

# RUNE QUEST III



CORE RULEBOOK





# RuneQuest II

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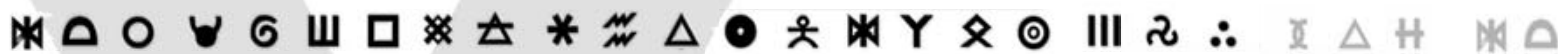


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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *RuneQuest III!*

What you hold is a fully revised and updated edition of the classic game system, originally released in 1978 and republished by Mongoose Publishing in 2006. *RuneQuest* is a complete roleplaying game, enabling adventures in fantasy landscapes but not limited to them. The rules presented in this volume can be tailored to a wide variety of settings and genres although the focus is primarily on gritty fantasy with a heroic feel.

*RuneQuest* has traditionally been associated with the world of *Glorantha*, Greg Stafford's epic masterpiece of mythic world creation that has been steadily developed and expanded since 1966. Greg created *Glorantha* as a way of exploring myth and heroism, along with the consequences of both, but *Glorantha* has become something far more than that. It is one of the most extensive and detailed roleplaying worlds ever devised and that tradition continues with the support of *RuneQuest* in this latest edition.

Yet *RuneQuest* is not confined to just one world: the rules are characterised by flexibility and intuition, permitting Games Masters, players and their Adventurers to explore just about any milieu they care to. The game focuses on characters and their capabilities, grounding everything from an adventuring perspective. Using *RuneQuest* as the basis, many different settings and worlds are possible – all it takes is imagination.

## NEW TO ROLEPLAYING?

Although *RuneQuest* is by no means an overly complex game, it is assumed that those reading this book have played a roleplaying game before and understand the key concepts: players control characters and a Referee or Games Master articulates the story, the action and adjudicates the results. So, whilst advice for both players and Games Masters is included throughout these rules, in the form of examples, clearly explained rules and so forth, it is written from the standpoint of a certain degree of roleplaying familiarity and experience.

## NEW TO RUNEQUEST?

It is expected that many old hands will be reading this book but, if you are new to *RuneQuest* as a system, then welcome indeed. *RuneQuest's* concepts and rules are easy to understand and implement with a series of unified mechanics underpinning the separate elements of character creation, combat and magic. Most character actions are based around a percentile skill or ability with a roll equal to, or below, the value indicating success. Of course different rules and circumstances add a certain degree of sophistication and complexity but at its heart *RuneQuest* is a very simple, logical system that can be grasped from a glance at the character sheet and a scan through these rules.

The game's design also incorporates new thinking that complements many tried and tested mechanics. This approach offers players a vast degree of control over what their characters do and how they do it. Many of the choices and possibilities are subtle: players and Games Masters will find that, with a little thought and creativity, all manner of wonderful opportunities and complexities present themselves whilst still being supported by the rules framework. *RuneQuest* is completely adaptable and its intuitive rules mean that creating new rules or changing existing ones, whether to support an individual style of play or a particular setting, is easy to do and accommodate.

## YOUR RUNEQUEST WILL VARY

These rules offer a detailed roleplaying framework and most players and Games Masters will use them as presented. However, nothing is cast in stone. If a rule does not suit you, change or ignore it. Your game is paramount. It is impossible, when designing a game, to take into account every situation, notion or idea that will present itself during play. However, the framework is here to support informed decision making and to allow you to make *RuneQuest* your own, unique rules set.

Experiment, improvise and adapt – that is the *RuneQuest* way!



CHAPTER 1:

# ADVENTURER CREATION

*R*uneQuest characters are called *Adventurers* and this chapter explains how they are created. Every player in *RuneQuest* creates and controls at least one Adventurer and it is through their Adventurer that players explore the game world around them. Adventurers, as their name suggests, are seeking adventure, glory and riches; they are prepared to engage in feats and endeavours that the common populace shy away from. Adventurers in *RuneQuest* are heroes in the making; the ones who, in time, might become the subjects of stories, legends and myths of their own.

## ADVENTURER OVERVIEW

Every Adventurer is comprised of certain game statistics that describe the character and what he is capable of. These statistics are as follows:

**Characteristics** – Seven characteristics define an Adventurer: Strength, Constitution, Size, Intelligence, Power, Dexterity and Charisma. These are physical and mental attributes that define how strong, resilient, large, clever, quick and charismatic the Adventurer is. From these seven characteristics all other game statistics flow.

**Attributes** – Derived from the seven characteristics, attributes are secondary statistics that provide modifiers for certain actions or determine particular capabilities. Each is described in more detail later in this chapter but the attributes are: Combat Actions, Damage Modifier, Improvement Roll Modifier, Hit Points, Magic Points, Strike Rank and Movement.

**Skills** – Skills are the engine room of a *RuneQuest* Adventurer. Skills are particular talents, abilities, capabilities and professional skills that are shaped by an Adventurer's culture, the profession he has chosen for himself and the way he has chosen to develop his interests and competencies. Skills are divided into Common



Loren Fetterman



and Advanced; Common skills are common to all Adventurers. Advanced skills differ from one Adventurer to another, reflecting culture, profession and individual interests. However all skills work in the same way and have starting values derived from a combination, or multiple, of the seven characteristics.

**Community** – No man is an island. Even before your Adventurer has set forth on his career as a potential hero, he has been supported by family, friends and allies. He may also have made valuable contacts, gained a few rivals and perhaps even some enemies. An Adventurer's Community is a summary of those people he knows and may be able to call upon in the future – or who may call upon him.

**Magic, Weapons, Equipment** and so on – In addition to these game statistics every Adventurer has additional information relating to what magic they know (if any), weapons they are experienced in using, equipment they carry and other pertinent information about the Adventurer in the here and now. These elements are introduced at the appropriate points in the Adventurer Creation process and later in this book.

On page 196 is a sample *RuneQuest* Adventurer sheet. It has sections for all the information described here, and more, and is used during play as a record of your Adventurer's current status. Various statistics – skills, for example, and Hit Points – will change frequently during the game, so complete the Adventurer sheet in pencil and keep an eraser handy to make changes as they occur.

Permission is granted to make copies of the *RuneQuest* Adventurer Sheet for personal use. A downloadable copy can be found at [www.mongoosepublishing.com](http://www.mongoosepublishing.com).

## CHARACTERISTICS

Every Adventurer, creature, monster and Non-Player Character in *RuneQuest* is defined by the same seven characteristics. These are the building blocks for every other aspect of a *RuneQuest* character, describing their physical, mental and spiritual status. The higher the figure, for a characteristic, the better. Low scores in characteristics tend to mean weakness or ill-health – although much depends on the race that the characteristics describe; some races have a low statistical range simply due to their natural physiology so a low score in a characteristic might indicate a perfectly normal state of existence. A dwarf, for example, is always likely to have a lower SIZ than a human.

For your first Adventurer it is recommended that you create a human. Other races are available and because all creatures in *RuneQuest* are defined in the same way, it means that just about any race or creature type can be created as an Adventurer. Humans, however, are the easiest to understand and the wisest choice for a new Adventurer. Human characteristics range between 3 and 21 although the upper limit for a starting Adventurer is likely to be 18.

The Characteristics, and their abbreviations, are as follows:

### Strength (STR)

Strength is a measure of an Adventurer's raw muscle power. It acts as an indicator of how much someone can lift, push or pull, or how tightly he grasps something. Strength determines if an Adventurer can wield the heaviest hand weapons at full ability. It is also a component in calculating the damage modifier, which may increase the effect of physical attacks. Human STR cannot naturally exceed 21. If an Adventurer is reduced to zero Strength for any reason he lacks the ability to move and becomes bed-ridden until STR improves somehow (through natural healing or magic, for example).

### Constitution (CON)

Constitution measures the health and vitality of an Adventurer and helps to determine how much physical damage he can sustain. Adventurers with a high CON are likely to have more Hit Points meaning that they can soak-up more damage during combat. CON also determines how long it takes before an Adventurer starts to feel the effects of fatigue and weariness. Human CON cannot naturally exceed 21. If CON is reduced to zero then the Adventurer dies.

### Size (SIZ)

Size represents the average of an Adventurer's mass. SIZ determines if an Adventurer can see over something, or fit through a small opening. SIZ also helps calculate the Adventurer's Hit Points and damage bonus. Human SIZ cannot naturally be higher than 21. If SIZ is reduced to zero it results in death.

### Intelligence (INT)

INT represents an Adventurer's capacity for learning, rationalising and analysis. It is less a measure of cleverness and more how the Adventurer applies what he knows either practically or analytically. INT affects many other game statistics and is important if the Adventurer is to be a competent magician. Human INT cannot naturally exceed 21. If, somehow, INT reaches zero, then the Adventurer is reduced to a witless, drooling idiot until INT is restored in some form.

INT is also used as a bonus when rolling to improve skills.

### Power (POW)

A somewhat abstract characteristic, POW represents the force of both an Adventurer's soul and his innate magical and spiritual presence. The more Power an Adventurer has, the greater his or her force of will, confidence and capacity for magic. Human POW cannot naturally exceed 21. POW can also be pledged to show devotion to the gods and in exchange for certain divine gifts or benefits. If POW is reduced to zero, the Adventurer usually dies – either completely sapped of his soul or his spirit has been taken into the gods' care. However, depending on circumstances characters can exist with zero POW – but may have ceased to be human altogether.







## Dexterity (DEX)

A measure of physical co-ordination, agility, suppleness and nimbleness, DEX is an important component in many physical skills. A decent DEX represents someone who is quick, keen of eye and fleet of movement. DEX determines how often in a fight an Adventurer can strike or defend himself – an important consideration if he is outnumbered or the skill of his foes is perhaps greater than his own. Human DEX cannot naturally exceed 21. If it is reduced to zero, the Adventurer is paralysed completely and cannot move in any way until DEX is recovered in some way (through healing or magic, for instance).

## Charisma (CHA)

Charisma measures the force of personality. Adventurers with a high CHA have the ability to make friends easily, find themselves the focus of attention when it is needed (and sometimes when not) and persuade others to do things. Adventurers with a low CHA tend not to be noticed so readily or have a hard time making themselves heard. Charisma is not a measure of how beautiful or handsome an Adventurer is; it is, instead, an indicator of confidence and the ability to express one's self. Human CHA has no upper limit although it is rare for it to exceed 21. If reduced to zero in any way, then the Adventurer has become completely uncommunicative and emotionless – a shell of a person.

CHA also influences the number of Improvement Rolls the Adventurer has when opportunities for skill and characteristic improvements come around.

## Determining Characteristics

An Adventurer's characteristics can be determined in one of several ways. The Games Master will decide which way is to be used.

### Random Roll, In Order

Roll 3D6 for STR, CON, POW, DEX and CHA taking each dice roll result as it comes. For INT and SIZ roll 2D6+6 again, taking the rolled results.

### Random Roll, Assign

Roll 3D6 five times and choose which result will be allocated to which characteristic from STR, CON, POW, DEX and CHA. Next, roll 2D6+6 twice and decide which score will be allocated to INT and which to SIZ.

### Points Build

Some players prefer not to roll dice to determine the characteristics for their Adventurer, either because they do not like leaving their character to chance or because they have a certain character type and certain characteristic values in mind. This option allows the players to design their character by assigning a number of points to their characteristics from a pool of Characteristic Design Points.

## Characteristic Values - Optional Rule

In both Random Roll options Games Masters may wish to allow one, or both, of the following options:

- \* Re-roll any result of 6 or less
- \* Allow the player to take up to two points from one characteristic and assign them to another. This swap may only be done once and neither SIZ nor INT can benefit from the swap. Furthermore, no characteristic can be allowed to fall below 3 or exceed 18.

- \* Players have 80 Characteristic Design Points.
- \* 1 point in a characteristic costs 1 Design Point.
- \* Characteristics cannot be *lower* than 6 or *greater* than 18.
- \* All Characteristic Design Points must be used in the design process. Points cannot be held over or used for anything else.

Using the Points Build system, some players may want to design an Adventurer with characteristics that exceed 18 and may go as high as 21. Games Masters may allow this as an option but if so, every characteristic point above 18 costs 2 Characteristic Design Points to buy. So, if a player wanted to have an Adventurer with STR 20, it would cost 22 Design Points: 18 points for STR 18 and then a further 4 points to raise STR 18 to STR 20.

## ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are a series of game statistics that are derived from the Adventurer's characteristic scores. Attributes represent capabilities that the Adventurer draws upon during the game to help resolve certain actions and outcomes. The attributes are as follows:

### Age

*RuneQuest* Adventurers start the game at 16+1D4 years of age, so between the ages of 17 and 20.

Their life experiences are most likely confined to the communities of their births and they have yet to experience the wider world. It is permissible for Adventurers to be older and more experienced than the novices the Adventurer Creation rules generate, and the rules for Experienced Adventurers are given on page 20 towards the end of this chapter. It is up to the Games Master to decide if players start the game with more experienced Adventurers or not.



## Edric the Restless - An Example Adventurer

*Throughout RuneQuest we will follow the progress of Edric the Restless: from initial dice rolls right through to his career in a Rune Cult. We begin at the beginning: with a blank character sheet, a pencil and some dice.*

*The Games Master has decided that Adventurers in his campaign will be rolled using the Random Assign method. Edric's player must therefore roll 3D6 five times, noting the results, and 2D6+6 twice, again, noting the outcomes.*

*For the 3D6 rolls he gets the following: 10, 12, 13, 7 and 14. For the two 2D6+6 rolls he gets 16 and 14.*

*Edric's player decides to allocate the results as follows: STR 12, CON 7, SIZ 14, INT 16, POW 14, DEX 13, CHA 10.*

*Edric is around the human average for Strength. He is no weight-lifter but neither is he a weakling. With CON 7, Edric most likely suffers from coughs, sneezes and winter chills. He might have suffered an illness as a young child that has left his body weakened, or suffered some childhood injury that did not heal properly. SIZ 14 indicates Edric is above average height. He stands taller than the other boys in his village and is stockier maybe. With INT 16 - Edric is smart. He is observant, good at committing things to memory and has the ability to analyse problems and solve them quickly. His POW of 14 means his spirit is strong; with an above average Power score he will find working magic easier and will be noticeable to the gods who watch over his village. Edric's DEX 13 is above average, so he is pretty agile and fast. He is noted for accuracy in various village games, such as horseshoe throwing. Finally, CHA 10 is about average: Edric is personable but not especially so. People know who Edric is but he does not stand out from the crowd.*

### Edric's Saga

*Rolling 1D4 and adding the result to 16 we find that Edric begins the game at 20 years of age.*

## Combat Actions

Adventurers frequently get into fights - from bar-room brawls, through duels of honour, to tense melees with vile monsters and up to pitched battles in the midst of a war surrounded by thousands of comrades.

Combat Actions, abbreviated to CA, are the number of times that an Adventurer can act to either attack an enemy, defend himself from attack or perform some other action during battle.

The number of CA an Adventurer has during a Combat Round (a period of time explained later in this book) is dependent on his DEX and INT. Add together DEX and INT and divide the result by 2 (rounding up); then consult the Combat Actions table.

### Combat Actions

Average of DEX and INT	Combat Actions
6 or less	1
7-12	2
13-18	3
For every additional 6 points	+1

### Edric's Saga

*Edric's DEX of 13 and INT of 16, added together and divided by 2, gives him 3 CA. In a fight, Edric is going to be confident and fast enough to act several times - an advantage over slower opponents.*

## Damage Modifier

Bigger and stronger Adventurers are able to hit harder than smaller, weaker ones. The Damage Modifier is a dice roll that is made in addition to the damage rolled for a weapon. For example, an Adventurer with a Damage Modifier of +1D4 rolls a four-sided dice alongside the damage for the sword he is using and adds it to the total.

To calculate the Adventurer's Damage Modifier, add together the scores for STR and SIZ and look up the result on the Damage Modifier table.

### Damage Modifier

STR + SIZ	Damage Modifier
1-5	-1D8
6-10	-1D6
11-15	-1D4
16-20	-1D2
21-25	+0
26-30	+1D2
31-35	+1D4
36-40	+1D6
41-45	+1D8
46-50	+1D10
51-60	+1D12
61-70	+2D6
71-80	+2D8
81-90	+2D10
91-100	+2D12

Note that the Damage Modifier can be negative. If an Adventurer is physically small and weak he may not have the strength, leverage and reach to swing a weapon and strike to its full damage potential. Hence, a negative Damage Modifier is still rolled but



the result is subtracted from the weapon's damage total. If the Damage Modifier reduces a weapon's damage to zero or a negative number, then no damage has been inflicted on that occasion.

### Edric's Saga

*Edric's STR 12 and SIZ 14 equal 26, which gives him +1D2 as a Damage Modifier. His above-average SIZ means that Edric can gain more leverage when swinging with a weapon, or place more weight behind it when thrusting, which improves its damage.*

## Hit Points

In *RuneQuest* the body of every creature – human, animal and monster – is divided into a number of Hit Locations: each Hit Location has a number of Hit Points. Whenever a weapon strikes or a wound is taken, the place where it hits or where the wound affects is determined and damage applied to the Hit Points for that location.

Humans have seven Hit Locations: Head, Chest, Abdomen, Right Arm, Left Arm, Right Leg and Left Leg. The number of Hit Points each Hit Location has is based on CON and SIZ. Add the Adventurer's CON and SIZ scores together and cross reference the result on the Hit Points per Location table.

### Edric's Saga

*With a CON of 7 and SIZ of 14 we know that Edric is big but not necessarily in the best of shape. CON+SIZ gives a result of 21 which, cross referenced on the Hit Points per Location table gives the following Hit Points per location: Right and Left Leg: 5; Right and Left Arm: 4; Abdomen: 6; Chest: 7; and Head: 5*

*Edric's bulk and body mass helps compensate for his somewhat flimsy constitution and Edric has reasonable Hit Point scores in each location.*

## Improvement Roll Modifier

At the end of a *RuneQuest* story, Adventurers are given the opportunity to improve their Adventurer's skills and characteristics.

The CHA score provides either a penalty or a bonus to the number of Improvement Rolls an Adventurer has (see Adventurer Advancement starting on page 49); this reflects the relationship the character has with his community, peers and colleagues, or, if CHA is particularly low, the difficulty of attempting to improve one's capabilities without the assistance of others.

### Improvement Roll Modifier

CHA	Improvement Roll Modifier
6 or less	-1
7 - 12	0
13 - 18	+1
For every additional 6 points of CHA	+1

### Edric's Saga

*Edric's CHA of 10 means that he gains no Improvement Roll modifier when it comes to improving his skills and characteristics; thus, if the Games Master allocates three Improvement Rolls to the Adventurers, Edric takes advantage of all three. Had his CHA been higher though – say 15 – he would gain an additional Improvement Roll. Conversely, if his CHA was 6 or less, he would have one roll fewer than the number granted by the Games Master.*

## Magic Points

Magic Points represent a pool of points that are used to fuel spells and other magical effects. Usually the Magic Point total is equal to the Adventurer's POW but this can change depending on whether or not an Adventurer has dedicated any of his POW to the worship of a god. This is explained in more detail later in the book, so, for now, Magic Points are equal to the Adventurer's POW characteristic.

### Hit Points per Location

Location	CON + SIZ								
	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	
Each Leg	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	+1
Abdomen	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	+1
Chest	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	+1
Each Arm	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	+1
Head	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	+1





JM Ringuet

Whenever Magic Points are used to power a spell, the total is temporarily reduced by the amount used. The Magic Point total cannot fall below zero. Using all one's Magic Points takes its toll on the body's physical reserves; if an Adventurer reaches zero Magic Points he must make a successful Resilience roll (see Game System, page 48 for more on skill rolls) to remain conscious.

If the Resilience roll is successful, he gains a level of Fatigue (see page 61 for more on how Fatigue works); if he fails it and falls unconscious, he remains that way for a number of minutes equal to his CON subtracted from 21.

Expended Magic Points normally recover after a sufficient period of rest. See page 105.

### Edric's Saga

With POW 14 Edric has 14 Magic Points. Edric is interested in becoming active in one of the religions of his community and will, in the future, dedicate some of his POW to his god to show his devotion and this will reduce his available Magic Points but, for now, his Magic Points are the same as his POW.

## Movement

Human Adventurers have a base Movement rate of eight metres per Combat Round. Movement is described in more detail in the Game System chapter.

## Strike Rank

How frequently an Adventurer acts in combat is defined by Combat Actions. How *quickly* he acts is defined by Strike Rank. Strike Rank is described in more detail in the Combat chapter but essentially, the higher an Adventurer's Strike Rank the quicker he acts in a Combat Round.

Strike Rank is based on two components and is calculated as follows:

- \* Add together SIZ, INT and DEX and divide the result by three (rounding up). An Adventurer's speed of action is a combination of his stature, ability to weigh-up his opponents and spot potential openings and opportunities, and his overall speed and quickness of action. Although SIZ is generally an indication of mass, rather than height, reach and stature, larger creatures tend to have a greater reach than smaller ones.
- \* Subtract the Strike Rank penalty incurred through wearing armour. This is described in more detail on page 11 but Adventurers who are wearing armour of any kind tend to have their movements restricted and have to handle the additional weight of their protection; this slows down the ability to react in a combat situation. The Strike Rank penalty for armour is the total amount of Armour Points the Adventurer is carrying, divided by 5 (rounded up).

Natural armour – such as a dragon's scales – does not inflict a Strike Rank penalty. Similarly, armour provided by some magic spells does not inflict a Strike Rank penalty either.

### Edric's Saga

Taking Edric's SIZ of 14, INT of 16 and DEX of 13, adding them together and dividing by three gives him a Strike Rank of 15 ( $(16+14+13) = 43/3 = 14.3$ , rounded up to 15).

Edric has also inherited his grandfather's leather jerkin, which covers his chest and abdomen and gives 2 Armour points of protection to both Hit Locations. This means Edric is carrying 4 points of armour and suffers a Strike Rank penalty because of it. 4 divided by 5 gives a result of 0.8 which is rounded up to 1. Edric's Strike Rank of 15 is therefore reduced to 14, reflecting the encumbrance of the leather armour.



## COMMON SKILLS

Every Adventurer has a range of Common skills allowing him to perform a variety of actions with varying degrees of expertise. These are detailed more fully in the Skills chapter. At this point of Adventurer creation, players will only need to know the base values of each Common skill.

The basic score of each Common skill is determined by the sum of two characteristics or a multiple of a single characteristic. The value represents the Adventurer's innate competence in a given area, along with any training he has received as part of his formative years.

The Common Skills table shows how the basic values are calculated. The score represents the percentage chance of success for a skill; so, an Athletics score of 25 is expressed as 25%. How skill percentages work, and each Common Skill's full description, is given in the Skills chapter.

### Common Skills

Common Skills	Basic Percentage
Athletics	STR+DEX
Brawn	STR+SIZ
Culture (Own)	INT x2
Dance	DEX+CHA
Drive	DEX+POW
Evade	DEX x2
Evaluate	INT+CHA
First Aid	INT+DEX
Influence	CHA x2
Insight	INT+POW
Lore (Regional)	INT x2
Perception	INT+POW
Persistence	POW x2
Resilience	CON x2
Ride	DEX+POW
Sing	CHA+POW
Sleight	DEX+CHA
Stealth	DEX+INT
Swim	STR+CON
Unarmed	STR+DEX

Every Adventurer possesses the skills listed in the Common Skills table; however there are three other categories of skills that, whilst considered to be Common, are not automatically listed: Close Combat styles, Ranged Combat styles and Common Magic. These skills, and their basic values, are defined in the following table but they do not automatically appear in the Common Skills section of the *RuneQuest* Adventurer Sheet.

Skills	Basic Percentage
Each Close Combat style	STR+DEX
Each Ranged Combat style	DEX x2
Common Magic	POW+CHA

Whilst all Gloranthan Adventurers have some magic, other *RuneQuest* settings may not grant or use Common Magic or it may be restricted to certain professions.

