not being used, the target takes the additional damage X times.

Stun

The attack inflicts the Staggered condition (see page 127) on the target, if one or more Effects are rolled. The condition lasts until the end of the target's next turn. The target may ignore this at the cost of 1 point of Doom for each Effect rolled.

Subtle X

The attack is particularly quiet and draws little attention. Any Observation test to detect an attack with this weapon increases in Difficulty by a number of steps equal to X. This differs from the Hidden Quality in that it is used when the weapon is used, versus when it is concealed.

Thrown

The weapon can be thrown effectively. When throwing a melee weapon with the Thrown Quality, your character does not increase the Difficulty of the Ranged Weapons test. Some weapons may be listed as Thrown (M), in which case they are treated as ranged weapons with a range of Medium when thrown.

Unforgiving X

If the target of this attack was affected by an Exploit action immediately before this attack was made, then this attack gains the Intense and Vicious X Qualities.

Vicious X

An attack with this Quality inflicts X additional damage for each Effect rolled.

Volley

This ranged weapon can be used quickly, allowing the wielder to unleash volleys of projectiles. Thus, wielders often carry bundles of ammunition (arrows, bolts, etc.). An attack with a Volley weapon does not expend any Shots; the user has enough ammunition to last the fight, barring Complications. Further, a Load of ammunition can be spent to perform a Volley, adding a bonus d20 to Ranged Weapons tests to attack, and +1 to the weapon's damage if the attack hits. Loads may also be lost as the result of a Complication. After a fight, spent Loads can be recovered in the same way as Shots.

ARMOR

Armor is any garment that provides protection against physical harm whether it's the padded jackets of an Argosean sailor or the full majesty of a Nemedian king's plate harness. In the Hyborean Age, armor comes in four grades: heavy clothing; light armor; heavy armor; and very heavy armor. The costumes and protections that make up these suits are many and varied. This section covers a wide range of armor types drawn across the many lands and kingdoms, and other regional armor types will be introduced and described fully in relevant sourcebooks.

Ultimately, armor provides persistent **Soak** against physical attacks. Each piece of armor provides a quantity of Soak to one or more hit locations. Where a character wears multiple items of armor, each location only uses the highest Soak value of the items covering that location (see *Layering Armor* on page 105). Armor does not stack on individual locations.

Armor for the arms and legs is assumed to incorporate the gloves and boots, though these are inevitably lighter than the rest of the armor. Only heavy and very heavy armor offer meaningful protection to the hands and feet: for most

armor types these are simply leather gloves and boots, if any additional coverage is included at all.

HEAVY CLOTHING

Heavy clothing consists of any heavy garment including (but not limited to) quilted jerkins, padded gambesons, heavy furs, layered soft hides, or leather. It is capable of providing a modicum of protection and, unlike other grades of armor, is often worn as a layer underneath other protections. The armor protection of heavy clothing is already factored into other armors, and in a pinch a warrior can hurriedly don a suit of armor's underlayers to achieve the same level of protection as heavy clothing. As heavy clothing is clothing rather than armor, it cannot be sacrificed in the same manner as other armor types, as it is generally more resilient than armor made of hardened leather and metal (see *Sacrificial Armor* in the **Conan corebook**).

LIGHT ARMOR

Light armor consists of a variety of garments reinforced using light plates of metal and leather, or treated in some way to make the material more rigid. While less comfortable than heavy clothing, light armor types are generally worn without causing their wearer the discomfort and inconvenience that heavier armor types incur.

Variants of leather armor consist of metal rings sewn onto the leather, or even studs. Lighter types of brigandine are



Light Armor

Heavy Armor

ARMOR							
Armor Type	Item	Hit Locations Covered	Armor Soak	Qualities	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Heavy Clothing	Padded Gambeson	Torso and Arms	1	—	1	2	1
Heavy Clothing	Trousers	Legs	1	—	1	1	1
Light Armor	Brigandine Jacket	Torso and Arms	2	—	2	8	3
Light Armor	Brigandine Vest	Torso	2	—	2	4	2
Light Armor	Brigandine Sleeves or Trousers	Arms or Legs	2	—	2	4	2
Light Armor	Brigandine Sleeve or Legging	Single Limb	2	—	2	2	1 each
Heavy Armor	Heavy Hauberk or Coat	Torso, Arms, Legs	3	Heavy or Noisy	3	18	3
Heavy Armor	Heavy Vest	Torso	3	Heavy or Noisy	3	6	2
Heavy Armor	Heavy Shirt	Torso and Arms	3	Heavy or Noisy	3	12	2
Heavy Armor	Heavy Sleeve or Legging	Single Limb	3	Noisy	3	3	1 each
Very Heavy Armor	Cuirass	Torso	4	Very Heavy	4	8	3
Very Heavy Armor	Arm or Leg Plates	Single Limb	4	Very Heavy	4	4	1 each
Very Heavy Armor	Full Plate Armor	All	4	Very Heavy	4	28	7
Heavy Clothing	Leather Cap	Head	1	—	1	1	—
Heavy Armor	Helmet or Coif	Head	3	Heavy	3	3	2
Very Heavy Armor	Great Helm	Head	4	Very Heavy	4	4	2

small rectangular metal plates affixed to leather armor, either inside or outside, and lamellar is similar, though the armor plates may be leather and they are arranged in overlapping rows. Both types are popular with poorer mercenaries, town guards, and brigands, as they are considerably cheaper than the suits of armor worn by seasoned professional warriors.

Light armor is also used by those in more arid climates — whether desert, steppe, or dense jungle — as well as sailors and pirates, as heavier armor is a death sentence for someone knocked overboard.

HEAVY ARMOR

Heavy armor presents the greatest variety among armor types, with different approaches to the best means of protecting warriors from the edges, points, and crushing force of the weapons they will encounter. Generally, the heavy armor types are either mail, scale, or coats of plates, and each frequently incorporates elements of the other, as well as elements from light armor and heavy clothing.

Mail (sometimes called chain or mesh) is a suit of interlocking metal rings woven into garments such as tunics,

At her command they brought harness to replace Conan's chain-mail — gorget, sollerets, cuirass, pauldrons, jambes, cuisses, and sallet. When Yasmela again drew the curtains, a Conan in burnished steel stood before his audience. Clad in the plate-armor, vizor lifted and dark face shadowed by the black plumes that nodded above his helmet, there was a grim impressiveness about him that even Thespides grudgingly noted. A jest died suddenly on Amalric's lips.

— “Black Colossus”

corselets, hoods, skirts, leggings, and even coats, always worn with a layer of padded cloth or leather beneath. Mail is popular with mercenaries and with any soldier trying to earn a living in times between battles. It provides excellent flexibility at the cost of some degree of additional noise, though skilled woodsmen are often able to move silently, even in mail. Mail has the Noisy Quality.

Classic Horned Helmet



Very Heavy Armor



Scale armor is a suit of tight overlapping plates of metal riveted or sewn onto a backing of cotton or heavy leather, usually arranged in rows, like roof shingles. More rigid than mail, scale is often heavier, with full suits weighing as much as Aquilonian plate. It is not uncommon for mercenaries to wear scale in concert with lighter mail to offset the weaknesses of both. Scale has the Heavy Quality.

Coats of plates (a heavier version of brigandine) are often worn with leggings of scale, mail, or brigandine. The armor consists of metal plates of the same or different sizes sewn or riveted onto heavy leather. Garments vary in style between segmented breastplates and reinforced brigandines. Like scale, coats of plates have the Heavy Quality. Many knights wear coats of plates as their protection of choice.

These suits are the mainstay of military armor, and most warriors choose to wear a helmet made of this material over weaker caps, or supplement the armor with a heavier helm. Heavy and impractical for day-to-day wear, these types of armor mark the wearer as someone anticipating combat at any moment. Designed to provide extensive protection, these suits can increase the Difficulty for skills such as Acrobatics, Athletics, and Stealth, depending on how much of the armor is worn and what activity is being attempted.

VERY HEAVY ARMOR

The pinnacle of protection available to warriors is plate armor. Consisting of layered metal plates connected to one another, hinged and jointed and fitted to the wearer, plate

armor is expensive and often must be custom built for its wearer. It takes time to don, and often requires the assistance of another person, or in the cases of royalty, a small group of assistants. It is heavier than most forms of armor, though not so much as scale and though it appears cumbersome, it allows a surprising freedom and speed of movement. All of this is in service to protection, as few weapons can find a gap to inflict injury for any but the most direct blow, and frequently weapons must sheer through two layers of metal as well as a layer of leather and padded undergarment before biting into flesh. Plate has the Very Heavy Quality and is rare due to the prohibitive cost of fabricating such armor.

The great helm can represent a completely enclosed helmet such as those worn with Aquilonian knightly armor, or it could also be a great horned or winged helm of the style favored by those of Nordheim.

ARMOR QUALITIES

Armor can have any of the following Qualities associated with its use.

Heavy

Attempting any activity outside of combat in this Armor is exhausting and difficult. If wearing Heavy armor on three or more hit locations, your character suffers one additional Fatigue whenever suffering Fatigue normally. If hit locations are not being used, the armor is assumed to cover enough of the body to cause the additional Fatigue.

Noisy

Attempting stealth of any type in this armor is likely to fail. If your character is wearing Noisy armor on two or more hit locations, the Difficulty of all Stealth tests is increased by one step. If hit locations are not being used, the armor is assumed to cover enough of the body that the Difficulty penalty applies.

Very Heavy

This armor is considered as Heavy and Noisy armor. If worn as a full suit it increases the wearer's Courage Soak by 2, due to the confidence gained from such sturdy protection. Very Heavy armor must be crafted to the wearer for greatest efficiency. A full suit of Very Heavy armor that has been crafted specifically for the wearer provides Reach 2, even when wielding no other weapons, allowing the character to have a significant advantage in close quarters combat.

