

# Travel & threads for DragonQuest

by Paul Montgomery Crabaugh

It is very easy to work up enthusiasm for SPI's *DragonQuest*. Although by no means the most complete fantasy role-playing game available, it is probably the best in its \$10 price range. Combined with the usual SPI-quality rules, it is excellent, and promises to become more so as supplements become available.

However, until the supplements are actually written, players and referees will find a need to fill in some of the gaps — like overhand movement. The other aspects of an adventuring life are covered, including the chance of encounters, the effects of exhaustion, and the need for supplies. The speed the characters can travel at is left open, which, as you may have guessed, is the subject of this article.

First, the assumptions. Scale is assumed to be 10 miles to the hex. Movement is defined in terms of number of hours required to cross a hex. The players have the choice of moving at a given rate of exercise (See Case 82.9 in the rules), and are either on mounted on horses. If on horses, the players suffer fatigue loss at one level less than they are moving at a given horses suffer full effects); for example, if a party pushes forward at a Hard pace, the characters become fatigued at the Medium rate, while their mounts suffer the Hard rate. Sea movement is not covered — that's another subject.

Two types of terrain exist: features which fill a hex completely, and those which follow the hexsides. Hex-filling features are: Clear Terrain (including Field and Plain), Woods, Hazardous Terrain (Cavern, Crypt, Rough, Ruin and Waste), Mountain, Volcano, and Marsh.

**Movement Table**

Terrain	Light	Med.	Hard	Stren.	Lost**
Clear	4/2	3/1½	2/1	1/½	10
Woods	5/4	4/3	3/2	2/1	8
Hazardous	6/4	5/3	4/2	3/1	9
Mountain (1)	10+1/p	8+1/p	6+1/p	4+1/10+1	5
Volcano (2)	12+1/p	10+1/p	8+1/p	6+1/14+1	6
Marsh	5/5	4/4	3/3	2/2	7
Stream (3)	+½/+1	+½/+1	+½/+1	+½/+1	na
River (3)	+1/+2	+1/+2	+1/+2	+1/+2	na
Slope* (3)	+2/+2	+2/+2	+2/+2	+2/+2	na

## Explanations

(1)— Visible in adjacent hex (normally, to map a hex, a party must actually move into it).

(2) — Visible 2 hexes away.

(3) — Hex-side feature; all others are hex-filling.

\* — Cast is for movement up the slope only, and is in hours, not dice; an exception to the usual rule for hex-side features.

\*\*— In each hex, roll this number or greater to become lost; subtract one for each level of Ranger skill for that terrain type (but an unmodified 10 is always lost). When a party is lost, throw a 6-sided die to determine which adjacent hex it will move into, paying double the usual entry cost.

p— Prohibited

na— Not applicable.

f/m— Hours to cross, foot/mounted

f+x/m+y — Foot crosses in f+(x dice) hours, mounted in m+(y dice) hours.

+x/+y— Additional penalty to cross hex-side: x dice hours for foot, y dice for mounted; however, see \* above.

## 'Minimum clothing'

One of the reasons for my fascination with *DragonQuest* is that the combat system provides encouragement for swords and sorcery heroes in the classic style. In most systems,

armor is almost exclusively a benefit, so that characters walk (or trundle) into battle surrounded by their very own Sherman tank. This can be lethal in *DQ*, where armor cuts agility down twice: once for being armor and once for being encumbering. You may end up *almost* invulnerable — but with your action points reduced to where you can only get in one blow to your opponent's three or more.

Going without armor carries its own hazards, but at least it is plausible to follow the lead of underclothed heroes such as Conan, John Carter, Red Sonya and Rifkind.

However, some shopping for the latest styles quickly reveals that the *DQ* shopping list caters to fairly ordinary street clothes — not tuxedos and formal gowns, but moderately heavy clothing that can, under the proper circumstances, cost an action point or two that might be needed someday.

Therefore, herewith is provided a list of "minimum clothing": items of apparel sufficient to avoid violations of any indecent-exposure laws, but much lighter than regular clothing (and, incidentally, more in line with most of the 25mm miniature figures available).

Harness: made of leather, worn by either sex, weighs 2 pounds, costs 8 SP; equivalent to a weapon belt. Favored by John Carter and (in a metallic version) Red Sonya.

Ribbons: female option only; a collection of barely adequate silk ribbons and such; weighs 1 pound, costs 1 SP. Worn by Elinore of Montagar.

Body Stocking: either sex, one pound, 4 SP. Worn by Rifkind of the Asheera, Oscar Gordon and the Empress of Twenty Universes.

Loincloth: male option only, one pound 1 CF. Worn by Tarzan of the Apes, Conan of Cimmeria and others.

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# New skill for DragonQuest

# The versatile Magician

by Jon Mattson

The Magician in DragonQuest is a jack-of-all-trades in the field of magic. As such, he has a much greater variety of spells than the average adept of a specific college, but he never achieves the great power with each spell that a true wizard does. He can, of course, use all three types of minor magic (see Case 4.2).

A Magician must have a Magic Aptitude rating which is at least average (15). He is considered to be Neutrally aligned to all colleges of magic, and he will never be accepted into any of these colleges.

Aside from the exceptions noted below, a Magician is subject to all of the restrictions of any other spellcaster. A Magician can never achieve a rank of above 5 with any spell except *Detect Aura*; thus, he will never know more spells (other than *Detect Aura*) than are indicated by his Magic Aptitude score (see Case 34.6). He may increase his rank with rituals and talent magic normally, however.

1. A Magician gains several basic rituals and spells at rank 0.

At rank 0, a Magician is able to use the four basic rituals of magic; i.e., the Ritual Spells of Preparation, Purification, Investment, and Warding (see Case 32). In addition, he is able to learn one General Knowledge Counterspell of any college (again, the exact spell is his choice). Both of these spells are at rank 1 and may be increased through normal experience point expenditure.

2. At rank 1, a Magician gains the *Talent Magic spell, Detect Aura*.

This is the same spell that members of the College of Naming Incantations receive (see Case 39.3). It is the one spell that a Magician can increase beyond rank of 5, and he automatically has rank of 1 with it to start with.

3. A Magician gains additional spells as he increases in rank.

For each rank above 0, the Magician gains one General Knowledge spell or one General or Special Knowledge Counterspell of his choice from any college he wishes. He may not learn additional rituals in this manner. If he is of rank 6 or higher, he may instead choose a Special Knowledge spell of any college he wishes, subject to the following restrictions:

A Magician may never possess more Special Knowledge spells (including Counterspells) than General Knowledge spells.

A Magician may never learn Special Knowledge spells of a college which is oppositely aligned to any from which he has already learned other Special Knowledge spells. For purposes of this determination, the following colleges are considered to be oppositely aligned (in addition to those listed in case 34.1): Air Magics and Earth Magics; Fire Magics and Water Magics; Celestial Star Mages and Celestial Dark Mages.

These additional spells may be increased in rank through normal experience point expenditure, but can never be increased beyond rank of 5 (see Case 87.4).

4. A Magician must spend (100 x rank) Silver Pennies per year on miscellaneous material components for spell research.

Failure to do this decreases the Magician's rank with all spells by two until the fee is paid. Also, if the Magician acquires new spells (increases his own rank), he will have to learn them normally (taking a number of weeks equal to the ordinal number of the spell) instead of getting them automatically.

Note: A Magician who is also an Alchemist or an Astrologer may add 10% of the experience he uses to increase his Magician rank into one of these two classes for free, if he progresses in the Magician skill and the other skill simultaneously (up to two skills may be practiced at once; see Case 87.5).

## Experience Point Cost Chart Magician skill

Rank	Pts.	Rank	Pts.
0	1000	6	4000
1	500	7	5000
2	1000	8	7000
3	1500	9	10000
4	2000	10 <sup>1</sup>	15000
5	3000	<sup>1</sup> — And each additional rank beyond 10th	

## Additional note on magic weapons

Using the Ritual of Investment, adepts in *DragonQuest* are able to form certain "charged" magic items such as rings and wands. However, the only way to create a weapon which strikes more effectively in combat due to its magical nature is by using a Ritual of Enchantment, which is only available to members of the College of Ensorescements and Enchantments. If the rules suggested below are used, any adept (or Magician, if the first part of this article is employed) can create magical weapons using the Ritual of Investment.

An adept may create a weapon which is temporarily magical by performing the Ritual of Investment on it normally, but casting no spell into it. Instead, he expends two fatigue points for each "plus 1" the weapon will have. Each such plus adds 3% to the base chance of hitting, effectively increasing the wielder's rank with the weapon by 1, and adding one to the damage done if a hit is scored. Thus, a *sword plus 3* would add 9% to the chance of hitting and do an extra 3 points of damage when it scored a hit. A weapon can never be given more pluses than the adept's rank with the Ritual. Such a weapon will have a number of charges equal to the adept's rank with the Ritual of Investment (see Case 32.3), and each successful hit on an opponent expends one charge. Anyone can use the weapon's magical properties once it is enchanted in this manner, but when it has expended all charges, it will revert back to a normal weapon.

A weapon can be made permanently magical by following the above procedure but expending one Magic Aptitude point per "plus" instead of two fatigue points. These specific MA points are lost *permanently*, since the adept is pouring his very life energy into the enchantment, but they may be regained through normal experience point expenditure. A permanent magical weapon has no charges, of course, and expends none, but it can only be enchanted up to an amount equal to one-half of the adept's rank with the Ritual of Investment, rounded down; i.e., an adept with rank of 5 in the Ritual of Investment could only enchant a plus 1 weapon or plus 2 weapon permanently.

Note that weapons can be given additional "charged" magical spells in the usual manner, even if they are already enchanted as described above. Thus, it is possible to have, say, a plus 2 (permanent) sword with a Spell of Creating Starsword (4 charges) in it. Also note that weapons can still be enchanted normally with a Ritual of Enchantment; these suggestions do not change that, they merely expand upon it.

# The thrill of the hunt

## Dragonquest™ rules for finding 'fresh' food

by Paul Montgomery Crabaugh

A curious feature — or lack of feature — in most fantasy role-playing games is the apparent necessity for players in the wilderness to carry every gram of food they might need on an expedition. The idea of hunting and gathering food seems completely beyond the characters; but unless a random encounter turns up something edible, a shortfall of rations is potentially catastrophic — and even then, who would want to hunt for food in an environment where the only game consists of creatures important enough and formidable enough to put on an encounter chart? Mammoth-hunting might have been a way for some early humans to make a living, but many more of them made an even better dying at it.

Being determined to correct this oversight, and running the *DragonQuest*™ game more than others at the moment, I devised hunting rules for parties in the wilds. A new skill — Hunting (are you surprised?) — turned out to be necessary.

Hunting skill is the ability to locate and dispatch from this mortal coil various small, lovable, furry animals who are tasty, as well as to locate edible trees and reasonably unpolluted water. All characters start with the skill at Rank 0. The experience costs for the skill are:

Level	0	1	2	3	4
Cost	0	200	50	100	150
5	6	7	8	9	10
200	300	400	500	750	1000

The way it works is that each day, one or more members of the party is/are designated as the hunters for the day. (Don't everybody queue up at once.) The catch is that each hunter is assumed to operate independently during the day (small game is frightened away by large parties), and so encountered creatures may ambush individual hunters rather than the main party, there being an even chance for each "detachment," including the main body, to be the target of a random encounter.

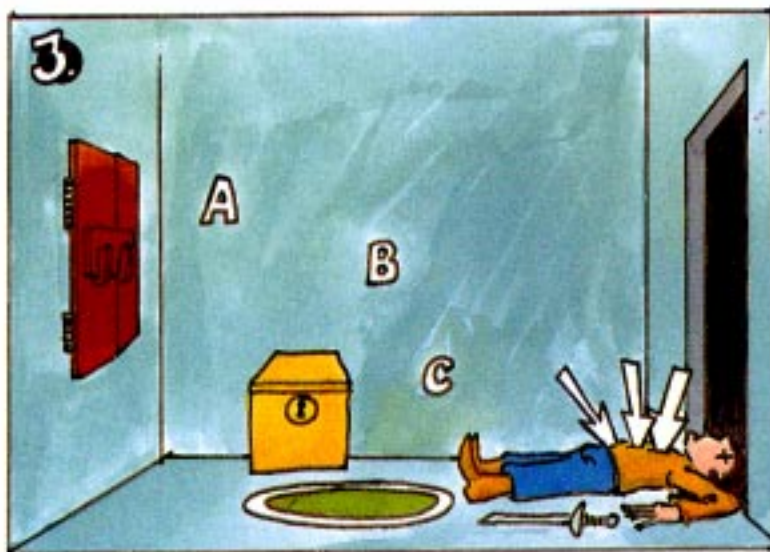
The hunter spends a certain number of hours each day hunting. The party is slowed to that extent (unless they don't mind losing whomever is doing the hunting — but he can't bring the food back to

**STOP!** Don't read any farther unless you have already taken the "What's New?" quiz on p.90-91. The words will be easier to read if you hold the page up to a mirror.

① Obviously not.  
 ② A: He's wearing a red coat. B: The dagger blade is stained steel. C: He's chewing gum. D: His shirt is purple. E: He's wearing an Archaic High School ring.  
 ③ What to them.  
 ④ Knock your drink into the GM's lap; spout your protest; run into the kitchen for some paper towels; and slip out the back door.