### Edric's Saga

*Edric's basic scores in each of the Common skills are as follows:*

*Athletics 25%, Brawn 26%, Common Magic 24%, Culture (Own) 32%, Dance 23%, Driving 27%, Evade 26%, Evaluate 26%, First Aid 29%, Influence 20%, Insight 30%, Lore (Regional) 32%, Perception 30%, Persistence 28%, Ranged Combat 26%, Resilience 14%, Ride 27%, Sing 24%, Sleight 23%, Stealth 29%, Swim 19%, Unarmed 25%.*

*Bear in mind that these are Edric's starting skill values reflecting his natural abilities and competencies: many of these areas will improve as the Adventurer Creation process continues.*

## PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

The next stage of creating an Adventurer is to determine the character's previous experience. Each Adventurer starts the game between the ages of 17 and 20, and he or she was most likely considered an adult at age 14 or 15, depending on the culture. Therefore the Adventurer has already had many years-worth of learning and experience that needs to be reflected in his skills: this includes skills developed within the Adventurer's culture and those skills developed as part of professional training.

Previous experience therefore has three steps. First the player must pick the Adventurer's **cultural background**, which is a reflection of the kind of cultural upbringing the Adventurer has had. This provides certain starting skill bonuses reflecting this upbringing.

Second, the player must pick a **profession** and gain further skills and skill bonuses associated with that profession. The list of professions provided is considered appropriate to an Adventurer, however, it is entirely possible that an Adventurer might be a tailor, rather than a sailor and the appropriate skills for that kind of profession will have to be determined between the player and Games Master.



Third, the player determines and allocates the Adventurer's **Free Skill Points**. These represent the remainder of the Adventurer's experience outside of his upbringing and profession.

## Cultural Background

*RuneQuest* Adventurers come from one of four cultural backgrounds:

- \* Barbarian
- \* Civilised
- \* Nomad
- \* Primitive

Players are free to choose which background their Adventurer belongs to although Games Masters may insist that all Adventurers in a group come from the same cultural background. This helps bring a group of Adventurers together, provides opportunities for friendships and community support to develop and provides a strong reason to explain why these different characters are adventuring together.

However it is not uncommon for Adventurers in the same group to come from very different cultural backgrounds and, where this is the case, a good variety of skills and magic gives the adventuring group flexibility and interest.

A description of each cultural background follows and includes a view of the culture from the perspective of one of its members. Included in the description is a list of skill bonuses and new skills appropriate to that culture.

Players should apply the skill bonuses immediately to the Common skills on their Adventurer Sheet and add the additional new skills, known as Advanced Skills, to the appropriate section of the sheet. In many cases a cultural background lists a range of skills and invites the player to pick one, or more, that will gain a bonus: in this way players from the same cultural background can ensure that their Adventurers are different in the areas they have developed.



Jason Banditt Adams



## Barbarian

Tribal in nature, barbarians tend to shun civilisation, viewing those who live in towns and cities as weak and corrupt. They are much closer to nature and live as one with the land, hunting and tending to their farms far out in the wilderness. Most are adept in the use of weaponry as they must face many dangers throughout their lives. Many have extensive boating or animal handling/riding skills.

Common Skill Bonuses	Combat Styles	Advanced Skills	Starting Money
All barbarian Adventurers gain the following bonuses: +30% to <i>Culture (Own) and Lore (Regional)</i> +10% to <i>Athletics and Resilience</i> +5% to <i>Brawn, Perception, Ride and Stealth</i>	Barbarian Adventurers choose three Combat Styles from the following, and gain a +10% bonus to each: <i>2H Axe, 2H Hammer, 2H Spear, Axe and Shield, Blowgun, Bow, Dagger, Hammer and Shield, Spear and Shield, Staff, 1H Sword, Sword and Shield, Unarmed</i>	All barbarian Adventurers gain the following Advanced Skills: <i>Language (Native) +50%, Survival</i>  In addition, barbarians choose one Advanced Skill from the following: <i>Craft (any), Lore (any), Play Instrument, Track</i>	Barbarians begin the game with 4D6 x20 silver pieces.

## Civilised

Civilised Adventurers hail from an urban culture, which includes a village, town or city that is part of a wider network of similar settlements. In a civilised culture, education is becoming a right, not a privilege and the skills of the civilised Adventurer reflect this. However, he may be lacking in some of the skills that Adventurers from other backgrounds will depend upon for survival in a harsh world.

Common Skill Bonuses	Combat Styles	Advanced Skills	Starting Money
All civilised Adventurers gain the following bonuses: +30% to <i>Culture (Own) and Lore (Regional)</i> +20% to <i>Evaluate and Influence</i>	Civilised Adventurers choose one Combat Style from the following, and gain a +10% bonus: <i>2H Spear, 2H Sword, Bow, Crossbow, Dagger, Polearm, Rapier, Spear and Shield, Spear, Sword and Shield</i>	All civilised Adventurers gain the following Advanced Skills: <i>Courtesy, Language (Native) +50%</i>  In addition, civilised Adventurers choose three Advanced Skills from the following: <i>Art (any), Craft (any), Language (any), Lore (any), Mechanisms, Play Instrument, Streetwise</i>	Civilised Adventurers begin the game with 4D6 x75 silver pieces

## Nomad

Nomadic people are constantly on the move, with no home and hearth to call their own. They may move aimlessly about, or they may have several camps they move to and from throughout the year. With no crops and few herd animals of their own, nomads are adept at surviving on what they can quickly and easily scavenge from the land.

Common Skill Bonuses	Combat Styles	Advanced Skills	Starting Money
All nomad Adventurers gain the following bonuses: +10% to <i>Athletics, Perception, Resilience and Stealth</i> +30% to <i>Culture (Own) and Lore (Regional)</i> +10% to <i>ONE of either Brawn, Drive, Ride or Swim</i>	Nomad Adventurers choose two Combat Styles from the following, and gain a +10% bonus to each: <i>2H Axe, 2H Hammer, 2H Spear, Axe and Shield, Blowgun, Bow, Dagger, Hammer and Shield, Sling, Spear and Shield, Spear.</i>	All nomad Adventurers gain the following Advanced Skills: <i>Language (Native) +50%, Survival</i>  In addition, nomad Adventurers choose one Advanced Skill from the following: <i>Boating, Craft (any), Language (any), Lore (any), Play Instrument, Track</i>	Nomad Adventurers begin the game with 4D6 x20 silver pieces



## Primitive

People of other cultures commonly dismiss primitive people as little more than animals. While mostly prejudice, it is true that primitive peoples have not mastered the technology that so many other cultures take for granted, as they still rely on flint spears and arrows and they are highly skilled at the basic knowledge needed for survival in the wild.

Common Skill Bonuses	Combat Styles	Advanced Skills	Starting Money
All primitive Adventurers gain the following bonuses:  +15% to <i>Athletics, Perception, Resilience and Stealth</i> +30% to <i>Culture (Own) and Lore (Regional)</i>	Primitive Adventurers choose one Combat Style from the following, and gain a +10% bonus.  <i>1H Axe, 1H Hammer, 1H Spear, 2H Hammer, Blowgun, Bow, Dagger, Sling, Spear and Shield</i>	All primitive Adventurers gain the following Advanced Skills:  <i>Language (Native) +50%, Survival, Track</i>	Primitive Adventurers begin the game with 4D6 x10 silver pieces.

### Edric's Saga

The campaign Edric will be joining is set in Glorantha, during its Second Age. The Games Master advises the players that he would like all the Adventurers to come from the same cultural background but that they can choose which background that will be. After some discussion the players decide that they will all play members of the same clan living in the area of Glorantha known as Ralios. This means that either Barbarian or Nomad would be a good fit for the region and the players settle on Barbarian. Edric's player enters this on his Adventurer sheet.

Running through the skill bonuses and options, Edric's adjusted Common skills now look like this:

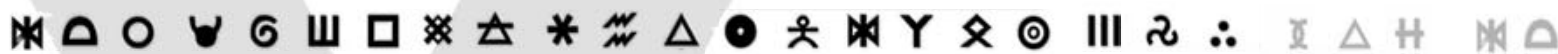
*Athletics 35% Brawn 31% Culture (Own) 62%, Lore (Regional) 62%, Perception 35%, Resilience 24%, Ride 32%, Stealth 34%.*

Edric also gets to choose three Combat Styles gaining a +10% bonus to each. He chooses *Spear and Shield, Dagger and Sling*. *Spear and Shield, and Dagger*, are both Close Combat styles, whilst *Sling* is a Ranged Combat style. His Close Combat skills start at STR+DEX, which for Edric is 25%, and Ranged Combat skills start at DEX x2, which is 26%. With his barbarian 10% bonus Edric's weapon skills are therefore *Spear and Shield 35%, Dagger 35%, Sling 36%*.

Edric also gains three Advanced Skills. These need to be written onto his Adventurer Sheet as Advanced Skills vary from one character to another and are therefore not listed. He gains *Language (Native)* at its starting value and a +50% bonus; he also gains *Survival* at its starting percentage. Additionally he must choose one particular Advanced Skill from the Barbarian Cultural Background list: Edric goes for *Lore (Orlanth the Dragon)*. He knows that there are Dragon Worshippers in Ralios and the idea of worshipping Dragons intrigues him. The Games Master agrees that this is a good choice of Advanced Skill and it is entered into his Adventurer Sheet along with the others.

Edric checks on the Basic Values for his Advanced Skills and notes down the percentages. These are: *Language (Native) (INT+CHA) 26%+50% = 76%; Survival (POW+CON) = 21%; Lore (Orlanth the Dragon) (INT x2) = 32%*





## Professions

Every *RuneQuest* Adventurer starts the game having followed a profession. The profession he chooses may not necessarily be the one he continues to follow as he begins his adventuring life but it is the career he embarked on as part of the transition to adulthood and it further defines his skill development. The professions available are dependent on the cultural background; in some cultures the list of available professions is quite narrow because the needs of the community are straightforward and cultural traditions will push young adults along a certain path. In others, the list is more diverse, reflecting a more complex community and society with wider needs or cultural traditions that have diversified over the centuries.

Players should therefore examine the list of professions available to them based on the cultural background chosen in the previous stage of Previous Experience. Like the cultural background the profession offers bonuses to Common Skills and access to new Advanced Skills. These are applied to the Adventurer Sheet immediately.

Some professions also introduce Magical Skills. These Magical Skills are described in the Skills chapter, beginning on page 30.

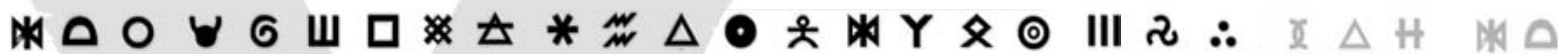
If a profession duplicates an Advanced Skill gained through the cultural background (or the skill is offered as an Advanced Skill option and the player chooses it again) then the character gains a +10% bonus to it.

### Professions

Profession	Cultural Background	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills	Magic
Acrobat	Barbarian, Civilised	Athletics +15%, Evade +15%, Sleight +10%	Acrobatics	—
Alchemist	Civilised	Evaluate +10%, First Aid +10%	Lore (Alchemy)	Manipulate, Sorcery (Grimoire)
Animal Trainer	All	Driving +5%, First Aid +5%, Lore (Regional) +20%, Persistence +10%, Resilience +5%, Riding +5%	—	—
Bard	All	Influence +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Perception +5%, Sing +10%, Sleight +5%	<b>Select Two</b> Dance, Play Instrument, Language, Lore	—
Blacksmith	Barbarian, Civilised	Brawn +15%, Evaluate +5%, Hammer +10%, Resilience +10%	Craft (Blacksmith)	—
Champion/ Knight/Noble Warrior	All	Influence +5%, Athletics OR Brawn OR Riding +5%	<b>Select Two</b> Courtesy, Culture (Other), Oratory, Play Instrument	—
		Pick any two Combat Styles appropriate to your culture, receiving both at a +10% bonus		
Courtier	Civilised	Influence +15%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Perception +5%, Sleight OR Dance +5%	<b>Select Two</b> Courtesy, Lore (Art), Lore (Heraldry), Lore (Philosophy), Play Instrument	—
Craftsman	All	Evaluate +20%, Influence +5%, Persistence +5%	Craft (Any)  <b>Select One</b> Craft (Other), Engineering, Mechanisms	—



Profession	Cultural Background	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills	Magic
Diplomat	Civilised	Culture (Own) +10%, Influence +10%, Perception +10%	<b>Select Two</b> Courtesy, Culture (Other), Dance, Language (Other), Lore (Any), Play Instrument	—
Explorer	Barbarian, Civilised	Lore (Regional) +20%, Perception +5%, Resilience +5%	<b>Select Two</b> Language (Other), Lore (Astronomy), Lore (Geography), Shiphandling, Survival	—
Farmer	Barbarian, Primitive, Civilised	Athletics +5%, Brawn +10%, Driving +5%, Lore (Regional) +10%, Resilience +10%	Craft (Farming)	—
Fisherman	All	Athletics +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Resilience +10%, Swim +10%	<b>Select Two</b> Boating, Craft (Any), Shiphandling, Survival	—
Herdsman	Barbarian, Primitive, Nomad	First Aid +5%, Lore (Regional) +10%, Resilience +15%, Sling +10%	Survival	—
Hunter	All	Lore (Regional) +10%, Resilience +10%, Stealth +10%, One missile weapon style appropriate to your culture +10%	Track	—
Noble	Civilised	Sword +10%, Influence +10%, Persistence +5%, Riding +5%	<b>Select Two</b> Courtesy, Culture (Other), Dance, Language, Lore (Any), Play Instrument	—
Mercenary	Barbarian, Nomad, Civilised	Pick any two Combat Styles appropriate to your culture, receiving both at a +10% bonus  <b>Select Two</b> Athletics +10%, Evade +10%, Driving +10%, Evaluate +10%, Resilience +10%, Riding +10%, Unarmed +10%	Lore (Tactics)	—
Merchant	Civilised, Barbarian	Evaluate +20%, Influence +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%	<b>Select Two</b> Commerce, Language (Other), Lore (Logistics), Shiphandling	—
Miner	Barbarian, Civilised	Athletics +10%, Brawn+10%, Hammer +10%, Resilience +10%	Lore (Mineral)	—
Physician	Civilised	Evaluate +5%, First Aid +20%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Perception +10%,	Healing	—



Profession	Cultural Background	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills	Magic
Priest	Civilised, Barbarian, Nomad	Influence +15%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Persistence +10%	—	Lore (Specific Theology), Pact (Cult or God)
Sailor	Primitive, Civilised	Athletics +10%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Resilience +5%, Swim +10%	<b>Select Two</b> Boating, Culture (Other), Language (Other), Shiphandling	—
Scholar	Civilised	Culture (Own) +10%, Evaluate +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Persistence +10%	2 x Lore (Any)	—
Shaman	Barbarian, Nomad, Primitive	First Aid +5%, Influence +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Persistence +5%	<b>Select One</b> Healing, Lore (Any), Survival	Spirit Walking, Spirit Binding
Soldier/Warrior	All	Athletics +5%, Brawn +5%, Evade +5%, Resilience +5%	Lore (Tactics)	—
		Pick any two Combat Styles appropriate to your culture, receiving both at a +10%		
Spy	Civilised	Evade +5%, Insight +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Perception +5%, Persistence +5%, Sleight OR Stealth +5%	<b>Select Two</b> Disguise, Culture (Other), Language (Other), Track	—
Thief	All	Evaluate +10%, Perception +10%, Sleight +10%, Stealth +10%	<b>Select One</b> Disguise, Mechanisms, Streetwise	—
Tracker	Barbarian, Nomad, Primitive	Athletics +10%, Perception +10%, One weapon style appropriate to your culture +10%	Survival, Track	—
Witch	All	First Aid +10%, Insight +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%	<b>Select One</b> Healing, Lore (Any), Survival	<b>Choose from</b> Spirit Walking and Spirit Binding OR Lore (Specific Theology) and Pact (Cult or God) OR Manipulate and Sorcery (Grimoire)
Sorcerer	Civilised	Insight +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Persistence +10%	<b>Select One</b> Language, Lore (Any)	Manipulate, Sorcery (Grimoire)
Woodsman	Barbarian, Peasant, Primitive	Athletics +10%, Axe +10%, Brawn +10%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Resilience +5%	Survival	—



Nick Egberts



### Edric's Saga

Coming from a barbarian culture, Edric has a whole range of professions to choose from. Running through the list the one that appeals most is Warrior. Edric's player reasons that because Edric is big and reasonably clever, his size and smarts will give him an advantage in combat. He also decides that his father was a warrior too and, in a barbarian culture, it is a case of Like Father, Like Son.

Choosing Warrior as his profession, Edric gains +5% to Athletics, Brawn, Evade and Resilience. He also gains +10% to any two Combat Styles and, because he already has Spear and Shield and Dagger, he decides that he will improve these two combat styles. For his Advanced Skill, Edric gains Lore (Tactics) – useful in cattle raids.

So, having determined cultural background and profession, Edric's skills are now:

Common: Athletics 40%, Brawn 36%, Culture (Own) 62%, Dance 23%, Drive 27%, Evade 31%, Evaluate 26%, First Aid 29%, Influence 20%, Insight 30%, Lore (Regional) 62%, Perception 35%, Persistence 28%, Resilience 24%, Ride 32%, Sing 24%, Sleight 23%, Stealth 34%, Swim 19%, Unarmed 25%.

Advanced: Language (Ralios) 76%, Lore (Orlanth the Dragon) 32%, Lore (Tactics) 32%, Survival 21%

Combat Styles: Spear & Shield 45%, Dagger 45%, Sling 36%

Edric is now ready to move onto the third stage of Previous Experience.

## Free Skill Points

Every *RuneQuest* character receives an additional 250 skill points to spend on their Adventurer.

The player can add these free skill points to his skills in the following ways:

- \* Add to a Common skill or Combat Style skill score.
- \* Add to an Advanced skill score, as long as the character already possesses the skill.
- \* Buy an Advanced skill. This costs 10 free skill points and the Advanced skill starts at its basic characteristic-derived score.
- \* Buy skills enabling Magic to be cast. If Common Magic is supported in the *RuneQuest* setting (Glorantha, for instance), then the character will already have this as a Common skill; otherwise it will need to be bought as an Advanced Skill. The other magic enabling skills are Pact (Deity) and Lore (Specific Theology) – for Divine cult members; Spirit Walking and Spirit Binding – for Shamans and Spirit Cultists; Manipulation and Sorcery (Grimoire) for Sorcerers.

**Important Note:** No single skill can benefit from more than 30 free skill points. This means that an Advanced skill purchased with free skill points cannot be increased by more than 20 points.

*For example, if Edric, as part of his free skill points, chose to buy Tracking (an Advanced Skill), it would cost 10 skill points to buy the skill at its basic, characteristic value – in this case Edric's INT+CON, making it 23% – and Edric would not be able to spend more than an additional 20 points on it meaning that, if he chose to raise it, the maximum it could be would be 43%.*

### Edric's Saga

*Edric chooses to spend his 250 free skill points in the following way:*

Value	Spend	New Skill
Athletics	+30%	70%
Evade	+15%	46%
First Aid	+20%	49%
Insight	+25%	55%
Perception	+20%	55%
Persistence	+30%	58%
Resilience	+30%	54%
Spear & Shield	+25%	70%
Sling	+25%	61%
Common Magic	+10%	34%
Lore (Orlanth the Dragon)	+20%	52%

*He has distributed his free skill points across a range of Common Skills, including combat styles and Common Magic. He has invested 20 points in his Advanced Lore skill and has not invested more than 30 points in any one skill.*

## Advanced Adventurers

It is perfectly acceptable for Adventurers to begin the game at a higher level than that used for creating basic, young adult Adventurers.

The table opposite lists the ways a Games Master should alter character creation in order to create Adventurers of an advanced experience level.

All advanced characters are created normally, including choosing cultural background and profession, until the time comes to spend free skill points, which they can distribute freely without limitation.

## COMMUNITY

The final stage of Adventurer creation is to discover something of the Adventurer's back-story. What has happened in the formative years of their life? Who are their family and friends? Has the Adventurer made any rivals or enemies? How well known is he or she? This section of Adventurer generation aims to answer these questions.

### Families

All Adventurers have families. Family ties might still be close or severed long ago. The family might be large and rambling or small and close-knit. The family might have a reputation that has been a help or hindrance to the Adventurer, or its connections might be useful for all sorts of reasons now or in the future.

Roll 1D100 on each column of the Family Ties Table to determine the parental status, number of siblings and what the general, extended family structure is like.

For large families it is recommended that details be left deliberately vague. Part of the fun is introducing that roguish or well-connected uncle or cousin at strategic points in a campaign or scenario, and keeping family details at a high level allows for considerable flexibility in developing interesting and intriguing plot twists.

### Family Ties Table

1D100	Parents/Guardians	Siblings	Family Size
01–20	Both Parents present	None	Self Contained
21–40	No Living Parents	1D4	1D4 Aunts and Uncles on each parent's side
41–60	One birth parent plus step-parent	1D6	1D6 Aunts and Uncles on each parent's side
61–80	Single Parent – Father	1D8	1D8 Aunts and Uncles on each parent's side
81–00	Single Parent – Mother	2D6	1D10 Aunts and Uncles on each parent's side

### Advanced Adventurers Table

	Seasoned	Veteran	Master	Hero
Minimum Age	21	28	35	42
Free Skill Points	350	450	550	650
Money	Double that for Cultural Background	Fives times that for Cultural Background	10– times that for Cultural Background	20– times that for Cultural Background
Characteristics	1D3 additional Characteristic points, which may be split between Characteristics as desired.	1D4+1 additional Characteristic points, which may be split between Characteristics as desired.	1D6+2 additional Characteristic points, which may be split between Characteristics as desired.	1D8+4 additional Characteristic points, which may be split between Characteristics as desired.
Status	May be an initiate member of a cult, a journeyman in a sorcery order, or a votary in a shamanic cult, if appropriate.	May be an acolyte member of a cult, an adept in a sorcery order, or a shaman in a shamanic cult, if appropriate.	May be either a Rune Lord or a Rune Priest of a cult, a Mage in a sorcery order, or a high shaman in a shamanic cult, if appropriate.	May be either a Rune Lord or a Rune Priest of a cult, a Mage in a sorcery order, or a high shaman in a shamanic cult, if appropriate.
Hero Points	3	6	9	12
Heroic Abilities	None	One, if requirements are met	Two, if requirements are met	Three, if requirements are met

### Family Reputation

1D100	Reputation	Contacts, Enemies and Rivals
01–20	Poor reputation	1D3 Enemies or Rivals
21–50	Average reputation; but a few skeletons and secrets in the background	1 Enemy or Rival
51–65	Average reputation	—
66–85	Good reputation; but a few skeletons and secrets in the background	1 Contact or Ally
85–00	Reputation of excellent standing	1D3 Contacts or Allies

How well is the family connected? Is it important or run-of-the-mill? Is it well liked or does the family name carry with it a stigma? The following tables help decide how well known the family is and what kind of weight it carries at local, regional and national levels.

As an optional stage for the Adventurer's background, is he married? Roll 1D100 and compare it with the Adventurer's Influence skill. If the result is equal to, or less than, Influence then the Adventurer is married, should the player wish it. If the result is higher than the Influence skill he is unmarried. How happily the Adventurer is married is up to the player to decide – similarly, children. If the Adventurer wants to have children by his spouse then he may roll 1D3–1, giving a result of between 0 and 2 children, about right for Adventurers in these kinds of cultures and starting ages. The age of any children will be, again, 1D3–1, with a result of 0 indicating a new-born.

### Family Connections

1D100	Connections	Contacts, Enemies and Rivals
01–20	No connections worth mentioning	—
21–80	Family has reasonable connections within the community	—
81–90	Family is considered well connected with other families and persons holding local power	1 Contact and 1 Rival
91–95	Family is considered well connected with other families and persons holding local and regional power	2 Contacts, 1 Rival and 1 Enemy
96–00	Family is considered well connected with other families and persons holding local, regional and national power	2 Contacts, 2 Rivals and 2 Enemies

### Allies, Contacts, Enemies and Rivals

Through both his family and his personal dealings, an Adventurer may make acquaintances that will help or hinder him in the future. The Family Reputation and Family Connections tables will have determined if Allies, Contacts, Enemies or Rivals are present in the Adventurer's life and, if so, how many are out there.