LAYERING ARMOR

Most armor types include several layers and incorporate a variety of different materials in their construction, metal plates overlapping smaller metal plates affixed to leather

BARDING						
Item	Hit Locations Covered	Armor Soak	Armor Type	Availability	Cost	Encumbrance
Light Barding	Body, Neck, Head	1	Light Armor	3	5	8
Heavy Barding	Body, Neck, Head	2	Heavy Armor	4	8	12
Very Heavy Barding	Body, Neck, Head	4	Very Heavy Armor	5	12	16

worn atop padded cloth is not uncommon, for example. Because this is already a feature of armor design, layering different types of armor atop one another will increase the penalties of wearing armor, but does not add any additional Soak. Despite this, when characters wish to layer different suits of armor atop one another, the following rules apply:

- The armor types cannot be of the same types of protection: wearing heavy clothing and heavy armor is possible, but two different layers of scale armor is not possible.
- The type of armor providing the least protection is considered the inner layer and the other the outer layer.
- Multiple layers of armor counts as Heavy so long as both layers are worn, and if one of the layers of armor is already Heavy, then they count as Very Heavy.
- If a character is wearing two or more types of armor on a location, and your character sacrifices the armor Soak on that location (see *Sacrificial Armor* in the **Conan corebook**), your character only sacrifices the outermost layer of armor — inner layers provide their own protection and can be sacrificed separately.
- Layering more than one type of armor may cause additional Difficulty step increases due to bulkiness, at the gamemaster's discretion, based on the relative heaviness of each type of armor.

ARMOR COSTS

The price and usage of armor varies greatly from location to location: often it is a spoil of war, while elsewhere it is primarily issued to soldiers, rather than being purchased directly. The Availability value of any given armor is equal to the grade of Soak it affords. *For example, a complete suit of mail (comprised of a heavy coat and a coif) would be Availability 3 for each part, with separate Society tests required to find each item of armor desired.*

The Encumbrance value provided is only for use when the armor is being carried or transported. Wearing armor does not count against the Encumbrance Limit of the character (see pages 88-89): the penalties are already considered with the armor's Qualities.

ARMOR FOR MOUNTS

Described on page 327 of the **Conan corebook**, warhorses are the sole type of mount capable of following a character's orders in combat, trained to respond to commands and to withstand any fear. Most horses dislike the smell of blood and are frightened by loud noises, but warhorses are accustomed to it, and the screams of the injured or dying do not cause them to balk. Warhorses are often incredibly expensive, and when wounded they are hindered just as much so as a human, so riders expecting to ride their warhorses into combat frequently equip these mounts with armor. Armor for mounts is generally called barding, and available types of barding are described in the *Barding* table above. Barding is made using the same techniques and with the same materials as human armor, though the shape and coverage varies for the horse's physique.


Light barding is made of boiled and cured leather plates, sometimes studded or with metal rings mounted onto the leather, often worn under or over a type of cloth called a caparison that drapes most of the horse's body and upper legs. Heavy barding represents a suit of chain or scale, with metal segmented plates, while Very Heavy barding is large metal plates, overlapping and interspersed with chain or brigandine. Frequently, reins are also armored, or interspersed with metal chains so that they cannot be cut, causing the mounted knight to lose control of the warhorse. Many of the heavier armors are also elaborately enameled and worn over or under caparisons, which can be utilitarian or sewn of fine silks and velvets, set with cloth-of-gold thread or thick brocade.

As with human armor, barding does not count against the mount's Encumbrance Limit.





PHROI



“If you can show me that much, these shreds of vision which mean nothing, disjointed, why can you not show me all that is to occur?”

Zelata stirred the fire without replying.

“These things are governed by immutable laws,” she said at last. “I cannot make you understand; I do not altogether understand myself, though I have sought wisdom in the silences of the high places for more years than I can remember.”

— Conan and Zelata, The Hour of the Dragon

CHAPTER 5

RULES

The participants in a game of **Conan** take on certain roles. The majority are **players**, the actual people sitting around the table, in a living room, or even online together. Each player controls a single character — normally referred to as a player character, to distinguish those characters from the many non-player characters that populate the game world. Players make the decisions that influence and direct their characters, deciding what a character does in a given situation, how the character reacts to a threat, etc.

The gamemaster is responsible for everything else. The gamemaster controls the non-player characters, making decisions for them and determining their actions and responses. He is also responsible for setting scenes, establishing environments, and determining unfolding events. The gamemaster must interpret how the rules apply to a given situation. This includes ruling on the Difficulty of tasks and ruling on the outcomes when unusual situations or disagreements arise.

The gamemaster is not an adversary to the players. Playing this game is a much greater experience for everyone if the gamemaster is an enthusiastic supporter of the player characters and their exploits, seeking to make those characters' lives as dramatic, exciting, and challenging as possible.

DICE

Two types of dice are used to resolve the actions any character (player or non-player) may attempt and the situations they may face.



TWENTY-SIDED DIE (D20)

The first, and most commonly used dice type is a twenty-sided die, known throughout this document as a d20. These d20s are used for resolving skill tests and for rolling on certain large tables. More often than not, multiple d20s are required, noted as Xd20, where X is the number of dice to be rolled. The most common roll is the **2d20** roll. Specially-made **Conan** dice boast the Phoenix icon in the 1




space, indicating a result blessed by Mitra, the patron god of many of the Hyborian Age kingdoms.


Another type of d20 is used in **Conan**: the optional Hit Location die. This can be a regular d20 rolled and compared to a table, or a specially-marked d20 with the locations labeled in place of numbers.

COMBAT DIE

The Combat Die, or , is a six-sided die (d6) rolled to determine damage and other special effects. When rolling a , ignore any results of 3 or 4. Results of 1 and 2 have their normal values. Results of 5 or 6 are referred to as Effects. Specially-made **Conan** Combat Dice replace the 1 and 2 sides with success icons, and the Phoenix icon for the 5 and 6 faces, with the 3 and 4 faces left blank. An Effect adds 1 to the total, and also triggers certain abilities, such as weapon Qualities and other special conditions.

COMBAT DIE	
Roll	Value
1	1
2	2
3,4	0
5,6	1, plus an Effect

Most of the time, more than one  is rolled together and the results totaled. Multiple Combat Dice are noted as X, where X is the number of Combat Dice rolled. For example, 4 indicates that four Combat Dice should be rolled.

Demetrius of Ophir successfully strikes a Zamorian bandit with his broadsword. The weapon has a damage rating of 5. Demetrius' player rolls five d6s and generates results of 1, 2, 4, 6, and 3. The 1 and the 2 add together for a total of 3. The 4 and 3 are ignored, and the 6 adds 1 to the total and indicates an Effect.

Adding this all together, Demetrius' attack inflicts 4 damage and creates an Effect.



In most circumstances, more than one dice of any given type are rolled at once. These dice collectively are referred to as the **dice pool** (or the pool).

ROUNDING NUMBERS

Whenever you need to divide the result of a dice roll, a value in the game, or some other number, the players and gamemaster alike should always round up.

RE-ROLLING DICE

Many circumstances allow a player or gamemaster to re-roll one or more dice. When a talent, ability, item, or circumstance grants a re-roll, the player or gamemaster chooses which die to re-roll, and rolls it (or another die of the same kind) in its place. This replaces the original result entirely. The new results stand, even if they're the same as, or worse, than the original results.

Some situations allow for a specific number of dice to be re-rolled, while others allow all dice in a pool to be re-rolled. In this latter instance, the player or gamemaster chooses how many dice to re-roll from those rolled, up to the number of dice listed (if any). Note that in most cases, re-rolling is optional. The player or gamemaster does not have to re-roll a die if the original result is acceptable.



SKILL TESTS

Whenever a character attempts a task where the outcome is in doubt, the player or gamemaster will make a skill test to determine whether the task succeeds or fails.

Under most circumstances, no more than three additional d20s may be rolled on any skill test.

TARGET NUMBER (TN)

The **Target Number** of the skill test is determined by adding the character's relevant Attribute to the character's Skill **Expertise**.

DIFFICULTY

A task's Difficulty (a value from 1 to 5) is determined by the gamemaster. The levels of Difficulty, and some examples of what tasks might fall into each level, are described on the *Test Difficulty* table (opposite).



BASIC SKILL TEST

To make a skill test, roll 2d20. For each d20 that rolls equal to or less than the test's Target Number, the character scores a success. Each d20 that rolls equal to or less than the character's **Focus** in the skill used for the test generates one additional success.

If the character scores a number of successes equal to or higher than the Difficulty of the test, then the task is a success. Sometimes Difficulties are summarized by the number of successes required, such as a one success task summarized as D1.

COMPLICATIONS

Not every situation goes entirely according to plan, even when the plan succeeds. Characters are likely to face challenges and complications, even when things go well.

Whenever a 20 is rolled on any d20 in a skill test, the gamemaster should immediately create and introduce an impediment or problem called a **Complication**. One Complication is created for each 20 rolled, so a bad roll can have multiple Complications.

Complications represent an inconvenient change of circumstances. A Complication could present an obstacle to further progress, requiring a new approach (like a route of escape being blocked, requiring a new path), a loss of personal resources (such as using up a resource like arrows

TEST DIFFICULTY		
Name	Successes	Examples
Simple (Do)	0	Opening a slightly stuck door. Researching a widely known subject. Hitting a stationary archery target during practice.
Average (D1)	1	Overcoming a simple lock. Researching a specialist subject. Shooting an enemy at optimal (medium) range.
Challenging (D2)	2	Overcoming a complex lock. Researching obscure information. Shooting an enemy at optimal range in poor light.
Daunting (D3)	3	Overcoming a complex lock in a hurry. Researching basic historical information. Shooting an enemy at long range in poor light
Dire (D4)	4	Overcoming a complex lock in a hurry, without the proper tools. Researching esoteric historical information. Shooting an enemy at long range, in poor light and heavy rain.
Epic (D5)	5	Overcoming a complex lock in a hurry, without the proper tools, and in the middle of a battle. Researching purposefully obscured historical information. Shooting an enemy at extreme range in poor light and heavy rain.