① You should wear the hat of the servant — not the servant itself. (Sure it's hard to find what you're going to make it safe for someone to grab his treasure.)  
 ② One chop with the sword should do it for the falling; however, use a little together and usually reduce an axe.

③ Apparently, you didn't spot the hidden death trap in time.



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camp if he doesn't know where the camp is). It is possible to spend "zero" hours hunting and still catch something; this represents making the best traveling time possible while still checking out potential targets along the way — and getting lucky.

At the end of the day, add up the modifiers from the following chart, add the roll of 1d10, divide by 10, and subtract 1. The result, rounded off to the nearest whole number, is the number of personation-days obtained by the day's hunting efforts.

Fresh food can be kept for up to three days before it becomes inedible. The number of party members this food will feed is a function, to some extent, of who and what those members are. A giant consumes 3 human-sized rations per day, and even the smallest of the humanoids in the group consumes at least one ration a day.

Condition	Modifier
Armed with a missile weapon	Rank with the weapon
Perception	Perception
Ranger skill (all types)	Rank
Ranger in correct terrain	2 × Rank
Per hour of hunting	+2
In desert (or other waste)	-20

Condition	Modifier
In forest/swamp (or other life-dense)	+10
Hunting skill	5 × Rank

Finding water is easier than finding food, for several reasons, not the least of which is the self-fulfilling prophecy that it simply *is* easier to find. Water doesn't hide; sources of water are much larger than the typical game animal; and one source will suffice for the entire party to slake its thirst. Searching for water occurs during the same time as normal hunting. Use the table above to determine some of the appropriate modifiers, but don't use the desert and forest/swamp modifiers or the missile-weapon modifier. For the effects of varying terrain on the chance of finding water, use the modifiers below:

Terrain	Modifier
Mapped source of water in this hex	+90
Forest	+30
Desert	-30
Swamp	-10
Other	+15

The resulting number (using the same process described above for hunting) is the percentage chance of finding a water source during the day.

Good eating, and remember: The bears are using the same rules.

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# Enhancing the enchanter

## Changes and additions to DRAGONQUEST™ rules

by Craig Barrett

Of the twelve initial Magical Colleges in the DRAGONQUEST™ game system, the College of Ensoelments and Enchantments is my favorite. So it makes me just a bit unhappy to realize that it's also the weakest of the twelve. In the interest of fair play — and not just because one of my favorite Primary Characters is an Enchanter — this article proposes a few minor changes, as well as a couple of major ones, in the DRAGONQUEST magic rules that will rectify this state of affairs.

Is the case on behalf of Enchanters overstated? Consider that while spells 36.T-1, 38.T-1, and 46.T-1 are all called "Witch-sight," the Enchanter's version of that Talent is the least powerful of the three, and it is the only Talent available to Enchanters. And that 36.G-4, "Spell of Walking Unseen," is less potent than its namesakes, 43.G-5, 44.G-9, and 46.G-3. And that Enchanters have only a single spell that in and of itself inflicts damage. "Poison Dust" (36.Q-4) can potentially cause damage, but it's a ritual, it's exorbitantly expensive for low-Ranked Adepts, and it isn't all that useful. These are just a few examples. Only Namers are as weak as Enchanters, and they have some compensating advantages.

All of which are marvelous, if prejudiced, excuses for this article.

Actually, the changes proposed here aren't all that radical. With two exceptions, they're all either clarifications or extrapolations already implied by the game rules themselves or by supplemental materials. Here goes:

### "Concentration" spells

The question arises: Can an Adept invest (by Rule 32.3) a spell into an object when the duration of that spell is governed by the concentration of the Adept? Yes, he can, because in the supplement *The Palace of Ontoncle* (page 4) the character Loklar has a medallion invested with 42.S-4, "Web of Fire," a spell that has a duration of "Concentration." So, Enchanters can invest spells 36.G-7, "Mass Charming," and 36.S-5, "Web of Entanglement." And, logically, this advantage has to be extended to members of the other Colleges as well. But Enchanters do realize some benefit.

As to what the duration of such spells should be (separated as they are from the actual concentration of the Adept), where maximums are given, as in "Web," the maximum duration applies and is subject to deliberate reduction by the Adept himself. Where no maximums are given — 14 separate spells in the first 12 Colleges fall into this category — the maximum can be deter-

mined by comparing the spell with other, similar spells for which a maximum duration is given. Thus, 36.G-7, "Mass Charming," should be compared to 36.G-1 and 39.S-1, "Spell of Charming." Both of the latter spells have a multiple of one hour, and are targeted at a single entity. "Mass Charming" can be targeted at several entities, so it's reasonable to assume that its duration as an invested spell should be relatively shorter, perhaps "½ hour + ½ hour per Rank." In any case, the duration should be specified at the time of investment, not at the time of use, with the Gamemaster's judgment final.

### Investing rules, 32.3 and 84.2-84.5

On the subject of investment, here's another extrapolation: The spells listed under Rules 32.3 and 84.2-84.5 can, generally, be invested in objects, using 32.3, just like any other spells (see 84.1). "Deathcurse," listed under 84.4, isn't covered by this rule, since the dying Adept isn't going to live long enough to go through an Investment Ritual. (See Rule 75, paragraph 20 for how a Deathcurse should be used, which in ultimate effect isn't so different from investment.) On the other hand, "Geas" (84.2) merely needs a change in its Range qualification in order to work as an invested spell. Here, it's the person rather than the caster who must be within communicating distance of the object in which the geas has been invested, and must be clearly able to see it. The geas, still couched in 25 words or less, is considered to communicate itself to the person through a kind of extra-sensory perception, which the person hears as audible words. The geas will have been invested with a number of charges equal to the Adept's Rank with the Investment Ritual (32.3), and each person who is "spoken to" by the geas in this fashion will exhaust one charge. When all the charges are exhausted, the invested object no longer contains the geas.

This kind of modification should be used on all aspects of all spells covered under this rule.

### "Charge" control

A necessary condition of allowing the investing of Rule 84 spells is that Adepts of all the Colleges must have absolute control over the number of spell-charges they invest in an object. An Adept can't exceed the limitations of Rule 32.3, paragraph 3; however, he can invest as few charges as he pleases, because if investing a major curse (84.4) into an object is going to cost him a decrease in his Endurance value for each

charge he invests, he's going to want to control *exactly* how many charges he's investing. This ability is part of the Investment Ritual (32.3) and not something that has to be separately learned.

### Activation instructions

Activation instructions are a vital part of investment. It's fairly clear from Rules 32.3 and 32.4 that two different sorts of activation instructions are possible, one for spells and one for Wards. Instructions for spells imply deliberate intent on the part of the person who activates the spell. Instructions for Wards imply lack of intent on the part of the person who activates the Ward. In practice, however, the distinctions tend to get a little blurred. For example, an Enchanter might protect his strongbox by investing it with 36.G-8, "Spell of Invisibility," with the instruction to activate if someone approaches within five feet unless that person utters a special word that prevents activation. The spell is still activated by the deliberate action of a person who approaches, but now possesses the characteristics of a Ward, in that the person did not intend to activate the spell.

Spell instructions are less detailed than Ward instructions. A Ward might be set to activate only when a particular person enters or exits, but a spell can never be so specifically personalized. Exactly how tricky an Adept can get with his spell instructions depends on his Investment Ritual Rank and on the GM's discretion. The GM might require a Rank of 5 for an Enchanter who wants to invest 36.S-7, "Enhance Enchantment," but who also wants to wait until the moment of activation before he decides which characteristic the spell will enhance. But, the desire to activate with a single whisper or gesture might be allowed at Rank 2.

Ward instructions require a much lower Rank in order to be sophisticated. Primarily, Rank will extend sophistication rather than enhance it. For example, an Adept who creates a Ward might be allowed to specify that its effect be delayed for 1 minute per Rank of the Adept. Or, a Ward might be restricted from attacking specified individuals (1 person per Rank of the Adept), but this instruction would endure only one hour per Rank and then the Ward would attack anyone who triggered it.

GMs ought to allow for great flexibility when players set up activation instructions. Remember, this is a kind of "verbal shorthand" in which a single word or gesture will mean just exactly what the Adept wants it to mean.

### Anti-magic charms

In *The Palace of Ontoncle*, on page 20, three rings are described, each magically endowed as a charm against spells of the College of Fire Magics. Since counterspells come in pairs (Rule 31.3), each ring must have two spells in it. A single ring adds +5 to the Magic Resistance of whoever is wearing it, and an individual can benefit from the protection of only one ring at a time. But no limit is given on the number of times a ring can protect its wearer, so "spell charges" cannot be involved.

What are these rings, and who can control them? Obviously, each ring is a kind of amulet, similar in nature to the amulets created by the "Special Alchemy" Talent (46.T-3). As to who created them, the answer to this question leads to another rule extrapolation, added to Rule 32, "Special Magical Preparations":

**[32.5] An Adept of any College can create an amulet against the magic of his own College by investing both of his College's counterspells into a single object.**

A full 10-hour Preparation Ritual must precede two full 10-hour Investment Rituals (one for each counterspell) for a total of 30 hours expended, with one of the rituals performed on each of three successive days. The result is a permanent charm in the form of a ring that adds to the wearer's Magic Resistance against the spells of the Adept's College a number of points equal to

the Adept's Rank in whichever counterspell of his College his Rank is lowest in, providing the Adept has at least an equal Rank with the Investment Ritual. As with the *Ontoncle* rings, the effects of wearing more than one ring are *not* cumulative. A character can benefit from the protection of only one such ring at a time — from the strongest, if the other rings protect against the same College, or from the first one put on, if any of them protect against different Colleges. (See Rule 31.3, paragraph 7.) A ring-amulet is effective if worn on a chain instead of on a finger, but not if carried in a pouch.

Cost: The rings in *Ontoncle* are worth 2,000 Silver Pennies (SPs), but a large portion of that value would be for the rubies with which they are adorned. The rubies, by the way, would have no effect on the use of the rings, the coincidence of their color and their anti-fire effects simply a conceit of their creator or a convenient means of identifying them. A bare ring would weigh about two ounces (maximum weight for a ring), would have a high platinum content, and would cost about 50 SPs — part of the price would be due to craftsmanship and merchant's mark-up. On each of the three days of the ritual, the Adept would have to expend material worth 30 SPs x the ring's ultimate Rank. A ring-amulet offering +5 protection would therefore cost 50 + 450, SPs, or 500 SPs all told.

Adepts of the College of Naming Incanta-

tions can create ring-amulets against the magic of any College, and are unique in this respect.

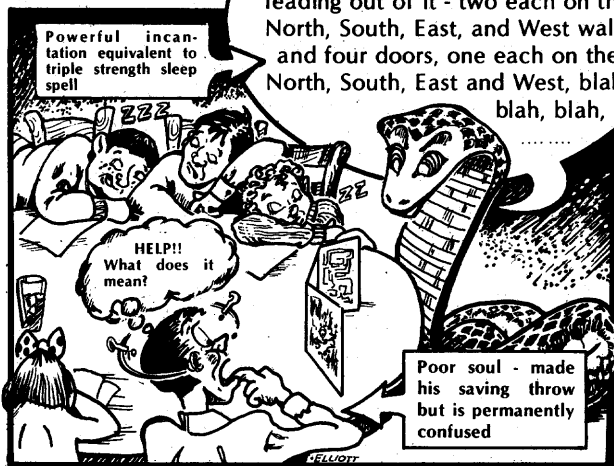
GMs should treat this formula as Special Knowledge. It is not properly speaking a ritual of its own, and it has no Experience Multiple.

### Invest a ritual?

Ritual Spell Preparation (Rule 32.1) is a very valuable piece of Special Knowledge, but its use is somewhat restricted. Can it be made more flexible? Yes: Any Adept with Rank 10+ in Investment Ritual (32.3), or any Enchanter with Rank 5+ in Investment Ritual and Rank 5+ in 36.S-7, "Enhance Enchantment," can invest Ritual Spell Preparation into an object as if the ritual itself were a spell.

The procedure requires two Adepts of appropriate Ranks and compatible Colleges working together. While one is performing the Ritual of Preparation, the other performs the Ritual of Investment in an adjoining room, compartment or area. The moment both rituals are complete — and they must be completed within one minute of each other — one "charge" of Spell Preparation is invested in a given object. This "charge" will contain up to +30 Base Chance points (3 for each hour spent in the combined ritual, up to a maximum of 10 hours), and will be retained in that object for up to 10 days at full potency, at which time the charge will dissipate instantly.

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In effect, the object has been turned into a "storage battery" so that the Ritual Preparation can be executed ahead of time and its effects saved for when they're needed. The process is similar to that used by the character Aestus in the DRAGONQUEST supplement *The Blade of Allectus* (page 8) to store magical energies equivalent to 30 Fatigue points in his oaken-wood staff. And just as that staff is of use only to Aestus, so this object is of use only to the person the two Adepts designate at the time of preparation, which can be one of the two of them or someone else entirely, so long as the designated person was in the presence of one Adept or the other during the entire combined ritual.