### Edric's Saga

On the Family Ties table, Edric's rolls are 96 (Single Mother), 59 (1D6 Siblings – result of 4; he has two brothers and two sisters, Edric's player decides) and 68 (1D8 relatives on each parent's side – a total of 9 in all). It is decided that Edric's father died several years ago, when Edric was no more than 10 years old, leaving his mother to raise him and his two brothers and two sisters with the help of their extensive family. Despite having lost his father, Edric had plenty of male role-models in his life.

For Family Reputation the roll is 91 – Edric's extended family has an Excellent Reputation and this grants 1D3 (result 2) Allies or Contacts. Edric chooses one of each and decides to detail them later. For Family Connections, the 1D100 roll is 33 – so Edric's family has reasonable connections within the community.

Edric's player decides that Edric is unmarried – but has designs, to be explored further along in this part of Adventurer Creation.

### Edric's Saga

It was determined that Edric has an ally and a contact. He decides to make the Ally his father's brother (so Edric's uncle), Marius who is the chieftain of Edric's clan. The Contact is Selena, Marius's daughter. The two were childhood friends and Edric's player decides that Edric is in love with Selena but dare not admit his feelings until he has proven himself worthy.

- \* **Contacts** are individuals that the Adventurer knows and has had friendly dealings with in the past. They have useful skills or positions and may be willing to aid the Adventurer.
- \* **Allies** are individuals that the character knows and has had friendly dealings with in the past. Allies will actively go out of their way to provide aid when asked for it.

- \* **Rivals** are people who hate or oppose the Adventurer and will attempt to interfere or harass him.
- \* **Enemies** are even worse than rivals – a rival will normally work within the law but an enemy wants the character dead, imprisoned or otherwise doomed.

Note any allies, contacts, enemies and rivals on the Adventurer sheet along with a little detail on why they have this relationship with the Adventurer. Players can give as much detail as they wish, from the sketchy ('Rival in the Clan') to the detailed ('Harrick the Hairy is my rival, because I disobeyed his orders while out hunting. He had me embarrassed in front of the clan elders, damn him! I'll have my revenge on him one day!')

Other Adventurers can be contacts, allies or even rivals for the purposes of the Connections rule, on page 25 and may be implicated in Background Events, which follow.



Carlos Nunez de Castro Torres

## Background Events

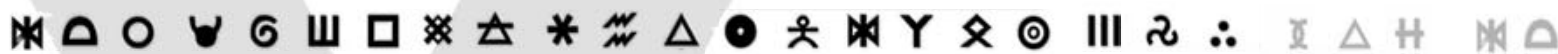
When an Adventurer is created he usually begins life as a young man but this does not mean his previous childhood and adolescence was lived in an uneventful bubble. We all undergo life-shaping experiences that define who we are, what we do and what approach we have to life. Games Masters are strongly recommended to spend time with their players developing the previous lives of the characters. This does not need to be especially detailed and neither does it need to be too specific. Past experiences can be fleshed-out during the course of play or even be ignored all together. Establishing the background events to a character's life can be extremely rewarding and provide the fuel for countless future adventures, if the Games Master desires it.

Of course the cultural background of the character will have some say in what these previous experiences were, or, at the very least, determine where they took place. But the *general* nature of life experiences tends to be universal. The following table offers a wide selection of possible background events and some suggested game effects that the players and Games Master may wish to apply to the Adventurers during character creation. Every Adventurer should roll once on the Background Events table; if the player is feeling very adventurous, then he may roll twice. If an event is thought to be restrictive or inappropriate for either the Adventurer or the campaign, it can either be ignored, or re-rolled.

### Background Events Table

1D100	Event
01	Accidentally injured or killed a childhood friend.
02	Afflicted by visions of a God or Goddess.
03	Afflicted by visions of the future.
04	Amnesia. No memory of life before age of 18. Unsure if current family is real or bogus.
05–06	Attacked or chased by a creature or monster – harbour a deep fear of the creatures as a result.
07–08	Battle – character witnessed a great battle or other conflict.
09	Birth Mark. Character has a prominent and unusual birth-mark that has been mistaken for the holy sign of a particular god.
10	Blind. Character either born blind or struck by blindness later. Other senses have compensated.
11	Body Double. The character is either a very close likeness or almost identical double of someone famous (or infamous).
12	Born Runetouched.
13–15	Brother or Sister died or killed.
16–18	Bullied viciously by one or more youths.
19–20	Childhood sweetheart – character was once married to childhood sweetheart.
21–22	Childhood sweetheart lost – character's childhood sweetheart married a friend or rival.
23	Deaf. Character either born deaf or struck by deafness later. Other senses have compensated.
24	Destitution – the character's family fell into destitution.
25	Disappearance. A family member disappeared 1D10 years ago and character is on a quest to find them.
26	Discovery – character discovered, by accident, some long-lost lore, formula or piece of knowledge that various agencies are now hunting.
27–29	Disease or Plague – character suffered disease or grave illness as a child.
30	Family Secret – the character's family harbours a great secret.
31	Family Treasure – the character's family are the custodians of a great treasure.
32–35	Father died or killed.
36	Feud and Romance. Character's family has a long-standing feud with religious/trade/political rivals. Character has fallen in love with son/daughter of the rival family/organisation – something which must be kept secret.
37	Feud. Character's family has a long-standing feud with religious/trade/political rivals that has recently turned to bloodshed.
38	Foundling – character was abandoned by birth parents and brought up by adoptive guardians.
39–40	Fraud – the character has been part of a fraud or scam: or the victim of one.
41	Fugitive – character gave secret help to a known fugitive.
42	Gender Change – character was once a member of the opposite sex but changed to current gender through a curse or powerful magic.
43	Identity change – the character has adopted a new identity for some reason.
44	Inadvertent Comments. Something the character did or said resulted in a fight, battle or war. The remark or action was innocent but the repercussions tragic.





1D100	Event
45–46	Inheritance or Legacy Denied. Character has been cheated out of a huge legacy left by a parent or relative.
47–48	Inheritance or Legacy. Character is set to inherit a huge legacy from a parent or relative.
49	Kidnapped and/or indentured by a powerful sorcerer who needed an apprentice.
50	Kidnapped or press-ganged into military service.
51	Last Will. Character is on a quest to fulfil the dying wish of a relative or loved one.
52	Local Coward. Well-known in local community for a particularly <i>unheroic</i> deed.
53–54	Local Hero. Well-known in local community for a particularly heroic deed.
55–56	Major Wound – character suffered a major wound as a child that leaves a permanent scar or other sign of injury.
57	Merchant Dynasty. Character is born into a powerful mercantile family or dynasty.
58	Met a great hero at a time when he or she was relatively unknown.
59	Met a villain at a time when he or she was relatively unknown.
60	Mistaken Identity – Case of mistaken identity resulted in a period of imprisonment or some other punishment.
61–63	Mother died or killed.
64	Mute. Character either born mute or struck mute later. Fluent sign language communicator.
65	Orphaned. The character lost both parents either through illness, an accident or some other tragedy.
66–67	Ostracised from family.
68	Penance. Character is undergoing penance for some insult or slight committed against someone in power or authority.
69	Personal Treasure – found a great treasure and hid it for safekeeping.
70	Physical deformity of a random location. No ill effects, as character has learned to adapt.
71–72	Pioneers. Family moved to a new country as settlers, refugees or pioneers.
73	Political Family. One parent is a high ranking political official.
74	Prosperity – the character rises from destitution to great wealth.
75	Raised by a cult or monastic order.
76	Raised by a Guild or Military order.
77	Raised by distant relatives.
78	Raised by inhumans (trolls, for example, or dwarves).
79	Ran away to sea or to join a travelling troupe.
80	Religious Family. One parent is a high-ranking religious official.
81	Sect or Cult. Discovered that family is part of a secret sect or cult and disagrees with their views. Trying to escape both family and those who hunt them.
82	Shipwrecked or stranded as a youth and lived alone for several years before rescued or found.
83	Sidekick. Somehow the character has picked up a loyal companion or retainer. This does not make the companion a welcome presence, necessarily, but the relationship has somehow endured over the years.
84	Slavery. Spent childhood and young adulthood as a slave before escaping or being freed.
85	Sole Survivor – family wiped out by some tragedy.
86	Sole survivor of a tragedy that wiped out the character's entire settlement/community.
87–88	Squire – character indentured as a vassal or squire to a famous knight or warrior.
89–90	Twin. Character has a twin brother.
91–92	Twin. Character has a twin sister.
93	Visited by ghosts or spirits.
94–95	Well-travelled. The character either singly or with family/friends, has travelled widely.
96	Wicked Step-Parent. One parent died and the other remarried. The step-parent is cold, calculating and brutal towards the character. A typical evil step-parent.
97–98	Roll again and take both events
99–00	Roll twice more and take all events



### Edric's Saga

*For his Background Event Edric's 1D100 roll is 76 – Raised by a Guild or Military Order. The Games Master knows this is not appropriate given what we know of Edric already and suggests a re-roll. The result this time is 56 – Major Wound; Edric suffered a major wound as a child that left him with a scar across his left leg. Edric's player decides the wound was caused by a troll – the same troll that killed his father on a hunting expedition – and so now Edric both fears and hates trolls: he wants revenge on the troll who murdered his father some day.*

### Connections

Why do parties of Adventurers come together? This is always an interesting question to answer when beginning a *RuneQuest* campaign. Sometimes the Adventurers have a reason for being together – coming from the same clan, village or town; drinking in the same tavern when monsters attack it; travelling in the same caravan. Yet perhaps the Adventurers have had some previous, significant history together, before play begins. This is where the Connections rule comes into Adventurer creation and it involves at least two players and their Adventurers.

If both players agree, then any Background Event can involve another suitable Adventurer. Only one character needs to have rolled the specific event. If this is done, then *both* Adventurers gain a +10% bonus to any skill, Common, Advanced, Combat or Magical, gained so far. Adventurers may gain a maximum of *two* such bonuses from this rule and each connection must be with a different Adventurer.

Players are encouraged to explore and embellish upon a rolled event. For example, how could two different characters both have a connection through the 'Mute' event? In this case, one character might act as the other's interpreter, the two having grown up together and developed a form of sign language known only to them.

### Edric's Saga

*Two other Adventurers are being created alongside Edric: Lilina and Thrace. All are from the same cultural background and from the same clan, living in Ralios. The three players agree that Lilina and Thrace were all with Edric when the troll attacked and murdered his father and gave Edric the scar across his leg. The three of them have sworn an oath to find and kill the troll – a worshipper of the troll war god Zorak Zoran – some day.*

*As this forms a connection with two other Adventurers, Edric receives +10% to any two skills. He decides to improve Spear and Shield and Survival.*

## FINAL STAGES

Adventurer creation is nearly complete. All that remains is to name the Adventurer, if this has not already been done, determine what, if any, starting magic is available to him and buy the Adventurer's beginning equipment using the money determined by cultural background.

### Names

*RuneQuest* is a fantasy game and so names reflecting ancient cultures, popular fantasy fiction, TV and movies are more appropriate than contemporary names. The cultural background and profession can be of help in naming a character; a civilised craftsman for example, might be Urwin the Potter; or a barbarian warrior might be Harrick Swiftaxe, son of Hendrick Redbeard. Give some thought to the Adventurer's name – it will be important!

### Magic

There are several different types of magic available to *RuneQuest* Adventurers and the types available from the start of play depend on the cultural background, the Adventurer's profession and the availability of magic in the setting. In Glorantha, for instance, magic is common place and every Adventurer has a smattering of spells learned as part of growing up. In other settings, though, magic may not be anywhere near as common.

If Common Magic is freely available, then the amount an Adventurer has at the start of the game depends on his cultural background. For *RuneQuest* games set in Glorantha, every Adventurer begins with 6 points to spend on Common Magic spells, as described in the Common Magic chapter. The following limits apply to all Adventurers:

- \* 1 point is equal to 1 point of Magnitude (thus Bladesharp 2 would cost 2 points).
- \* No spell can exceed Magnitude 3.
- \* Spells must be chosen from the Cultural Background Magic table.

Thus, Edric could begin with up to six Magnitude 1 spells, three Magnitude 2 spells or two Magnitude 3 spells.

Gloranthan Adventurers also begin the game with a +30% bonus to the Common Magic skill, reflecting the proliferation of magic in the world and their innate expertise at casting it.

The skills used for Divine Magic, Sorcery and Spirit Magic, and the way each works, are detailed in the appropriate magical chapter and the Skills chapter



### Cultural Background Magic

All Cultures	Barbarian	Civilised	Nomad	Primitive
Bandit's Cloak	Armoursmith's Boon	Abacus	Bestial Enhancement	Bestial Enhancement
Bearing Witness	Bestial Enhancement	Armoursmith's Boon	Clear Path	Clear Path
Becalm	Clear Path	Babel	Darkwall	Darkwall
Befuddle	Darkwall	Countermagic	Demoralise	Endurance
Bladesharp	Demoralise	Demoralise	Endurance	Fanaticism
Bludgeon	Dragon's Breath	Dragon's Breath	Fanaticism	Frostbite
Cauterise	Endurance	Entertainer's Smile	Frostbite	Thunder's Voice
Chill	Fanaticism	Glamour	Thunder's Voice	
Co-ordination	Frostbite	Golden Tongue		
Detect X	Thunder's Voice	Mason's Boon		
Disruption		Repair		
Dullblade		Understanding		
Extinguish				
Fate				
Firearrow				
Heal				
Ignite				
Light				
Lucky				
Mindspeech				
Mobility				
Multimissile				
Parry				
Pierce				
Protection				
Push/Pull				
Second Sight				
Slow				
Speedart				
Strength				
Spirit Bane				
Vigour				
Warmth				
Water Breath				

#### Edric's Saga

*Edric is nearly complete. All that is left to do is decide his Common Magic. Being a Gloranthan character and a member of a barbarian clan, Edric has 6 points to spend on Common Magic spells. He can only choose spells common to all cultures and those from the Barbarian column of the Cultural Background Magic table.*

*Edric chooses Bladesharp 2 (meaning he can cast it at Magnitude 2), Dragon Breath (Magnitude 2), and Heal 2 (Magnitude 2).*

*He casts all three of these spells at his Common Magic skill of 34%; but, as Glorantha is an inherently magical world, he gains an automatic +30% bonus to Common Magic, taking his Common Magic skill to 64%.*

*Equipment he will decide upon later, but all the essential components for Edric are in place. His completed Adventurer sheet is shown on page 28.*



# RUNE QUEST II

PLAYER -  
Lawrence

ADVENTURER -  
Edric the Restless

RACE :	Human	AGE :	20
HOMELAND :	Ralios (Glorantha)	GENDER :	Male
CULTURE :	Barbarian		
PROFESSION :	Warrior	FAMILY :	Mother (Adrianna), Two Brothers (Jerrak and Gertz); Two Sisters (Mair and Maya)

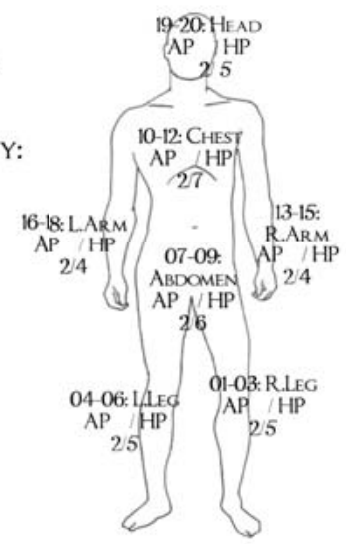
HERO POINTS

## CHARACTERISTICS AND ATTRIBUTES

STR	12	COMBAT ACTIONS	3
CON	7	DAMAGE MODIFIER	-1D2
SIZ	14	IMPROVEMENT MODIFIER	0
INT	16	MOVEMENT	8m
POW	14	DEDICATED POW	0
DEX	13	MAGIC POINTS	14
CHA	10	STRIKE RANK	15

ARMOUR TYPES:  
Leather

ARMOUR PENALTY:  
-2



## COMMON SKILLS

SKILL	BASIC PERCENTAGE	%
Athletics	STR+DEX	50%
Brawn	STR+SIZ	31%
Culture (Own)	INT x2	62%
Dance	DEX+CHA	23%
Drive	DEX+POW	27%
Evade	DEX x2	46%
Evaluate	INT+CHA	26%
First Aid	INT+DEX	49%
Influence	CHA x2	20%
Insight	INT+POW	55%
Lore (Regional)	INT x2	62%
Perception	INT+POW	55%
Persistence	POW x2	43%
Resilience	CON x2	39%
Ride	DEX+POW	32%
Sing	CHA+POW	24%
Sleight	DEX+CHA	23%
Stealth	DEX+INT	34%
Swim	STR+CON	19%
Unarmed	STR+DEX	25%

## ADVANCED AND MAGICAL SKILLS

ADVANCED SKILL	BASIC PERCENTAGE	%
Common Magic Language (own)	POW+CHA	64%
Lore (Orlanth)	INT x2	76%
Lore (Tactics)	INT x2	52%
Survival	INT x2	32%
Pact (Orlanth)	POW+CON	31%
		14%

## COMBAT STYLES

Spear & Shield	STR+DEX	80%
Dagger	STR+DEX	45%
Sling	DEX x2	61%

## SPELLS/GRIMOIRES

- Common Magic Spells
- Bladesharp 2
  - Dragon Breath
  - Heal 2
- Divine Magic Spells (Magnitude 2)
- Channel Strength
  - Dismiss Elemental
  - Mind Link
  - Soul Sight

# RUNE QUEST II

PLAYER -  
Lawrence

ADVENTURER -  
Edric the Restless

WEAPON	SIZE	REACH	DAMAGE	AP	HP	COMBAT MANOEUVRES	RANGE	LOAD	ENC
Short Spear	M	L	1D8+1	4	5	Impale			2
Dagger	S	S	1D4+1	6	8	Bleed, Impale			-
Heater (Shield)	L	S	1D4	6	12	-			2
Sling	L	-	1D8	1	2	Stun Location	200m	1	-

## FATIGUE

LEVEL	SKILLS EFFECT	MOVEMENT	STRIKE RANK	CA
Fresh	-			
Winded	-10% to all skills			
Tired	-20% to all skills	-1m		
Weary	-30% to all skills	-1m	-2	
Exhausted	-40% to all skills	Halved	-4	-1
Debilitated	-50% to all skills	Halved	-6	-2

## DISEASES, POISONS, HEALTH

## EQUIPMENT

## ENC

## MONEY, WEALTH AND POSSESSION

## CONTACTS, FRIENDS, ENEMIES AND RIVALS

Marius (Clan Chief)  
 Selena (Marius's daughter and secret love)  
 Thrace  
 Lilina  
 Owain - rival for Selena

## NOTES

## CULTS

CULT NAME:	Orlanth the Dragon
RANK:	Initiate
DEDICATED POW:	4
PACT:	14%
LORE:	52%
CULT SKILLS -	
Spear fighting, Lore (Orlanth the Dragon), Evade, Perception and Common Magic	

## SPECIFIC DUTIES -

## GIFTS/COMPULSIONS -

## DIVINE SPELLS -

Channel Strength  
 Dismiss Elemental  
 Mind Link  
 Soul Sight

## CHAPTER 2:

# Skills

Characteristics and attributes define an Adventurer in terms of what he is – how strong, how fast, how much damage he deals with a well-aimed blow and so on. Skills define what an Adventurer can actually *do*. Ranging from how well an Adventurer can sneak past a guard and how well he can sculpt a statue, to his expertise with a sword. Skills quantify just how good an Adventurer is at specific tasks. The Adventurer creation process has already introduced Common and Advanced skills; this chapter explores how skills, in general, work and how each skill works specifically.

## SKILL ROLLS

All skills have a starting value based on the sum of two characteristics or a single characteristic multiplied. Cultural background, profession and Free Skill Points raise the value of these skills. There is no upper limit to a skill; it can rise over 100% and even higher, indicating truly superhuman capabilities. How skills increase is detailed in Adventurer Advancement beginning on page 49.

When an Adventurer is called on to roll against a skill, he uses 1D100 and is attempting to roll equal to, or less than, his skill's value. Achieving this means the skill is used successfully; if the 1D100 roll is above the skill's value, then the attempt has failed.

## Levels of Success and Failure

Whether or not an Adventurer succeeds or fails is important in *RuneQuest* but it is also very important to see how *well* he succeeded or failed. For this reason levels of success are crucial to the game. The levels of success are (from best to worst):

- \* Critical Success.
- \* Success (sometimes referred to as a Normal Success).
- \* Failure.
- \* Fumble.

## When and When Not to Roll

Routine activities; those an Adventurer conducts time and again, under normal circumstances and expected pressures, do not require a roll for success. For example, riding a horse at a trot or gentle gallop across an open field, on a fine day, does not need a Ride test. Similarly a blacksmith making horse shoes with all the right tools and raw materials does not need to make a Craft (Blacksmith) roll.

Skill rolls are required where the circumstances are out of the ordinary and/or impart some degree of stress, urgency or difficulty to the situation. Riding a horse at a gallop across an open field whilst being pursued by bandits is an instance where a Ride roll is called for. Attempting to make horseshoes with poor quality implements or a lack of resources is another.

The watchword is *circumstance*. The Games Master is the best judge as to whether the conditions and circumstances warrant a Skill Test. An Adventurer might not need to make a Perception test to hear a neighbouring conversation if the surroundings are relatively quiet. However, if there is a degree of background noise it will be necessary to roll to overhear accurately. If the people the Adventurer is eavesdropping are whispering, then the Skill Test should incur a penalty for the circumstances, as outlined in *Difficult and Haste*.

## Difficulty and Haste

Sometimes it will be necessary to make a skill roll because success or failure needs to be measured but the circumstances in which the skill is being used need to be taken into account. Circumstances can make a skill easier or harder to accomplish. For example, running up a steep hill to out-pace a murderous troll requires an Athletics skill roll but the hill's gradient means that the circumstances are harder than normal: the skill's value is therefore modified to reflect this. Conversely hiding from a brood in a dark wood as night sets in, requires a Stealth roll but the darkness makes hiding easier and

so the skill's value is modified accordingly. Similarly the amount of time invested in using a skill can have a bearing on its outcome. Rushing a job leads to errors whereas paying attention to detail and taking one's time improves the chance of success.

Circumstances are graded in the Difficulty and Haste Modifiers table. These modifiers are applied temporarily to the skill's value until the circumstances change.

### Difficulty and Haste Modifiers

Difficulty	Time Taken	Skill Roll Modifier
Very Easy	Ten times normal time	+60%
Easy	Five times normal time	+40%
Simple	Double normal time	+20%
Routine	Normal time	+0%
Difficult	—	-20%
Hard	Half normal time	-40%
Very Hard	—	-60%
Formidable	Almost instantly	-80%

The following Difficulty Examples table lists a few examples of tests that may occur in a *RuneQuest* game, which skills would be used and what difficulty should be assigned to them. Games Masters can use this table as a reference when creating their own Skill Tests for the Adventurers.

### Rolling in Secret

It is a great deal of fun rolling dice and seeing the outcome. Yet there are going to be occasions where the game is better served by the Games Master making the dice roll on behalf of the characters and in secret, only revealing the result through game-play. For example, a character might be attempting to disguise himself to gain access to a thieves' guild. The character is not aware of how convincing the disguise attempt has been until it is put into



Jesus Garcia Lopez

### Difficulty Examples

Situation	Skill Used	Difficulty
Climbing a cliff face near a large waterfall	Athletics	Difficult (-20%)
Travelling by rowboat across a stormy sea	Boating	Very Hard (-60%)
Accurately steering a rowboat in a swift-flowing but broad river	Boating	Simple (+20%)
Recalling which plants are edible in farmland	Lore (Regional)	Easy (+40%)
Recalling which plants are edible in an uncharted jungle	Lore (Plant)	Difficult (-20%)
Spotting a shiny gold coin on the floor in a well-lit and uncluttered room	Perception	Simple (+20%)
Finding a gold coin in a large refuse dump	Perception	Hard (-40%)
Finding food and water in a bleak desert	Survival	Hard (-40%)
Finding food and water in a forest	Survival	Simple (+20%)
Locating tracks in the snow	Tracking	Very Easy (+60%)
Locating tracks on a busy city street	Tracking	Hard (-40%)
Fixing a complicated lock of foreign design, with nothing more than a knife, while being shot at by archers	Mechanisms	Formidable (-80%)





practical use, infiltrating the guild headquarters. If the Disguise Skill Test is made secretly by the Games Master then it becomes easier to build an air of suspense and tension as the character makes his attempts to bypass the guild's members as he wanders into the guild buildings.