Conan sprang to meet him, and all his tigerish strength went into the arm that swung the sword. In a whistling arc the great blade flashed through the air and crashed on the Bossonian's helmet. Blade and casque shivered together and Gromel rolled lifeless on the floor. Conan bounded back, still gripping the broken hilt.

— "The Phoenix on the Sword"

or salves), or something that hinders the character temporarily (a twisted ankle or a social faux pas).

The important thing to remember is that a Complication is an inconvenience; they are independent of success or failure, and it is entirely possible to succeed at a skill test while simultaneously generating a Complication. The Complication should only take effect immediately after the skill test's results have been applied. A character may leave himself vulnerable when fighting, but if his skill test succeeded, his attack still connects before he suffers the Complication.

For example, the Pictish warrior Dakeyah might successfully use Ranged Weapons to shoot an enemy with his bow, but on his test, his player rolls a 20. The arrow strikes the target, but the gamemaster might declare that Dakeyah's quiver is now empty of arrows, and he must find more arrows, or seek other means of killing his foes.

Multiple Complications can be resolved separately, or the gamemaster may choose to group them together into a bigger problem.

For example, if Dakeyah's player had rolled multiple 20s, the gamemaster might announce that in addition to being out of arrows, his bowstring has frayed and broken, or that a cloud of smoke has risen and obscured his targets. Combining multiple Complications might mean that instead of minor inconveniences (no arrows, bad bowstring), it might be that Dakeyah's bow cracks when he draws it, making it entirely useless.

MOMENTUM

When the number of successes scored on a skill test is greater than the Difficulty rating, the excess successes become **Momentum**. Momentum can be spent immediately to perform the task faster or more effectively, or it can be saved and applied to subsequent actions taken on the same turn. Up to six points of Momentum may be saved at any given time.

If a skill test is not successful, no points of Momentum are earned.

Momentum can also represent cooperation, group dynamics, leadership, action coordination, assistance, and other forms of teamwork. Players who have saved



DOOM AS COMPLICATION

If no idea for an appropriate Complication springs to mind, the gamemaster can instead choose to add two points of Doom to the Doom pool. This method allows the gamemaster to refresh a dwindling Doom pool, accepting Doom instead of inflicting Complications on the player characters.

If a gamemaster-controlled non-player character suffers a Complication, the gamemaster can have the non-player character suffer Complications, or the players can ask the gamemaster to remove two Doom points from the gamemaster's Doom pool instead. The gamemaster has the final say, however.

Additional results of 20 can be spent on reducing the Doom pool by an additional two points, though it cannot be reduced if it has only one or zero points left.

Doom is explained further on page 29.

Momentum can also spend it to assist the actions of other player characters, who can then use that Momentum in addition to any Momentum that they might generate themselves through successful skill tests or other effects. If players wish to share Momentum or save it beyond their turn, they place it in a Momentum pool from which all the players can draw. **Players cannot hold onto Momentum of their own beyond their turn: Momentum is either used immediately or during that turn, placed in the shared pool, or lost.**

Most uses of Momentum happen immediately after a successful skill test, though the player or gamemaster does not have to choose how to use it until it is actually needed. Each use of Momentum can only be used once on each skill test, unless that use is noted as Repeatable. Some uses of Momentum are listed as Immediate. This means they can be used at any time, spending points directly out of the group's pool of saved Momentum.

Players are encouraged to be creative in their use of Momentum, as they build success on top of success, but the gamemaster has the final say on the outcome of spent Momentum, especially when it concerns the non-player characters or the setting.

MOMENTUM DEPLETION

At the end of each scene, and at the end of each round during an action scene, the group loses a single point of saved Momentum from their shared pool.

MOMENTUM AND DOOM

The game runs off of two parallel resources: **Momentum** and **Doom**. Doom is used by the gamemaster to introduce additional hardship on the players, to activate non-player character abilities, and generally make things more difficult for the players. Whenever player characters wish to use Immediate Momentum (such as to buy an extra d20 for a task), they may do so by adding 1 point to Doom instead of spending 1 point of Momentum.

Similarly, the gamemaster does not need to keep track of any Momentum earned by non-player characters. Instead, any unspent Momentum from non-player character skill tests are added to the Doom pool, and can be spent by the gamemaster as Doom.



EXAMPLE USES OF MOMENTUM		
Desired Effect	Cost	Conditions
Perform a task in half the normal time	1	
Add +1 damage on a successful attack	1 per +1	Repeatable
Disarm an opponent	2	
Add an additional d20 to a skill test, before the roll is made	1 per d20	Immediate, Repeatable
Increase an opponent's skill test Difficulty by +1	2 per +1	Immediate, Repeatable
Ask the gamemaster a pertinent question about the situation, the characters present, or something else that the player character might be able to discern with that skill test	1 per piece of info	Repeatable

TRACKING MOMENTUM

A useful method of tracking Momentum — player and/or group — is to place a large or distinctive-looking d6 in a highly visible place, with the number of the die turned up to indicate the amount of current Momentum. If the d6 shows a 3, there are three points of Momentum available. Another method is to use a pool of tokens or additional d20s to track the amount of saved Momentum. Just don't mix them up with other dice or tokens!

Whichever the case, everyone should try to keep the amount of saved Momentum visible to everyone at the table, to make coordinating actions easier!

an attack or defending against an attack. However, some situations may mean that it is possible for one or both sides to simply fail without offering any opposition. These situations apply a Difficulty to the tests attempted by the characters involved. If a character fails the test, the opposed test is automatically lost. If both characters fail, neither achieves anything. If either side has some circumstance which would make its test more challenging for them than for its opponent, then that side's test Difficulty increases as normal. As noted above, if one side fails the test outright and the other does not, then the failing character loses the opposed test. Characters may spend Momentum or Fortune points (see *Fortune* on page 114), pay into the Doom pool (see *Doom* on page 114), or use any other means of gaining successes or extra Momentum to boost their chances on this test.

STRUGGLES

When two characters are in direct opposition to one another, each character involved in the task performs a skill test related to that action. The character achieving the greatest quantity of Momentum succeeds, achieving the goal, though the final amount of Momentum is reduced by 1 point for each point of Momentum scored by the loser. In other words, the losing opponent's level of success detracts from the winner's. In the case of a tie, a player character wins, unless the gamemaster spends 1 Doom. If two player characters or two non-player characters are tied, the gamemaster should randomly determine the winner, perhaps by comparing the related attributes or simply rolling a die.

For example, if Damastinos and Lucretia are running a race against one another, the winner will simply be whichever of them has the better skill test, based on the number of successes.

If there are no other factors involved, the Difficulty of the opposed test is Simple (D0), or Average (D1) if making

UNTRAINED SKILL TESTS

Characters can make skill tests using skills in which they possess no Expertise. The Target Number for the test is equal to the relevant Attribute, unmodified.

However, untrained tests are a little sloppier, and come with greater risk of mishap. Complications occur on rolls of 19 or 20 (instead of just 20) when characters lack the Skill Expertise for a particular skill test.

TURNING THE TIDE

While succeeding at most common tasks is a straightforward matter, even the most proficient character cannot succeed at the most difficult tasks without effort, opportunity, or assistance. Skill Focus can allow a character to achieve higher difficulties some of the time, but to truly triumph, a character needs to find some other way of improving the odds. This is normally done by finding some way to add extra d20s to a skill test.



A character cannot use more than three additional d20s on a single skill test, so no more than five d20s in total can be rolled. The only exception is Teamwork, where multiple characters can work together, contributing d20s towards a single task. Any additional d20s from Momentum or other bonuses must be added before the test is attempted.



BUYING EXTRA DICE WITH DOOM

As noted in *Momentum* (page 111), a character can pay one Momentum (Immediate, Repeatable) to buy an extra d20 for a skill test. This requires that the group has available Momentum to spend, or that instead of spending Momentum, the character is willing to generate Doom points for the gamemaster.

FORTUNE

A character can spend a point of **Fortune** before attempting a skill test to “buy” a bonus d20 to use with the skill test. However, unlike Momentum dice, this d20 is not rolled. Instead, it is simply set on the table with the 1 facing up, as if the player had rolled the best possible result. The special result is then counted normally, which means it automatically counts as a success, or two successes if the character has 1 or more points of Focus with that skill.

TEAMWORK

When facing a task too great for one character, additional characters can work together as a team, assuming the situation, time, and the gamemaster permit it. With team efforts, one character is designated as the leader, and the other characters are designated assistants. The gamemaster may decide that only a certain number of characters may assist, or apply other limitations, depending on the circumstances.

To assist with a skill test, each player must describe how his character is assisting the leader. If the gamemaster

DOOMED!

The gamemaster can use Doom to trigger events, activate effects, boost the effectiveness of non-player characters, and otherwise make the characters' lives more interesting.

The CONAN COREBOOK contains more information for the gamemaster about how to use Doom.

approves, each assistant then rolls one d20, using his own Attribute, Expertise, and Focus to determine if any successes are scored. The leader makes a normal skill test. Assistants may not use any means to roll additional dice, though the leader may use Momentum, Doom, Resources, Fortune, or any other available methods of gaining extra d20s. Because these dice are rolled by other characters, they do not count towards the limit of three bonus d20s applied to a task.

FICKLE FORTUNE!

Fortune points can be used for more than just buying extra dice. See page 128 for more about how this powerful resource is used.