When the "charge" is activated by the designated person, the points are applied to the Base Chance of any spell he casts in the same pulse. (See Rule 33, paragraph 2: When the character uses a full pulse in Pass Action to prepare a spell, part of the preparation is the activation of this "storage battery," so that in the next pulse both the spell and the "storage battery" will operate together. Activation instructions for the "battery" must therefore be very simple.)

In the process of the rituals, the two Adepts will each expend 100 SPs worth of non-recoverable materials.

GMs should treat this procedure as slightly less well-known than the Investment Ritual (32.3); that is, Adepts will be in a position to learn that this can be done when they reach about Rank 5 in that ritual.

All the modifications and extrapolations proposed so far have been of benefit to all Adepts, not just to Enchanters. But Enchanters, logically enough, have a special concern with enchantment (Rule 36), so it's reasonable to give them a few special advantages in the area of enchantments and investments, such as these:

### Investing cold iron

For example, can cold iron ever be used as an *object* of investment, providing it isn't touched during the Investment Ritual? Read Rule 29.1 carefully (italics by the author): "A character may never *prepare* a spell or engage in ritual magic while in *physical contact* with cold iron. . . . The amount of cold iron that will *prevent an Adept from using his powers* is relatively small, but not minute. . . . The Adept must be *in direct contact* with cold iron for this stricture to apply. . . . An Adept cannot *prepare a spell, use the special talents* of his College, or *perform Ritual Magic while wearing armor* made of cold iron or *holding weapons or tools* made of cold iron. . . ." And finally, the second-to-last sentence of the rule: "A character is not protected from the effects of magic by wearing cold iron."

The intent of the designers is clear: Cold iron inhibits magic, to keep it from arising from its source (the Adept), but does not affect magic once it has arisen! Thus, the spells for enchanting weapons and the spells

for enchanting armor can be used to enchant cold-iron weapons and armor, not just *neutralized* cold iron. But also remember that Rule 56.3 requires a mechanic to invest silver a trap before it can be invested. Cold iron can accept the *effects* of an enchantment; however, when it comes to being the "surrogate source" of a spell, the non-neutralized cold iron even inhibits itself. So, under normal circumstances cold iron cannot be invested with a spell unless it is first neutralized.

Two pieces of evidence have yet to be heard, though: Rule 29.1 states that "a few ounces" of cold iron is enough to inhibit all but racial Talent Magic; and, under "Special Alchemy," 46.T-3, the sixth amulet is "of Iron." Obviously, Adepts of the College of Black Magics can use cold iron in working magic. And if a member of one of the other Colleges can do that, then Enchanters, with their special affinity for enchantment, ought to be able to do that as well.

So let's be generous and assume that "a few ounces" is four ounces, and that some quantity less than four ounces — say, three ounces or less — not only won't inhibit magic but also can itself be used for magic, provided one has the right formula.

The Adepts of Black Magic have one formula; the Enchanters have another one, which goes like this: An Enchanter first invests the spell "Enhance Enchantment" (36.S-7) into a non-metallic item — perhaps a piece of cloth. An object made of (non-neutralized) cold iron is then rested on the cloth while the Enchanter performs a full 10-hour Investment Ritual, using the spell of his choice and with no penalty because of the cold iron. During the ritual, one charge of "Enhance Enchantment" is activated. If the ritual succeeds, the cold-iron object is invested with the chosen spell at -20 to the Base Chance but +1 to the Base Chance per Rank of the "Enhance Enchantment" spell.

The procedure is a little lengthy, but can be very rewarding, particularly since only one "Enhance Enchantment" charge was used and the enchanted cloth can be employed at once for another cold-iron object. This formula has no cost other than that of the non-metallic and cold-iron objects used. GMs should treat this formula as moderately restricted. The knowledge that Enchanters can do this at all should be highly scarce among non-Enchanters.

Note: Spells can be invested in neutralized cold iron. Except for the case of Rule 56.3, however, the Cast Chance is penalized as described in Rule 29.1, numbered section #3.

### The wyvern-horn amulet

Have you ever wanted to be able to detect the presence of magic before you stumble into it? An Enchanter, using this formula, can make it possible to do just that. And this formula doesn't break any of the DRAGONQUEST rules, though it may bend one or two of them.

The formula is based on the fact that

while a wyvern (see the rulebook, page 115) doesn't know any magic, it can obtain magical items and so must have some kind of affinity for, or attraction to, magic. Neither a picture nor a detailed description of the wyvern is offered, which makes it possible to suppose that the wyvern has a small, backward-curving horn growing near the tip of its snout. It's in this horn that the wyvern's affinity for magic is centered; and, on the principle of Sympathetic Magic, an Enchanter can use this horn to create an amulet that can be used to detect magical auras.

The horn itself shouldn't be enormously difficult to obtain, since wyvern horn has recognized medicinal properties in addition to its little-known magical-detection properties. A horn of the proper size will cost about 1,000 SPs. But to be of any magical use, the horn must have been cut from a living wyvern, since the trauma of death destroys its affinity. About 40% of the horns being sold will have come from living wyverns. (The "horn" is actually made up of horny hair fibers growing out from the skin, just like the horn of the rhinoceros; and experienced hunters know that if the wyvern is left alive in the wild after its horn and poison are harvested, in about a year its quickly growing horn can be harvested again.) An Enchanter can easily tell whether a horn has been cut from a living or a dead wyvern, simply by holding the horn in his hand.

Once the wyvern horn is obtained, the Enchanter uses it to create an amulet by performing the "Ritual of Creating Crystal of Vision" (36.Q-2), using the horn in place of a piece of crystal. This takes about three hours, and the total cost of creating the amulet is the cost of the horn plus the cost of the ambergris used, in all about 2,000 SPs.

The amulet can be employed in two ways. In the simplest procedure, a character holds the amulet in his hand and recites whatever activating phrase the Enchanter has built into the amulet. For one minute thereafter, the character will be able to recognize any magical aura — spell, Ward, amulet, etc. — within his field of vision, providing he continues to hold the amulet, though he will be unable to distinguish the nature of the magic (the kind of spell or Ward it is, its purpose, how it's triggered, etc.). This procedure can be used one time each day, +1 time per Rank the Enchanter has with the "Ritual of Creating Crystal of Vision."

In the second procedure, the Enchanter performs an Investment Ritual (Rule 32.3) on the amulet and invests it with "Wizard's Eye Spell" (36. S-10). When this spell is activated, the character will not only be able to recognize magical auras as in the first procedure, but if he has the Witchsight talent (36.T-1, 38.T-1, or 46.T-1, but not the 44.G-7 spell) he can also learn something about the nature of the magic. Base

Chance for success in this is the same as the Adept's normal Base Chance with Witchsight, with no penalty for failure. If the Adept succeeds, the GM should tell him one fact about the magical aura he is investigating, such as the name of the spell or Ward involved, or its effects, or its activation instructions, or what College is involved (and whether General or Special Knowledge), etc. Exactly what piece of information the success yields is up to the GM. The Adept has only one opportunity to learn one fact about each magical aura he investigates while the "Wizard's Eye Spell" is in effect. Using a second "Wizard's Eye Spell," he can re-investigate auras he failed to learn anything about, but he can learn nothing new about auras that he has already succeeded in investigating.

GMs should treat this formula as not very widely known, about as difficult for an Enchanter to obtain as the "Wizard's Eye Spell" itself — and even less well-known to non-Enchanters. The availability of appropriate wyvern horns can also be restricted.

An attendant danger in carrying a wyvern-horn amulet is that wyverns tend to notice such things and then react in an unfavorable manner. In fact, it's not impossible that a wyvern's trove of magical items could contain a wyvern-horn amulet taken from some unwary and unfortunate Adept.

#### Gryphon-fur amulet

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make also follows the principle of Sympathetic Magic: Since gryphons (see the rulebook, page 109) have a talent for locating buried treasure, they can "contribute" a key ingredient for an amulet that can be used in treasure hunting. This key ingredient is a lock of fur taken from the gryphon's chest — specifically, the black lock that always grows nearest the heart. Since the death-trauma would destroy the magical value of the lock, it must be taken from the chest of a living gryphon, and if this is done it will grow back in about 18 months.

Once the lock is obtained — on the open market its cost will vary but should never be less than 1,500 SPs — the Enchanter uses it to make an amulet by performing the "Ritual of Creating Crystal of Vision" (36.Q-2), using the lock in place of a piece of crystal. This takes about three hours, and the total cost of creating the amulet, including the lock of gryphon fur, the other materials for the amulet, and the ambergris that is burned, is at least 3,000 SPs. When the amulet is completed, the Enchanter then invests it with the "Spell of Location" (36.Q-6), which can be used in the normal fashion.

The treasure-hunting aspect of this amulet depends on the presence of the "Spell of Location" but does not require the use of any of that spell's charges. So long as a single charge of the spell is present in the amulet, the treasure-hunting aspect will work. When the last charge has been used,

however, the amulet becomes dormant until it is re-invested.

When a non-dormant amulet is brought within 10 feet (+5 feet per Rank with the "Ritual of Creating Crystal of Vision" of the Adept who fashioned the amulet) of any buried, hidden, or secret treasure of any kind, a special arrow will automatically appear to the Adept without any special activation on his part, providing the amulet is touching some portion of the Adept's anatomy. This arrow is visible only to the Adept himself; its presence will neither interfere with his combat efficiency nor distract him from concentration; and, so long as the Adept remains within range, the arrow will direct the way to the treasure. This use of the amulet has no limit on duration, and since it doesn't depend on magical charges, it can be used any number of times.

The Adept need not have encountered, or studied, or even known about the treasure in order for the amulet to activate itself. In addition to direction, the amulet will also indicate distance to the treasure and the treasure's "strength," which might be a clue to its value, size, or some other aspect of its nature. The Adept will also be able to tell if he has previously encountered or studied the treasure, but the amulet will tell him nothing more.

If two or more separate treasures are within range, the amulet will indicate all of them at once, or each in order as it comes within range, and the Adept must determine which one he wants to hunt before the amulet will guide him any further. If too many treasures are present (GM's discretion), the amulet will "blur" and won't guide the Adept toward any of them, but will merely indicate to the Adept that he's in a treasure-rich area. The amulet will never blur if a specific target has been selected, or if the Adept is hunting a particular treasure that he knows to be in the vicinity. The blurring will clear if the character approaches within 10 feet of a specific treasure; and, given leisure to accomplish it, an Adept can always voluntarily reduce the amulet's range at a rate of five feet every 30 seconds in an effort to eliminate the blur, thus perhaps getting a fix on the nearest treasure.

"Too many treasures" might be defined as five or more treasures hidden in separate places, or an area of "dispersed" treasure — perhaps, a gold mine. Just what is meant by "buried" "hidden" and "secret" is open to wide interpretation by GMs, as is "treasure" for that matter. In his enthusiasm for the "blur," the GM should beware of so-called "Monty Haul" dungeons, but should also remember that one man's treasure is another man's junk.

The primary use of this amulet is to discover hidden treasure troves within a limited environment, such as a palace, a castle, a lair, and so forth. Should an Adept take such an amulet into room c05-A of *The Palace of Ontoncle* (page 20), for example, it would immediately point out to him the

trove buried in the corner of the lair.

The GM should treat the formula for this amulet as restricted knowledge, similar to the wyvern-horn amulet and just about as difficult for an Enchanter to obtain. It is almost completely unknown to non-Enchanters.

There they are: nine rule modifications. Nothing startling, nothing outrageous, just simple extrapolations from information the DRAGONQUEST rules had already offered. But what follows is in a different category: new rules, the creation of which is motivated by the simple feeling that they ought to exist. On that basis, consider the following:

Rule 32.3, paragraph 3, states: ". . . a particular object may never be invested with more than one spell at the same time." And we already know from experience that once a spell is totally discharged from an object, the object becomes normal once more, without magical value. Which means that mages in the DRAGONQUEST game can produce precious few enduringly magical objects. Well, Enchanters ought to be an exception to this rule. So, for the purpose of this article's argument, below are given two ways in which Enchanters can get around the general rule.

To support these exceptions, the rules offer this evidence: We've already seen how two counterspells can be put into the same amulet (the platinum rings), so the phenomenon of two spells in a single object does exist. Among the amulets made by Adepts of the College of Black Magics (46.T-3-C) is the "Amulet of Luck" (#3) which more clearly than the others employs the effects of two separate spells. And finally' the supplements *The Palace of Ontoncle* and *The Blade of Allectus* have examples of objects containing multiple spells, though admittedly some of these may have been (and probably were) created outside the purview of the twelve Colleges.

With all this in mind, it should come as no surprise that Enchanters, with their famous affinity for enchantments (Rule 36), can invest more than one spell into an object. Here's how they do it:

### [36.7] Special Knowledge Rituals

#### 1. Ritual of Multiple Investment (R-1)

This ritual is precisely the same as the Investment Ritual (32.3) in all except three respects: First, during the ritual, the Enchanter must burn a special incense costing 100 SPs. Second, the ritual is performed upon an object into which a spell has already been invested, with the purpose of investing an "extra" spell. Third, when the ritual is complete, the additional spell(s) will have charges of its (their) own equal to the Enchanter's Rank with this ritual.

At Rank 1, the Enchanter must be dealing with an object into which he himself has already invested a spell, and he can add only a single "extra" spell to the object.