Not all rolls should be made secretly by the Games Master. The best times to use secret rolls are in the following conditions:

- \* The character using the skill would have little or no way of knowing how successful his skill attempt has been until it is put to a practical test.
- \* The skill's outcome is not immediate.
- \* Revealing the outcome of the Skill Test incrementally will create a better sense of tension.

Games Master dice rolls are, like all game tools, there to increase the enjoyment of the game for all, not to remove fun and enjoyment from the players. Used with discretion and at times where the outcome may not be immediate, certain or clear-cut, it can be a great way of introducing drama to a situation.

## CRITICAL SUCCESS

For many skill rolls it is only necessary to determine whether one is successful or not. However, there may be certain cases where it is important to know *how* successful an Adventurer was – did he just skim by or did he achieve an incredible feat? This is determined by critical successes.

A roll of 01 is *always* a critical success.

If the dice roll is equal to or less than 10% of the modified skill (rounded up), then the Adventurer has scored a critical success. Note that the chance of a critical success relates to the *modified* skill total being used in the test, not the original 'normal' skill level. If an Adventurer is suffering a penalty to the Skill Test, it will reduce the Adventurer's chance of scoring a critical success. Likewise if an Adventurer has a bonus to the Skill Test, it will increase the Adventurer's critical success chance.

The actual result of a critical success varies from skill to skill and the skill descriptions note the effects for a critical success. However Games Masters are quite at liberty to apply additional results to fit the circumstances; for example:

- \* The task is completed sooner.
- \* The task is completed to a higher degree of expertise than normal.
- \* The task is completed with élan and style, generally impressing witnesses.
- \* The Adventurer gains additional information or insight into the task thanks to their brilliance.

If a critical success is achieved while crafting jewellery, for instance, the Games Master may decide that the finished article is of unusually high quality or that the item was completed faster than usual.

## FUMBLES

If one can succeed critically, one can also *fail* critically: a situation known as a fumble. A fumble occurs when:

- \* The modified skill being used is less than 100%, the result is 99 or 00.
- \* The modified skill being used is equal to, or more than 100%, 00 is rolled.

Very highly skilled Adventurers, or those in circumstances that make using a skill easier, fail less often than Adventurers with a lower degree of skill, or in situations where circumstances have made a skill more difficult to use.

Essentially, fumbling is the diametric opposite of critical success – the Adventurer has botched the attempt so badly he has experience a dramatic failure.

The precise effects of a fumble depend on the skill and the skill descriptions offer guidance on what effects a fumbling Adventurer experiences. However, as a rule, fumbles normally result in one of the following mishaps:

- \* The task takes twice as long to finish and is still a failure.
- \* The task produces a useless result that actually makes further actions more difficult.
- \* The task is failed spectacularly, opening the Adventurer up to derision and scorn from witnesses.
- \* The Adventurer becomes impeded or even harmed by his failure.

*For Example, Edric is using his Dance skill to impress Selena, the chieftain's daughter. Rolling 99 when making his Dance skill roll, Edric trips, stumbles and crashes into the musicians. The gathered clan boos and jeers in derision and Selena's father, Marius, glares angrily at the red-faced Edric, upset that such a prize klutz would attempt such a complicated ritual dance in the first place. Edric's chances of impressing Selena have evaporated and, with it, he has angered her father...*

*Later, Edric's rival for Selena's affections, Owain, attempts the same dance intending to capitalise on Edric's spectacular failure. Owain's Dance skill is 92% but the Games Master decides to apply a +10% bonus reflecting the fact that the crowd is behind Owain's attempt following Edric's fumble. Owain is therefore rolling against a modified skill of 102%. The dice roll is 00 – Owain also fumbles! The Games Master explains that Owain, swaggering around the great hall, fails to spot a spilled mug of mead, slips on it and executes a stumble every bit as bad as Edric's. At the high table Marius shakes his head sadly and Selena, trying to remain calm as the arrogant Owain climbs to his feet, winks a smile at Edric. Edric's heart soars.*

Weapon Skill Tests are as vulnerable to fumbles as any other test. A fumbled roll on a Bow skill roll could result in a snapped bowstring, whilst fumbling a melee weapon attack roll could mean the weapon has been clumsily broken. The Combat chapter provides more detailed guidance on combat fumble results.



## Automatic Success & Failure

Whenever an Adventurer attempts to use a skill, there is always a chance he will succeed or fail, *regardless* of the level of his skill. Even a master swordsman with a sword skill of 190% can have a rock slip under his foot or have the sun hit his eyes at just the wrong moment. Likewise, the most unfit Adventurer might be able to climb a cliff in a lashing rainstorm at night, even if the modifiers would reduce his Athletics skill to below 0%.

- \* Any test result of 01 to 05 is an automatic success.
- \* Any test result of 96 to 00 is an automatic failure.

Note that the automatic success and failure rules do not apply if the Games Master has ruled that no test is required or possible.

## DEFAULTING FROM AN ADVANCED SKILL

Note that while everyone has some facility with Common skills, Advanced skills are generally only possessed by specialists. Nevertheless, there will be times when an untrained Adventurer attempts to use an Advanced skill, even though they do not possess it.

In these cases, the Games Master may make one of two decisions. The first is that the task is simply impossible for the Adventurer. The Adventurer automatically fails the test.

Alternately, the Games Master may decide that a default Common skill may be used for that specific situation, as long as there is a logical link between the original Advanced skill and the substitute Common skill. However, such substituted Skill Tests normally suffer at least a -20% penalty, often more.

### *Skill Competencies Table*

Skill Range	Competency	Description
01–25	Novice	Basic techniques and principles are usually completed without the need for a Skill Test, if enough time is available and necessary equipment is at hand. Advanced techniques require a Skill Test and may suffer a penalty depending on the nature of the task.
25–50	Competent	All basic and some advanced techniques are possible without a Skill Test if enough time is available and necessary equipment is at hand. Some advanced techniques require a Skill Test and may suffer a penalty depending on the nature of the task.
50–75	Professional	Advanced tasks can be tackled even in the absence of one or two components necessary for success, but again, at a penalty.
75–100	Expert	Almost all techniques are known and can be undertaken with confidence even when the right components have been compromised.
100–125	Master	The Adventurer is supremely confident in their execution of the skill and can readily improvise or resolve problems easily using effective shortcuts.
125+	Grand Master	At this level the Adventurer is an absolute virtuoso of the skill and able to tackle, with confidence, any problem involving the skill's use. The duration taken for most tasks can be halved, if necessary (although a Grand Master knows that time and patience are always key).

## LEVELS OF SKILL

What is considered routine for an Adventurer with a skill of 60% may well be considered difficult for an Adventurer with only 25% in the same skill. So, the value of the skill forms one of the circumstances to take into consideration. The chart below gathers skill values into a range of Competencies along with some guidance on what constitutes a routine task.

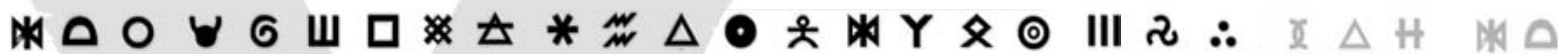
### Augmenting Skills with Other Skills

There are occasions where one skill can help with another. For example, a merchant trying to get a good price on a rare vase might want to use his Lore (Pottery) skill to help his Influence or Commerce skill and thus get a good deal. In such situations it is permissible to allow the secondary skill to provide a bonus equal to its critical score to the primary skill. Thus, in the example above, the merchant has Influence at 70% and Lore (Carmanian Pottery) at 63%. The critical score for Lore (Carmanian Pottery) is 7% making the merchant's Influence 77% in total.

Only one skill at a time can be used to boost another skill and the skills must be complementary to each other for the given situation. The Games Master should also stipulate when an augmentation like this can be applied; it is never an automatic right.

## GROUP TESTS

In essence, this is a time-saving device for the Games Master. With a group test, the Games Master may make a single percentile roll to determine the success of a group of individuals all performing the same task, rather than rolling dozens or hundreds of individual die rolls. There are two kinds of group tests: team tests and sorting tests.



## Team Tests

In a team test, success is cooperative; everyone reaps the benefit from a single success. If a squad of temple guards are all trying to search for an intruder in a crypt, then any successful Perception test will reveal him to all of them. If each guard rolls a Perception test, not only will things take longer but their mathematical chance of finding the intruder becomes quite high. The Games Master rolls once for the highest skill in the team (the highest Perception skill among the temple guards, for example) and if the roll is a success, everybody succeeds. If the roll is a failure, *everybody* fails.

The Games Master may also use a 'reverse team test' in a situation where one failure can spell disaster. For example, if a gang of hunters are attempting to sneak up on a deer, any failed Stealth test will startle the quarry. In this case, the hunter with the lowest Stealth skill rolls a Stealth test. If he succeeds, everyone succeeds. If the roll is a failure, everybody fails.

## Sorting Tests

In a sorting test, success is individual. For example, a group of bandits are attempting to outrun the local constabulary, which calls for opposed Athletics tests. Some of the bandits have an Athletics skill of 40%, some of 50% and some of 60%. The Games Master rolls a group test for the bandits, which results in a 49. Those with skills of 50% or more succeed, while the slower bandits begin to fall behind (unless the remainder of the bandits slow their progress to allow their fellows to keep up).

It is up to the individual Games Master when to move from multiple individual rolls to a group test. The former is certainly more authentic but the more individuals involved in the test, the longer it will take (and the more it will break up the flow of the game) to roll separately for each.

## Large Groups and Percentile Success

From time to time, the Games Master may need to determine the success of a large group of people performing the same task, in a situation in which there is no room for error. In this case, he may simply take the skill or Characteristic being employed and use that as the percentage of success.

*For Example: A group of 100 brigands is attempting to swim across a fast-flowing river a scant distance upstream from a 200 metre waterfall, an activity which calls for an Athletics Skill Test. Because of the speed of the current and the nearby waterfall, a failed Skill Test for an individual will result in their being swept away by the current. Rather than rolling 100 Skill Tests, or rolling only one to determine whether all 100 brigands made it across, the Games Master may simply take the Athletics skill as the percentage of success. If the Games Master rules that all the brigands have an Athletics skill of 75, then 75 of them will make it to the other side of the river. The remaining 25 will be swept away over the falls, presumably wondering why none of them had the presence of mind to find a safer place to cross the river.*

## Assistance

Adventurers often have the opportunity to help one another during various tests. The Games Master is the final judge as to which tests can be helped with assistance and which require an Adventurer to make the test alone. For instance, if an Adventurer is attempting to lift a huge log out of a road, then clearly several others can help him in the Athletics test required. However, an Adventurer trying to break down a barred door may jam up the doorway too much for anyone else's shoulder to fit. An Adventurer trying to recall the details of the local history of his own village cannot have strangers help him but several sages can piece together the history of the kingdom from their own memories.

Every assisting Adventurer adds his critical score to the primary Adventurer's skill. Remember to apply any relative modifiers to the assisting Adventurer's skill before determining the critical score.

The Games Master is the final arbiter of how many Adventurers may assist in any given test and how many attempts may be made in what period of time.

## OPPOSED SKILLS

An opposed skill roll occurs when one skill is *actively* resisted by another. For example a thief attempts to sneak past a wily palace guard who, being vigilant is on the look-out for potential crooks.

In an opposed test both participants roll their respective skills. The winner of the test is the one who gains the higher level of *success*; if both participants have the *same* level of success, then the winner is the one with the *higher* dice roll within his skill range. If both fail then a stalemate has occurred, forcing the opposed test to be rolled again at a later point.

*For example: The cunning thief is attempting to sneak past the vigilant palace guard. The thief uses his Stealth skill, which is at 75%. The guard is opposing with his Perception skill of 60%. Dice are rolled. The thief rolls 71% and the guard rolls 59%. Both have succeeded but the thief has the higher roll within his skill range and sneaks past. Conversely, if the guard has rolled 59% and the thief had rolled 54%, again, both have succeeded but the guard has the higher roll and so spots the thief as he emerges from the shadows.*

If both had failed then other circumstances have intervened. In the above example, for instance, a chambermaid might have entered the courtyard distracting the guard but interrupting the thief. Once she has passed, the opposed test can be attempted again.

*Example: Edric and Owain are engaged in a race. This calls for Athletics opposed skills. Edric's Athletics is 35% and Owain's is 95%. The dice are rolled and Owain scores 94 – a very good roll since it is a high roll and less than his skill percentage. Edric's roll is 02 – a critical success and this beats Owain's standard success. Edric's lucky burst of speed clearly overwhelmed*

*Owain's energy-conserving pace. Had Edric rolled between 05 and 24, Owain would have won because whilst both Adventurers succeed, Owain's is the higher roll whilst still being a normal success.*

Opposed Skill Tests are extremely useful for many situations where the skills of one party need to be weighed directly against the skills of another.

- \* Bargaining (Adventurers match Commerce and Commerce, or Commerce and Influence).
- \* Evading detection (Adventurer matches Stealth against the opponent's Perception).
- \* Persuading (Adventurer matches Influence against Persistence).
- \* Pursuits (participants match Athletics skills, or Evade against Athletics).
- \* Withstanding torture (Adventurer matches Resilience against Lore (Torture)).
- \* Hiding or palming an object (Sleight against Perception).

## Opposed Skills Over 100%

During opposed tests, whichever participant has the highest mastered skill subtracts 100% from it and uses the remainder as a penalty to *everyone* in the contest. Thus the most skilled participant has a skill of 100% and everyone else is less than this. This has the benefit of introducing an increased chance of failure for the lesser skilled opponents in the contest; thus improving the chance of a better victory level.

*For example, Mikhail the mercenary possesses a Stealth skill of 120%. Since he is the most experienced character he reduces all his opponents' Perception skills by 20% and he himself is lowered to 100%.*

The identification of who has the highest skill must be calculated *after* any other modifiers for circumstances have been applied.

## USING NON-COMBAT SKILLS IN COMBAT

The Skill Use Combat Action (described on page 83) allows Adventurers to use their skills in combat situations whenever they deem it appropriate. For example, an Adventurer may be desperately trying to open a locked door to escape an oncoming enemy who is currently fighting his comrades.

The actual Skill Tests made are performed as described previously. However, in combat it becomes important to know how long a skill takes to perform. Most will take only a single Combat Action and there are some specific examples listed in the skill descriptions later in this chapter.

The greatest problem with using a skill in combat is that it is quite possible to be interrupted in the middle of skill use by a random event (such as being struck by a sword). When an Adventurer must use a skill over a number of Combat Rounds, the final effect of

the skill (and the test itself) will not normally take place until the end of the final Combat Action. In the meantime, the Adventurer must concentrate on the skill being used – he cannot suspend his skill use to initiate an attacking Combat Action, for instance.

Normally, an interruption to the skill user will result in either a penalty to the final test or the test automatically failing.

## COMMON SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

Every Adventurer has access to all the Common skills during Adventurer creation. These skills detail the most common actions every person in the world can succeed in to one degree or another. Each skill is derived from a combination of two characteristics or a single characteristic multiplied.

### Athletics (STR+DEX)

This broad skill covers a range of athletic activities useful to Adventurers, including climbing, jumping and running.

If an Adventurer is wearing armour, the distances he can climb, run or jump are affected by the Armour Penalty. The section on Movement on page 63 of the Game System chapter details these effects. When using Athletics for the following specific actions the rate of Movement is determined by how it has been modified by the effects of any armour worn.

*Climbing:* Given enough hand and footholds, the right equipment and enough time, an Adventurer can climb any surface without the need for a test. Under normal circumstances, an Adventurer can climb or descend one quarter of his Movement as a Combat Action.

- \* Climbing a rough surface (trees, steep hills and so on): The Armour Penalty is subtracted from three quarters of the base Movement (6 metres per Combat Action for human Adventurers). If the result is zero or less, they are too burdened by their armour to climb. Thus, our hero in his plate armour cannot climb as his Climbing movement is  $6 - 9 = -3$ .
- \* Climbing a sheer surface (walls, cliff faces and so on): The Armour Penalty is subtracted from the base Movement divided by two. As with climbing a rough surface, if the result is zero or less, the Adventurer cannot climb.
- \* Tests should be made for treacherous surfaces (such as sheer cliffs or wet surfaces) and if an Adventurer is trying to increase the rate of his ascent or descent. An Adventurer can double the rate of his modified Movement by taking a -20% penalty on his Athletics test.

A critical Climbing success allows the Adventurer to triple his Movement rate for the climb.

A fumbled Climbing roll means the Adventurer falls and cannot make an Acrobatics test (if he has the skill) to attempt to reduce the falling damage.



*Jumping:* In general, a successful Athletics test allows an Adventurer to jump up to twice his own height horizontally or up to half his own height vertically, if he has at least five metres to run first. If he is making a standing jump, these distances are halved. Leaps of over half an Adventurer's maximum distance result in him falling prone on landing.

- \* If armoured, reduce the distance in metres the Adventurer can jump by the Armour Penalty divided by 2.
- \* For every full 20% he possesses in this skill, the Adventurer may add an extra metre to a horizontal jump, or 20cm to a vertical jump, if he has space to perform a run up.

For a critical success the Adventurer adds a further metre to his total distance and remains upright on landing.

A fumbled Jump roll indicates the Adventurer has landed awkwardly. He must immediately make a Resilience test. If the Resilience test is successful he sustains 1 point of damage to each leg. If the Resilience test fails, then he sustains 1D4 points of damage to each leg.

## Brawn (STR+SIZ)

Brawn is used where physical force (pushing, pulling and lifting) needs to be implemented; forcing a jammed door, for instance, or pulling a cart free of a rut in the road.

A character can lift up to his STR x1.5 in SIZ without making a Brawn roll. As a mass equivalent, 1 point of SIZ equals, roughly, 5 kilograms.

For SIZ and mass above this, the character needs to succeed in a Brawn roll and if successful he can lift up to three times his STR. If the roll is a critical success, then up to five times STR can be lifted.

If the Brawn roll is fumbled, the character risks injury: he must make a successful Resilience roll or sustain 1D3 points of damage to the Chest Hit Location (armour does not protect against this damage).

## Common Magic (POW+CHA)

This skill relates to the magic commonly used by the Adventurer's community and to which he will have had daily exposure whilst growing up, becoming familiar with a variety of spells and magical effects that are used in the daily tasks of his society. The spells of Common Magic are described in the Common Magic chapter and cover a wide variety of different effects, situations and scenarios.

If a Common Magic roll is a critical success, then the spell costs 1 less Magic Point (to a minimum of 1) to cast.

If the roll fumbles, then the Adventurer expends all the Magic Points for the spell's Magnitude but the spell still fails.

## Common Magic in Glorantha

Glorantha is a magic-rich world and so Common Magic is a Basic Skill for all Gloranthan adventurers. The spells falling under the Common Magic banner are available to most cultures: there is nothing secretive about them and most cultures in Glorantha have developed their own, similar range of spells to assist them in their daily lives and, naturally enough, in warfare.

All Gloranthan Adventurers begin the game with a +30% bonus to their Common Magic score.

## Culture (Own) (INT x2)

The Culture skill is actually several separate skills, each dealing with a specific culture. The Culture skill is distinct from Lore and Language skills, as it represents a person's understanding of, and ability to heed, the behaviours, habits, customs and everyday rituals of a specific cultural group. For example, someone making a successful test in Culture (Praxian) understands that it is considered good manners to remove all head-gear and footwear whenever entering a person's tent; or knows that it is considered polite to pass the bread from left to right at a Praxian feast, whilst the fermented milk is always passed from right to left.

A critical success grants the Adventurer a unique understanding or insight into the workings of a particular cultural group, subgroup or type. The Games Master should reveal one or two key, previously unknown, facts about the culture to the Adventurer. Additionally the Adventurer may add the critical value of his Culture skill to any communication or personal credibility tests made in the immediate circumstances.

A fumble indicates the Adventurer has completely misunderstood a particular cultural practice, reference or social code, which causes an embarrassment that will be, at best, humiliating or, at worst, insulting. The Adventurer will be ostracised until suitable reparations are made.

Culture (Specific Culture) can also be learned as an Advanced skill when the Adventurer studies a different culture to his own.

## Dance (DEX+CHA)

An Adventurer with this skill is accomplished at moving gracefully in time with music or other rhythm, using standardised and often intricate steps and movements. A successful test with Dance results in the audience or partner being pleased by the Adventurer's performance.

On a critical success the dance is expressive, fluid and deeply affecting for all who witness it. Music is accompanied by perfect movement and emotion. The dance is as persuasive as any Influence test and



Amanda Webb

can be used as such in situations resting on communication and personal credibility. Alternatively any subsequent Influence test is given a bonus to the critical score of the Dance skill.

A fumbled dance is deeply humiliating to both the dancer and those who watch it. The dancer trips or stumbles. Passion is lost, the execution is clumsy and the dance fails to interpret the music in any shape or form. Any skills resting on communication and personal credibility will suffer a penalty at the discretion of the Games Master.

### Drive (DEX+POW)

If an Adventurer is driving a wagon, chariot or similar vehicle at not more than a walking pace across flat terrain, a Driving roll is not required. Rolls are needed when an Adventurer wants to do something out of the ordinary with a vehicle – traverse treacherous terrain, jump obstacles and so on.

A critical result either increases the vehicle's movement by half again, if the skill is being used in a straightforward manner. If being used to perform a special manoeuvre, such as evading an enemy, a critical success allows half the Adventurer's normal Driving skill to be used as a negative modifier against any applicable skills being used by pursuers for the rest of the Combat Round.

*For example: Vadrus the Charioteer is being pursued by the war chariot of his enemy, Kortek. Kortek is hurling javelins with abandon and Vadrus declares he's going to try to wheel his horses in a bid to evade the javelins. The Games Master calls for a Driving Skill Test from Vadrus's player. Vadrus's skill at Driving is 70% and the dice roll*

*is 06. This means that a -35% penalty is now applied to Kortek's attack rolls as Vadrus's chariot weaves and swerves.*

A fumbled Driving roll indicates either a reduction in the vehicle's speed by half, or if the vehicle is trying to perform a special manoeuvre, it becomes unstable and overturns. If the vehicle overturns all occupants need to make a successful Athletics test to leap clear of the wreckage or sustain 1D6 points of damage to a random location as the vehicle crashes.

### Evade (DEX x 2)

Evade is used to escape from impending danger and can be used against ranged weapons (by dodging or diving out of the way), avoiding traps (triggered, sprung or otherwise), changing the engagement distance in combat and generally getting out of the way of a potential physical hazard.

For most tasks such as dodging traps or spells, the skill is opposed by the deadliness of the trap (that is the skill of its setter) or the casting skill of the sorcerer. Winning the opposed test allows the user to completely escape harm. On the other hand, if they lose they suffer the normal consequences.

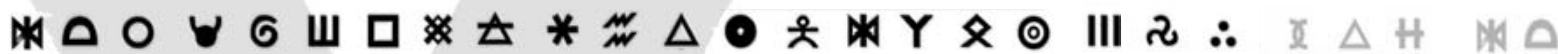
*For example, Edric, investigating a murky old burial mound of (perhaps) First Age origin comes across a sarcophagus. He tries to open it and triggers the dart trap set 500 years ago, by the sarcophagus's designers. The trap-setter's skill at the time was 65%; Edric's Evade is 46% – he must pit this against the trap in an opposed roll. Edric scores 45 and the Games Master rolls 31. Both are successful but Edric wins the contest with the higher roll. The trap is sprung as Edric lifts the sarcophagus lid and a hail of darts whirr towards his face: Edric, prepared for such an eventuality, ducks deftly to one side and the darts strike the wall behind.*

Since most quadruped or swimming creatures lack the Evade skill, they may substitute their Athletics skill for these situations instead. In a like manner, flying creatures can substitute their Fly skill for Evade when aloft.

If the Evade roll is fumbled, then the Adventurer has left himself open to the hazard and sustains its *maximum* damage.