If the leader scores at least one success on his roll, then any successes generated by the assistants are added to the leader's total. If the leader does not generate any successes, then any successes scored by the assistants are lost, their efforts negated by unsuccessful leadership.

Characters providing assistance do not have to use the same skill as the character they're assisting: assistance may sometimes be best provided by someone contributing different knowledge and training. In such cases, the gamemaster should determine how different skills might be utilized in pursuit of the same goal.

A snarl of bloodthirsty gratification hummed in his bull-throat as he leaped, and the first attacker, his short sword overreached by the whistling saber, went down with his brains gushing from his split skull. Wheeling like a cat, Conan caught a descending wrist on his edge, and the hand gripping the short sword flew into the air scattering a shower of red drops. But Conan had not paused or hesitated. A pantherish twist and shift of his body avoided the blundering rush of two yellow swordsmen, and the blade of one, missing its objective, was sheathed in the breast of the other.

— "The Slithering Shadow"





The rogues drew back momentarily, as their leader seized several and thrust them toward the single door, and in that brief respite Conan leaped to the wall and tore therefrom an ancient battle-ax which, untouched by time, had hung there for half a century.

With his back to the wall he faced the closing ring for a flashing instant, then leaped into the thick of them. He was no defensive fighter; even in the teeth of overwhelming odds he always carried the war to the enemy. Any other man would have already died there, and Conan himself did not hope to survive, but he did ferociously wish to inflict as much damage as he could before he fell. His barbaric soul was ablaze, and the chants of old heroes were singing in his ears.

— “The Phoenix on the Sword”

ACTION SCENES

No matter where they go, characters will find themselves confronted by rivals and enemies. These foes — whether man, beast, or monstrous other — must be faced in perilous conflicts, collectively described as **action scenes**.

ROUNDS

Action scenes are divided into rounds. Each round represents a distinct slice of time, during which characters can attempt actions and respond to the actions of their enemies. These rounds are of no fixed duration. Instead, their length will vary based on the encounter in question: an intense battle in the cramped corridors of a ruined castle may have rounds that last only a few seconds, while a band of raiders attacking a village may have rounds that last for minutes. A massive sea battle between war-galleys could even have rounds lasting a quarter hour or more.

WHAT TYPE OF ACTION IS IT?

For some actions, the type of action is obvious and already defined. *For example, it requires a Standard Action to Withdraw from an enemy's reach.* At other times, the gamemaster will need to make a judgment call about what type of action is required.

Here are some rules of thumb for the gamemaster to use:

- Actions that could be resolved in the blink of an eye (like dropping an item held in hand) or which can be done while simultaneously focusing on other tasks (like talking) are probably a **FREE ACTION**. If a skill test is required, it is not a Free Action.
- Most tasks that require a Simple Do skill test or no skill test at all are Free Actions. However, if a character wishes to roll the dice on a Simple (Do) skill test in order to generate Momentum, that makes it a **STANDARD ACTION**.
- Any action that requires focus or effort but does not require a skill test — such as crossing a room — is probably a **MINOR ACTION**.
- Any action that requires a skill test is usually a **STANDARD ACTION**, unless specified otherwise.

ACTIONS

Regardless of how much time a round may represent, during the round each character will have a single turn. Each turn, a character can take a single **Standard Action**, a single **Minor Action**, and any number of **Free Actions**.

FREE ACTIONS

Free Actions require very little time or effort. Characters can perform any number of Free Actions on their turn (at the gamemaster's discretion), but cannot perform the same Free Action more than once during any given turn.

MINOR ACTIONS

Minor Actions do not require much energy or effort, but they do require a certain level of focus.

STANDARD ACTIONS

Standard Actions are the focus of action scenes and take up most of a character's attention and effort. A character can also use a Standard Action to perform any Minor action.

REACTIONS

Reactions do not occur during a character's turn, but are special actions triggered by some other event (like an enemy attacking), and many Reactions turn an enemy's skill test into a Struggle. A character may perform several Reactions during a round, but at an increasing cost: the first Reaction a character attempts during a round requires that he pay a single point of Doom (into or out of the pool, depending on whether the character is a player character or non-player character). The second Reaction costs 2 points of Doom, the third Reaction costs 3, and so forth, with each successive Reaction costing 1 more point of Doom than the previous Reaction.

TURN ORDER

During each round, the player characters act first. The players can simply agree among themselves which player character will act next, but once a character begins his turn he must resolve all of the actions he wishes to take before other characters can take their turns.



INDECISION

If the players spend too much time deliberating and discussing their choices during an action scene rather than taking action, the gamemaster can add 1 point of Doom to the Doom pool as a warning that the player characters are ceding the initiative to their opponents.

If the players' deliberation continues, the gamemaster can take additional Doom points, warning the players periodically until they act, or until the gamemaster chooses to spend the Doom, allowing any non-player characters to act first.

Once all the player characters have taken their turns, all of the non-player characters take their turns (in whatever order the gamemaster wishes).

After all player characters and non-player characters have taken their actions in a round, that round is over. The shared Momentum is depleted by 1 and a new round begins.

SEIZING INITIATIVE

At the start of the round before anyone has acted, or at any time immediately after a player character has finished his turn (and before another player character has begun

his turn), the gamemaster can spend 1 point of Doom to interrupt the player characters and allow a non-player character to immediately take its turn.

The non-player character resolves its actions normally. Once its turn is done the turn order passes back to the player characters, unless the gamemaster spends additional points of Doom to allow additional non-player characters to take their actions before the player characters. That non-player character does not get to act again that round.

SURPRISE

When one group of characters attempts to gain an advantage over another group of characters by taking them by surprise, the attempt is resolved as a Struggle (see page 113). Each side nominates a leader to attempt the skill test, with other members of the group assisting and the GM awarding bonus momentum as appropriate.

If the group attempting surprise succeeds at the Struggle, each character on that side gains the benefits of an Exploit Action *for free* (see page 125) and acts immediately at the start of combat (non-player character's do not need to spend Doom to gain this, nor should the GM spend Doom to override this.).

If the group attempting surprise fails at the Struggle, the winners may choose to add two points to Doom or spend one Fortune point (for the whole group) to gain the benefits

of surprise instead. Typical surprise scenarios include an ambush (Stealth vs. Observation) or betraying supposed allies at a peaceful celebration (Persuade vs. Insight).

ZONES

During an action scene, knowing where everyone is can be of vital import, and determining both absolute position (where characters are in the scene) and relative position (how far apart anyone is from a given friend or foe) is crucial. Rather than tracking everything using precise distances, the setting of the action scene is divided into abstract **zones**.

At the start of an action scene, the gamemaster will define the zones which make up the setting. (Generally three-to-five distinct zones are a good place to start, although this number will vary depending on the exact nature of the scene.) Each zone is a small, contiguous area. A zone will be adjacent with one or more zones, but will likely be separated from others by intervening zones.

There are no hard-and-fast rules when it comes to defining the size or boundaries of a zone, but the identity of a zone will generally flow naturally from the divisions and logic of the setting.

For example, during the siege of an Aquilonian fortress, groups of warriors clash within the fortress itself. Several of the fortress's defenders are holed up in a guardroom, while the attackers are trying to batter the door down from the corridor outside. The guardroom is one zone, while the corridor is another.

Similarly, think about the landmarks by which people will define their position.

For example, in a Cimmerian village, Asgardian raiders approach the smithy. When battle commences, they look around for cover and see a wagon, a pile of hay (currently ablaze), and a nearby hut. It should be easy for the players to imagine them running from the wagon (one zone), across the dirt track (another zone), to the blazing heap of hay (a third zone).

Because zones are of no fixed size, they can also be varied to accommodate other factors in the scene.

For example, a battle amidst the towering trees of a forest might be divided into many small zones among the trees (difficult to navigate and offering lots of cover) and a couple of larger zones representing clearings (easy to see or run across).

RANGE AND MOVEMENT

To keep things simple and fluid, the distance between zones is handled in an approximate manner, using five broad range categories:

- **Reach** is when an object or character is within arm's length. Characters enter Reach to interact with objects manually, to attack in close combat, and to perform any other actions where they may need to touch the subject of their action. A character can move within Reach of a target as part of any movement action that ends in the same zone as the target. Moving out of an enemy's Reach may be risky, as it leaves characters open to the Retaliate Reaction unless they take a Withdraw Action. Retaliate and Withdraw are described on pages 126 and 125.
- **Close** range is defined as the character's current zone. Moving within Close range is a Free Action.
- **Medium** range is defined as any zone adjacent to the character's current zone. Moving to a point within Medium range is a Minor Action.
- **Long** range is defined as any point two zones away from the character's current zone. Moving to a point within Long range is a Standard Action, but the character increases the Difficulty of all tests by one until the start of his next turn.
- **Extreme** range is defined as any point three or more zones away from the character's current zone. A character cannot move to Extreme range in a single action.

Characters cannot perform more than one movement action per turn.

For example, a character cannot use a Minor Action to move to an adjacent zone and then use her Standard Action to move an additional two zones.

CREATING DISTANCE WITH ZONES

For a scene in which there are only two zones of interest that should nonetheless feel distant from each other, the gamemaster can fill the space between them with any number of "empty" zones, in order to create the right feel. Characters wishing to go from the first zone of interest to the second must pass through these place-holding zones first.

DISTANCE AND PERCEPTION

The further away something is, the harder it is to notice. The gamemaster should increase the difficulty of Observation and Insight tests by +1 at Medium range, by +2 at Long range, and by +3 at Extreme range.

ZONE EFFECTS

Individual zones can have terrain effects defined by the gamemaster. Only a few key options are described here, but a wider variety will be found in the **Conan** core rulebook. Additionally, the gamemaster is encouraged to create additional such effects as desired.