At Rank 5, the Enchanter can also begin

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dealing with objects into which another Adept (of any of the Thaumaturgical Colleges) has invested a spell. To do this, however, the Enchanter must have full knowledge of what the spell is and how it is activated, or the ritual will fail. He can also begin investing an "extra" spell into *magical items*, such as the products of rituals 36.Q-2, 36.Q-3, 36.Q-4, etc., providing he has full knowledge of the other ritual. Such objects can never have more than a single "extra" spell added.

At Rank 10, the Enchanter can perform a second 36.R-1 Ritual on an object that already contains two spells, in order to invest a third spell. However, the second and third spells invested into the object must both be the Enchanter's own, and must share between them the "extra" charges that his Rank with this ritual allows. (This is another reason why it is so important for an Enchanter to be able to govern the number of charges he's investing; otherwise, he can't determine which spell has how many charges. See "Charge control" above.) Three spells is the maximum number that can be invested in a single object using this ritual.

At Rank 15, the Enchanter obtains the skill to use the spells of other Adepts of any of the Thaumaturgical Colleges as the "extra" spells, providing that at least one of the three spells in the object is his own. To use the spell of another Adept in this fashion, that other Adept must be present and cooperating during the entire ritual, and the cost of the incense burned during the ritual increases to 200 SPs. The maximum number of "extra" charges remains equal to the Enchanter's Rank with this ritual, and the Enchanter governs how they're shared out.

Since the investing Adept controls how his spells' charges will be activated, an Enchanter using this ritual can specify that the spells will activate separately on given commands, or in a particular sequence on a single command, or even simultaneously. This allows for numerous variations, depending on the GM's judgment of whether or not the Adept has the necessary sophistication with this ritual, in terms of Rank, to set up sufficiently complex activation instructions. Whatever the activation instructions, Cast Chance, range, and other aspects are determined separately for each spell.

This ritual can never be used with non-neutralized cold iron, no matter how small the amount. It can be used with neutralized cold iron, with two "extra" spells allowed if truesilver was used, or one "extra" spell if gold or silver was used; the Cast Chance penalties of 29.1, numbered section #3, apply.

The GM should consider knowledge of this ritual to be only moderately restricted among Enchanters, with few non-Enchanters even knowing it exists. This ritual cannot be used on Spell Containers (see below).

Note: The existence of this ritual should not be allowed to discourage or inhibit the

imaginative use of non-ritualized spell combinations. For example, the parts of an object are just that — part of that object and not subject to separate investment. The threads of a shirt cannot be invested separately from the shirt itself. But the chain that holds a medallion can be invested separately from the medallion. The jewel in the pommel of a sword, provided it is properly insulated from the cold iron, can be enchanted separately from the sword. And the pouch that holds a Crystal of Vision can certainly be invested with its own spell.

(Note: In the DRAGONQUEST rules, the words "enchantment" and "investment" are sometimes used interchangeably (see 56.3) and sometimes not. Players and GMs should pay careful attention to the context in which these words are used.)

At the end of this process, the object is still essentially non-magical, merely invested with magical charges. To create actual magical items, the following Special Knowledge Ritual available to Enchanters is used.

## 2. Ritual of Creating Spell Containers (R-2)

An Enchanter can create a permanent Spell Container out of any object by subjecting it to this ritual. The effect is to create in the object intangible "spell compartments," in each of which are a number of "charge-niches" that can be occupied by spell charges when the com-


partment is "filled." This ritual, however, does not actually "fill" the compartment — that requires a subsequent Investment Ritual (32.3), using a specific spell. Each time the 36.R-2 Ritual is performed on an object, it creates a single spell compartment that contains one charge-niche for each Rank the Adept has with the ritual. Each compartment holds only one kind of spell at a time; each niche contains a single charge, and any invested charges that do not find an empty niche to occupy are lost.

To construct a Spell Container, the Enchanter must purchase materials worth 1,000 SPs (+1,000 SPs more for each compartment already in the container) for use in the ritual, and these materials will be unrecoverable whether the attempt succeeds or fails. A full 10-hour Preparation Ritual (32.1) must be executed the day prior to the 36.R-2 Ritual, and the 36.R-2 itself takes 10 hours. Base Chance for success at the end of the ritual is 50%, +1% per Rank, plus the Adept's Magical Aptitude. However, magical "static" makes it dangerous to keep adding spell compartments to a container, and each compartment already existing in a container attaches a -10% penalty to the Base Chance. Failure of the ritual means that the object will literally disintegrate, immediately discharging any and all spells it contains, with appropriate effects on anyone nearby.

The experience multiple for Ritual 36.R-2 is 500.

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The number of compartments that can be created in a single object depends on two factors. The first is "real presence," which for simplicity will be considered as equal to the object's weight. Although compartments are intangible, their existence creates a kind of magical "static" that can be injurious to physical reality. A very small metal object, such as a one-ounce silver coin, can safely contain no more than one spell compartment. A larger metal item, such as a three-ounce silver throwing dart, might contain two compartments. But as compartments are added, the requisite size of the container will increase by a factor of 3 until a seven-compartment container has a requisite weight of 729 ounces, or a little more than 45 pounds. Obviously, containers designed for personal use will seldom have more than four or five compartments. Cold iron, even if neutralized, cannot contain spell compartments at all, unless truesilver was used in the neutralizing — if so, treat the object as if it were organic. Inorganic materials can generally contain more compartments than organic materials, on a 3-to-2 scale by weight, rounding down. Items already possessing magical power — amulets, Crystals of Vision, etc. — can never be made into Spell Containers.

Exactly how many compartments a given item can contain is a matter for the GM to decide, and the player of an Adept character should consult the GM concerning specific objects. It's no fun to go to the trouble and expense of enchanting a Spell Container, only to have the GM announce, "That container has been jammed with too many compartments, and the static has just caused it to disintegrate, releasing all its spells with the following effects on everyone in the vicinity. . . ." The initial decision of the GM should be considered final, however, since Enchanters are expected to have a very accurate "feel" for how many compartments an object can contain.

The second factor governing the number of compartments is the Enchanter's Rank with this ritual. At Rank 1, an Enchanter can create one compartment in an object that has no compartments already. At Rank 3, he can create a second compartment in a container that already has one compart-

ment. At Rank 6, a third compartment can be added; at Rank 10, a fourth; at Rank 15, a fifth compartment. At Rank 20, an Enchanter can create as many compartments as he pleases, but seven compartments should be considered a strict functional maximum because of the increasing danger, expense, and size requirements.

Once a Spell Container has been created, it is sufficiently flexible to entirely offset the difficulties and limitations involved in its creation. It can be invested by Adepts from any of the Colleges, and a multiple-compartment container can even hold spells from different Colleges without regard to alignment. When the charges in a particular compartment are all expended, the compartment can be refilled with the same or a different spell from any of the Colleges. When using a container, an investment can fail but it cannot backfire; and simply because a container is being used, +10 is added to the investment's Base Chance. A container created by one Enchanter can even have compartments added to it by another Enchanter. Also, an Enchanter can use the 10-hour 36.R-2 Ritual by itself to increase the number of niches in an existing (but empty) compartment, each use of the ritual adding niches equal to his own Rank with the ritual, up to a maximum of 20 niches per compartment. When used to create new niches in existing compartments, the cost of materials for the 36.R-2 Ritual is only 200 SPs, with no "static" penalties.

An Adept uses the Investment-Ritual (32.3) to store charges equal to his Rank, as usual. But if one Investment Ritual isn't sufficient to fill the compartment in question, the Adept can keep repeating the Investment Ritual until the compartment is filled. Since investment in a container is subject to almost complete control, if the container has more than one empty compartment, then the Adept can direct his subsequent investments with the same spell to fill niches in a different compartment, thus putting the same kind of spell into two different compartments. It's also possible to use the Preparation Ritual (32.1) as an "investment" to increase the Base Chance of a spell in a specific compartment. Since the Preparation Ritual must be applied to all the spell's charges, divide the Preparation bonus by the number of charges present to determine the net effect on the spell's Base Chance. In this connection, 36.S-7, "Enhance Enchantment," can be used to enhance a stored spell in a similar manner. Charges subsequently added to the compartment adopt the Base Chance and other characteristics of the charges already in that compartment, whether higher or lower.

There's a limit to how much enhancing and recharging an Adept can do with a stored spell, however. From the moment a spell is invested in a compartment, the compartment begins to "close"; once it's closed, no one can tamper with the stored spell in any way, not even Namers. Only the Adept's own mind can act as a wedge to

keep the compartment from closing, and over a period of days he can continue to work on the spell he has just invested. But the moment the Adept turns his mind to some new endeavor, the compartment will close, and neither changes nor new charges can be added until the spell is completely expended and a new one is stored. The degree of continual concentration required of the Adept is analogous to "walking meditation." The Adept can perform minor tasks — preparing and eating food, dressing and undressing, sleeping — without breaking this concentration, but the moment he actually turns his mind to another task, such as combat or conversation, the concentration is broken and the compartment will close.

Activation of spells stored in a container can be handled in three ways: The Enchanter who creates the first compartment, and thus the container, can direct that all spells are subject to the same activation instruction and can use this chance to establish permanent personal control over the container. Or, each compartment can be given a separate activating instruction. Or, the investing Adept can stipulate the activation instruction of the spell he is investing at the time of investment. Proper activation instructions could make it possible to discharge from several compartments simultaneously, or in predetermined succession, or from any particular compartment selectively. Under most circumstances, a given compartment will release its charges only one at a time.

Finally, a container can be destroyed by any action that would damage the object's integrity. An enchanted bow would be unaffected by a broken bowstring, but its compartments would be irreparably ruptured if the bow itself were broken. In this case, any stored spells would be dissipated, not released. Fortunately, container objects are about 20% more difficult to damage with physical force than similar non-container objects, and they resist direct magical attack to their integrity as if they were persons with a total passive Magic Resistance of 75 (see 31.1).

GMs should consider the 36.R-2 Ritual to be highly restricted information. Among non-Enchanters, few people even know such devices can be created. Among Enchanters, an Adept must have reached Rank 10 with at least ten magical abilities (at least two of which are rituals) before he can even comprehend the principles involved in 36.R-2. Each container should have its own chart to record compartments, niches, spells, activating instructions, and other details of its nature.

That completes the list of alterations and extrapolations. None of them are startling or dramatic; no new spells or weapons are added with which an Enchanter can clobber the opposition. With proper use, however, these changes will turn the Enchanter into at least a marginally more formidable character than he was before.

## Module hunt

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# The warrior alternative

## Generating non-magical characters for the DQ game

by Craig Barrett

Of all role-playing game topics, my favorite is fantasy. I enjoy working with simulations of magic, provided that the magic is treated as something special and is used in moderation. This statement seems contradictory in light of the fact that the fantasy RPG I have worked with most frequently is the DRAGONQUEST™ adventure game. Contradictory, because the DQ game system not only encourages every player to make his character a practitioner of magic but actually penalizes a player who doesn't.

It's not that the DRAGONQUEST game doesn't allow for non-magical characters, because non-Adepts abound. For example, non-magical characters are described in the game rules (see 31.0 and 31.4), in game supplements (from "Camp of Alla-Akabar" to "Blade of Allectus"), and even in Gerry Klug's article "DragonNotes" (ARES™ Magazine, issue #11), which deals with the issue of randomizing NPCs. So, nothing in the rules prohibits a player's character from being a non-Adept, but nothing encourages

to start with some Ranked skills besides languages may find this option intriguing.