### Evaluate (INT+CHA)

Every Adventurer places a sense of worth on valuables, trades or propositions. The Evaluate skill enables the Adventurer to determine the value placed on something by others, effectively guessing its market value. With the Evaluate skill, the Adventurer can try to determine the value of specific objects.



Particularly common or obscure objects might give a bonus or penalty to the test but success will allow an Adventurer to guess the average monetary value of the object (normally guessing accurately to within 10% of its actual value).

For a critical success the Adventurer not only estimates the item's value precisely, he also determines a secret or hitherto unknown fact about it that can be used to increase the item's value by half again.

*For example, examining a rare Pelorian vase, Matvalk the Merchant scores a critical Evaluate and correctly values the vase at 500 SP. He also notices a minute signature on the base meaning that the vase came from the Shah of Carmania's renowned slave potter, Gustubus. This means the vase is highly sought after and could be sold for up to 750 SP.*

If the Evaluate fumbles, not only does the Adventurer completely misjudge the value of the object, he devalues it by half again. Thus, if Matvalk in the above example had fumbled his Evaluate roll, he would have valued the vase at only 250 SP.

## First Aid (DEX+INT)

Living in a dangerous world, most Adventurers are adept at First Aid to one degree or another. First Aid is always applied to a specific location. See the First Aid Actions table. An Adventurer may apply First Aid to himself, though there is usually at least a -10% penalty owing to the awkwardness of applying the treatment.

It normally takes 1D3 minutes to administer First Aid. Neither person can move and nor can Combat Actions be used for any other activity.

A location that has had any variation of First Aid administered to it cannot benefit from First Aid again until it has fully healed (it is restored to maximum Hit Points once more).

The use of First Aid requires suitable medical equipment such as bandages or salves. Makeshift medical equipment (such as bandages made from strips of cloth hastily torn from a dirty tunic) will bestow a -20% penalty on the test.

### First Aid Actions

Injury	Treatment
Impalement	A successful First Aid test removes the impaling item without causing more damage to the victim.
Unconsciousness	A successful First Aid test can revive an Adventurer from unconsciousness, though drugged patients may inflict a penalty on the First Aid test.
Injured location	A successful First Aid test on an injured location (but not one below 0 or less Hit Points) heals 1D3 Hit Points to that location.
Serious Injury	A successful First Aid test on a location suffering from a Serious Injury heals one Hit Point to a location and restores it to functionality (in the case of a limb) or consciousness (in the case of the Abdomen, Chest or Head).
Major Injury	A successful First Aid test on a location suffering from a Major Injury does not restore the location's Hit Points. This First Aid merely stabilises the patient so that they will not die from the injury.

A critical success in First Aid reduces the treatment time by half. If being used to treat an Injured location (see the First Aid Actions table), then 1D3+1 Hit Points are restored to the hurt location.

A fumbled First Aid attempt causes more harm than good: the Hit Location being treated suffers a further 1 point of damage.

## Influence (CHA x 2)

Adventurers skilled in Influence find it easy to persuade others to their way of thinking, whether they are trying to persuade a king to send armies to fight a distant enemy, bribe a guard or merely get a merchant to sell them something at a reduced price.

Influence tests are normally opposed by the Perception, Persistence or another's Influence skill and are modified by how much an Adventurer is trying to change an opponent's mind. For instance, getting a merchant to accept gems instead of coinage as payment is relatively easy, whilst trying to buy a sword for a 50% discount is not.

For a critical success the Adventurer's efforts are incredibly persuasive, so much so that not only is the Adventurer successful in what he is trying to attain with his Influence skill but his next Influence test with the same person, no matter when it takes place, is at a bonus equal to the Adventurer's CHA.

*For example, Matvalk the Merchant, having now determined the vase he is studying is worth 750 SP tries to convince the seller that it is a worthless piece of Carmanian tat. His Influence test is a critical success and Matvalk walks away with the vase for a trifling 200 SP. In his next Influence test with the same merchant, Matvalk's Influence will be at a +14% bonus, for Matvalk's CHA value.*

A fumbled Influence roll indicates that not only does the Influence attempt fail; it also insults or offends the person being influenced. The reaction depends on the individual and the situation but at the very least it means that all future Influence tests against the same person will be at a -40% penalty.

## Insight (INT+POW)

Insight is the ability to read a person's verbal and non-verbal behaviours and signals to determine their motives and state of



mind. Insight is used to decide if someone is telling a lie, or to predict how someone feels about a particular situation. It is distinct from the Perception skill, since it is used to detect subtle expressions of character and attitude, rather than tangible effects that can be assessed through general observation alone.

Sometimes it may be more effective for the Games Master to roll the outcome of an Adventurer's Insight attempt, keeping the result of the roll secret and revealing information according to the degree of success (or failure) – as the results for a critical success or a fumble suggest.

For a critical success the Adventurer gains the ability to second guess how the person under analysis will react to a given situation. The Games Master should offer private hints to the Adventurer regarding the person's motivations and likely actions.

For a fumble, the Adventurer completely misjudges the analysed person's motives and actions. The Games Master should offer the Adventurer a series of private, deliberately misleading hints regarding the person's motivations and likely actions.

### Edric's Saga

*Matvalk the merchant has come to Edric's village to sell his collection of rare Pelorian pottery. Edric is suspicious of the merchant's intentions, sensing that Matvalk believes the Orlanthi of the village to be unsophisticated half-wits. The Games Master makes an Insight roll for Edric, concealing the result from Edric's player: the result is 03 – a critical success against Edric's Insight 45%. Taking Edric's player to one side the Games Master tells him that Matvalk, whilst making a convincing and sincere pretence of being an honest trader has all the hallmarks of worshipping the Trickster god – never a good sign in an Orlanthi settlement. From now on Edric will be on the look out for Matvalk's cunning plans and schemes to make trouble. However, the Games Master does not tell Edric's player what the degree of success actually was for the Insight roll: Edric will find this out for himself in the course of play but the Games Master will ensure that Edric notices anything Matvalk does that reeks of Trickster worship.*

### Lore (INT x 2)

The Lore skill is actually many different skills, each of which must be improved separately. Each Lore skill defines an area of knowledge for the Adventurer and tests are made whenever a player wants to see if his Adventurer knows something about the subject at hand. This effectively allows the player to ask the Games Master direct questions if the test is successful.

Every Adventurer has, as a Common Skill, Lore (Regional). This is a measure of the Adventurer's familiarity with the geography,

flora and fauna of the area where he has grown up or spent the most significant amount of time prior to his adventuring career. Attempting to use this skill in unfamiliar circumstances will be at a disadvantage. For instance, an Adventurer raised in an arctic mountain range will suffer a penalty to Lore (Regional) skills in an equatorial desert.

For a critical success the Adventurer has gained some specific insight or made a startling discovery as a result of the critical success in the Lore skill. The Adventurer should be given one specific fact, relevant to the scenario or campaign that the Adventurer can use as he sees fit.

A fumbled Lore test indicates a complete misunderstanding of the tenets of the Lore in question. In the case of Lore (Regional), for instance, this might mean mistaking a poisonous fungus for an edible one or placing the capital of a country a thousand miles from its true position.

### Perception (INT+POW)

The Perception skill is used to represent the senses of the Adventurer when detecting objects or other persons. It covers listening for sounds, searching a room, hunting for a specific clue and so on.

On a critical success the adventurer has picked-up on a nuance unseen, or unheard, by everyone else. A critical Perception test offers a single burst of enlightenment or recognition that helps avert disaster or completely reveals the concealed.

Fumbling a Perception test leads to the Adventurer being utterly oblivious to his surroundings. He is blissfully unaware of the impending ambush; he has not got a clue that a missing diamond ring lies a metre away from his left foot. Fumbling a Perception test in circumstances where the Adventurer is likely to face some threat, such as an attack, provides a bonus to the initial attacks of the opposing side when it launches its assault.

### Persistence (POW x 2)

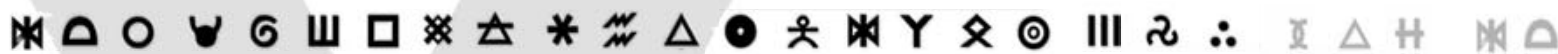
Persistence is used whenever an Adventurer has his mental willpower called into question. This may be for anything as simple as concentrating on a task at hand amidst distraction, or it may be to resist the baleful effects of a mind-controlling spell.

A critical success in resisting magic means that no further spells cast by the opponent have any affect on the Adventurer for a number of Combat Actions equal to the Adventurer's current Magic Points.

In the case of utilising willpower or mental fortitude, a critical Persistence roll enables the Adventurer to shrug-off any psychological effects of the situation and to remain undeterred by whatever it is he is experiencing.

Fumbling the Persistence roll when resisting magic makes the psychological effect of the spell *permanent* until healed.





If the fumble concerns a matter of willpower, not only does the Adventurer completely fold under the pressure of the experience but becomes unable to conduct any other actions for 1D6 minutes due to the sheer mental strain.

## Resilience (CON x 2)

Resilience is the physical counterpart to Persistence. The higher an Adventurer's Resilience, the more likely he is to handle adverse physical conditions, such as weathering a vicious sandstorm, surviving in a drought or overcoming the effects of poison or disease. It is an important skill for assessing the reaction to injury.

When resisting poisons or diseases a critical success allows the Adventurer to avoid making any further resistance rolls against that specific dose or infection.

### Edric's Saga

*During a banquet the boastful Owain is clearly attempting to woo the dazzling Selena. Edric, having consumed a few mugs of mead, watches the flirting with barely concealed jealousy. The Games Master calls for a Persistence roll, applying a -20% penalty for the mead Edric has drunk. Edric has Persistence 58% and rolls 52 - a failure with the penalty taken into account. Edric can keep his jealousy under control no longer and decides to confront his rival.*

Fumbling when resisting means that the poison or disease has overwhelmed the Adventurer and that they automatically fail any further resistance rolls against it.

## Ride (DEX+POW)

If an Adventurer is riding a creature (with the help of whatever riding equipment is common to his cultural background) at not more than a walking pace across flat terrain, a Riding test will never be required. Tests are required when an Adventurer wants to do something out of the ordinary with a mount - traverse treacherous terrain, jump obstacles, ride bareback and so on.

Riding an unfamiliar species is at least a Difficult (-20%) test; riding a species in a different medium (a horseman riding a dolphin or a griffin, for example) is at least a Hard (-40%) test.

## Persistence and Resilience as Skills

Whilst described as skills, both Persistence and Resilience are a combination of natural capability, personal fortitude, and training to deal with situations involving mental and physical stress, including pain. All of us have untapped reserves of Persistence and Resilience; these skills measure the character's ability to draw upon them to resist a variety of different pressures and conditions.

## Optional Rule - Limits to Persistence and Resilience

There are limits to mental and physical endurance; barriers beyond which the mind and body cannot be pushed and surrender becomes inevitable. To represent this, Games Masters may wish to rule in their campaign that Persistence cannot exceed the value of the POW Characteristic multiplied by 5 and Resilience cannot exceed the CON Characteristic multiplied by five. The starting values for each skill are both calculated as normal but they are now no longer 'limitless' skills. Of course, their limits can be extended through the improvement of their respective Characteristic scores.

A critical Riding test allows the Adventurer to double the mount's Movement for a number of Combat Rounds equal to the rider's critical range for the Riding skill. Thus, an Adventurer with a Riding skill of 50% would double the movement rate for 5 Combat Rounds.

Fumbling a Riding roll means the Adventurer must make an Athletics test to avoid losing control and being thrown from the mount (sustaining any falling damage as appropriate).

## Sing (POW+CHA)

All Adventurers are gifted with the tools for singing (unless mute), unlike those who play other musical instruments. Few, however, develop the skill beyond their innate talent (or lack of). A successful test with this skill results in the audience being pleased - or even pleasantly surprised - by the Adventurer's performance.

A critical Sing success can have one of several effects. If singing to earn money, increase by half again the amount earned due to the audience's appreciation of the performance. If being used to impress someone, add the Sing's critical score to the Adventurer's Influence skill. Thus, an Adventurer with a Sing skill of 70% would add +7 to his Influence test.

If fumbled, then the song was truly terrible; off-key, out of tune and poorly performed. Halve the earnings and the singer suffers a penalty to future Influence rolls at the Games Master's discretion and the circumstances of the fumble.

### Sleight (DEX+CHA)

This skill is used to hide or take objects, without drawing undue attention. It is usually opposed by a Perception test if trying to avoid getting caught.

The object being manipulated can be of any size but particularly small or large objects will bestow bonuses or penalties to the test. For instance, hiding a dagger on a well-clothed person is relatively easy (+20%) but attempting to hide a war sword on the same person is far harder (-20%).

If the Sleight attempt is being made whilst others are around, perhaps with some vigilance, then the attempt is an opposed roll against the Perception of likely observers.

On a critical success the Adventurer has concealed or palmed the object so successfully that any subsequent attempts to locate it, using a Perception test, for example, are subject to a penalty (decided by the Games Master) *plus* the critical score of the Sleight skill.

On a fumble, not only is the item *not* concealed, it is dropped or otherwise exposed in full view of whoever is watching. If no one is actively watching for the deception, the sound of the item falling, or some other commotion immediately attracts their attention.

### Stealth (DEX+INT)

The Stealth skill is used whenever an Adventurer attempts to personally evade detection by another character. This usually happens when an Adventurer either tries to move quietly past an enemy, hide from one or perform a combination of both. Stealth tests are typically opposed by the Perception skill and are modified according to the situation.

On a critical success any subsequent attempts to locate the Adventurer (follow him, find him and so on) are at a penalty *plus* (decided by the Games Master) the critical score of the Stealth skill.

For a fumble the Adventurer stumbles and causes some form of commotion that immediately attracts the attention of anyone in

the vicinity. Furthermore, if any other Adventurers are attempting a Stealth test in the fumbling Adventurer's company, they suffer a penalty to future Stealth rolls at the Games Master's discretion and the circumstances of the fumble.

### Swim (STR+CON)

Adventurers normally swim at half their usual Movement. Swim rolls are only required when conditions are less than ideal – swimming while heavily encumbered or in strong currents, for example. Failure of an Athletics test while swimming will usually result in the Adventurer not moving at all, though repeated failures may result in drowning. See the Game System chapter on page 48 for more details.

A critical Swim test allows the Adventurer to swim at his normal Movement rate.

On a fumble the Adventurer gets into difficulties due to the water conditions. He must make a successful Resilience test or sustain Suffocation damage as described on page 54.

### Unarmed (STR+DEX)

The Unarmed skill covers all trained and untrained unarmed combat from simple brawling to esoteric martial arts. Punches, kicks, head-butts and all other Unarmed attacks do 1D3 points of damage.

If using Unarmed the Adventurer may choose to either strike to cause damage or initiate (or break) a grapple.

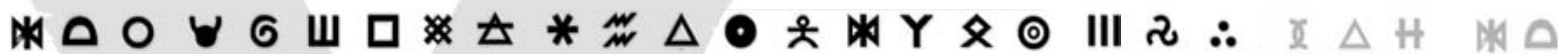
## ADVANCED SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

Advanced skills are those Adventurers are not expected to have automatically. These skills often require long and difficult training and Adventurers who possess any level of expertise in them often identify themselves according to their expertise. An Adventurer will not have access to many of these skills during Adventurer creation but others can be learnt through experience.

### Acrobatics (STR+DEX)

Acrobatics covers a range of entertainments, for things such as juggling or tightrope walking. It also includes gymnastics such as tumbling and recovering from falls. Acrobatics can be used in its own right as a performance to impress an audience; but can also provide a bonus to Athletics and Evade Skill Tests. If used in this way, it adds its critical range as a bonus to the base skill.

Normally, an Adventurer can move at half his base speed across an unstable surface without penalty. To move at his full rate requires an Acrobatics test. A successful Acrobatics test will also halve the damage suffered from falling.



A critical success allows the Adventurer to double his movement rate when performing a feat of balance or when negotiating an unstable surface. If falling, a critical success will reduce falling damage to a quarter.

A fumbled Acrobatics roll means that balance and agility has been lost catastrophically. Not only does the Adventurer fall, he falls awkwardly, sustaining the *full* damage from the fall!

## Art (POW+CHA)

This skill allows an Adventurer to create works of art. Like the Lore and Craft skills, it is actually a large number of skills grouped together under one heading. There are literally dozens of different artistic endeavours an Adventurer may pursue and each of them is its own individual skill. For instance, an Adventurer who wishes to take up the brush and palette would take Art (Painting).

A critical success indicates that the artwork produced is of stunning quality – worth half the standard value again of like products. If being used as part of an Influence test, to impress a prospective client or ally perhaps, then the Influence test will receive a bonus plus the critical score for the Art skill.

Conversely a fumble means that the artwork is a disaster and worth only what recoverable raw materials were used in its creation. Such artwork cannot be used to influence another party, without causing insult.

## Boating (STR+CON)

This covers small waterborne craft propelled manually by oars or paddles (sail-driven craft are used with the Shiphandling Advanced skill). Travelling across calm water does not usually require a test but adverse conditions such as currents and weather can bestow penalties.

A critical Boating success increases the Movement rate for the craft by half again.

If a Boating test is fumbled, the Adventurer should make an Athletics test. If the Athletics test succeeds then the Adventurer has lost an oar or the controlling device for the boat has been broken. Reduce the craft's movement by half. If the Athletics test is a failure or fumble, then the boat is in danger of capsizing. All on board need to make either an Acrobatics test or DEX x3 test (whichever is higher) to remain in the boat. Those that fail fall into the water.

## Commerce (INT+CHA)

This skill is used to secure the best price for goods being either bought or sold and it can be opposed by another Commerce roll, with the victor securing the advantage. Commerce is more than just haggling or simple bargaining; it is concerned with negotiation, compromise, brinksmanship and knowledge of the strength (or weakness) of the market for what is being traded. Where highly complex commercial deals are being discussed, a succession of

opposed Commerce rolls might be called for, with cumulative bonuses or penalties (no greater than +/-10% at a time) applied to the winner or loser, simulating the ebb and flow of the negotiation before settlement is reached.

A critical success allows the Adventurer to secure the commodity or service at half its usual price (or selling it for double).

A fumble indicates that the commodity or service is secured at twice the price or sold for only half the value.

## Courtesy (INT+CHA)

A noble court, from that of a minor lord to the grand palace of an emperor, usually conducts its business or communicates, in ways that would seem utterly alien to a commoner. With this skill, the Adventurer knows how to navigate the murky and treacherous waters of life amongst the nobility. He understands the subtleties and extravagances of courtly behaviour and can use them to his own advantage.

A critical success means the Adventurer has made a superb impression with his courtesousness and gains a bonus, plus the critical value of his Courtesy skill, in any Influence or similar tests, made soon after the Courtesy skill.

A fumble causes a devastating faux-pas. The Adventurer is prevented from performing any subsequent Skill Tests involving communication or personal credibility, until reparations have been made.

## Craft (DEX+INT)

Like the Lore skill, the Craft skill is actually several separate skills grouped under a single heading. For example, Craft (Armourer), Craft (Carpenter), Craft (Torturer) and Craft (Potter) are all individual skills.

Craft skills are used to fashion and create various items and there are literally hundreds of different crafts in the world, from the mundane to the exotic. The following list is by no means exhaustive:

*Armourer, baker, basketweaver, blacksmith, bowyer, brewer, butcher, candlemaker, carpenter, cartographer, cobbler, cook, cooper, fletcher, joiner, leatherworker, mason, painter, potter, sculptor, smith, tailor, torturer, weaver.*

A critical success allows the item being crafted to be of superior quality, in terms of durability, value or utility (choose one area of excellence). In terms of durability, it has additional AP and HP, distributed as the Adventurer sees fit, equal to the critical score of the skill. An item can not have its AP or HP increased above one and a half times its normal value in this way. For example, a weaponsmith who crafts an especially fine longsword using his skill of 81% can distribute 8 additional points between the sword's AP and HP. In terms of value, increase the item's value by half again. In terms of utility, the item provides a bonus equal to its maker's critical score to whichever skill the item is used for.



A fumbled roll halves the Armour and Hit Points of the item and reduces its value by half.

## Culture (Specific Culture) (INT x2)

Learning the ways of a Culture other than one's own is an Advanced skill. However it works in precisely the same way as for the Culture (Own) Common Skill. See page 36.

## Disguise (INT+CHA)

This skill is used to change an Adventurer's appearance, imitate cultural accents and mannerisms, or assume a different persona. It is usually opposed by an Insight or Perception test if the Adventurer is trying to avoid being identified.

A Disguise test will often be modified by the materials an Adventurer has to hand. For instance, it would be very hard to disguise an Adventurer as a royal guardsman if he has no uniform available, whereas an old and moulding cloak will go a long way to helping an Adventurer pull off a disguise as a beggar.

A critical success indicates that the disguise is completely perfect. The Adventurer gains the confidence of those being deceived and receives a bonus, plus the critical score in the Disguise skill, to any further Skill Tests relying upon the effectiveness of the disguise.

A fumble means the disguise is so unconvincingly executed as to be obvious. Even in a dark room, it fools no one.

## Engineering (INT x2)

This skill is used to design, build, activate, repair, sabotage or disassemble large mechanisms, traps or constructs such as siege machines, city gates, drawbridges, mineshafts, sailing ships and so forth.

A critical success indicates that the quality of the engineering project is first rate in terms of its durability and utility. The project is completed ahead of time and budget.

A fumble means the results of the project are simply unusable or may have failed to materialise. Indeed, the initial attempts have failed so badly that it takes double the time to complete it, whereupon it fails or collapses!

## Gambling (INT+POW)

The ability to understand and play games of chance, including calculating odds, keeping one's composure under high stakes and noticing when someone is cheating or when a game has been rigged.

A critical success with gambling allows the Adventurer to win a game even if it has been rigged to the highest degree. In terms of calculating or assessing odds of success, the Adventurer will be infallibly accurate in his assessment.

If the result is a fumble, then the Adventurer has utterly misread the circumstances, signals and other indicators surrounding the game. He loses everything save the shirt on his back (unless he was stupid enough to stake that too).

## Healing (INT+POW)

This includes a number of advanced cures and restorative abilities, including surgery, developing antidotes to poisons and remedying diseases. Use of this skill will always require a healer's kit (see page 77). Each use of the Healing skill generally takes 1D3x10 minutes to perform

*Curing Diseases:* A successful Healing test allows a patient under the effect of a disease to add a bonus to his next opposed Resilience versus Potency test to resist the disease, equal to the critical value of the skill.

*Curing Poisons:* A successful Healing test allows a patient under the effect of a poison to attempt a second opposed Resilience versus Potency test, with the patient gaining a bonus to his Resilience test equal to the critical value of the skill.

For a critical success in treating diseases and poisons, the patient gains a bonus to his Resilience test equal to the healer's Healing skill divided by 5.

If the roll is fumbled, the remedy weakens the patient's ability to fight the cause of the affliction; all Resilience tests are at -10% penalty.

*Surgery:* Surgery is the only way, other than magical healing, that an Adventurer may recover from a Major Wound. Once a successful First Aid test has been made to stabilise a Major Wound (see page 95), a successful Healing test can attempt to set broken bones, stitch together rent flesh and restore the location so that it is on the road to recovery. As long as the Healing test is a success, the stricken location will begin to heal as normal for a location suffering a Major Wound (see Natural Healing on page 60).

Surgery can re-attach a severed limb but this will not make it usable once more.

Critical success in surgery indicates that the patient gains 1 Hit Point due to the superior quality of the healing. Reattached limbs will heal at half the normal rate described under Natural Healing on page 60.



If the roll is fumbled the affected location remains permanently maimed and never recovers any Hit Points.

## Language (INT+CHA)

Like the Lore skill, the Language skill is actually several separate skills grouped under a single heading. Language (English), Language (German) and Language (French) are all individual skills.

Every Adventurer with a Language skill of 50% or more is fluent in that language, though they will likely bear an accent if it is not their native tongue.