Under normal circumstances, moving around requires no skill test. Moving to anywhere within Close range takes only a Free Action. Moving to anywhere within Medium range takes a Minor Action. Moving to anywhere within Long range takes a Standard Action, which adds +1 to the Difficulty of all other tests the character makes until the start of his next turn, including those to traverse difficult terrain.

However, movement in some circumstances may require a Terrain test. This is a skill test, typically using either Acrobatics or Athletics for characters and creatures, though unusual terrain may require a different test, as will riding animals or operating vehicles. A situation may only allow use of one of these skills exclusively, or in some cases either of them, depending on how the character attempts to traverse the terrain. If movement requires a skill test with a Difficulty of Average (D1) or higher, then it cannot be performed as a Free Action, even if the movement is only within Close range. Under no circumstances can a skill test be attempted as a Free Action.




Broadly, any circumstances that require a Terrain test can be split into three categories: **Obstacles**, **Hindrances**, and **Hazards**. A fourth type, **Cover**, does not generally require a Terrain test, but has useful effects that characters may take advantage of.

- Obstacles:** These exist at the points where two zones meet, impairing efforts to pass between those zones. Climbable walls and fences, ladders, and similar barriers can all serve as obstacles. Attempting to bypass an obstacle requires a Terrain test, normally with a Difficulty of Average (D1), but particularly difficult obstacles may increase this (while straightforward obstacles might reduce this to Simple (D0), removing the need for a test unless other factors pose a problem). Failing this test prevents the character from moving across the obstacle.
- Hindrances:** These affect entire zones, slowing movement within them. Moving within a hindrance for any portion of your movement requires either giving up a portion of your movement (moving one fewer zone than you normally would with that action), or attempting a Terrain test, with failure meaning that the character stops moving within the hindering terrain. The Terrain test is normally Average (D1), but some terrain may require a more difficult test. Areas of deep water, thick snow, or broken ground might be considered to be Hindrances.



They were following no marked trail, but dipping down into ravines so deep the sun never struck bottom, laboring up steep slopes where loose shale threatened to slide from beneath their feet, and following knife-edge ridges with blue-hazed echoing depths on either hand.

— “The People of the Black Circle”

- **Hazards:** These function in the same way as obstacles or hindrances (this will be detailed in each individual case), but with one significant difference: they cause harm upon a failed Terrain test. A typical hazard inflicts 3  physical damage with the Stun quality, but different hazards may vary in quantity of damage, qualities applied, or even the type of damage.
- **Cover:** This is one of the most common terrain effects, representing objects that interfere with a character's ability to see or attack a target clearly. Cover provides additional Soak against physical attacks, as described in the Damage and Recovery section, below, and is normally divided into Light Cover (providing 2  Soak) and Heavy Cover (4  Soak).



ATTACKS



There are three different methods of attacking a target: **Melee**, **Ranged**, and **Threaten**. As a Standard Action, an attacker picks a single target within range and declares the type of attack they are making against that target.

The target has the option of performing a Defense Reaction, in which case the attack is resolved as a Struggle, using the skills shown on the Attack table (below). If the target does not perform a Defense Reaction, the attacker makes an Average (D1) test with the skill required for that type of attack. The Difficulty of the attacker's tests may be modified by their range.

ATTACK			
Attack	Skill	Damage Type	Defense Reaction
Melee	Melee	Physical	Parry
Ranged	Ranged Weapons	Physical	Acrobatics
Threaten	Persuade	Mental	Discipline

MAKING AN ATTACK

The process for making an attack is as follows:


1. Declare the attack:
 - a. Choose the type of attack being made: **MELEE**, **RANGED**, or **THREATEN**.
 - b. Choose a **TARGET** for the attack. The target chosen must be a viable type of target for the type of attack.
 - c. Choose a **WEAPON** (for Melee and Ranged attack) or a **METHOD** of scaring the target (for a Threaten attack).
 - d. The target chooses whether or not to make a **DEFENSE** Reaction.
2. The attacker makes a **SKILL TEST** to attack. This is an **AVERAGE (D1)** test, or a **STRUGGLE** if the target is taking a Defense Reaction.
3. If the attacker fails the skill test or is defeated in the Struggle, the attack ends. If the attacker succeeds, then the attacker rolls **DAMAGE**:
 - a. The attacker rolls a number of **COMBAT DICE** () determined by the weapon/attack used and the associated attribute scores. Each 1 or 2 rolled applies that much damage. Each 5 or 6 rolled creates an **EFFECT**, which applies 1 damage and triggers certain attack qualities, such as Piercing or Vicious. Add up all the damage applied: this is the **TOTAL DAMAGE**.
 - b. The defender determines their total **SOAK** at the same time. This is a combination of fixed value (from Armor or Courage) and dice (cover and morale). Roll the  and add the total rolled (1s, 2s, and Effects) to the fixed value. The result is the character's total Soak.
 - c. Subtract the defender's total Soak from the attacker's total damage. If one or more damage remains, this removes a number of points of **STRESS** equal to the number of points of remaining damage.
 - d. If there are five or more points of damage remaining, or the defender is reduced to 0 Stress of that type, or the defender had no stress of that type remaining, the defender suffers a point of **HARM**.

RANGED COMBAT

Range

Ranged weapons and Threaten attacks can be used at a distance. Broadly, each ranged weapon and each method of threatening a foe has a listed range. This will be Close, Medium, or Long (abbreviated to C, M, or L, respectively). That is the range category that is optimal for that weapon, and attacks at that range suffer no penalties for range. If the target is at a different range (nearer or further away), each range category difference increases the Difficulty of the skill test to attack by one step. Thus, a weapon with a range of Close suffers +1 Difficulty at Medium range, +2 at Long, and +3 at Extreme, while a weapon with a range of Medium suffers +1 at Close or Long ranges, and +2 at Extreme.

Ranged Weapons

Under normal circumstances, each time a ranged weapon is used, it uses up a single shot. This may be a handful of arrows or bullets, or a single crossbow bolt, or it might be a hurled weapon like a dart or even a loose rock. Drawing a shot is part of the Standard Action used to make the attack, but the character may only have a finite amount of shots available, and once the character has no more shots available, the ranged weapon can't be used again. At the end of the scene, the character rolls  for each shot used. On an Effect, the shot is damaged or broken and cannot be used again. (See also Volley, page 103.)

Melee weapons can be thrown as ranged weapons, as if they had a Range of Close, but as they're ill-balanced for this, the Ranged Weapons test increases in Difficulty by two steps. Each melee weapon counts as a single shot: once a sword has been thrown, it is no longer available for use until it is recovered.


Reach and Guard

Melee attacks can only be used within Reach, but they have a Reach value of their own, used to determine relative length and ability to attack. Further, characters have a state known as Guard when in melee. A character has Guard if he is on his feet, aware of an attack, and able to defend himself, but he can lose this if knocked prone, or an attacker spends 2 points of Momentum after a successful attack. A character regains Guard by taking a Minor Action and a Parry test with a Difficulty equal to his opponent's Reach (Simple Do, as a Free Action, if not in melee).


When a character makes an attack, compare the Reach of the weapon he is using with the Reach of his opponent's weapon (opponent's choice). The defender is assumed to be keeping the opponent at bay with the preferred weapon. If the defender has Guard, then the Difficulty of the attack increases by one step for every point the defender's Reach is longer than the attacker's (D1 to D2, for example). If the defender's Guard has been lost, then the attacker gains +1d20 for every point of Reach less than the defender, having slipped past the defender's weapon or shield.

ALTERNATE MODES OF ATTACK

Improvised Attack

A melee attack made without a weapon. It has a Reach of 1 and deals 2  physical damage, with the Stun, Thrown, and Improvised qualities (described on pages 100-103).


Steely Glare

A basic Threaten attack has a Range of Close, and deals 2  mental damage, with the Stun quality (see page 102).


Other Sources of Damage

Some environmental effects can also inflict damage, such as falling from a great height, being set on fire, or encountering something terrifying.

DAMAGE

If an attack is successful, it inflicts damage. The amount of damage is determined by the damage rating of the weapon or method used to make the attack. Damage ratings are a number of Combat Dice, or . Some characters may have bonus damage when using a particular attack. This will be noted on the pre-generated character sheets where appropriate.

COMBAT DICE

Combat Dice are a particular way of rolling and reading d6s. They are used for determining damage and governing special effects. When rolling a , ignore any results of 3 or 4. Results of 1 or 2 are counted normally, while 5s and 6s are referred to as Effects. These count as a result of a 1, and also trigger a range of special qualities.

COMBAT DIE	
Roll	Value
1	1
2	2
3,4	0
5,6	1, plus an Effect

For example, Valka, an Aesir warrior, uses her axe to strike an attacking winter wolf. She is successful! Her axe deals 4 damage, so Valka's player takes four d6s and rolls, getting 4, 1, 2, and 6. The result of 4 is ignored. The results of 1 and 2 are added together for a total of 3 damage. The result of the 6 is an Effect, which adds 1 to the total rolled, and also triggers the axe's qualities. The axe has the Vicious 1 quality, which inflicts an extra +1 damage. Valka's final damage total is 5.

SOAK

As shown on the Damage Table, each type of protection shields against damage from one type of attack. These protections are referred to as Soak, which comes as both a fixed value and as soak dice. Soak uses Combat Dice, as described above. Soak dice (if any) are rolled at the same time as damage, and all Soak (fixed and rolled) reduces damage on a 1 for 1 basis. It is possible for Soak to reduce the damage of a successful attack to 0.

HIT LOCATIONS

Physical damage inflicted on the target can affect one of several locations on the body, which may be more or less protected, depending on the construction of the character's armor.