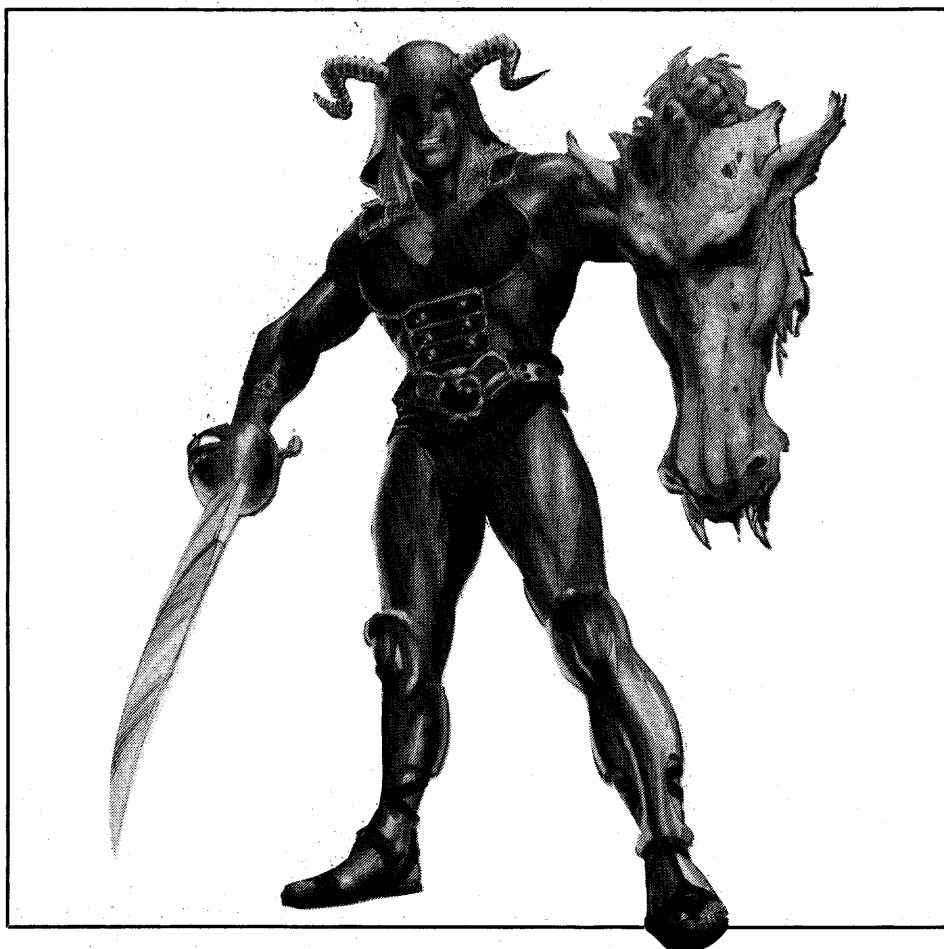
If a player examines the game rules (up to Rule 8.7) for resources available to his character, he realizes that his character must pay *something* in order to be initiated into a magical College. The most valuable clue to this *something* is found outside the regular DQ game materials, in Chaosium's *Thieves' World*. When Eric Goldberg, one of the original DQ game designers, adapted the game to fit the universe of Robert Asprin's fine *Thieves' World* anthology series, Goldberg directly contravened Rule 34.5, which prohibits Adepts from learning the magic of a College other than his own. The revised procedure goes like this: In exchange for a six-month term of study and 5,000 Experience Points (EPs), the initial magic of a College of the same alignment as a character (see 34.1) can be learned; for a twelve-month term of study and 7,500 EPs, the initial magic of a College of a different alignment can be learned.

In this setup, it's easier to learn the magic of a different but similarly aligned College than it was for the Adept to learn the magic of his original College, because, at this point, the character is building on a familiar foundation. A non-aligned College is more difficult since the character is hampered by the training gained from his first College. By splitting the difference between the two costs — say, a nine-month term of study and 6,500 EPs — we arrive at the initiation cost for a character's first magical College.

Let's suppose that, while a character's classmates are busy with their spells and potions, he decides to go a different route. The character knows that he can always be initiated into a magical College later (for nine months of study and 6,500 EPs); however, he currently wants an education that offers more tangible survival benefits. Instead of entering a school for magic, he enters a different kind of school.

Unless the Gamemaster has created a highly detailed DRAGONQUEST world, a player does not have to worry about identifying this other school that his character attended, any more than he would if all characters attended a magic-teaching school. Instead, this player should follow the standard Character Generation rules until he reaches Rule 8.5; at this point, he stops. The player now has nine months and 6,500 EPs to spend on his character for the development of skills other than magic.

These EPs can't be spent indiscriminately. Because players don't want to mess



Those who've played the DQ game know what I mean. Reading the Character Generation rules leads the player face to face with Rule 8.7: "The player may want to . . . choose a college of magic for his character (see 34). . . ." But what if the player doesn't *want* to choose a College for his character? Tough. No alternative is offered; no compensation for not making a character an Adept is provided. The rules trot blithely on, and the player is left wondering why such an empty opportunity exists.

it, either. The offer of a magical College for one's character is a gift; forgo the gift, and nothing is offered in its place.

This situation doesn't seem fair, because the courage required to engage in a DQ campaign without the recourse of personal magic deserves some reward.

Hence, the "warrior alternative" offered in this article. This option provides immediate martial privileges for players who are willing to sacrifice intermediate-range magical advantages for them. Players who wish

up the play balance, some restrictions are in order (see 87.7).

First, every character who chooses the warrior alternative expends 2,500 EPs on characteristic points: either for one Fatigue Point, which raises the character's total no higher than 23 and has no effect on Endurance (see 5.3), or for 3 Perception Points, which are added to his initial 8 PC points.

Second, a character selects one skill from Chapter VII that he majored in and expends sufficient EPs to raise that skill to Rank 2. Then, he selects a skill he minored in and expends enough EPs so that the skill is at Rank 1. Players should be able to defend skill choices if the Gamemaster challenges the relationship of these selections to the character being role-played. A school for Assassins, for example, might provide a supplementary course in Spying or Courtesy (the character has to get close to his target if he's to kill him), but not one in Alchemy or Navigation. A school for Thieves could also train Merchants (this way, a character could double as a fence for stolen goods), but not Military Scientists (though soldiers are also foragers and, therefore, might minor as Thieves).

Since the warrior alternative is the point of discussion here, choices for a major skill should be limited to Assassin, Beast Master, Military Scientist, Navigator, Ranger, Spy, and Thief. Neither the major nor the minor skill should be a language.

Once the character has selected his major and minor skills, he selects three weapons consistent with these skills and expends sufficient EPs to earn Rank 2 with one of them and Rank 1 with each of the other two. Thus, an Assassin *must* select either the sap or the garotte as a tool of his trade, and he probably wouldn't choose a broadsword or shield, while a Military Scientist (particularly one from a family of the Greater Nobility) probably would. These weapon choices shouldn't be unduly restricted, but should remain reasonable.

When weapons have been selected, all of the character's 6,500 EPs may have been used. Of any EPs remaining, only up to 500 can be held in reserve to be added to the EP bank once the procedures in Rule 8.7 are completed. Any EPs in excess of this amount are permanently lost. Remaining EPs can now be spent for more Fatigue or Perception points, for Stealth to Rank 1, for Horsemanship to Rank 1, for Hunting to Rank 1 (see Paul Crabaugh's article in DRAGON® Magazine, issue #78, p. 84), or for any affordable combination of these.

When remaining EPs have been spent, the player proceeds with Rules 8.5, 8.6, and 8.7. EPs acquired under Rule 8.5 can be spent in any manner desired during this process. (I recommend immediately using the bargain price of 100 EPs for one skill — Rule 8.6 — for a language skill. Under Rule 49.6, this means a character begins play with Rank 8 in that language. He already has 7 to 10 Rankings in other skills, so why pass up this chance if 8.5 has given him the EPs to spend?)

If the character is human (this variant is mainly designed for humans), he is credited with being able to read, write, and speak Common at Rank 8 (see Rule 49.0, paragraph 3, and Rule 49.6).

When the character generation process is completed, a player adds to the EP bank those EPs he's been holding in reserve from his character's "education fund" of 6,500 EPs. Finally, the player assigns his character a name (see 8.8), and his work is done.

Gamemasters should deal with the newly created non-Adept in a liberal fashion and should be patient as the non-Adept works out the duties of having sudden Rank. An Assassin of Rank 2, for example, must pay 700 Silver Pennies per year as "hush money" and such (see 51.9). Since the character won't be able to afford that sum of money right away, the Gamemaster should give the new Assassin plenty of time to gather the needed funds during his first year of operation. The Gamemaster must treat all skills with similar generosity.

One final note: These Ranks should be seen as fair just compensation for an audacious character who is willing to brave the dangers of a DRAGONQUEST world without the benefit of personal magical powers. By the character's abstinence, he's contributing to the value of the magic being used by others; therefore, he should be given a little bit of an edge in other areas. □

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# Learn magic by the month

## DRAGONQUEST™ rules for studying spells

by Craig Barrett

Most player characters (PCs) begin a DRAGONQUEST™ game campaign already adept in a magical college. That's the way the rules work, and since the rules also restrict PCs to membership in a single college at a time, there seems little point in knowing how a PC can enter a college *after* the campaign has begun.

However, things don't always run as smoothly as they first start out, even in role-playing games. Some players will elect to start their PCs as non-adepts (see "The warrior alternative," DRAGON® Magazine #86). Others will see their PCs stripped of magical power, either voluntarily or involuntarily, during the course of the campaign (see rules 34.5, 44.0, 46.0, etc.). Some GMs will draw from Eric Goldberg's article in Chaosium's THIEVES' WORLD™ game, which suggests allowing adepts to belong to more than one college at a time.

In all of these cases, a PC will enter a college *after* the campaign is already under way, and that brings up a major problem: In order to learn magic, a PC will have to spend six to twelve months of game time out of action, studying. This means an extended period of real time during which you, the player, have a choice of fascinating activities. You can twiddle your thumbs, count raindrops on a pane of glass, or watch your fellow players happily pursuing their own PCs' careers — you can do anything except *play*, which is what you came to do.

The purpose of this article is to provide a viable solution to that problem. Although a PC's education in magic may have to proceed in uninterrupted monthly increments (rule 34.5), nothing says those increments have to be consecutive. If a given study-month can be separated from the study-months before and after it, both you and your PC can be set free to enjoy yourselves. While your PC's colleagues are improving their skills or practicing their abilities, your PC can be studying his magic. When they're off adventuring, your character can adventure right along with them — and you can be in on the action, too.

But in order to make this procedure work, you have to have some knowledge of where a PC can go to study magic and how much magic he can learn during a given month of study.

### Monastic schools

I favor the suggestions provided in the DRAGONQUEST rules to determine the placement of monasteries, though each GM is free to organize the magical societies of

his world as he sees fit. The best way to deal with monasteries is to establish them per branch (rule 34.0) rather than per college. Having only three kinds of monasteries rather than twelve means that your world isn't going to be hamstrung by an overabundance of religious institutions. Of course, some care will have to be taken in deciding which masters and novices are inhabiting a monastery at any given time — but this has more to do with inter-college conflicts than with inter-branch differences. After all, fire mages and water mages may be incompatible in terms of the magic they *practice*, but they ought to be able to study side by side without too many problems. However, the same may not be true of pacifistic earth mages and druidic earth mages. (The answer to this is to keep pacifistic earth mages out of monasteries altogether. As individualists, they keep to themselves.)

Tuition fees are the same for all monasteries: 200 silver pennies per month actually spent in the monastery, plus 100 SPs per month that your basic magical education extends, from the first day of the first month to the last day of the last month. Payment is due at the start of each increment of monthly study, and should include arrears if you've been away from the monastery (in which case part of a month counts as a full month).

This is little enough to pay for the priceless magical education your PC is getting, and the real profit to the monastery comes in less tangible areas: the chance to spread the knowledge that the monastery exists to preserve; the services of willing novices, for assistants are always needed as each master works to further his own personal studies; the addition of new names to the list of those already loyal to the monastery. In the uncertainties of a DRAGONQUEST game world, loyal friends are priceless, and even after your "graduation," your master or your monastery's abbot may call upon you periodically for some service.

During the time of his education, your PC will be required to give strict devotion to his studies. Each monthly increment should be uninterrupted, and an interrupted month is a lost month, with both SPs and EPs forfeited. (GMs should be reluctant to allow uncontrollable outside factors to interfere with the studies of a dedicated novice. Anyone who is honestly trying to abide by the rules should be allowed to do so. Also, short missions for your PC's master or abbot are considered part of the

discipline, and shouldn't count against study time.)

The period of time your PC can spend away from the monastery between increments, whether on a mission or not, is limited to a maximum of 90 days, since successful study requires a measure of continuity. For each day by which a PC fails to meet this deadline, one week of additional study or 150 additional experience points (GM's choice) are added to his next increment's requirements. Obviously, a severely or habitually delinquent student will soon reach the point where he might as well abandon his present studies and start over.

During his time away from the monastery, however, your PC will be gathering fresh experience points. Whether he can begin his studies with insufficient EPs to complete them, as rule 87.1 allows, is up to your PC's master. But if your PC uses a magical ability during an adventure, the resulting EPs can be applied toward ranking that ability. No magical ability of the college currently being studied can be ranked higher than 3 until all basic study for that college is completed.

### Curriculum

When your PC enters a thaumaturgical, elemental, or entital monastery, part of the first month's general study involves letting his teachers determine which particular college he's best suited for. (You know ahead of time, but *he* doesn't.) How much of the college's magic your PC can learn during any given one-month increment will depend not only on which college he's studying, but also on whether or not it's his first college.

(Note: Time and experience-point costs given below are taken directly or by extrapolation from Eric Goldberg's article in Chaosium's THIEVES' WORLD game.)

If your PC is learning the general knowledge of his first magical college, it will cost him nine months and 6,500 experience points — 1,300 EPs for the first month of study, and 650 EPs for each succeeding month of study, "payable" at the start of each month. The entire course must be completed within a given three-year period, beginning on the first day of the first month.

In the first month, your PC learns rituals 32.1 and 32.2, as well as the fundamentals of the college. In the second month, he learns the two counterspells of the college and further fundamentals. Each succeeding month he'll learn a group of the college's talents, spells, and rituals, with the specific

abilities learned being determined by the GM as follows:

Divide the college's talents, spells, and rituals as evenly as possible into seven equal groups, so that all talents will be acquired before all spells, and all spells before all rituals; and so that talents, spells, and rituals are acquired in the order given in the rule book. Some flexibility should be allowed. For example, an enchanter may request to learn one ritual in each of the last four months of study, along with one of the last four spells, rather than having all four rituals grouped in the last two months of study. Any groups of abilities smaller than the others should be among the early months of study; any groups larger than the others should be among the later months. In some colleges, perhaps no abilities will be learned in the third or fourth month of study because of the small number of basic abilities in the college. There's no help for that.