Civilised cultures are more likely than other cultures to have developed literacy although this does not mean that every barbarian or nomad culture, for example, has no written form of its language. It is therefore up to the Games Master to decide if fluency in a language also includes the ability to read and write it, depending on the nature and circumstances of the campaign. If the Games Master wishes the literacy percentage of the Adventurer's language may be higher or lower than the spoken skill, in which case an appropriate bonus or penalty can be applied to the base Language skill.

If the Adventurer scores a critical success he has achieved a superb grasp of the language. He gains a bonus equal to his Language critical score for any tests involving communication of personal credibility.

On a fumble the Adventurer has completely misunderstood or mangled the nuances of the language. All immediate Skill Tests involving communication and personal credibility suffer a penalty.

## Lore (INT x2)

This skill is used in the same way as the Lore skill described on page 39. The Advanced range of possibilities for this skill is limited only by a player's imagination but a list of potential areas of Lore study are listed here:

*Alchemy, art, astronomy, gambling, geography, heraldry, law, logistics, military tactics, mineral, philosophy, poisons, theology.*

## Mechanisms (DEX+INT)

This covers an Adventurer's ability to both assemble and disassemble mechanical devices, including traps and locks. Mechanisms generally involve delicate contraptions with small working parts, as opposed to Engineering, which deals with massive constructions.

Picking a lock or disassembling a trap usually takes at least one minute to perform, while larger devices will take longer.

Usually, an Adventurer will simply make a Mechanisms test in order to succeed at assembling or disassembling a device, with appropriate bonuses or penalties decided upon by the Games Master. However, if a device has been designed to specifically resist



*Rich Longmore*

attempts at disassembly, the Mechanisms test becomes opposed by the Mechanisms skill of the Adventurer who created it.

On a critical success the Adventurer achieves success in half the usual time and with flawless results.

On a fumble the mechanism is broken and requires the attention of its maker to fix properly.

### Meditation (POW x2)

The use of meditation helps to focus concentration and is psychically soothing. Meditation is a skill which must be learned either by study or practice. A successfully meditating Adventurer may recover lost Magic Points at twice the normal rate. Meditating Adventurers retain full awareness of their surroundings and may make Perception tests at no penalty.

On a critical success the Adventurer triples the rate of Magic Point recovery.

Fumbling increases the Adventurer's Fatigue by one level as unwanted thoughts intrude on the psyche.

### Oratory (POW+CHA)

This skill is used when addressing large groups of people, such as a priest addressing the faithful or a general exhorting his troops to victory on the eve of a battle. In effect, it is much like Influence, save that it relies more upon emotional appeal than intellectual stimulation and is used for larger groups of people.

On a critical success the Adventurer wins over the audience completely and utterly, gaining their vociferous agreement. He gains a bonus equal to the critical score of his Oratory skill for all immediate tests concerning communication and personal credibility.

If fumbled the Adventurer's arguments come across as shallow and ill-communicated – even insulting. He gains a penalty equal to the critical score of his Oratory skill for all immediate tests concerning communication and personal credibility.

### Play Instrument (DEX+CHA)

Like the Lore skill, the Play Instrument skill is actually several separate skills grouped under a single heading. Play Instrument (Dulcimer), Play Instrument (Flute) and Play Instrument (Spoons) are all individual skills. A successful test with this skill will result in the audience being pleased by the Adventurer's performance.

On a critical success the music produced is of stunning emotional quality. If being used as part of an Influence test, to impress a prospective client or ally perhaps, then the Influence test receives a bonus of +40 plus the critical score for the Play Instrument skill.

For a fumble the music is discordant and unpleasant to listen to. If being used as part of an Influence test, to impress a prospective client or ally perhaps, then the Influence test receives a penalty appropriate to the circumstances.

### Seduction (INT+CHA)

Seduction combines charm, flirtatiousness, tenacity and cunning. This skill allows the adventurer to completely win-over the target of the seduction attempt using overt romantic or sexual signals, leading to the target becoming deeply enthralled to the adventurer and willing to perform one suggested service or command. The target may try to resist a seduction attempt with an opposed Persistence test.

### Shiphandling (INT+CON)

This skill is used in the same way as Boating but is instead applied to waterborne craft that are driven by sail or rows of oars.

A critical Shiphandling success increases the Movement rate for the craft by half again.

If the test is fumbled, reduce the craft's movement by half.

### Streetwise (POW+CHA)

In some ways, this skill could be considered the urban version of Survival. Rather than helping the Adventurer find food and water, however, this skill allows him to find other things he might need in an urban setting. Streetwise allows an Adventurer to find fences for stolen goods, black markets and general information. Such uses of Streetwise normally require a minimum of 1D4 hours.

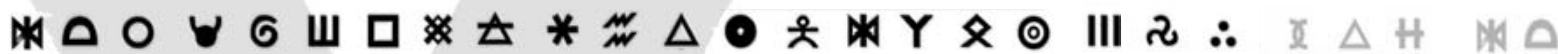
A critical success allows the Adventurer to find what he is looking for 1D2 hours, rather than usual 1D4.

A fumbled Streetwise means the Adventurer makes some mistake that causes insult or offence, attracting the attention of undesirables who may wish to cause him harm. The Games Master should decide on the specifics according to the circumstances.

### Survival (POW+CON)

This is a broad skill, used whenever the Adventurer has to rely on his own wits to survive outside the comforts of civilisation.

One Survival test will be required every day that an Adventurer lacks either food, water or a safe place to sleep. Success indicates the Adventurer manages to find whatever he is lacking – failure means he will go without which, over several days, could result in very serious consequences. Survival tests are not used when the Adventurer is in a city or town.



Survival tests may be required in other circumstances as well, such as hunting or gathering food for other Adventurers or attempting to locate the best place in the local terrain to permit a group to rest for an extended period.

On a critical success the Adventurer has been able to weather the conditions for a number of days equal to half his critical score in Survival (rounded up) without needing to make any further tests against Resilience, for instance.

On a fumble the Adventurer has done something that causes immediate harm. A Resilience test is required immediately. If failed, the Adventurer suffers 1D3 points of damage to a random location and the Games Master should adjudicate the specifics according to the circumstances of the environment.

### Teaching (INT+CHA)

The Adventurer is skilled in the instruction, coaching and tutoring of others. The skill does not work in the same way as other skills. When teaching someone else the teacher's skill acts as a bonus to the Improvement Roll for his pupil, as described in the section on Adventurer Advancement beginning on page 49.

### Track (INT+CON)

With this skill an Adventurer can locate the tracks (footprints, disturbed vegetation and so on) of a specific creature and follow them. A test must be made to locate the trail and then again once every hour they are being followed. Modifiers will be imposed depending on what terrain the trail is across (following footprints in the sand is Easy while doing the same across hard cobbles is Formidable), how long ago the tracks were made and whether anything has been done to cover them (either deliberately or via the weather).

With a critical Track the Adventurer will not need to make any further Tracking tests in pursuit of the quarry and is able to anticipate and follow the trail without difficulty.

For a fumble the trail is completely lost and cannot be recovered.

## MAGICAL SKILLS

The magical skills here are distinct from Common Magic and apply to the specific magical paths of Divine Magic, Spirit Magic

and Sorcery. These three styles use a combination of two skills to govern how magic works – both the power of spells and their casting. A more thorough explanation of how the skills work can be found in the respective magic chapters but a summary of each skill follows:

### Lore (Specific Theology) (INT+POW)

This is the knowledge and understanding of one's cult or religion; its history, myths and context in the world. The skill allows the Adventurer to call upon miracles or magic from his deity and is used in casting Divine Spells (see the Divine Magic chapter).

Critical success – the Divine Spell is not lost when cast and can be cast again.

Fumble – the spell does not work but is also lost and must be regained as if it had been successfully cast.

### Pact (Specific Cult or Deity) (CHA + Dedicated POW)

This is a measure of one's devotion to a Divine cult (see the Divine Magic chapter) and its object of veneration. The higher the Pact skill, the more dedicated the follower. Dedicating POW to a Divine cult automatically creates the Pact at a base percentage equal to: CHA+Dedicated POW. It is not a measure of how much an Adventurer knows about the cult or god; that is still measured by the Lore (Specific Theology) skill. Pacts are further explained in the Cults chapter.

If a critical success is rolled when recovering Divine Spells, the Adventurer recovers all the Divine spells associated with the Pact simultaneously.

If the Pact roll is fumbled then any Divine Spells used cannot be recovered and the Adventurer, irrespective of his standing in the cult, must return to a shrine or temple to pray for their return.

### Spirit Walking (POW+CON)

This skill represents the spirit magician's awareness of the Spirit Plane and its denizens. Anyone with this skill can, with a successful roll, detect (but not observe) the presence of spirits within a range of their POW in metres.

If the skill check is successful then the spirit magician can perform the following; dependant on his rank (see the Spirit Magic and Cults chapters for a greater understanding of Spirit Cult ranks):

- \* Follower (equivalent to Initiate) – Can see and identify spirits within range.
- \* Devotee (equivalent to Acolyte) – Can communicate with spirits within range.
- \* Shaman (equivalent to Rune Priest) – Can project their own soul onto the Spirit Plane.
- \* High Shaman (equivalent to Rune Lord) – Can drag the souls of others onto the Spirit Plane with them, at a cost of 1 extra Magic Point per additional person.

Utilising any of the advanced abilities requires entering a trance-like state which takes a number of minutes equal to the Species Maximum POW – their Characteristic POW and costs a single Magic Point.

If the roll is a critical success then entering the trance is achieved in a single minute. If the roll is fumbled, the shaman is barred from entering the spirit plane for a full day.

### Spirit Binding (POW+CHA)

Spirit Binding measures the authority a spirit magician has within a spirit cult and is used to bind spirits into fetishes and control their actions once bound. Additionally, it can be used to summon and coerce a known spirit to perform a single deed for a mutually acceptable service.

The skill is also used to command bound spirits and determine the damage inflicted in spirit combat. See page 139 of the Spirit Magic chapter.

During spirit combat if the Spirit Binding roll is a critical success, then maximum damage is inflicted. If the roll is a fumble, then the shaman overstrains himself and sustains the rolled damage to his own Magic Points.

### Sorcery (Grimoire) (INT x2)

Sorcery (Grimoire) is a measure of a sorcerer's knowledge and intimacy with a particular group of spells, collectively known as

a grimoire. This skill is the ability of the sorcerer to cast all spells known to a particular school or church of sorcery; that is those held within its Grimoire but also measures the depth of relationship and arcane standing the sorcerer has achieved within the order.

The sorcerer must have studied and memorised the spell to be cast; he cannot use the Sorcery skill to cast spells that are not in a grimoire he is familiar with, as represented by the skill. Even if a sorcerer possesses knowledge of several Grimoires, he is still limited to *memorising* a maximum number of spells (including those known from Common Magic) equal to his INT.

The scale of what can be affected by a spell is dependent on the skill in the Sorcery School. The higher the skill, the greater the effect or the target it can be used against.

To cast a spell, the sorcerer must succeed in a test of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. If the spellcasting attempt is a critical success, the entire spell costs zero Magic Points irrespective of the number of manipulations the sorcerer is attempting.

If the spellcasting attempt is fumbled, then the spell does not work and the sorcerer loses the full Magic Point cost of the spell.

### Manipulation (INT+POW)

The Manipulation skill is used to manipulate the components of Magnitude, Combine, Duration, Range and Target. When manipulating a spell, the Adventurer must choose which of these components he is manipulating.

Every 10% or fraction thereof of the Manipulation skill allows 1 point of Manipulation to be assigned to the manipulated component. Sorcerers therefore need to specify, at the moment of casting, how the points of their manipulation skill will be used. For example: a sorcerer with Manipulation of 50% could place three points into Manipulate Duration and two into Range; or 5 into a single component.

This skill is not rolled against when spellcasting. Its value merely limits how much the caster may manipulate a sorcery spell. However, sorcery spells cost as many Magic Points to cast, as the number of manipulation components applied to it; with a minimum cost of 1.



## CHAPTER 3:

# GAME SYSTEM

This chapter provides a series of rules for different in-game circumstances that will face *RuneQuest* Adventurers and Games Masters from time to time. Some circumstances might be one-offs; others will be more frequent.

## ACTION AND TIME

Action takes place in several different timescales, according to the stage of the story and the nature of the action. A fight, for instance, takes place in Combat Rounds, a detailed timescale that allows the anatomy of the combat to be played through and its effects applied appropriately. However, other actions and activities not need to be measured in such a detailed way; searching a room, for example, might take several minutes and travelling between two towns might take days. Time is typically abstracted into useful scales that advance the Adventurers' story, keep things moving, and focus the attention on what is most important. In a fight, for instance, it is important to know who is hurt, where and how badly, so tracking time at a detailed level is crucial. However, for travelling between two towns, along a known road with few hazards it is simply enough to state 'It takes you three days to get from A to B'.

### Time Scales

The key timescales, and what actions and motion can be accomplished, are as follows: *Combat Rounds*, *Local Time* and *Strategic Time*.

#### Combat Rounds

Dealt with in more detail in the Combat chapter, a Combat Round represents 5 seconds of game time. In a Combat Round an Adventurer can:

1. Act a number of times depending on his Combat Actions available.
2. Move a distance, usually a number of metres, equal to his Movement score (see page 63).

Once a Combat Round finishes another might start depending on the state of the combatants, or time might shift to Local Time (see the following section) to handle things such as first aid or healing.

Although Combat Rounds are used primarily for measuring fights between Adventurers and their adversaries, Combat Rounds can be useful for measuring very detailed activities that require a blow-by-blow resolution. For example, a chase between hunter and hunted can be measured in Combat Rounds, representing the twists and turns that happen very quickly during any tense pursuit. The circumstances and tension required will determine when Combat Rounds are used and the rules for action and movement within the Combat Round, as found on page 83, should be used.

#### Local Time

Local Time is anything from a few minutes to a few hours (but not more than about six hours) and is used to generally measure specific activities, such as skill usage, that do not require the detailed attention of a Combat Round but require a specific concentration of effort with a definite end result. Picking a lock might take five minutes and this is a measure of Local Time. Observing the patrols made by teams of guards around a castle's walls might require several hours but is still a measure of Local Time. Usually, in Local Time the following occurs:

1. The Adventurer states his intention (Local Time starts).
2. The Games Master assigns how long this takes to accomplish.
3. Any appropriate skill rolls are made and the results noted.
4. The Games Master communicates the results and the time take in step 2 passes (Local Time ends).

The sequence may then either continue in Local Time, move into Combat Rounds or even go into Strategic Time (see the following section).

## Local Time Table

Example Task	Time
Attempt a Craft or Lore skill	5 minutes to 10 days, depending on complexity, tools available; and so forth.
Attempt to influence, persuade, or seduce someone	5 minutes to 6 hours, depending in the nature of the person being worked on.
Attempt to sway a crowd through oratory	20 minutes to 6 hours, depending on the mood of the crowd.
Pick a lock	1 minute to 1 hour, depending on the complexity of the lock.
Search a room thoroughly	5 minutes to 2 hours, depending on the room's size.
Observe, note and understand a person or group of people's habits (through following them or observing from a distance)	1 hour to 6 hours.
Effect a functional repair on a piece of broken equipment, given the right tools and resources	1 hour to 6 hours, depending on the circumstances.
Read a scroll, parchment or several chapters of a book	10 minutes to 3 hours, depending on the complexity of the language and subject matter.
Pick up a trail and follow it using Tracking	2 minutes to 2 hours, depending on local conditions.
Build a makeshift shelter, raft or similar	3 to 6 hours.
Forage for food, set snares; and so forth	2 to 4 hours.
Prepare and cook a carcass for eating	1 to 12 hours, depending on the SIZ of the carcass.

Some examples of Local Time tasks and the typical time required are in given in the Local Time Table.

## Strategic Time

Strategic Time is measured in days, weeks, months or even years. Detailed events within Strategic Time do not necessarily need to be described and routine tasks and activities that are generally covered using Local Time are abstracted and presumed to happen automatically and successfully (although this, again, depends on the circumstances).

Use Strategic Time for those periods where it is not necessary to know the detail, just the outcome – 'You sail for 10 days and reach the port by dawn on the 11<sup>th</sup> day.' 'You travel the moors for two days and spot the village in the distance on the third.' 'You spend a week studying the grimoire but are none the wiser at the end of it.'

Long distances and environmental factors may be important to Strategic Time and may also have an effect on Local Time and Combat Rounds. The Games Masters' Chapter offers some additional guidance on weather conditions and their effects.

Most of the time, Strategic Time will be concerned with how far Adventurers can travel depending on the mode of transport used. The Strategic Time Travel Table offers examples for various conditions. The travel times assume a travelling day of around 10 hours with regular stops for rest, water and food. If Adventurers are desperate and need to increase the distances given in the Strategic Time Travel Table, then they can effectively double the distance travelled in the Strategic Time period but gain a level of Fatigue if a Hard (–40%) Resilience roll is not successfully made. Naturally an appropriate skill roll (Drive, Ride, Athletics and so on) also needs to be made to double the distance covered, along with dealing with any hazards that might need to be resolved in Combat Rounds or Local Time.

## Strategic Time Travel Table

Travel Example	Distance Covered (kilometres)
Walking	30 per Day (10 hours)
Horseback at casual speed	60 per Day (10 hours)
Wagon at casual speed	15 per Day (10 hours)
Open Sea, favourable conditions	300 (in a 24 hour period)
Open Sea, unfavourable conditions	36 (in a 24 hour period)
Coast or River, favourable conditions	60 per Day (10 hours)
Coast or River, unfavourable conditions	32 per Day (10 Hours)

## ADVENTURER ADVANCEMENT

*RuneQuest* Adventurers begin the game as callow youths and, through time and game play, may develop into heroes. They do this by improving the Common and Advanced skills they have, learning new skills, studying magic, seeking the secrets of Heroic Abilities and by improving their characteristics which, in turn, help other attributes to improve.

## Improvement Rolls

Skills and characteristics are increased through the use of Improvement Rolls, which the Games Master awards at the close of a particular game session or point in a story. Improvement Rolls are not given at the end of every game session but are awarded when the action reaches a natural close and the Adventurers have time to rest, reflect and consolidate what they may have learned in the time just past.

As a base, each Adventurer should receive three improvement rolls when the time comes for them to be awarded. This can



be modified if the Adventurers performed particularly poorly or heroically and the Games Master should judge how the award should be made: a minimum of one and a maximum of five Improvement Rolls depending on how the Adventurers acquitted themselves.

### Edric's Saga

*Edric, Lilina and Thrace have just completed an adventure that saw them sneak into the troll's lair in search of evidence for the whereabouts of the troll who killed Edric's father. During play all three Adventurers acted heroically and cleverly to the challenges set before them and so, when they return to the village, cut, bruised and bloodied, but with important information, the Games Master awards each Adventurer four Improvement Rolls.*

*Later...*

*The game session included a debate held in the Chieftain's hall that concerned the welfare of the entire clan. Throughout this important council Edric, Lilina and Thrace were completely disinterested and contribute nothing to the proceedings. At the end of the session, the Games Master makes an award of only two Improvement Rolls explaining that the award would have been higher if the Adventurers had participated more and learned from their experience.*

### Improvement Roll Modifier

Every Adventurer has an Improvement Roll Modifier, based on the CHA characteristic, of between -1 and +1, or more. This represents the relationship an Adventurer has with his community, peers and colleagues, who offer their services or advice, or, if CHA is particularly low, the difficulty of attempting to improve one's capabilities without the assistance of others.

The number of Improvement Rolls an Adventurer has to spend is modified by the value of the Improvement Roll Modifier. So, in the case of Edric, his Improvement Roll Modifier is zero. In the two examples given earlier Edric would receive four and two Improvement Rolls respectively, as the Games Master has decided to allocate them.

Lilina, on the other hand, has CHA 16 and therefore an Improvement Roll Modifier of +1. Lilina is very confident in her personality and this is abstracted in her ability to seek advice, make use of friends, colleagues and others in her community and make the most of her experiences. In the two examples earlier she would gain five Improvement Rolls (instead of the four the Games Master awards) and three Improvement Rolls rather than two.

Conversely Thrace, with a CHA of 5, is a somewhat sullen individual who tends to keep himself to himself, probably because he lacks confidence socially or because he is, genuinely, anti-social. This places

him at a disadvantage in his development and his Improvement Roll Modifier of -1 means that, in the examples from earlier, he gains only three and one Improvement Rolls respectively.

### Using Improvement Rolls

A player can choose to spend one improvement roll to attempt to increase one known skill.

- \* Select the skill to be increased and roll 1D100. Add the Adventurer's INT characteristic to the result of the 1D100 roll.
- \* If this 1D100 result is *greater* than the skill's current score, the skill increases by 1D4+1 points.
- \* If this 1D100 result is *equal to or less than* the skill's current score, the skill only increases by one point.

### Edric's Saga

*Edric wishes to increase his Athletics, which is currently at 35%. He practises the skill in earnest and then spends one Improvement Roll.*

*He rolls 1D100 and results in 29. However, he also adds his INT of 16 and this makes a result of 45. Since this is greater than the 35% of his current Athletics skill, it is improved by 1D4+1 points. If the result of the 1D100 roll and the addition of his INT had been less than or equal to 35, his Athletics skill would have increased by only one point.*

### Skills Above 100%

There is no limit to the score a skill can reach; a skill can reach 100% and exceed it. However, the more adept an Adventurer becomes at any particular skill, the more difficult it becomes for him to learn something about that skill he did not already know. Thus, as an Adventurer's skill percentage climbs, it will become more difficult and time consuming for him to raise that skill.

- \* When an Adventurer wants to improve a skill that exceeds 100%, he only needs to roll against a target value of 100. However, if his current skill is between 101-200% he only adds *half* his INT to the roll.
- \* If the skill is 201-300% he only adds one *quarter* of his INT to the roll; and, between 301-400% an *eighth* (and so forth).
- \* If the Adventurer manages to roll over 100, with his INT bonus as outlined above, then the skill improves by 1d4+1 points. If the result is less than or equal to 100 then the Adventurer only gains 1 point, as usual.

*For example Jurgen, a master swordsman, has Sword and Shield at 153% and INT 16. To improve his Sword and Shield he rolls 1D100 and adds 8 (half his INT) to the result. The roll is 94 and Jurgen's INT bonus takes the result to 102 meaning that Jurgen gains a 1D4+1 increase.*

*Years later, Jurgen's Sword and Shield has reached a dizzying 203%. To increase it, Jurgen must roll 1D100 and score 100 or more, adding only a quarter of his INT (4) to the roll. The 1D100 roll is 43 and Jurgen's INT bonus of 4 takes it 47 – nowhere near enough for the skill to increase by 1D4+1% and so it climbs to just 204%.*

## Learning New Skills through Improvement Rolls

An Adventurer can learn a new Advanced Skill through spending Improvement Rolls. Two Improvement Rolls give the Adventurer the Advanced skill at its basic characteristic-derived score.

Some Advanced skills however, cannot be learned through simply spending Improvement Rolls. The following Advanced skills can only be gained through training (see page 52).

- \* Craft.
- \* Culture – if studying a culture completely alien to one's own.
- \* Engineering.
- \* Healing.
- \* Language.
- \* Lore (with the exception of Lore (Regional)).
- \* Teaching.
- \* Sorcery and Manipulation.
- \* Spirit Walking and Spirit Binding.

Once learned with the assistance of a teacher, these skills then become improvable using Improvement Rolls.

## Improving Characteristics

Adventurers can gradually improve their characteristics, becoming more intelligent, stronger or dextrous over time. Characteristics improve at a much slower rate than skills but can have more of an effect on an Adventurer. The process of increasing a characteristic through exercise is abstracted through spending Improvement Rolls in a similar way to improving a skill – however the cost to do so is far higher. Improving a characteristic by one point costs a number of Improvement Rolls equal to the characteristic's current value; hence, improving a characteristic from 10 to 11 would cost 10 Improvement Rolls.

Improvement Rolls, when used to improve characteristics can be stockpiled from one allocation to the next but the player must state that his Adventurer is using these stockpiled Improvement Rolls towards a characteristic increase – and stipulate which characteristic is to benefit.