Whenever a physical attack hits, the gamemaster should roll a d20 on the Hit Location table to determine which hit location is struck. Creatures with different body types have different hit locations, presented with their descriptions

ALTERNATIVE HARM

Some attacks do not inflict the usual Wounds or Trauma. These attacks still reduce a target's Stress normally, but if they would inflict Harm, they will cause an alternative effect instead. These alternative effects do not count towards a character's normal maximum number of Harms, but impair the character in a different way. Such effects will be specified where they occur in the quickstart adventure.

in Chapter Ten: Encounters in the **Conan corebook**. The attacker may spend two Momentum on the attack in order to choose which hit location is struck instead.

HIT LOCATION	
Roll	Location
1-2	Head
3-5	Right arm
6-8	Left arm
9-14	Torso
15-17	Right leg
18-20	Left leg

Armor provides different quantities of Soak depending on which location it covers, and some armor may only cover specific locations. For example, a helmet only provides protection to the head.

STRESS AND HARM

When a character takes damage from any source, it is marked off from a particular form of **Stress**. Physical attacks reduce **Vigor**, while mental attacks reduce **Resolve**.

If this attack causes 5 or more damage, or reduces Vigor or Resolve to 0, the character suffers a point of **Harm**. If both events occur, the character suffers two Harms.

DAMAGE TYPES					
Damage Type	Stress	Soak	Harm	Recovery (Self)	Recovery (Other)
Physical (Creature)	Vigor (Brawn + Resistance)	Armor (static) + Cover (dice)	Wound (Agility, Brawn, Coordination)	Resistance	Healing
Physical (Object)	Structure	Armor (static) + Cover (dice)	Break (Any test involving structure)	—	Crafts
Mental	Resolve (Willpower + Discipline)	Courage (static) + Morale (dice)	Trauma (Awareness, Intelligence, Personality, Willpower)	Discipline	Counsel



Harm has different names and effects depending on what caused the Harm. Mental damage inflicts **Trauma**, which increases the Difficulty of Awareness, Intelligence, Personality, and Willpower tests by 1. Physical damage inflicts **Wounds**, which increases the Difficulty of Agility, Brawn, and Coordination tests by 1.

The effects of these Harms are cumulative.

INCAPACITATION AND DEATH

If a character suffers 4 points of Wounds or 4 points of Trauma, the character becomes incapacitated and can only take an action by spending a Fortune point. If the character takes a 5th Wounds point, the character will die. If the character takes a 5th point of Trauma, the character is driven irrevocably mad or rendered comatose, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Minor non-player characters are generally incapacitated or forced to flee if they suffer 1 or 2 points of Harm. At the gamemaster's discretion, significant non-player characters can endure Harm as a player character can.

RECOVERY

A character recovers Stress fully at the end of an action scene, with Vigor and Resolve returning to their full values. This is automatic, requiring only a brief rest.

Harm, on the other hand, must be treated using the appropriate skill (as indicated on the *Damage Types* table). A skill test to treat a patient's Harm can only be made once per day and has a Difficulty equal to the number of Harms (of that type) afflicting the character. On a success, the character treats 1 Harm plus 1 additional Harm of that type for each Momentum spent (Repeatable). Treated Harm doesn't impose any penalties, but it isn't fully healed, and if the character suffers a new Harm of that type, then treated Harms immediately return, as wounds reopen under the strain.

Complete healing takes time, rest, and possibly the attention of a healer.

OTHER COMBAT ACTIONS

BRACE

Weapons with a size category of Unwieldy (described on page 93) are particularly cumbersome and awkward to wield. An attack with an Unwieldy weapon increases the Difficulty of the Melee or Ranged Weapons test by two steps, and suffers Complications for every d20 that rolls 19 or 20, instead of just 20.

Performing the Brace action removes these penalties from future attacks made with the braced weapon. Once Braced, the weapon remains so until it is moved. If the character moves the weapon, then the benefits of being Braced are removed.

CLEAR (MINOR)

As a Minor Action, a character can attempt a skill test to end a current condition (such as Bleeding or Staggered). If the condition has a specific rating (such as Burning 3), the Difficulty of the test is equal to the rating. If not, the test is Challenging (D2).

Physical conditions require a Resistance test and psychological conditions a Discipline test.

DROP ITEM (FREE)


The character drops a single item held in one or both of their hands. The item falls within Reach.

DROP PRONE (FREE)

The character immediately drops to the ground. Ranged attacks targeting a prone character at Medium range or further are made at +1 Difficulty and the prone character also gains +2 Soak for each Effect rolled on cover dice. However, melee attacks and ranged attacks made at Close range gain +1 Momentum. When making a movement action, a prone character moves one fewer zone than normal.

A character cannot drop prone and stand in the same turn.

EXPLOIT (STANDARD)

The character takes additional time and concentration readying his next attack, to find vulnerabilities in his target's defenses. The character nominates a target he is able to perceive, and attempts an Average (D1) Observation test (modified by distance, lighting, and so forth as normal for Observation tests). If this succeeds, the character's first attack before the end of his next turn gains the Piercing 2 quality. If the character wishes, he may spend 1 point of Momentum on this test to add one bonus d20 to the attack's skill test, and +1  to the attack's damage. This is Repeatable, but these bonus d20s count towards the normal limit of three bonus d20s on any skill test. The benefits of this action can only be gained once per round.

READY (STANDARD)

The character may declare that he is waiting for a certain situation or event to occur before performing a Standard Action, which he must choose when he determines the triggering condition. When this triggering situation occurs, the character with the readied action temporarily interrupts the acting character's turn to resolve the readied action. Once the readied action is resolved, the acting character continues his turn as normal. If the triggering situation does not occur before the character's next turn, the readied action is lost.

Characters who take a readied action can still take Minor and Free Actions during their turn as normal.

RECOVER (STANDARD)

The character hunkers down, grits his teeth, and fights through the pain. The character chooses a single type of damage (physical or mental), and attempts an Average (D1) skill test: Resistance for physical or Discipline for mental. On a successful test, the character regains 2 points of Vigor (physical) or Resolve (mental), plus 2 more points for each Momentum spent (Repeatable).

Because the focusing is first and foremost on survival, a character taking the Recover Action re-roll any cover dice rolled until the start of the next turn. Cover is explained on page 121.

SPEAK (FREE)

The character may talk to allies, bellow a war cry, shout an order, threaten a rival, or otherwise converse using a few phrases or short sentences. This action cannot be used to attempt a Command or Persuade test, or to attempt any other skill test that involves speech. For such actions, the Use Skill action (below) should be used instead.

STAND (MINOR)

A prone character may take this action to stand, losing all the benefits and disadvantages of being prone.

USE SKILL (STANDARD)

Any other task not already covered by another action, which requires a Difficulty 1 or higher skill test, takes a Standard Action.

WITHDRAW (STANDARD)

A character attempting to leave an enemy's Reach may be attacked by the enemy using the Retaliate Reaction. To prevent this, a character can use the Withdraw action. A character that chooses to Withdraw moves to any point within Close range which is not within Reach of an enemy, and cannot be the target of a Retaliate Reaction that turn. This is a Movement action.

If the character and his allies within Reach outnumber the enemies within Reach, then he may Withdraw as a Free Action instead of a Standard Action.



MOMENTUM SPENDS		
Momentum Spend	Cost	Effect
Bonus Damage	1 R	A character can increase the damage inflicted by a successful attack regardless of the type of attack. Each Momentum spent adds +1 point of damage (not +1 ).
Break Guard	2	May only be used on an attack or a Defend Reaction. The target loses Guard.
Called Shot	2	The character can choose the hit location struck by a physical attack.
Change Stance	1	The character either goes prone or stands up.
Confidence	1 R	The character gains 1  Morale Soak per Momentum spent (maximum 4 ) until the start of the next turn.
Disarm	2–3	One weapon held by the target is knocked away and falls to the ground within Reach. This costs 2 points of Momentum if the target is holding the weapon in one hand or 3 points of Momentum if the weapon is braced or held in two hands.
Penetration	1 R	The damage inflicted by the current attack ignores an amount of Soak equal to twice the Momentum spent.
Re-roll Damage	1	The player may re-roll any number of damage dice from the character's current attack.
Second Wind	1 I, R	The character chooses a type of damage and recovers 1 point for each Momentum spent in the associated capability.
Secondary Target	2	A second target within Reach of the primary target is also affected by the attack, and suffers half the attack's damage, rounding up (to a random hit location, if physical).
Subdue	1	The attack gains the Nonlethal Quality.
Swift Action	2	The character gains an additional Standard Action, increasing the Difficulty by one step on any skill test that action requires.
Withdraw	1	The character leaves the Reach of an enemy without triggering any Retaliate Reactions.

COMBAT REACTIONS

DEFEND

The character attempts to defend himself from an attack. This Reaction may be used when an enemy attack is attempted, with the character declared as the target of that attack. This turns the attacker's skill test into a Struggle. The skill used by the defender is determined by the type of attack (see the Attack Table, page 121).

PROTECT

The character attempts to defend an ally from an attack. This Reaction may be used when an enemy attack is attempted, with an ally within Reach of the character declared as the target of that attack. This turns the attacker's skill test into a Struggle, with the character testing against a Difficulty of Challenging (D2). If the skill test is failed outright, the attack

hits its original target. If the skill test is successful, then the character becomes the new target, and the Momentum scored is used to determine whether or not the attack was successful, as normal for an Opposed test. The skill used for this Reaction is the same as is used for a Defense Reaction against an attack of that type.

RETALIATE

The character lashes out at a nearby foe. This Reaction may be used when an enemy attempts to make a non-attack skill test while within Reach of the character, or when an enemy attempts to move out of Reach of the character without using the Withdraw action. The character may immediately attempt a melee attack.

Resolve the Retaliate Reaction before the action it is a reaction to; if the character's melee attack is successful, then the character may spend Momentum to increase the Difficulty of the skill test being interrupted (as per the Create Obstacle Momentum spend), counting the movement as a (Do) Terrain test to bypass an Obstacle.