If your PC is already an adept and is learning the general knowledge of an aligned college (see 34.0 and 34.1), it costs him six months and 5,000 EPs — 1,500 EPs for the first month and 700 EPs for each succeeding month of study. The entire course must be completed within a given two-year period. Your PC already knows rituals 32.1 and 32.2, so he learns the college's two counterspells in the first month of study. The curriculum of succeeding months

should be determined as for his first college, above, using a five-month base.

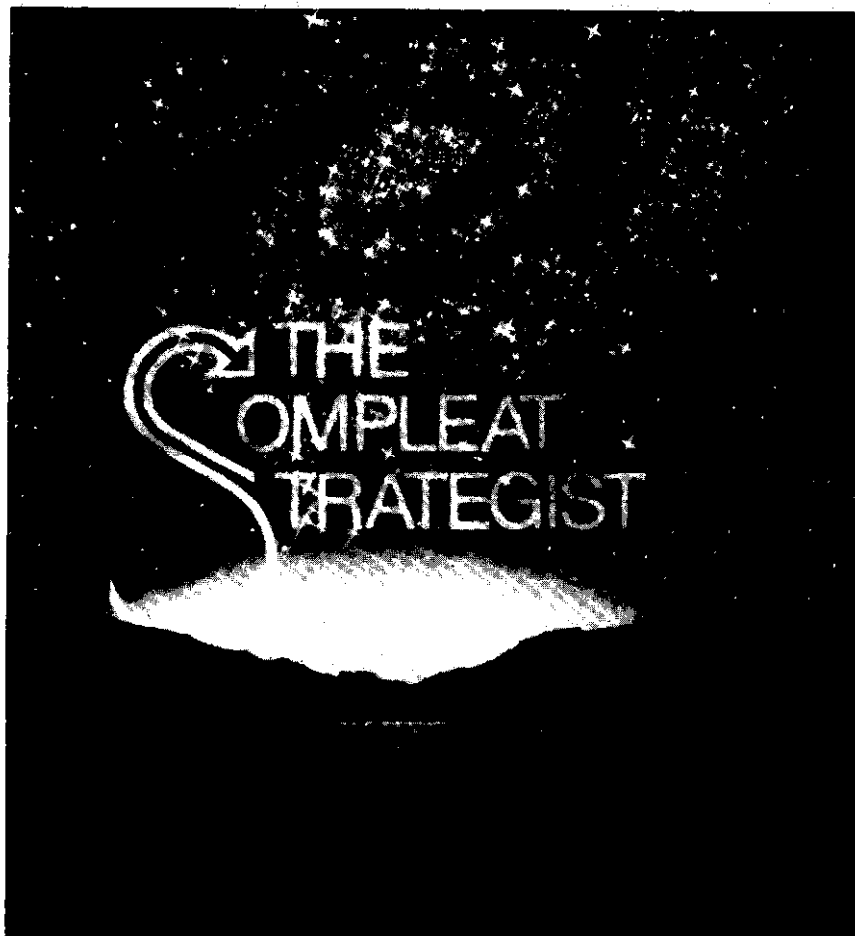
If your PC is learning the general knowledge of a non-aligned college (which can happen only twice, once for each non-aligned branch), it costs him 12 months and 7,500 EPs — 900 EPs for the first month and 600 EPs for each succeeding month of study. The entire course must be completed within a given four-year period. Your PC already knows rituals 32.1 and 32.2, so he learns the college's two counterspells in the first month of study. The curriculum of succeeding months should be determined as for his first college, above, using an eleven-month base.

If your PC fails to meet the deadline for completing the entire course of study for a college, he is immediately reduced by one rank in any ability of that college that he's succeeded in raising above rank 0, and he can never advance past rank 2 with any magical ability of that college. For this reason, the GM should give the dedicated student every possible chance to complete his studies — acting as the abbot of the monastery, he may even give a PC some form of magical dispensation if the deadline has passed because of circumstances beyond his control. But extensions of the deadline should always be linked to a quest assigned by the abbot, to be performed immediately upon completion of the PC's studies. The only other solution to a missed deadline is

to start studying all over again, sacrificing all time, EPs, and SPs already spent.

There may be many reasons why a PC (and that character's player) would prefer longer periods of study in place of the one-month increments. With a sufficient stockpile of SPs and EPs, a character may feel that the long winter months of a Scandinavian-like environment would be an excellent time to study magic; no one's doing much of anything anyway. . . . Or perhaps your GM has things arranged so that players lend him a helping hand periodically. If you're busy doing something besides running your PC but still involved in the game, that's a wonderful time for your PC to be usefully occupied (if everyone agrees to allow this sort of "double duty"). But if your PC is unable to complete his magical education in a single continuous time span, whether for lack of time or EPs or SPs, the system of monthly increments is a useful one to adopt. Just don't forget the 90-day maximum break between increments; this pertains to all cases.

One final point: Rules 34.6 and 34.7 apply at the beginning of magical study. Your PC may be allowed to accumulate the experience points he needs during the hiatus between increments, but not the magical aptitude required. However, the ritual of spell preparation (32.1) should never be counted against the magical aptitude, since it cannot be ranked. 112

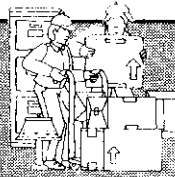


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# Going up and getting wet

## How DRAGONQUEST™ natives climb and swim

by Paul Montgomery Crabaugh

The fear of falling is one of the most basic emotions humanity enjoys. For characters in role-playing games, it is a fear realized unfortunately often. They're always trying to climb something, and just as frequently not succeeding.

There is also another kind of falling: the swimmer who misses a beat, whose strength or lungs give out, falls as well. It's a much slower, gentler fall — but the oceans are far deeper than any building or cliff is high.

Thieves in the DRAGONQUEST™ game are provided with the ability to climb things, quite high and smooth things, but non-thieves have no such ability. And no one, not even a Navigator, has the ability to swim. These omissions are remedied below.

Climbing is a minor skill, like Stealth or Horsemanship. All characters have it at Rank 0 to begin with. Characters who are Thieves already have access to their own, superior form of climbing and will not generally wish to increase Rank with this skill. Using Climbing, the base chance for a successful climb is  $(3 \times MD) \text{ plus } (10 \times$

Rank) minus one-tenth of the square of the height (in feet) being climbed. This figure is expressed as a percentage chance. Thus, a character with a Manual Dexterity of 20 and Rank 2 ability in Climbing has a 40% chance of successfully scaling a 20-foot-high wall:  $(3 \times 20) + (10 \times 2) - (400/10) = 40$ .

This formula works for a typical building exterior, with cornices, ledges, and other handholds, when the climb is being made in illuminated conditions. If the climber cannot see the surface he is climbing, the base chance is reduced by 15%. If the surface is unusually sheer, the chance is reduced by 20%. The presence of a firmly anchored rope to aid the ascent will increase the base chance by 50%.

If the roll for success is missed, a second roll on percentile dice will determine what percentage of the climb had been accomplished before the fall; this is the distance fallen. The damage the character takes as a result is the square of (distance fallen/10) — 1 point for a 10-foot fall, 4 points for a 20-foot fall, 9 points for a 30-foot fall, and so

on. These points of damage are taken directly off EN, and not absorbed by armor. Damage is increased by 1 point for each point of AG lost due to encumbrance.

Swimming is also a minor skill, but characters do not automatically start with it, even at Rank 0. The chance of swimming without incident is somewhat dependent on the time which will have to be spent in the water, reckoned in increments of 15 minutes. For example, if a character will have to swim for half an hour, then the "duration" in the formula for the base chance is 2. The base chance for a successful swim is  $(EN + WP + MD) \text{ plus } (10 \times \text{Rank}) \text{ minus the square of the duration}$ . Thus, a Rank 1 swimmer with EN 15, WP 12, and MD 18 who is trying to swim for an hour has a 39% chance of succeeding:  $(15 + 12 + 18) + (10 \times 1) - (4 \times 4) = 39$ .

The base chance is adjusted by +30% if the water is very still, by -30% if the water is unusually rough, by -20% if the character was completely unprepared for a swim (i.e., thrown in unawares), and by a negative amount equal to the square of (AG loss due to armor + AG loss due to encumbrance).

If the roll is failed and the character is alone, the unfortunate swimmer drowns. If a companion is traveling with the character, all is not lost: the companion may attempt to save the victim, at a base chance of  $(2 \times \text{companion's AG}) + (5 \times \text{companion's Rank})$ , with modifiers of +20 for still water and -30 for rough water. If this roll also fails, the character is dead. Even if the companion manages to keep the character from drowning, the character being saved takes 1D10 damage directly to Endurance and must make a new attempt to complete the swim. If this second attempt also fails, the character drowns with no possibility of being saved by a companion.

A character who has not attained any Rank with Swimming but who needs it anyway has to make a roll against  $(4 \times \text{modified AG})$  to stay afloat — and repeat this for every minute spent in the water. The character who can't swim may be able to keep from sinking, but cannot make any headway in the water.

The experience point costs to gain Ranks in these new skills are as follows:

	Rank					
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Climbing	0	150	300	450	600	750
Swimming	100	200	300	400	500	600
	Rank					
	6	7	8	9	10	
Climbing	900	1050	1200	1350	1500	
Swimming	700	800	900	1000	1100	

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# Getting in over your head

## Sink-or-swim rules for the DRAGONQUEST™ game

by Craig Barrett

In the realm of the Deep, mankind is an alien. Given the most sophisticated modern equipment (or its magical equivalent in the DRAGONQUEST™ game), man is still only a visitor here. He does not really belong in this environment.

He is, however, a persistent visitor. Whether freshwater lake or saltwater ocean, the Deep is a repository of mysteries and treasures that has lured man from time immemorial. So, DRAGONQUEST game players ought to reconcile themselves to the fact that sooner or later one of their characters is going to be drawn into an aquatic adventure. If he is going to survive that adventure, he better have an idea of what could happen to him once his head goes under the surface.

These rules are an attempt to meet that need for knowledge of underwater life and activities; be aware, however, that every effort has been made to adhere to existing DRAGONQUEST rules. When necessary, realism has been sacrificed to playability. So, players should start thinking of swimming (which, for clarity's sake, includes skin diving) as an adventure skill (according to rule 83.0), not as an acquired skill (Chapter VII).

### Swimmers

Every DRAGONQUEST character begins campaigning with the Swimming skill at Rank 0. A character can keep himself afloat in the water if he doesn't panic, but that's about all. He can hold his breath for 6 pulses (30 seconds), but the thought of *diving* is utterly appalling to him. As the PC increases his Swimming Rank, he begins to extend these and other abilities; by Rank 10, he is an adept Swimmer.

To chart this progress, use the experience point costs listed for Stealth, which are exactly the same for Swimming, on the Experience Point Cost Chart (87.8). Up through Rank 4, EPs are applied to this skill as described under rule 87.5; from Rank 5 on, EPs are applied directly, as described under rule 87.6.

When a PC achieves Rank 1, he acquires these abilities: diving under the surface to a distance of 7½ feet (1.5 cubic hexes), holding his breath for 6 pulses while diving and swimming, and swimming without stopping (hereafter called a *sprint*) a maximum distance of 25 yards, at a speed of TMR ½.

With each advance in Rank, diving distance increases by 7½ feet, underwater time increases by 2 pulses, and sprint distance increases by 75 yards. Swimming speed

increases to TMR 1 at Rank 3 and to TMR 1½ at Rank 8. For all humans, chase speed in the Adventure Sequence (see 80.0, paragraph 2b, and Movement Rates, 65.0) is determined by multiplying the TMR by 50 yards/minute. Note: A PC must spend 3 pulses (Ranks 1-4) or 6 pulses (Ranks 5-20) hyperventilating before diving; if this isn't done, his diving time is reduced by 30%.

### Divers

Some PCs begin campaigning at a higher Swimming Rank. The Diver is a person who was born and raised around water, and who probably learned to swim very soon after he learned to walk. He has a natural affinity for water that is almost magical and that no landsman could ever hope to match.

In order for a player to develop a PC who is a Diver, during the character generation process he simply opts, when he comes to rule 8.7, for his PC to be a Diver in lieu of enrolling the PC in a magical college. The PC automatically receives the Swimming skill at Rank 5 (worth 7,500 EPs), along with the following advantages:

1. A Diver can progress to Rank 20 in the Swimming skill. With each advance in Rank from Rank 11 up, diving distance increases by 9 feet, underwater time increases by 3 pulses, and sprint distance increases by 100 yards. At Rank 12, his swimming speed increases to TMR 2. (EP costs for Ranks 11-20 are 5,000 EPs per Rank.)

2. If a Diver becomes a Beast Master specializing in aquatics, a Navigator, or a Ranger specializing in the ocean environment, his EP cost for advancing in that skill is reduced by 25%, provided that his Swimming Rank is at least 2 levels higher than his Rank in that skill. Also, Divers have their success percentages in these skills modified by 5 points in their favor, whenever these skills are used in, on, or under the water.

3. A Diver who becomes a water mage receives a +5 addition to the base chance of performing any talent, spell, or ritual of his College. No Diver may become an air mage, fire mage, earth mage, or black mage.