*For example, Thrace's player, at the end of a story when the Games Master allocates Improvement Rolls says that he wants to increase his CHA 5 to CHA 6. It will cost him five Improvement Rolls to do this and he knows it will take time. Instead of using the two rolls he gains from the story to enhance skills, he puts them towards his CHA improvement instead. In the next Improvement Roll allocation he can again choose to put his Improvement Rolls towards increasing his CHA or use them for skill improvement.*

Adventurers can contribute some or all of their Improvement Rolls towards characteristic improvement. In Thrace's example he could contribute one Improvement Roll towards increasing his CHA and spend another on improving a skill. The choice is his.

When a characteristic increases, all skills that derive their base scores from it will change accordingly, as will the character's Attributes such as Combat Actions, Strike Ranks and Damage Modifier.

## Improving Skills Through Training

As well as using Improvement Rolls to increase skills, skills can also increase through dedicated training. For this to occur, the following conditions need to be met:

- \* The Adventurer has sufficient time to dedicate to training – usually a period of Downtime (see page 58).
- \* Access to a teacher or mentor, either one-to-one or via a school, academy or cult.
- \* Funds to pay for training.

An Adventurer cannot *continually* improve a skill through training; after increasing a skill by training his next improvement needs to be through an Improvement Roll. Once that is accomplished, he can then improve that skill through training once more, if he meets the training conditions.

To achieve any skill increase the Adventurer must spend a week in training and not undertaking any other activities. At the end of the training period a roll 1D100 roll is made to see if the Adventurer has made any headway and, if so, the skill improves. The amount of the improvement depends on the Adventurer's ability to learn and the teacher's ability to teach. Both are explained here.

## Teachers and Mentors

Two names for the same thing, anyone can act as a teacher or mentor as long as they have at least 20% more in the skill being taught than the Adventurer.

Teachers also benefit from the Teaching Advanced Skill. Teaching is the ability to train, coach and mentor to best effect, ensuring the right conditions for learning and cementing the knowledge conveyed. The value of the Teaching skill provides a bonus to the skill increase for the student. If the teacher has Teaching, he adds the critical range of the Teaching skill (one 10<sup>th</sup> of the skill's score) to the Adventurer's increase – if the Adventurer successfully learns anything from the time in study.

The Teaching skill also confers two other benefits, as follows:

- \* The teacher can instruct an additional student for every 20% he has in Teaching. Thus, a teacher with Teaching 60% could teach 4 students simultaneously.



### Edric's Saga

*Edric is keen to improve his Dance skill in order to impress Selina, the Chieftain's daughter, at a forthcoming banquet. His Dance is 23%. Edric approaches one of his aunts who has Dance 65% and Teaching at 50%. It will take a week to train Edric how to dance without looking ungainly or awkward.*

*At the end of the week Edric rolls 1D100 and scores 92. His Dance skill therefore increases by the following:*

- \* *Edric's INT 16 divided by 5 = 4, plus;*
- \* *His aunt's Teaching critical range of 5 (50%/10)*

*Thus, after a week of hard effort and several crushed toes, Edric has increased his Dance by a total of 9% taking it to 32%. He is still no expert but is far less clumsy than he was. His aunt suggests that, in return for her time, Edric should donate 50 silver pieces to the local temple of Eernalda the Scale, to show his appreciation.*

- \* The teacher can add 1 silver piece per 1% of Training skill to the standard training cost.

It is not necessary for a teacher to have the Teaching skill but it is clearly an advantage to the student if it is present.

### Training Procedure

To attempt a skill improvement through training the Adventurer spends a week in full time study with his teacher or mentor. At the end of the week he makes a 1D100 roll and compares it to his current score in the skill. Only one skill at a time can be increased through training.

- \* If the roll is less than the skill's current score, the skill increases by 1%. The Adventurer has not made significant progress through study.
- \* If the roll is equal to, or greater than, the skill's current score, the skill increases by a number of points equal to the Adventurer's INT divided by five (rounded up), plus the teacher's Teaching critical range (if the teacher has the Teaching skill).

### Learning New Advanced Skills Through Training

The following Advanced Skills can only be learned by an Adventurer if he has a teacher or mentor to teach him:

- \* Craft.
- \* Culture – if studying a culture completely alien to one's own.
- \* Engineering.
- \* Healing.
- \* Language.
- \* Lore (with the exception of Lore (Regional)).
- \* Teaching.
- \* Sorcery and Manipulation.
- \* Spirit Walking and Spirit Binding.

It takes one month for the Adventurer to emerge with the Advanced skill at its basic, characteristic derived score. From that point on, the skill can then be improved through either Improvement Rolls or training.

The teacher of the skill must be a professional, i.e. knowing the skill at 50% or higher.

Learning a new Advanced skill does not require a 1D100 roll to be successfully made; all that is necessary is the time and money needed for training. However, if the trainer has the Teaching skill, the number of days it takes to learn the new Advanced skill is reduced by 1 day for every 10% he has in Teaching. Thus, in Edric's example, if his mentor in Lore (Orlanth the Dragon) has Teaching 70%, Edric would need only 21 days – 3 weeks – rather than 28 to learn the skill to its starting level.

## Training Costs Table

	Learning a New Advanced Skill to Base Score	Adventurer's Current Skill %			
		Up to 50%	51% - 70%	71% - 100%	101%+
Magic Skill	500 SP	500 SP	600 SP	800 SP	1,000 SP
Lore Skill	400 SP	400 SP	500 SP	700 SP	900 SP
Common Skill	—	200 SP	300 SP	500 SP	700 SP
Advanced Skill	300 SP	300 SP	400 SP	600 SP	800 SP
Combat Skill	300 SP	300 SP	400 SP	600 SP	800 SP

### Training Costs

The standard costs for training are based on the Adventurer's current level in the skill and the trainer's Teaching skill. The table of costs above is a guide only and assumes that the Adventurer is finding an independent teacher who will offer one-to-one training. Dedicated academies may charge more or less, depending on reputation and a discount might be offered (5% per additional student, as a guideline) if a teacher is able to train multiple students at the same time. Remember that the teacher can add an additional silver piece for every 1% of his Teaching skill.

Therefore, an Adventurer wanting to train in his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill, currently at 74%, with a teacher who has Teach 85%, would spend 885 silver pieces for a week's training.

If an Adventurer is a member of a cult or guild that offers training in certain skills related to its membership, then he often benefits from a discount on training costs. The cult or guild's description will specify what skills it trains in, what teachers it has available and what discount is offered to members. The Training Costs Table is used as the base cost for the training, unless otherwise specified in the cult or guild's description.

## AGEING

The march of Time is inevitable. Unless an Adventurer is the lucky beneficiary of age-halting magic, he will get older and the effects of age will tell upon the frame. In *RuneQuest* the signs of ageing do not begin until the character reaches the age of 40. At that point, and for each year thereafter (the birthday perhaps, or an anniversary agreed between the Games Master and the player), the character should make two checks: one for Resilience and one for Persistence. Each test is at a penalty equal to the number of years over 40 the character has attained. Thus, a 50 year old character suffers a -10% penalty to the Resilience and Persistence tests. The tests are also further modified according to the character's life experiences, as noted in the following table.

Each different life experience is cumulative; so a character who has been poisoned and suffered a Major Wound incurs a -20% penalty to his Resilience and Persistence tests. However, the character does not suffer from accumulated penalties for the multiple occurrences of the same experience. Thus, even though an Adventurer may have suffered several Major Wounds, he only incurs a single -10% penalty.

### Life Experiences

Life Experience	Persistence and Resilience Modifiers
Disease or Poisoning	-10% (Resilience)
Emotional trauma	-5% (Persistence)
Insanity	-10% (Persistence)
Major Wound	-10% (Resilience)
Resurrected from Death	-15% (Persistence and Resilience)
Serious Wound	-5% (Resilience)

If the Resilience and/or Persistence test is made successfully, the character does not incur any ageing effects *that year*. If either test fails, the character must roll on the appropriate, or both, columns of the Character Ageing Table to determine which Characteristics suffer from the effects of ageing that year.

### Character Ageing Table

1D6	Physical Ageing (Failed Resilience)	Mental Ageing (Failed Persistence)
1-2	STR	INT
3-4	CON	POW
5-6	DEX	CHA

Each Characteristic affected by ageing reduces by 1D2 points. These points can be recovered through normal Characteristic improvement, as described on page 51, representing efforts made by the character to keep themselves trim and alert as they grow older. What specific debilitating effects arise as part of the ageing process are down to the players and Games Master to define. Reducing STR or DEX indicates the general wear and tear on the body, for instance, with creaking joints and a gradual loss of mobility. Reducing INT indicates that age is starting to play tricks on the mind and memory, whilst reducing CHA indicates the character is getting craggier and more short-tempered, perhaps, as they get older.

## DAMAGE

Damage comes from a multitude of sources and the following rules account for the most common forms that Adventurers will face.

### Acid

What is important here is the dilution of the acid more than its type or source. Acids are therefore classified as being Weak, Strong



## Acid Type

### Damage per Combat Round

### Treatable With...

Weak	1D2	Water – the residual acid can be washed away by the victim if a source of water, or similar fluid, is available. It takes a minute of washing to remove the acid: whilst being washed away the acid does not inflict any further damage, but the victim must focus on treating the affected location with water and cannot undertake any further actions. If he interrupts the washing process he continues to suffer 1 point of damage per round until it can be completed.
Strong	1D4	First Aid skill – a successful First Aid roll is required to reduce the acid's type from Strong to Weak; the victim continues to sustain damage from the acid whilst the First Aid treatment is being made. Thereafter the weak acid can be treated as noted above. If the First Aid roll is a critical success, then the acid is neutralised without needing further attention.
Concentrated	1D6	Healing skill – a successful Healing roll is needed to reduce the acid's type from Concentrated to Weak. Thereafter the weak acid can be treated as noted above. If the Healing roll is a critical success, then the acid is neutralised without needing further attention.

or Concentrated. For game purposes *RuneQuest* assumes that contact with the acid is significant or sustained, rather than just a droplet or two.

A splash or spray of acid lasts only for a single round before it ceases working. Immersion in a considerable volume of acid however, inflicts the damage every round until the victim or location is removed and treated.

Armour slows the effects of acid but does not stop it. An armoured location has its APs reduced by the acid's damage until it reaches zero Hit Points, at which point the damage is then transferred to the Hit Location that it had been protecting. Armour reduced to zero AP is rendered useless as the acid burns through bindings, straps and joints.

## Asphyxiation/Suffocation/Drowning

If prepared, Adventurers are able to hold their breath for a number of seconds equal to CON x5.

If unprepared (and as the circumstances are too varied to summarise, Games Masters must determine if an Adventurer is prepared, or able to prepare), the Adventurer must make a Resilience roll successfully to be able to gasp enough air and retain it without panicking, for CON x1D4 seconds. If the Resilience roll fails and/or when the Adventurer reaches the point where he must struggle to breathe, then damage sustained through asphyxiation/suffocation or drowning is as follows:

Make a (further) Resilience roll

- \* If the roll is a critical success, the Adventurer takes no damage that round.
- \* If the roll is successful, the Adventurer sustains 1D3 points of damage to the Chest that round.

- \* If the roll fails, the Adventurer sustains 1D3 points of damage to the Chest and Head that round.
- \* If the roll is fumbled, the Adventurer sustains 1D6 points of damage to the Chest and Head that round.

The process continues until the Adventurer is able to breathe normally again or they die.



Adventurers struggling for air can attempt to perform any appropriate skills circumstances permit: Swim, for instance, or grapple with a foe holding them in a position where asphyxiation is occurring. However all such skill attempts are considered to be Hard (-40%).

## Disease and Poison

Diseases and poisons take many different forms but for game purposes function in a similar way. First, the *Potency* of the disease or poison must be calculated. All diseases and poisons are rated for Potency between 10 and 100 (or higher). The Potency is then matched against the appropriate resisting skill (usually Resilience or Persistence) in an opposed test.

- \* If the resisting skill is a success then the effects of the disease or poison are avoided.
- \* If the resisting skill is a failure then the effects of the disease or poison are felt for the Duration.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF POISONS AND DISEASES

Every disease or poison has a series of characteristics that govern how it affects the target. The characteristics are:

**Application:** how the poison or disease is administered:

- \* Ingested – the disease or poison is ingested through either eating or drinking.
- \* Inhaled – the disease or poison is inhaled through breathing or snorting.
- \* Contact – the disease or poison is absorbed through skin contact.
- \* Injected – the disease or poison must be injected directly into the body (via a needle, sting or some other direct means).

**Onset time:** the time prior to the effects taking hold. Poisons or diseases possessing multiple Conditions may have different onset times for each one.

**Duration:** the duration of the poison or disease's Conditions.

**Resistance Time:** when or how frequently the Adventurer needs to make a Resistance roll to counter the disease or poison's effects.

**Potency:** the disease or poison's Potency, rated between 10 and 100 (or higher).

**Resistance:** how the disease or poison is resisted – either Persistence or Resilience, usually, but another roll may be called for.

**Conditions:** every poison or disease has one or more Conditions. These have specific effects as described in the Conditions table and if a victim fails to resist the poison or disease, he suffers all the Conditions described. See the Conditions table overleaf.

**Antidote/Cure:** if the character succumbs to the poison or disease's Conditions, there is still a chance that an appropriate cure will mitigate the effects. If so, then the remedy will be noted here. Otherwise all non magical diseases and poisons can be alleviated by specific healing magic, such as the Cure Disease or Cure Poison spells.

## Sample Diseases

These are samples of various diseases encountered during *RuneQuest* play, to be used as they stand or as a template for Games Master designed infections.

### Creeping Chills

Carried by the dreaded, chaos-tainted broo, Creeping Chills is spread by skin contact although the skin must be broken (through a wound, for instance) for the disease to take hold. Broo sometimes smear their weapons in their own blood, spittle or excrement all of which harbour the contagion. If contracted Creeping Chills takes 1D4 hours before its effects are felt. First, the victim feels a chilling numbness through his arms and legs, before this rapidly overtakes the whole body. As the chills spread, he is rendered partially incapacitated as per the following description.

**Application:** Contact

**Onset time:** 1D4 hours

**Duration:** 1D6+1 weeks

**Resistance Time:** Weekly. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset Time, then weekly thereafter. Successfully resisting the disease allows the Adventurer to avoid suffering the Conditions until the next roll must be made. Thus victims of Creeping Chills often appear to recover, only to suffer a later relapse.

**Potency:** 50+ CON of Broo carrying it.

**Resistance:** Resilience.

**Conditions:** Fever. If the Resistance roll fails the victim suffers shivering attacks, muscle ache and has all skills halved until the disease is cured.

**Antidote/Cure:** Cure Disease spell. Creeping Chills is a magical disease, meaning that only the Cure Disease spell can cure it.

### Rabies

Carried by certain animals and transferred by a successful bite, rabies works on the brain, inflaming it and paralysing the throat. Victims begin with flu-like symptoms (muscle pains, coughing, fever) but within a few days the disease moves into its far more painful – and invariably fatal – phase.

**Application:** Contact

**Onset time:** 2D6 weeks

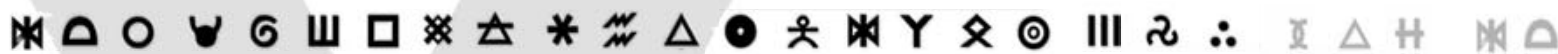
**Duration:** 2D6 days

**Resistance Time:** One Resistance roll.

**Potency:** 80.

**Resistance:** Resilience.





### Conditions Table

Condition	Effects
Agony	The victim is incapacitated with pain. The affected area, if a location, cannot be used for the poison's duration. If the poison affects the whole body, the character cannot move save to crawl slowly; and scream.
Asphyxiation	Victim suffers asphyxiation – he collapses, unable to breathe; and is incapacitated. The rules for Asphyxiation, found on page 54, are used.
Bleeding	Victim suffers a further 1 HP of damage every hour, from each location currently wounded, or from internal bleeding. Internal bleeding generally applies damage to all Hit Locations simultaneously.
Blindness	Victim becomes blind.
Confusion	Victim cannot use any knowledge, communication or magic skill.
Contagious	Victim can transfer the poison or disease by touch.
Deafness	Victim loses his hearing.
Death	Victim must make a resistance roll. If the resistance roll fails then the victim dies immediately. If the resistance roll is successful then all Hit Locations are reduced to a negative equivalent of their starting value: the victim then has a number of minutes to live equal to his CON characteristic. It requires either the Healing skill or appropriate disease or poison healing magic to stabilise the victim.
Dumbness	Victim's vocal chords are paralysed, preventing verbal communication or the casting of spells.
Exhaustion	Victim gains an extra level of Fatigue, on top of any they are currently suffering from.
Fever	The victim's body temperature fluctuates wildly – from hot to cold – and muscles ache. All skills are halved and the victim also suffers from nausea (see the Nausea entry).
Hallucination	Victim experiences delusions and cannot differentiate between real and imaginary experiences. His skills and abilities are unaffected but his ability to relate to the real world is seriously impaired and characterised by fear, panic, hatred and, in extreme circumstances, irrational violence. Characters with the Spirit Walker skill are unable to enter the spirit plane.
Maiming	Victim suffers a permanent loss of 1 HP in the location(s) affected, due to necrosis of the injured tissue.
Mania	Victim is driven to follow some compulsion; such as avoid water, paranoia, attack companions; and so forth. The mania induced by the disease or poison will be noted in its description.
Nausea	Victim cannot eat, and must roll against his Resilience every time he performs a stressful physical action to avoid being physically sick. The sickness lasts for 1D3 rounds during which he cannot act and, once it has ended, he suffers a level of Fatigue until rested.
Paralysis	Victim is unable to physically move.
Sapping	Victim loses Magic Points based on its potency (see Skill related Damage table).
Unconscious	Victim loses consciousness for a period specified in the disease or poison's description. When consciousness is regained the victim suffers a level of Fatigue.

**Conditions:** Hallucination, Mania (hydrophobia), Death. If the disease takes hold, the victim suffers increasingly acute and debilitating hallucinations. Halfway through the Duration, manic hydrophobia automatically sets-in as the victim's throat swells, the body dehydrates and it becomes physically painful to swallow water. At the end of the Duration, the victim mercifully slips into a coma and dies.

**Antidote/Cure:** Cure Disease spell. Rabies is not a magical disease but its severity means there is no natural cure or antidote for it; healing magic is essential and must be administered prior to the conclusion of the disease.

### Soul Palsy

Carried by certain supernatural creatures, Soul Palsy deliberately targets the victim's soul, eroding Magic Points. The disease is usually contracted through inhaling the demonic breath of the supernatural monster carrying it.

**Application:** Inhalation

**Onset time:** 1D4 days

**Duration:** 1D6 days

**Resistance Time:** Daily. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset Time, then daily thereafter.

**Potency:** 65

**Resistance:** Persistence.

**Conditions:** Sapping. The Sapping condition saps 1D6 Magic Points if the daily resistance roll is failed.

**Antidote/Cure:** Either the Cure Disease spell, or by drinking water specially Sanctified by a Rune Priest of the victim's cult. The Sanctified water has a Potency of the Rune Priest's Magic Points multiplied by 5 and it reduces the Potency of the Soul Palsy by this amount, either completely curing the disease or enabling the victim to better resist it.



## Sample Poisons

### Blade Venom

Blade venom comes from many sources: poisons milked from venomous creatures and then treated further; toxic plants and herbs; or by alchemy perhaps. Typically blade venom is a sticky paste that is applied to a blade or spear/arrow head. It must be introduced through an open wound and once it takes effect, it inflicts a terrible burning pain in the injured location.

**Application:** Injection

**Onset time:** 1D3 Combat Rounds

**Duration:** 2D6 minutes

**Resistance Time:** One Resistance roll.

**Potency:** 55.

**Resistance:** Resilience.

**Conditions:** Agony. If the victim fails his Resistance roll the poisoned location is incapacitated with pain. The effect continues until the Duration is completed.

**Antidote/Cure:** Each specific blade venom usually has a counteracting agent, such as urine or yoghurt, which soothes the pain. If the cure is applied successfully before the end of the Onset time then the blade venom is completely counteracted. Successful use of the Healing skill will also neutralise the pain.

### Potent Snake Venom

This venom is of the kind typically injected by a poisonous snake such as a cobra or similar. Fangs are used to inject a neurotoxin in a dose sufficient to kill within a few minutes. The potency of the venom is based on either the quantity injected or the concentration – meaning that small snakes with quite small venom glands can often introduce a small amount of venom that is every bit as harmful as a large dose from a larger snake.

**Application:** Injection

**Onset time:** Nausea after 1D3 minutes, Paralysis after 3D6 minutes, Asphyxiation at conclusion

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Resistance Time:** The victim must make a resistance roll at the Onset Time of each stage of the poison. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect

**Potency:** 80

**Resistance:** Resilience

**Conditions:** Nausea, Paralysis, Asphyxiation. The venom initially causes the victim to start feeling nauseous if the first Resistance roll is failed. The location bitten then suffers paralysis if the second Resistance roll is failed. At the end of the Duration the victim must succeed in a final resistance roll or suffer respiratory failure.

**Antidote/Cure:** Anti-venom. Some cultures have perfected anti-venom remedies which have a Potency of 1D20+10. The anti-venom must be introduced with a successful First Aid or Healing roll and add their Potency as a bonus to the victim's Resilience roll to fight the venom throughout its duration.

### Sleeping Draught

**Application:** Ingestion

**Onset time:** 1D8 minutes

**Duration:** 2D6 hours

**Resistance Time:** Hourly. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset Time, then hourly thereafter. Success indicates the victim has woken up but remains groggy for the remainder of the Duration.

**Potency:** 75.

**Resistance:** Resilience.

**Conditions:** Unconscious. If the victim fails the Resistance roll he falls into a deep sleep remaining unconscious until he succeeds in resisting the draught, or the Duration expires. The victim awakes feeling groggy and lethargic, gaining a level of fatigue in addition to any already suffered.

**Antidote/Cure:** The sap of the foxglove plant can protect against the effects of a sleeping draught if taken in advance of the poisoning. Otherwise, there is no method save magic which can counteract the effects.

## Falls

Falling can happen for a number of reasons. Failed or fumbled Athletics rolls to climb or jump often result in falls and Knockback can easily knock an Adventurer off a precipice or over a parapet. An Adventurer that takes damage from a fall ends up prone. Armour Points do not reduce falling damage.

### Falling Distance

Distance Fallen	Damage Taken
1m or less	No damage.
2m to 5m	1D6 points of damage to a random location.
6m to 10m	2D6 points of damage to two random locations.
10 to 15m	3D6 points of damage to three random locations.
16m to 20m	4D6 points of damage to four random locations.
+5m	+1D6 damage.

A creature of SIZ 8 to 9 treats the distance fallen as one metre less. A creature of SIZ 6 to 7 treats the distance fallen as three metres less. A creature of SIZ 4 to 5 treats the distance fallen as five metres less. A creature of SIZ 2 to 3 treats the distance fallen as eight metres less. A creature of SIZ 1 or less treats the distance fallen as 10 metres less.

As long as the character was not surprised, they may attempt an Acrobatics test to mitigate falling damage – a successful test allows the character to treat the fall as if it were two metres shorter than it actually is. In addition, as long as this test is a success and the character is not reduced to 0 Hit Points in a location due to the fall, the character lands relatively safely and is not prone.



Characters falling onto soft surfaces (such as thick moss or a hay stack) may treat the distance they fall as halved for the purposes of damage. The Games Master will decide whether this applies or not.

Characters falling onto damaging surfaces (such as pit spikes or a concrete floor bubbling with two inches of acid) will suffer the effects of the surface to all locations that are damaged in the fall.

## Falling Objects

A falling object imparts an amount of damage based on its SIZ and the distance of the fall. An object imparts 1D6 damage for every 6 points of SIZ (or fraction thereof), plus an amount of damage equal to the Damage Taken column of the Falling Distance chart on page 57 – including any adjustments for objects of smaller size.

*For example, an anvil with SIZ 10 inflicts 2D6 damage. If said anvil fell from a height of 10 metres, it would impart an additional 3D6 damage! If a small rock SIZ 1 was dropped from the same height, it would inflict 1D6 damage but would gain no extra damage from the fall.*

### Fire/Cold

Fire and intense heat can come from numerous sources, such as naked flames or super-heated metal.