COMBAT MOMENTUM

Momentum is a key tactical resource. When characters generate Momentum in combat they have numerous options available which can help overcome enemies, empower allies, and bolster their own prowess.





The following table provides a number of options available to characters when they generate 1 or more Momentum in combat, but players should remember that they always have the option of creating new uses for Momentum. The gamemaster may also establish scene-specific Momentum spends.

Under Cost, an **R** means the spend is Repeatable, and an **I** means the spend is Immediate. If neither note is present, then the Momentum spend may only be used once per round at most.

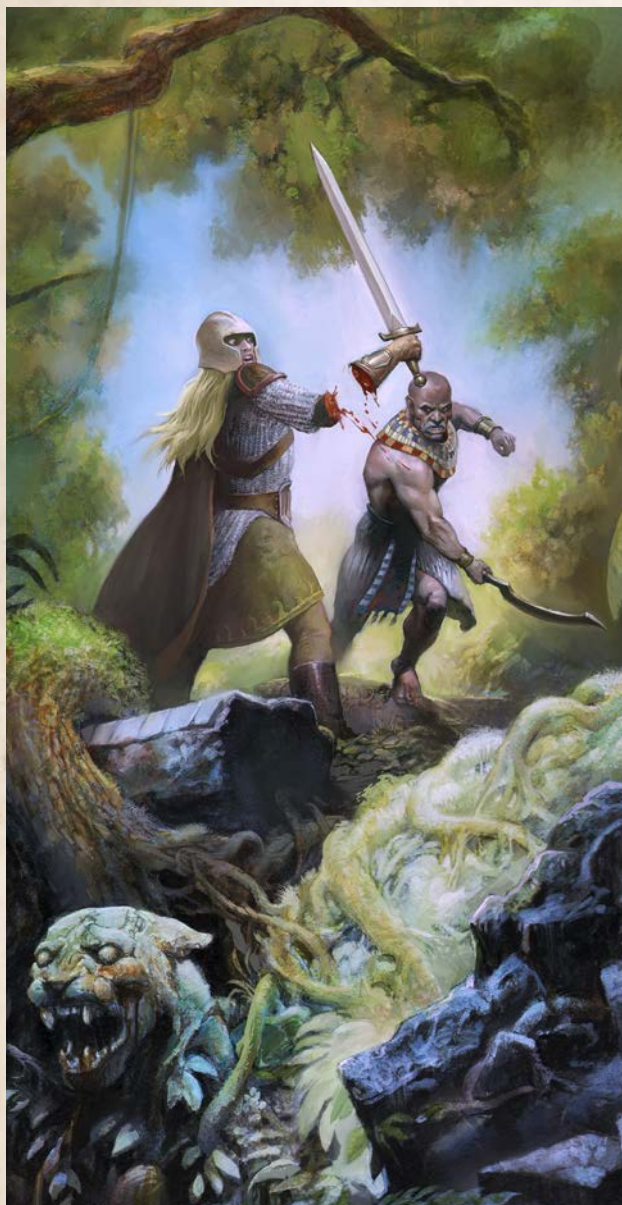


CONDITIONS

There are a number of detrimental conditions that can afflict a character during action scenes. The most common of these are described below.

- **Blind:** The character's vision has been severely damaged. Upon being blinded, a character suffers 3  mental damage, and any skill test reliant on vision (Insight, Observation, Ranged Weapons, etc.) increases in Difficulty by two steps.
- **Burning X:** The target is set alight. This condition lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of Effects rolled on the attack that inflicted it. If no  were rolled, the cause of the burning effect will list a duration. At the end of the target's turn, it suffers X  physical and mental damage (roll once and apply it to both), ignoring Armor Soak. Any physical damage caused by Burning X has the Incendiary attack quality, and Effects rolled increase the number of rounds that the character remains aflame. A character may attempt a Clear Minor Action to remove this effect, while a prone character can spend his Standard Action rolling around, extinguishing the flames, which works as a Clear Action, but reduces the Difficulty by two steps. If the
- character is hit by another Burning attack or effect while already ablaze, the existing status is extended by a number of rounds equal to the number of Effects rolled.
- **Dazed:** All skill tests performed by a Dazed character increase in Difficulty by one step until the Dazed condition ends.
- **Deaf:** The character's hearing has been severely damaged. Upon being deafened, a character suffers 3  Resolve, and any skill test reliant on hearing (Observation, Insight, Command, Persuade, etc.) increases in Difficulty by two steps.
- **Hindered:** The character's movement is hindered, slowing him down. The character cannot attempt any movement-based Free Action. Further, he may only move to within Close range as a Minor Action move, and only to within Medium range as a Standard Action move. Finally, the Difficulty of all terrain tests is increased by one step.
- **Staggered:** A Staggered character can only perform a Standard Action on his turn if he is willing to pay 1 point of Doom. A Staggered character cannot perform a Reaction unless he spends 1 Fortune point in addition to its normal Doom cost.





FORTUNE

Player characters have access to a special type of resource called Fortune points. This reflects the fact that the player characters have drive, ambition, and determination above and beyond most people, and can succeed where others might fail. Whether or not they are viewed as heroes, the player characters are destined for greatness.

A player character begins each session with 3 points of Fortune, and cannot have more than 5 Fortune points at any point. The gamemaster should award Fortune points during a session for reaching milestones, creating entertaining moments at the table, and other in-game accomplishments.

As a general guideline, there should be two or three opportunities for players to gain Fortune points per hour of play.

USING FORTUNE POINTS

Here are just a few of the ways in which Fortune points can be spent during play:

- **Bonus Die:** Add an extra d20 to a skill test, up to the maximum of three additional d20s. The extra die is treated as having automatically rolled a 1.
- **Bonus Action:** Perform an additional Standard Action on your turn.
- **Second Wind:** Recover all lost Vigor or Resolve (choose one).
- **Overcome Weakness:** Ignore effects of Wounds or Trauma (choose one) until the end of the current scene.
- **Story Declaration:** Introduce a fact or add a detail to the current scene. The gamemaster may veto some story declarations, or require multiple Fortune points for particularly large or significant declarations.

Conan, stooping above the body of the Agha, made no move to escape. Shifting his reddened simitar to his left hand, he drew the great half-blade of the Yuetshi. Khosratral Khel was towering above him, his arms lifted like mauls, but as the blade caught the sheen of the sun, the giant gave back suddenly.

— “The Devil in Iron”



RULES REFERENCE



TAKING ACTION

- The gamemaster and player determine the relevant **SKILL** and the **DIFFICULTY**.
- Difficulty determines the number of **SUCCESES** required to perform the action.
- **SKILL EXPERTISE** is added to the base **ATTRIBUTE** to determine the **TARGET NUMBER (TN)**.
- Roll 2d20, counting each die rolled separately.
- Each roll equal to or less than the TN is a success.
- Players can roll additional d20s by generating **DOOM**, spending **MOMENTUM**, or using **RESOURCES**.
- A roll equal to or under the **SKILL FOCUS** is worth two successes.
- Any extra successes become **MOMENTUM**.
- No more than three additional d20s may be rolled for one test.
- Some **TALENTS** allow additional dice, or re-rolls, automatic successes, or generate additional Momentum.
- Results of 20 cause **COMPLICATIONS**. A skill test for an untrained skill becomes a Complication on a 19 or 20.

TEST DIFFICULTY

Name	Successes	Examples
Simple (D0)	0	Opening a slightly stuck door. Researching a widely known subject. Hitting a stationary archery target during practice.
Average (D1)	1	Overcoming a simple lock. Researching a specialist subject. Shooting an enemy at optimal (medium) range.
Challenging (D2)	2	Overcoming a complex lock. Researching obscure information. Shooting an enemy at optimal range in poor light.
Daunting (D3)	3	Overcoming a complex lock in a hurry. Researching basic historical information. Shooting an enemy at long range in poor light
Dire (D4)	4	Overcoming a complex lock in a hurry, without the proper tools. Researching esoteric historical information. Shooting an enemy at long range, in poor light and heavy rain.
Epic (D5)	5	Overcoming a complex lock in a hurry, without the proper tools, in the middle of battle. Researching purposefully obscured historical information. Shooting an enemy at extreme range in poor light and heavy rain.

EXAMPLE USES OF MOMENTUM

Desired Effect	Cost	Conditions
Perform a task in half the normal time	1	
Add +1 damage on a successful attack	1 per +1	Repeatable
Disarm an opponent	2	
Add an additional d20 to a skill test, before the roll is made	1 per d20	Immediate, Repeatable
Increase an opponent's skill test Difficulty by +1	2 per +1	Immediate, Repeatable
Ask the gamemaster a pertinent question about the situation, the characters present, or something else that the player character might be able to discern with that skill test	1 per piece of info	Repeatable

FORTUNE POINTS

Player characters begin with 2 or 3 FORTUNE points each session, which can be spent for any of the following:

- **BONUS DIE:** Add 1d20 to a skill test, up to the maximum. The extra die counts as if it rolled a 1.
- **BONUS ACTION:** Perform an additional Standard Action per turn.
- **SECOND WIND:** Recover all lost Vigor or Resolve (choose one).
- **OVERCOME WEAKNESS:** Ignore effects of Wounds or Trauma (choose one) until the end of the current scene.
- **STORY DECLARATION:** Introduce a fact or add a detail to the current scene, with the gamemaster's approval.

TURN SEQUENCE

A ROUND has no fixed length, and each character's combination of actions is their turn. Once per TURN, a character can make each of the following:

- One STANDARD ACTION
- One MINOR ACTION
- As many FREE ACTIONS as can be reasonably accomplished.

A Standard Action can be exchanged for a Minor Action, and a Minor Action can be exchanged for any number of Free Actions.