Players are not encouraged to blithely enter their PCs into the Diver class. Unless the player expects most of his PC's early adventures to be in and around water, the advantages of the Diver class are insufficient to compensate for not being allowed immediate entrance into a magical College

or ready access to "The warrior alternative" (see DRAGON® Magazine, issue #86, p. 24). The Diver option is primarily included for GMs to use in creating very important NPCs who ought to have special aquatic advantages due to their origins, and to illustrate the fact that latecomers to the sea face enormous difficulties in attempting to match the prowess of people who have spent all their lives in and around water.

However, players who feel that they're getting their value's worth can make their PCs into Divers if they wish. While this excludes them from using the warrior alternative, PCs who are Divers can always enter a magical college at a later stage of their careers.

In addition, Swimmers are not forever barred from the higher ranks of the Swimming skill. Once a Swimmer has achieved Swimming Rank 10, any further EPs obtained during aquatic activity *while wearing a merfolk's cap of woven gold* can be applied toward achieving Swimming Rank 11 and up. Without a merfolk's cap, swimmers must pay 7,500 EPs/Rank to achieve Ranks 11-15, and 10,000 EPs/Rank to achieve Ranks 16-20. In this way, a Swimmer can go as high as Swimming Rank 20 if he desires, but he uses the skill increases per Rank described under the "Swimmers," heading above, not the increases given for Divers. Swimmers are never Divers: the advantages of Divers described in this section never apply to Swimmers, no matter how high a Swimming Rank they achieve. (But Swimmers *do* get TMR 2 at Swimming Rank 12.)

As to whether Divers who are already water mages (or some other type) can also become air, fire, earth, or black mages, using the option described in Eric Goldberg's DRAGONQUEST article in Chaosium's *Thieves' World*, this should be left to GM discretion. I would favor it, providing the Diver became a water mage *before* becoming any of the other four types, to fully establish his mastery of the water environment.

### Underwater combat

All surface dwellers, whether Swimmers or Divers, suffer one common disability underwater: they are "legally blind." They can locate light sources, and they can see, fuzzily, for about 3 hexes, but that's all. Fortunately, this problem can be overcome by using goggles (which block peripheral vision into the rear half of each hex on the character's right and left front) or a diving

mask (which gives unobstructed vision in those hexes).

Less easy to overcome is the 25% visual distortion with regard to distance, size, and angles that also affects all surface dwellers underwater. Only experience teaches compensation for this, so distortion is reduced to 20% at Rank 1, 15% at Rank 2, 10% at Rank 3, 5% at Rank 4, and 0% at Rank 5 and above. This affects all ranged and melee combat, underwater only.

Other than that, aquatic combat is essentially governed by rule 67.0, with directions reversed: base chance of a character on the surface hitting a character underwater is reduced by 20, with the added provision that no character who is 5 cubic hexes or more below the surface can be hit by ranged combat from the surface. Base chance of a character below the surface hitting a character above the surface is reduced by 15.

All ranged weapons are useless underwater, except for three. Crossbows and heavy crossbows can be used, with reduced ranges of 3 and 4 hexes respectively, but no change in the base chance for being underwater. Nets used underwater have a range of 2 hexes, with -10 to the base chance for the second hex only.

Both in and under the water, any melee or close combat weapon has its base chance reduced by 10. Underwater, both Class B and Class C weapons suffer a further reduction of -20 to their base chance, as well as -5 to their current damage modifier. The

minimum Physical Strength for proper use of Class B and C weapons is increased by 1 while underwater.

These reductions do not apply to magic weapons. Likewise, the fact that surface dwellers are unable to make effective vocal communication while underwater does not affect the use of magic. The limited sounds that are possible serve magical purposes perfectly well. However, the process of casting a spell, vocal or not, reduces underwater breath time by 1 pulse in all cases — unless the Water Breathing Spell (41.G-12) or the merfolk's cap of woven gold is being used.

A note on watergoing monsters: In addition to the 13 creatures listed in the Aquatics section of the DRAGONQUEST rule book, the rules also contain swimming information for crocodiles, giant land turtles, suarimes, nixies, fossergrim, nagas, water elementals, and the demons Furcalor, Vephar, and Forneus. Tigers and sabertooth tigers may also be met in the water, and these have TMRs of 1 and ½, respectively. Other non-aquatic creatures that are in water seldom move faster than TMR ½.

#### Buoyancy

Another critical factor in underwater combat is buoyancy (hereafter abbreviated as BCY). With positive BCY, an object rises in water; with negative BCY, it sinks. At 0 BCY, an object floats where it has been placed until it is moved.

The following assumptions are made for game purposes only: When used to balance weight, 1 BCY point equals 5 pounds. How fast an object rises or sinks depends on how much BCY it has in excess of 0 BCY, with 1 BCY point equal to 1 TMR. Maximum rates are TMR 4 in ascent and TMR 7 in descent.

Example: If a Diver wants to raise a 15-pound object from the bottom of a lake, he can attach three 1-pound flotation bags (each filled with +1 BCY equivalent of air) to get 0 BCY, and then he can add one more to get 1 TMR of lift. The object will rise 1 hex every pulse until the bags reach the surface. Attaching a total of seven flotation bags would give the maximum ascent of TMR 4.

Example: To gain extra "bottom time," a Diver can hold onto a line attached to a heavy weight and move with it as far down as he likes. If the diver is at 0 BCY, a 35-pound weight will take him down at the maximum rate of TMR 7.

Human males have +1 natural BCY and require a 5-pound weight belt to achieve 0 BCY, human females have a +2 natural BCY and require a 10-pound weight belt. Or, natural BCY can be overcome by expending Agility points, with 1 AG point equal to 1 BCY point.

Example: A woman of AG 15 can use 2 AG points to overcome her +2 natural BCY, rather than a 10-pound weight belt.

Similarly, the Diver described above

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could have used 4 AG points to lift the 15-pound object to the surface, rather than four flotation bags. While Physical Strength states how much one can carry (see rules 4.1 and 82.9) and indicates how much energy is needed to overcome the inertia of objects in water (to lift, pull, or push), Agility dictates whether one can or cannot move that weight. Use this formula:  $1 \text{ AG} = 1 \text{ BCY} = 1 \text{ TMR}$ .

This can become dangerous, though, because AG points are also required for a swimmer so that he can move *himself* in water. At Ranks 1-2, 6 AG points are required per  $\frac{1}{2}$  TMR of speed; at Ranks 3-7, 3 AG points per  $\frac{1}{2}$  TMR; at Ranks 8-11, 2 AG points per  $\frac{1}{2}$  TMR; and, at Ranks 12-20, 1 AG point per  $\frac{1}{2}$  TMR. These AG points are *not lost*, and AG used for swimming can be simultaneously used for combat, stealth, or when determining Initiative Value. But AG points used for swimming *cannot* also be used for BCY.

Example: At Swimming Rank 9 and AG 15, with a 5-pound weight belt for 0 BCY, a Diver needs 4 AG points to swim at 1 TMR and 4 more to lift the 15-pound weight at 1 TMR. This would still leave him 7 AG points unused and a total of 11 AG points available for combat (his normal 15 minus only the 4 AG points used to lift and move the 15-pound object).

Example: A woman of AG 15 would have 13 AG points available for combat if she used 2 AG points to overcome her natural

BCY, no matter what her Rank is or how fast she chooses to swim. With a 10-pound weight belt to counter her natural BCY, all 15 of her AG points would be available for other uses.

All of these points to the trouble a clothed and armored man has in water. Clothes become waterlogged rapidly, and their weight affects both BCY and AG, with a minimum AG loss of 2 points. Shoes absorb an additional 1 AG point; boots, 2 AG points. All types of armor except chain mail have 30% added to their weight; all types of armor except plate mail add 1 to the wearer's AG loss, and plate mail *doubles* its AG loss.

Example: Wearing chain mail armor and seven pounds of clothes and boots in water, a man of AG 25 has a total AG loss of 7 points (2 for clothes, 2 for boots, and 3 for armor). He also suffers -10 BCY ( $7 + 42 = 49$  pounds of weight, divided by 5 = 9.8, rounded up to 10). His natural BCY is +1, but the additional 9 AG points applied to BCY gives him a net result of 0 BCY. With 7 AG points already lost, that leaves him with 9 AG points to spare. He can easily apply 1 AG point to moving the weight he's carrying and 6 AG points to swimming, no matter what his Swimming Rank is. He even has a total of 8 AG points for combat (his 9-point reserve minus 1 point needed to keep the burden he's carrying in motion).

With only AG 16, he would have enough points to keep afloat, but not enough to

swim even one stroke. How long he could float like that, or whether he could unburden himself, would depend on GM discretion. With only AG 15, he couldn't even float. He'd sink at a rate of TMR 1, starting the moment he entered the water.

If two men grapple in the water (two combatants, or a drowning victim clutching in panic at his rescuer), all of their AG points are absorbed in combat and cannot be used for BCY. (The same is true of a man who is entangled.) Men in this condition rise or sink according to their combined BCY, with -2 BCY added to their total to account for the effects of mutual awkwardness in water.

### Normal exertion

Time spent active in water is always costly in Fatigue points for a landsman. Whenever a character spends a significant portion of any given hour in water (see 82.1, paragraph 3), consult the Fatigue and Encumbrance Chart (82.9) as though he had been carrying 60 pounds of weight for a full hour, and charge him the appropriate number of FT points. The exercise rate should be read as one level higher than the same exercise on land. (In lieu of assigning it a higher rate, the cost of strenuous exercise is doubled.)

This does not include the FT cost of anything being carried, pushed, or towed in water for a significant amount of time. Determine this cost separately, again at a rate one level higher than on land.

### Exceeding the limits

Up to this point, the life of a Swimmer or Diver is relatively easy and uncomplicated. As long as he stays within his limits (and out of the reach of the nasties, he doesn't have much to worry about. But if he wants to complicate matters, he can exceed his limits — for a price.

1. If a character dives past his Rank limit, he *immediately* expends 1 FT penalty point for every 5 feet that he exceeds it by.

2. If a character exceeds his sprint limit, he *immediately* expends 1 FT point for every 5 yards (+5 per Rank), or portion thereof, that he exceeds his limit.

3. During the tactical stage (rule 80.0, section 3), a character may double his TMR for a number of pulses equal to his Swimming Rank. To do this, he must have enough free AG points to account for the extra speed (at the usual AG cost for his Rank). He must also pay 1 FT point per  $\frac{1}{2}$  TMR of extra speed, payable every 10 pulses, or portion thereof, spent at extra speed. Underwater, the FT penalty is payable every 5 pulses, or portion thereof. This burst of extra speed is possible only once per sprint or dive.

4. A character may exceed his underwater time by a number of pulses equal to one-half of his Willpower (rounding down), at a cost of 1 FT point every third pulse. The first FT penalty point is lost on the first Willpower pulse. If the character is not able to take a breath by the time these pulses are

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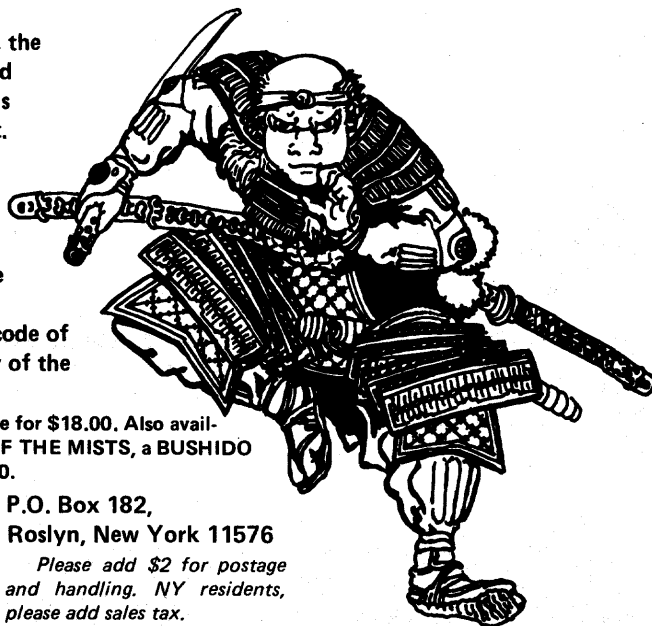
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used up, he *immediately* begins to drown.

5. In addition, whenever a surface dweller dives past 33 feet, he *immediately* loses 1 FT penalty point. Another point is lost going past 66 feet, and another going past 99 feet.

FT penalty losses due to these five causes are cumulative during a single sprint or dive. (A sprint is ended when at least 3 pulses are spent at rest; a dive, when the character resurfaces.) If a character accumulates FT penalties greater than one-third of his original Endurance level (rounding down), the effect is the same as if he had suffered these losses due to a wound (rule 19, paragraph 2): the character is immediately stunned and begins to drown if still in the water.

Fortunately, so long as the character doesn't incur the drowning penalty, FT losses due to these five causes are fairly easy to recover — unlike normal FT losses, which aren't. Once the character is able to spend time resting totally out of the water, his rate of recovery is determined by dividing his normal FT level by his Swimming Rank (rounding up). The result is the number of pulses of rest it takes him to recover each FT penalty point. (FT points lost to causes other than these five cannot be recovered in this fashion.)