Player characters usually act first each round, determining who goes in what order. Each character must complete the actions on their turn before the next can begin. Outside a character's turn, only REACTIONS can be attempted.

Once all the player character can act, non-players can act, unless the gamemaster spends Doom to SEIZE THE INITIATIVE.

The round ends when everyone has taken their turn.

Any shared Momentum is depleted by 1 at the end of the round.



MAKING AN ATTACK

The process for making an attack is as follows:

1. Declare the attack:
 - a. Choose the type of attack being made: MELEE, RANGED, or THREATEN.
 - b. Choose a TARGET for the attack. The target chosen must be a viable type of target for the type of attack.
 - c. Choose a WEAPON (for Melee and Ranged attack) or a METHOD of scaring the target (for a Threaten attack).
 - d. The target chooses whether or not to make a DEFENSE Reaction.
2. The attacker makes a SKILL TEST to attack. This is an AVERAGE (D1) test, or a STRUGGLE if the target is taking a Defense Reaction.
3. If the attacker fails the skill test or is defeated in the Struggle, the attack ends. If the attacker succeeds, then the attacker rolls DAMAGE:
 - a. The attacker rolls a number of COMBAT DICE (🎲) determined by the weapon/attack used and the associated attribute scores. Each 1 or 2 rolled applies that much damage. Each 5 or 6 rolled creates an EFFECT, which applies 1 damage and triggers certain attack qualities, such as Piercing or Vicious. Add up all the damage applied: this is the TOTAL DAMAGE.
 - b. The defender determines their total SOAK at the same time. This is a combination of fixed value (from Armor or Courage) and dice (cover and morale). Roll the 🎲 and add the total rolled (1s, 2s, and Effects) to the fixed value. The result is the character's total Soak.
 - c. Subtract the defender's total Soak from the attacker's total damage. If one or more damage remains, this removes a number of points of STRESS equal to the number of points of remaining damage.
 - d. If there are five or more points of damage remaining, or the defender is reduced to 0 Stress of that type, or the defender had no stress of that type remaining, the defender suffers a point of HARM.






ATTACK

Attack	Skill	Damage Type	Defense Reaction
Melee	Melee	Physical	Parry
Ranged	Ranged Weapons	Physical	Acrobatics
Threaten	Persuade	Mental	Discipline

HIT LOCATION TABLE

Roll	Location
1-2	Head
3-5	Right arm
6-8	Left arm
9-14	Torso
15-17	Right leg
18-20	Left leg

BONUS DAMAGE

Attribute	Bonus
8 or less	None
9	+1 
10 or 11	+2 
12 or 13	+3 
14 or 15	+4 
16 or more	+5 

TYPE OF DAMAGE BONUS

Type of Attack	Associated Attribute
Melee	Brawn
Ranged	Awareness
Threaten	Personality

COMBAT DIE

Roll	Value
1	1
2	2
3,4	0
5,6	1, plus an Effect




SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Action	Effect
FREE ACTIONS	
Adjust	Moving within Close range or in and out of Reach.
Drop Item	Dropping an item held in one or two hands.
Drop Prone	Dropping prone to the ground.
Simple Task	Any small task requiring no skill test or a Simple (Do) test.
Speak	Speaking without using a communication skill.
MINOR ACTIONS	
Clear	Ridding self or an item from an ongoing condition.
Draw Item	Drawing an item or weapon.
Movement	Moving within Medium range.
Regain Guard	Stepping back and defending, requiring a Parry test.
Stand	Standing from prone position.
STANDARD ACTIONS	
Assist	Granting an ally an advantage.
Attack	Attacking a foe.
Brace	Steadying an Unwieldy weapon for an attack.
Exploit	Observing foe to discover a weakness, to exploit immediately.
Pass	Doing nothing.
Ready	Holding another Action to perform later.
Recover	Attempting to recover lost Vigor or Resolve.
Skill Test	Attempting a skill test.
Sprint	Moving to any point in Long range.
Treatment	Treating an ally within Reach to recover Vigor or Resolve.
Withdraw	Withdrawing to Close range to avoid a Retaliate Action.
REACTIONS	
Defend	Parrying, blocking, or otherwise avoiding an attack.
Protect	Defending an ally from an attack.
Retaliate	Attacking a nearby foe when an opportunity is presented.

DAMAGE TYPES

Damage Type	Stress	Soak	Harm	Recovery (Self)	Recovery (Other)
Physical (Creature)	Vigor (Brawn + Resistance)	Armor (static) + Cover (dice)	Wound (Agility, Brawn, Coordination)	Resistance	Healing
Physical (Object)	Structure	Armor (static) + Cover (dice)	Break (Any test involving structure)	—	Crafts
Mental	Resolve (Willpower + Discipline)	Courage (static) + Morale (dice)	Trauma (Awareness, Intelligence, Personality, Willpower)	Discipline	Counsel

MOMENTUM SPENDS

Momentum	Cost	Effect
Bonus Damage	1 R	Each Momentum spent adds +1 to damage (not +1 ) on a successful attack, regardless of the attack type.
Break Guard	2	May only be used on an attack or a Defend Reaction. The target loses Guard.
Called Shot	2	The character can choose the hit location struck by a physical attack.
Change Stance	1	The character either goes prone or stands up.
Confidence	1 R	The character gains 1  Morale Soak per Momentum spent (maximum 4 ) until the start of the next turn.
Disarm	2-3	One weapon held by the target is knocked away and falls to the ground within Reach. This costs 2 points of Momentum if the target is holding the weapon in one hand or 3 points of Momentum if the weapon is braced or held in two hands.
Penetration	1 R	The damage inflicted by the current attack ignores an amount of Soak equal to twice the Momentum spent.
Re-roll Damage	1	The player may re-roll any number of damage dice from the character's current attack.
Second Wind	1I,R	The character chooses a type of damage and recovers 1 point for each Momentum spent in the associated capability.
Secondary Target	2	A second target within Reach suffers half an attack's damage (rounding up). A physical attack hits a random hit location.
Subdue	1	The attack gains the Nonlethal Quality.
Swift Action	2	The character gains an additional Standard Action, increasing the Difficulty by one step on any skill test that action requires.
Withdraw	1	The character leaves the Reach of an enemy without triggering any Retaliate Reactions.

DISTANCES

- **REACH:** Within arm's length. Characters can move within Reach of a target as part of any movement action that ends in the same zone as the target. Moving out of an enemy's Reach leaves characters open to the Retaliate Reaction unless they take a Withdraw Action.
- **CLOSE RANGE:** The character's current zone. Moving within Close range is a Free Action.
- **MEDIUM RANGE:** Any zone adjacent to the character's current zone. Moving to a point within Medium range is a Minor Action.
- **LONG RANGE :** Any point two zones away from the character's current zone. Moving to a point within Long range is a Standard Action, but the Difficulty of all tests increases by one step until the start of the next turn.
- **EXTREME RANGE:** Any point three or more zones away from the character's current zone. A character cannot move to Extreme range in a single action.





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PRIMARY ATTACKS

Ranged		Melee		Presence	
BONUS DAMAGE		Damage		Loads	
NAME	Range/Reach	Grip	Size	Damage	Loads
Qualities					
NAME	Range/Reach	Grip	Size	Damage	Loads
Qualities					

STRESS & HARMS

COURAGE		Vigor	
ARMOR SOAK			
WOUNDS			
HEAD	1-2	L. ARM	6-8
TORSO	9-14	R. LEG	15-17
L. ARM	3-5	L. LEG	18-20
MENTAL			
Resolve			
TRAUMA			

BELONGINGS

GOLD	
UPKEEP	

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CHARACTER NAME

BACKGROUND

Age & Gender		Homeland	
Caste	_____	Trait	_____
Archetype	_____	Nature	_____
Education	_____	War Story	_____
Appearance	_____		
Personality	_____		
Languages	_____		

EXPERIENCE

Fortune Points	_____	Renown	_____	Standing	_____	Total	_____	Spent	_____
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TALENTS

HOMELAND	Effect	Skill	_____
CASTE	Effect	Skill	_____
CASTE	Effect	Skill	_____
BLOODLINE	Effect	Skill	_____
EDUCATION	Effect	Skill	_____
NATURE	Effect	Skill	_____
ARCHETYPE	Effect	Skill	Rank
OTHER	Effect	Skill	Rank
OTHER	Effect	Skill	Rank

ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS

AGILITY		Exp	Foc	TN
Skill	Acrobatics			
	Melee			
	Stealth			
AWARENESS		Exp	Foc	TN
Skill	Insight			
	Observation			
	Survival			
	Thievery			
BRAWN		Exp	Foc	TN
Skill	Athletics			
	Resistance			
COORDINATION		Exp	Foc	TN
Skill	Parry			
	Ranged Weapons			
	Sailing			
INTELLIGENCE		Exp	Foc	TN
Skill	Alchemy			
	Craft			
	Healing			
	Linguistics			
	Lore			
	Warfare			
PERSONALITY		Exp	Foc	TN
Skill	Animal Handling			
	Command			
	Counsel			
	Persuade			
	Society			
WILLPOWER		Exp	Foc	TN
Skill	Discipline			
	Sorcery			

SPELLS

NAME
Difficulty
Duration
Cost to Learn/Cast
Effect

NAME
Difficulty
Duration
Cost to Learn/Cast
Effect

NAME
Difficulty
Duration
Cost to Learn/Cast
Effect

NAME
Difficulty
Duration
Cost to Learn/Cast
Effect

NAME
Difficulty
Duration
Cost to Learn/Cast
Effect

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Difficulty
Duration
Cost to Learn/Cast
Effect

NAME
Difficulty
Duration
Cost to Learn/Cast
Effect

NAME
Difficulty
Duration
Cost to Learn/Cast
Effect