Females recover FT penalty points as if they were one Swimming Rank higher than their current level.

A character has one hour to recover FT penalties; all unrecovered points after that time become normal FT losses that will have to be recovered in the normal fashion. FT penalty points are treated as lost points for all purposes until they are recovered. If a character hyperventilates for a full dive, but only dives for 70% or less of his allotted underwater time, 1 FT point lost during that dive is automatically restored at the end of the dive.

Also note that a character can exceed his TMR limit while descending, without penalty, by making a *sounding* dive. This is only possible at Swimming Rank 8 or higher. The technique is to float on the surface at 0 BCY, often while using a diving mask and snorkel to observe below. When the character wants to make an extra-rapid dive, he jackknives in the water, throws his feet into the air, and descends at TMR 3 (for males) or TMR 2 (for females). Hyperventilation cannot be used with a sounding dive.

Even the number of FT points a character has can be exceeded (as in rule 82.6), but for a character in water, this is dire danger. The character may expend "phantom" FT points up to one-half of his initial FT points (rounding down) in aquatic activity. In the pulse in which the last phantom point is expended, he immediately collapses. These phantom FT points must be "restored" by sleeping 1 hour per 2 points, and only when this is completed can the character begin restoring real FT points. (By now, FT penalty points have become normal FT losses, of course.) For

rule 82.6, paragraph 3, 1 phantom FT point equals one half-hour of exhaustion.

### Drowning

Drowning is the greatest danger a character faces in the water. Aquatic enemies may or may not be present in any given situation, but wherever there is water, there is the danger of drowning.

For game purposes, drowning is a process of Fatigue and Endurance point loss. In the pulse a character is declared to be drowning, he loses 1 FT point, and then continues to lose 1 FT point every pulse thereafter. When he has lost all FT points, he is stunned. In the following pulse, EN point loss begins at the rate of 1 point per pulse. When all EN points are gone, the character is dead.

Once drowning has begun, the process continues until it is corrected by direct action, or until the character dies.

Drowning may result from several things. Whenever a character underwater uses up all his breath time, including his extra Willpower pulses, he is declared to be drowning. Swim rate is reduced to 1/3 TMR (plus BCY ascent rate), and the character immediately makes a Willpower test to see if he panics. If he rolls equal to or less than (Willpower x 4), he retains his self-control and can continue to help himself (by releasing his weight belt if he hasn't already done so, for example). If he rolls higher, he panics and can no longer help himself.

A character who is stunned in or under the water is also declared to be drowning. He cannot recover from being stunned or panicked until after the drowning process is stopped (presuming he's rescued).

Panic may result from anything that would cause panic on land (see rule 64.1, for example). When consulting the Fright Table (44.8) for characters in water, any result from 26-95 should be considered as panic only — use the 26-76 explanation (recognizing that in water a panicked, drowning victim is virtually immobilized). All panicked victims begin to drown.

In addition, a Rank 0 Swimmer who (voluntarily or involuntarily) enters a free body of water up to neck level makes an immediate Willpower check. If no fright occurs, a further WP check is made every 30 seconds the swimmer remains in the water at that depth, or whenever an event occurs that would frighten him (such as a splash sending water over his head). If fright occurs, consult the Fright Table, with 01-20 as given and 21 + as a panic reaction.

### Rescue and recovery

To rescue a drowning victim, the rescuer must come into close contact and execute a successful restrain action (16.5) on the victim. A victim who is either stunned or not panicking presents no problems (use the PS and AG of the rescuer, x 3, only), and the victim can be pulled to safety at 1/2 TMR (if rescuer has a Swimming Rank from 1-7) or 1 TMR (if rescuer has a Swimming Rank from 8-20).

A panicked victim, however, will attempt to grapple (16.3) any rescuer who comes within range *and* sight. If the grapple action succeeds, the rescuer must attempt to break the victim's hold, or both may sink (see Buoyancy, above). To lessen this risk, two rescuers may make a combined restrain attempt on a panicked victim.

An unstunned victim may also attempt a self-rescue by using a grapple action to seize a rope, branch, floating log, bush, or some other object that is within reach and sight, and pull himself to safety. Base chance of the grapple is determined as if the object were a person with PS 0 and FT 0 (see 17.6, Strike Chance Modifiers). A panicked victim suffers a -10 penalty to his base chance.

Only when the drowning victim reaches or is brought to a place of safety — essentially, out of the water, though the GM may rule a character halfway up on a log or rock to be considered safe — can an attempt be made to end the drowning process.

Every Swimmer and Diver learns lifesaving techniques when he learns to swim, and improves them as his Swimming Rank increases. Therefore, the rescuer with the highest Swimming Rank should make the primary lifesaving attempt. The base chance for this is the total of the victim's remaining FT and EN points at the moment of the attempt, plus (the rescuer's Swimming Rank x 3). If a D100 roll is equal to or less than the base chance,

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drowning stops at once. If not, drowning continues, but further attempts may be made every pulse until the victim is saved or dies. If more than one rescuer is present, a second rescuer may assist by adding his (Swimming Rank x 2) to the base chance. (An unstunned victim who is not panicking may add his unmodified Swimming Rank to that of a single rescuer.)

An unstunned victim who has performed a self-rescue may attempt a self-save by adding his unmodified Swimming Rank to his remaining FT and EN points; a panicked victim uses only his FT and EN points. The self-save attempt may be repeated only until the character becomes stunned.

If the victim is under the Spell of Flotation (41.G-4), the extra Willpower pulses added to his breath time are increased by 50%, and his chance of resisting panic is increased by the strength of the spell (base increase of 5, plus 1 per mage's Rank). All rescue and lifesaving attempts (both by himself and others) also benefit by the strength of the spell. (Attempts by a panicked victim to grapple rescuers are *reduced* by the strength of the spell — the magic helps its target in spite of himself.)

In the pulse that a lifesaving attempt succeeds, all FT and EN losses end. Panicked victims will not resist lifesaving, though they may have resisted rescue, and panic ends in the pulse that lifesaving succeeds. Beginning with this pulse, stunned

victims may attempt to recover from stunned (see rule 19).

Once the drowning victim has been saved, recovery of FT and EN points lost due to near-drowning depends on the victim's fitness, as measured by his Swimming Rank. First, lost EN points are recovered at a rate of 2 per Rank for every six hours the victim sleeps. Once that process is completed and all EN points lost due to near-drowning are recovered, then FT points lost due to near-drowning are recovered at a rate of 2 per Rank every hour the victim rests. If no EN points were lost, FT recovery may begin at once.

New weapons and basic goods

The following items should be added to the weapons and goods lists:

*Diving knife:* 14 oz., PS 7, MD 11, base chance 50, damage modifier +1, range P (not weighted for throwing), Class A, use MC, cost 12. Skill Ranks with daggers apply.

*Diver's safety line:* 150 ft. long, 15 lbs., 15 SPs.

*Diving goggles:* 9 oz., 15 SPs.

*Diving mask:* 16 oz., 30 SPs.

*Snorkel tube:* 12 oz., 2 SPs. Used to breathe while floating facedown in water. Sounding dives will not dislodge it. Be sure to clear it of water before each use.

*Weight belts:* 5-pound type, 3 SPs; 10-pound type, 4 SPs; 15-pound type, 5 SPs. Belts have quick-loose ties and should be put on last when donning diving gear so that they can be released without trouble during emergencies.

*Flotation (air) bags:* 1-pound size, 2 SPs.

*Diver's net sack:* 8 oz., 1 SP. Since water flows through the fine, cut-resistant mesh, the sack never adds + BCY beyond whatever is placed inside. It has a drawstring closure.

*Diver's belt:* 12 oz., 4 SPs. Belt has sewn pouches for items small enough to pass through the mesh of a diver's net sack, and it also has loops for carrying tools and weapons.

*Calf sheath:* 8 oz., 2 SPs. Used for carrying a diving knife (only) at the calf; can be used on either leg.

Remember that the gear that a diver actually wears is made for underwater use and never imposes BCY or AG penalties on the wearer — except for weight belts, which affect BCY.

A final word: These rules are designed for a Mediterranean-style climate. If campaigns are to occur in cold Northern waters, be prepared to add warm clothing — long-johns, for example (of the waterproof sort) — to the basic goods list.

In real life, the hallmark of the good swimmer or diver is caution. Wisdom dictates that he knows his limits and that he doesn't go beyond them. Hopefully, that principle has come across in this article. If a Swimmer or Diver stays within his limits, he can collect all the rewards of the Deep and perhaps suffer none of its penalties. ♣



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# For a fuller background

## Heritage in the DRAGONQUEST™ game

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Sooner or later, either as a player of the DRAGONQUEST™ game or as a referee, you're going to encounter a character whose background gives you considerable pause: a halfling member of the greater nobility, perhaps, or an elf whose family are peasants — or maybe a fire giant descended from pirates.

To be sure, in the Heritage section of the rules (Section 8), it states that for nonhumans, the social status role will give the equivalent ranking in human society, and that the referee and the player should work out the details of the character's standing in his or her own society. Not to put too fine a point on it, poppycock. The player typically doesn't know enough about the campaign background to boldly make statements concerning the society of the nonhuman races, and the referee — particularly if confronted by a large and/or changing cast of players — very likely doesn't have the time to give lectures on culture to individual players.

A faster, more efficient way to preclude some of the odder combinations of race and heritage is to revise the Social Status Table (8.1) to key it by race. Incidentally, this provides a chance to add a couple of common-in-fiction backgrounds that got left off. The result is Table 8.1b, which accompanies this article. This also calls for some minor modifications to the Order of Birth Table (8.2), as well as the Money Multiplier. And as long as I've got everyone's attention, we'll add something new: an Experience Modifier. (This should not be confused with the Experience Multiple from 6.3.) When the player is consulting Table 8.5 to determine the character's initial allotment of experience points, that allotment should be multiplied by the Experience Modifier listed in Table 8.2b (also contained herein). This reflects the fact that people growing up in different backgrounds will tend to learn more or less the ways of the world because of those backgrounds.

One last thing: I've always been troubled by the image of, say, the triumphant entry of the Prince into his realm, accompanied by the throng madly screaming, "Long live the Greater Nobility!" It seems like there should be some titles to go along with Greater and Lesser Noble social classes. And so, if your character is of those social classes, consult Table 8.9 (Noble Ranks) and roll 1D10 to determine the exact title you come with. The title is assumed to be inactive, for whatever reason: plague, war, exile, poor prospects, and so forth. If both

TABLE 8.1b

Social Class	Human	Halfling	Elf	Dwarf	Orc	Giant	Shape Changer
Barbarian	01-10	—	—	—	01-20	01-20	01-15
Slave	11-18	01-05	—	01-05	21-30	—	16-25
Woods Dweller	—	—	0 1 - 4 5	—	—	—	—
Miner	—	—	—	06-35	—	—	—
Peasant	19-25	06-15	—	—	31-40	21-30	26-35
Farmer	26-31	16-35	—	—	—	31-50	35-45
Townsmen	32-38	36-55	—	36-40	—	—	—
Soldier	39-46	—	—	41-50	41-50	—	—
Craftsman	47-53	56-75	46-65	51-65	—	51-65	—
Adventurer	54-63	76-85	66-85	66-75	51-60	66-75	46-65
Bandit	64-70	—	—	76-80	61-75	76-90	66-80
Pirate	71-77	—	—	—	76-85	—	81-85
Merchant	78-84	86-95	—	81-85	86-95	—	86-95
Merchant Prince	85-88	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lesser Nobility	89-97	96-00	86-95	86-95	96-00	91-95	96-00
Greater Nobility	98-00	—	96-00	96-00	—	96-00	—

TABLE 8.2b

Social Class	Money	Experience	Bastard	Legitimate	First
Barbarian	2	1.2	01-10	11-85	86-00
Slave	1	0.9	01-25	26-95	96-00
Woods Dweller	4	1.0	01-10	11-80	81-00
Miner	7	1.0	01-05	06-85	86-00
Peasant	2	0.8	01-30	31-85	86-00
Farmer	4	0.9	01-17	18-81	82-00
Townsmen	5	1.0	01-13	14-92	93-00
Soldier	5	1.1	01-13	14-92	93-00
Craftsman	5	1.0	01-13	14-92	93-00
Adventurer	5	1.2	01-13	14-92	93-00
Bandit	8	1.2	01-15	16-90	91-00
Pirate	8	1.2	01-15	16-90	91-00
Merchant	6	1.0	01-20	21-89	90-00
Merchant Prince	10	0.9	01-24	25-87	88-00
Lesser Nobility	5	0.8	01-27	28-96	97-00
Greater Nobility	10	0.7	01-35	36-98	99-00

TABLE 8.9

Noble Titles	Roll	Lesser Noble	Greater Noble.
1-5 Knight (Sir/ Lady)			Marques (Marchioness)
6-8 Baron (-ess)			Duke (Duchess)
9-10 Count (-ess)			Prince (-ss)

the player and the referee are agreeable, adventures might be built around an attempt to regain the lands and status of the title.

The upshot of all these changes should be that your DRAGONQUEST game characters will be more clearly positioned with respect to the society they'll probably be outcasts from anyway. . . .