An Adventurer normally takes damage from fire or heat to a specific Hit Location. However, if an Adventurer is immersed in the source of the damage (such as standing within a burning room or being burned at a stake), then all locations will suffer from the damage the fire causes. The amount of damage suffered from fire or heat will depend on its intensity, as shown on the Fire and Heat table. The damage from the heat source is applied every Combat Round until the heat source is extinguished or removed, or the Adventurer manages to escape from it.

### Fire and Heat

Damage Source	Example	Damage
Flame	Candle	1 point
Large Flame	Flaming brand	1D4 points
Small Fire	Camp fire, cooking fire	1D6 points
Large Fire	Scolding steam, large bonfires, burning rooms	2D6 points
Inferno	Lava, inside a blast furnace	3D6 points

Cold can be just as deadly, though generally harder to implement as a lethal weapon. If something is cold enough to cause damage, it will cause damage according to its intensity, just like fire or heat.

### Cold

Damage Intensity	Example	Damage
Chill	A winter wind	1 point
Cold	A frozen pond	1D4 points
Intense Cold	Ocean waves	1D6 points
Freezing	Arctic Environment, summer	2D6 points
Intensely Freezing	Arctic Environment, winter	3D6 points

## DOWN TIME

Down time is the period in between adventures when characters spend their hours relaxing, training, carousing, researching, or simply getting on with their mundane lives. It is deliberately not a period that requires a Games Master to invest with any great detail but it can be interesting and fun to find out what characters have been up to in their down time and, perhaps, use some of their activities either as the basis for a scenario or to form part of one.

### Activities

The characters can get-up to countless activities during Down Time and they do not need to be specific about them unless they are associated with improving the character in some way, or might have a useful implication for further adventures.

If the Games Master (and players) want to know what happens to their adventurers during Down Time, and do not wish to fill in the blanks deliberately, here are some suggestions for common activities.

### Odd Jobs

The character takes on paid, part-time work using his skills as an adventurer. The work is generally non-hazardous and relatively poorly paid. Either choose an odd job or roll randomly. To see how much the character earns, either decide how many days are spent in the odd job, and multiply it by the Payment per Day figure, or roll 1D20 to randomly determine the number of days.

To see how successful the character was in the job, roll a second 1D20. If the die roll is a 20, this indicates the character was sacked from the job for some reason and pay was withheld (or worse). If a 1 is rolled, then the character performed a sterling service. Double the earnings from the work.

### Cost of Living

When not adventuring, characters have living expenses like everyone else; food, rent, taxes, socialising and so forth. Of course, how much an Adventurer chooses to spend depends almost entirely on what they have available to spend. Living luxuriously to one



### Odd Job Table

1D20	Job	Payment per Day	Notes
1	Bar Keep	5 CP	Free lodging
2	Bard/Busker	1D8 CP	—
3	Bodyguard	1D4 SP	Free lodging
4	Bouncer	1D2 SP	Free drink
5	Burglary	1D100 SP	—
6	Farmhand	3 CP	Free lodging
7	Gambler	1D100 SP	Free set of dice or cards
8	Grave Digger	3 CP	Free shovel
9	Hunter	1D10 SP	Free food
10	Librarian/Research Assistant	2 SP	May conduct personal research whilst working
11	Local Politics	2D4 SP	—
12	Manual Labourer	3 CP	—
13	Militia Duty	2 SP	Free food and lodging
14	Odd-Jobber	1D10 CP	—
15	Rat Catcher/Pest Control	2D4 CP	Free net
16	Rent Collector	2D4 CP	—
17	Salesman	1D4 SP	—
18	Tax Collector	1D6 SP	—
19	Teacher	8 CP	Free chalk and slate
20	Temple Assistant	2 SP	Free lodging

character may seem like border-line poverty to another, depending on what characters are used to.

Use the following table as a general guide to living expenses. The terms used are relative to the amount of money the character has available: 'luxury' to someone with only a few silvers in their purse might be taking a bath once a week. To someone with several thousand, it might be taking a bath in ass's milk every day.

### Standard of Living Table

Standard of Living	Proportion of Personal Wealth spent
Subsistence	10%
Within Means	25%
Comfortable	50%
Luxurious	80%
Ostentatious	100%

The amount spent on Cost of Living exclude any dues necessary to cults or guilds and are exclusive of training costs. Neither are the costs of specific weapons, armour or other individual goods used in adventuring included. As a period of Down Time begins, characters should declare what standard of living they intend to pursue after having decided on training and personal improvement activities and paid any dues to cults or other patrons. These costs should be deducted from each character's personal wealth and the remainder used to determine the standard of living enjoyed for the remainder of the Down Time.

### ENCUMBRANCE

Despite their most fervent prayers, characters will be unable to carry every last weapon, piece of armour and treasure chest they discover. There is a limit to what an Adventurer can carry and those who exceed this limit will not be able to move very quickly.

Every piece of equipment in the Equipment chapter has an Encumbrance (ENC) score, though some items are too small or light to have an ENC score. Characters can usually ignore the effects on Encumbrance that these have unless they start carrying a lot of them – assume that an average of 20 such items will equal 1 ENC, so long as the character has a suitable means of carrying them, such as a sack or backpack.

An Adventurer can carry equipment whose total ENC is less than or equal to his STR+SIZ without penalty.

### Overloading

An Adventurer carrying total ENC greater than his STR+SIZ is Overloaded.

- \* Overloaded characters suffer a –20% penalty to all tests that require physical actions, including Weapon Skill Tests and most tests that have DEX or STR as a Characteristic (some exceptions being Sleight and Mechanisms).
- \* Overloaded characters have their Movement halved. They also suffer a –20% penalty to all Fatigue tests.



## HEALING

Healing can come from a variety of sources: First Aid and Healing skills are obvious, as is magical healing in the form of spells: these healing forms are dealt with in their respective descriptions. However, Adventurers also heal naturally and the rate of natural healing is dependent on the Adventurer's Resilience.

### Natural Healing

The amount of hit points an Adventurer naturally regains is based on the Resilience value, as shown in the Natural Healing Table:

#### Natural Healing Table

Resilience Value	Healing Rate
01– 10	1 Hit Point per 72 hours
11– 30	1 Hit Point per 48 hours
31– 50	1 Hit Point per 36 hours
51– 70	1 Hit Point per 24 hours
71– 90	1 Hit Point per 18 hours
91+	1 Hit Point per 12 hours

There are certain restrictions on natural healing, as follows:

- \* An Adventurer cannot engage in anything other than light activity: if the Adventurer undertakes anything strenuous then the rate of healing is treated as one stage lower on the Natural Healing Table thus, an injured Adventurer with Resilience 44% heals at a rate of 1 Hit Point every 36 hours. If he decided to assist his colleagues in defending the village from attack, his Healing Rate would drop to 1 Hit Point every 48 hours, for the duration of the time he engages in work related to the village's defence.
- \* Natural healing will not heal a Major Wound until that location has either been treated with a successful Healing test or significant magical healing has been applied.

### Magical Healing

However magical healing is achieved, whether from a spell, prayer or potion, it has an instantaneous effect.

In addition to the restoration of Hit Points, any location suffering a Major Wound that receives even a single Hit Point's restorations through magical healing of commensurate power immediately stops bleeding and can benefit from natural healing.

If an Adventurer has been knocked unconscious due to a Serious or Major Wound, the restoration of a single Hit Point to the wounded location that caused the unconsciousness will revive the character.

Unless specifically stated in the magic's description, magical healing cannot re-attach severed limbs or revive the dead.

## HERO POINTS

Hero Points are part of the currency of *RuneQuest*. Hero Points allow Adventurers to differentiate themselves from the rank and file, using Hero Points earned to gain an advantage over opponents, find a way through tricky situations, or mitigate that killing blow that gets through even the best Adventurer's defence.

Every character starts with a fixed number of Hero Points that are used throughout his adventures and Quests. New Adventurers start the game with two Hero Points and more can be earned as the game progresses.

At the conclusion of a story, each character should receive two Hero Points. This can be modified if the character performed particularly poorly or heroically, giving a range of between zero and four Hero Points awarded. However Hero Points need not be reserved for the end of a story: if an Adventurer performs some action or deed that the Games Master deems especially heroic, or which significantly adds to the atmosphere or progression of the story, then he can make an immediate award, at his discretion. Such awards are never a right and cannot be demanded by players for their characters; they are always the Games Master's decision. In these cases ad-hoc awards should be of a single Hero Point and no Adventurer should benefit from more than one such award per story.

#### Edric's Saga

*In a battle with a group of trollkin, Thrace saves the day through a mixture of quick thinking, deft tactics and mighty thrusts with his long spear. As his initiative saves the lives of Edric and Lilina, the Games Master makes him an immediate award of one Hero Point at the end of the combat. At the end of the story's session and following more heroics from all three Adventurers, the Games Master awards each of them two Hero Points.*

### Using Hero Points

Hero points can be used in a variety of ways. Each of the following options costs a single Hero Point. Once spent, a Hero Point is gone for ever.

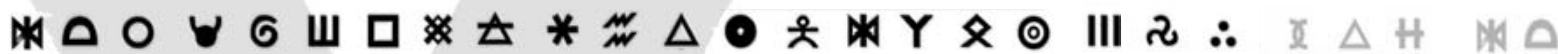
**Last Chance Combat Action:** If an Adventurer has exhausted his Combat Actions during a fight and needs to find that last burst of desperate energy to perhaps avoid a messy end, he may spend a Hero Point to gain a Combat Action.

**Second Chance:** An Adventurer can re-roll any dice roll that affects his character. This can be a Skill Test, damage roll or anything else that has some effect on him. He can even force an opponent to re-roll an attack or damage roll made against him.

*For example Edric is engaged in an opposed Skill Test with his great rival, Owain. Both are attempting to impress the fair Selena with*







## Fatigue Levels

Level of Fatigue	Effects
Fresh	None.
Winded	All Skill Tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -10% penalty.
Tired	All Skill Tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -20% penalty. Movement suffers a -1m penalty.
Wearied	All Skill Tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -30% penalty. Movement suffers a -1m penalty. Strike Rank suffers a -2 penalty.
Exhausted	All Skill Tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -40% penalty. Movement is halved. Strike Rank suffers a -4 penalty. DEX is considered 5 points lower for the purposes of determining Combat Actions.  Character must make a Persistence test every minute or fall unconscious for 1D3x2 hours.
Debilitated	All Skill Tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -50% penalty. Movement is halved. Strike Rank suffers a -6 penalty. DEX is considered 10 points lower for the purposes of determining Combat Actions.  Character must make a Difficult Persistence test every Combat Round or fall unconscious for 1D6x2 hours.

## Exposure, Starvation and Thirst

Freezing cold wastes or crippling hot deserts can take a terrible toll on characters, as can hunger and thirst.

Exposure occurs when an Adventurer is insufficiently prepared against a hostile environment, normally because of a failed Survival test. An Adventurer can normally survive for a number of hours equal to his CON before suffering from exposure, although this can change according to weather conditions.

An Adventurer can survive for a number of days equal to his CON before becoming incapacitated from starvation, though after three days they will begin to suffer a -10% penalty to Fatigue tests.

An Adventurer can survive for a number of hours equal to his CON x 4 before becoming chronically thirsty, though particularly arid environments may reduce this to CON x 3 or even CON x 2.

Whenever an Adventurer is suffering from exposure, starvation or thirst, the Fatigue test penalty immediately doubles to -20%. In addition, the character will automatically suffer one point

of damage to all locations every day, for every condition he is experiencing. Natural or magical healing will not heal this damage – only sufficient shelter, food or water can remedy the problem and allow natural or magical healing to take place.

## Abstract Fatigue

The standard Fatigue rules aim for a balance between realism and ease of play. However, at the Games Master's discretion, they can be still further simplified for players who find keeping track of elapsed rounds almost as tiresome as armed combat.

The Games Master can simply call for a Simple (+20%) Athletics test after each major exertion by a character or antagonist. A major exertion might be: killing a foe, emptying a treasure chamber, fleeing a foe, withstanding a cavalry charge, mounting an infantry charge, swimming a rapid river, climbing a castle wall and so on. He should feel free to adjust the rhythm until he and the players are comfortable – some groups may agree that it takes three kills (or major duels) to induce a Fatigue test. Other groups may decide that the first kill merits a Simple (+20%) Athletics test, the second and third a Normal (+0%) Athletics test, the fourth and fifth a Difficult (-20%) Athletics test and so forth. A rest between combats might 'reset' this clock.

The effects of abstract Fatigue are the same as those given in the regular rules.

## INANIMATE OBJECTS

Like Adventurers, inanimate objects – such as doors, walls, statues and so forth – can also sustain damage.

All inanimate objects have Armour Points and Hit Points. Except for the most unusual of circumstances, attacks on inanimate objects will automatically hit – characters simply need to work out how much damage they deal.

The object's Armour Points will be deducted from any damage dealt as normal, with the remainder being applied to its Hit Points. Once an object's Hit Points have been reduced to zero, it is smashed and useless.

Inanimate objects likely to block or restrain characters, such as doors or ropes, have Armour and Hit Point scores. To break down a door, or burst one's bonds, an Adventurer must succeed with either a Brawn, Unarmed or weapon attack roll, as appropriate. A successful roll deals damage to the item as per the weapon type; a failed roll has simply failed to apply enough force or damage to the item to deteriorate its condition. Once the object's Hit Points reach zero, the item is broken or sundered. In the cases where Brawn is used (to break a rope, for example), a successful roll inflicts the same damage as an Unarmed attack.

The Inanimate Objects table gives a range of examples of inanimate objects, along with their Armour Points and Hit Points.



## Inanimate Objects

Object	Armour Points	Hit Points
Boulder	10	40
Castle gate	8	120
Castle wall (2m section)	10	250
Chain/shackle	8	8
Club	4	4
Dagger	6	4
Hut wall (2m section)	3	15
Iron door	12	75
Rope	6	3
War sword	6	10
Wooden chair	2	6
Wooden door (normal)	4	25
Wooden door (reinforced)	6	30
Wooden fence (2m section)	4	5

## Inanimate Objects and Weapons

A weapon is designed to cleave flesh, not stone. Using a weapon on an inanimate object with Armour Points equal to or greater than that of the weapon, deals damage to both the object and the weapon. For instance, using a war sword on a boulder will certainly damage the boulder but the war sword itself will be destroyed long before the boulder is. Certain tools and weapons, such as the mining pick (see page 78), are designed for use on rock and would not be destroyed if used on a boulder.

The Games Master should exercise judgement on which weapons or tools can affect which objects. For example, a warrior with a sword can easily slash through a rope but one armed only with a maul is likely to have a much harder time.

## MOVEMENT

Standard human base movement is eight metres per Combat Round at walking pace. If sprinting, the movement rate is multiplied by five; however, an Adventurer can only maintain a sprint for a number of Combat Rounds equal to his CON before he must check for Fatigue.

### Comparative Movement

Time Period	Movement 4m	Movement 6m	Movement 8m	Movement 10m	Movement 12m	Movement 16m	Movement 20m
Combat Round	4m (20m if sprinting)	6m (30m if sprinting)	8m (40m if sprinting)	10m (50m if sprinting)	12m (60m if sprinting)	16m (80m if sprinting)	20m (100m if sprinting)
Minute	48m (240m if sprinting)	72m (360m if sprinting)	96m (480m if sprinting)	120m (600m if sprinting)	144m (720m if sprinting)	192m (960m, if sprinting)	240m (1,200m if sprinting)
Hour	2.8km	4.3km	5.6km	7.2km	8.6km	11.2km	14.4km
Day (12 hours)	33.6km	51.6km	67.2km	86.4km	103.2km	134.4km	172.8km

The Comparative Movement table summarises typical distances covered, by creatures of differing base Movement rates, for a variety of time periods.

## Movement in Armour

The armour an Adventurer wears acts against the movement rate and certain kinds of actions such as swimming or climbing.

*Armour Penalty = Total Locations Armoured, divided by five and rounded up. Thus, a full suit of plate armour (6 AP on seven locations gives an Armour Penalty of  $42/5 = -9$ )*

The effects of Armour Penalty on an Adventurer's Movement are as follows:

- \* **Walking or gentle jogging:** Armour does not interfere with such movement, although it can increase the Fatigue level (see page 61).
- \* **Sprinting:** Multiply the base Movement by five and subtract the Armour Penalty. The result is how fast the Adventurer can move during short chases, or when charging. *For example, an Adventurer wearing full plate armour can sprint or charge at 31 metres per Combat Round.*
- \* **Swimming:** Divide the base Movement by two and subtract the Armour Penalty. If the result is zero, the Adventurer cannot move and barely keeps himself afloat. If the Movement is negative, then the Adventurer sinks. *For example, the Adventurer wearing full plate armour, with a  $-9$  penalty, has a Swimming Movement of  $4-9 = -5$ : the Adventurer will sink if he attempts to swim in his armour.*
- \* **Climbing a rough surface (trees, steep hills and so on):** The Armour Penalty is subtracted from three quarters of the base Movement (6 metres per Combat Action for human Adventurers). If the result is zero or less, they are too burdened by their armour to climb. *Thus, our hero in his plate armour cannot climb as his Climbing movement is  $6-9 = -3$ .*
- \* **Climbing a sheer surface (walls, cliff faces and so on):** The Armour Penalty is subtracted from the base Movement divided by two. As with climbing a rough surface, if the result is zero or less, the Adventurer cannot climb.
- \* **Jumping:** Reduce the distance in metres the Adventurer can jump (see the Athletics skill, page 35) by the Armour Penalty divided by 2. For standing jumps this impairment is halved.



## CHAPTER 4:

# EQUIPMENT

Adventuring is a profession like any other and this means that success often relies on good equipment – not just on what the Adventurer knows or has experienced. This chapter covers a comprehensive array of different equipment for Adventurers, including weapons and armour and also items which might, at first glance, offer little practical value but, in the right place and at the right time, prove to be life-savers.

Games Masters should read through this chapter and decide which items are going to be available to the Adventurers based on their cultural background. The tables listing prices and so forth offer guidance on availability but it is perfectly possible that a barbarian village has traded with civilised merchants and therefore come into possession of goods one would not ordinarily find in a barbarian community. Similarly cultural taboos might forbid or restrict the sale of certain goods, or shortages in one commodity or another might mean availability is very limited.

Essentially Games Masters are the final arbiter on what equipment Adventurers can buy once their characters have been created and all that silver is burning a hole in their purses. Just because this chapter lists something it does not mean that it is available.

## CURRENCY

As its default currency, *RuneQuest* uses coins minted in lead, copper, silver and gold. The standard, everyday coins are copper and silver, with gold being the preserve of the very wealthy. The names for coins vary from place to place but for ease of economy, coins maintain a similar value and standard, as follows:

- 5 lead bits (LB) = 1 copper penny (CP)
- 10 copper pennies = 1 silver piece (SP)
- 20 silver pieces = 1 gold crown (GC)

## ARMOUR

Armour absorbs weapon damage. Any successful attack must first penetrate an Adventurer's armour before it starts reducing Hit Points. This simple fact alone makes armour an essential for any Adventurer intending to face great peril or deliberately seek out dangerous challenges. However, armour is not infallible: every piece of armour has certain limitations and weak-spots and a well-aimed or well-timed blow can bypass armour completely. So a total reliance on armour – even good metal armour – is perhaps misplaced. For comfort, and as part of its protection, all armour is considered lined or padded.

Each piece of armour is characterised by the following qualities:

**AP:** How many Armour Points are given to each location covered by this armour. If a character is wearing multiple pieces of armour on a location, only the highest Armour Point score is used.

**ENC:** The weight and bulk of the armour. See page 59 for more details on Encumbrance and its effects on characters.

**Locations:** Which Hit Locations this type of armour protects.

**Cost:** The average cost in silver pieces to purchase this armour.

## Armour Effects on Strike Rank and Movement

The more and/or heavier, the armour worn, the more restricted and slower an Adventurer is likely to be in combat. Total the APs for each armoured location and divide the result by five, rounding up. The result is the Armour Penalty applied to the Adventurer's Strike Rank.

For example a chainmail shirt covers three locations for 5 AP per location. This gives a total of 15 AP which, divided by five, gives an Armour Penalty of -3. A full suit of plate mail, covering seven locations at 6 AP has a total of 42 AP which, divided by 5 and rounded up, gives an Armour Penalty of -9. In combat these penalties would reduce the Strike Rank of the wearers.

The same Armour Penalty is applied to various types of movement, such as swimming or climbing. If these penalties are too great, then the Adventurer may find themselves unable to perform such movements.

## Effects of SIZ on Armour

Armour made for a character of SIZ 1 to 5 will have its cost and ENC halved from that shown on the Armour table. Characters of SIZ 21 or higher will double the cost and ENC for armour made for them.

## Armour Types

**Soft Leather:** Armour made from cured hides – the simplest form of armour usually found amongst primitive cultures but also worn in more cultivated styles where protection is important but not necessarily an essential.

**Hard Leather:** Strengthened hides and cured leather used for shields and body armour. Hard leather is the consistency of shoe leather: hard wearing yet flexible.

**Linen Cuirass:** Similar to a heavy leather cuirass but the armour is crafted from multiple layers of quilted linen. The thick, stiff fabric provides decent protection at a fraction of the weight of other materials

**Ringmail:** Bronze or iron rings sewn onto a leather backing. Heavier than leather but affords much better protection.

**Scalemail:** Similar to Ringmail but the rings are replaced with scales of metal which overlap, like the scales of a fish or serpent.

**Chainmail:** Woven metal links which, whilst heavy, are flexible and more durable than armour relying on a leather base.

**Plate:** Made of moulded individual metal plates, this armour provides excellent protection but is encumbering and comes with a heavy price tag.

## Armour Types and Costs

Armour	AP	Cost in Silver per Hit Location
Soft Leather	1	50
Hard Leather	2	100
Linen	2	75
Ringmail	3	200
Scalemail	4	250
Chainmail	5	400
Plate	6	1,200

Thus, a full suit of plate, covering all seven Hit Locations, would cost 10,800 SP. A full suit of Hard Leather costs 700.

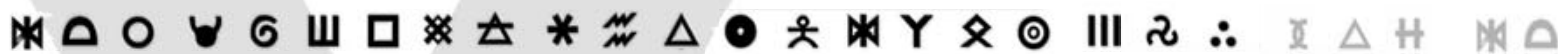
However armour does not need to be bought as a full suit: different pieces can be mixed and matched, although nobles, especially, delight in wearing crafted armour all of one type. The coverage offered by different armour types and styles is summarised in the Armour Pieces table:

## Armour Pieces Table

Name	Hit Locations Covered	Type of Armour
Greaves	Legs	All
Pants or Trews	Abdomen and Legs	Soft Leather, Hard Leather, Ringmail, Scalemail, Chainmail
Skirt	Abdomen	All
Hauberk	Chest and Abdomen	Soft Leather, Hard Leather, Ringmail, Scalemail, Chainmail
Byrnie/Cuirass	Chest	Soft Leather, Linen, Ringmail, Chainmail,
Breastplate	Chest	Plate
Sleeves/Vambraces	Arms	All
Coif/Hood	Head	Soft and Hard Leather, Ringmail, Chainmail
Coat	Chest, Arms and Abdomen	Soft and Hard Leather, Ringmail, Scalemail, Chainmail
Helm	Head	Soft and Hard Leather, Scalemail, Plate



Article of Clothing	Description	Cost
Coat, common	Any standard cut of coat used for warmth and in inclement weather. May be made from a variety of fabrics but most commonly wool.	2 SP
Coat, fancy	As above but cut in the latest fashion.	8 SP
Coat, winter	A woolly coat lined with fur. It is thick and warm, repelling the stiff and bitter winds of the high mountains or cold winters. Anyone wearing a winter coat can add +10% to his Survival or Resilience Skill Tests to avoid the effects of natural cold.	10 SP
Cloak, common	Usually hooded and reaching to either the knees or ankles, a cloak is more substantial a garment than a cape. It gives protection against rain and wind.	2 SP
Cloak, winter	A large fur and leather cloak with an extra flap to close around the body completely, a winter cloak is too heavy and thick to wear all the time but does a great deal to ward off the wind and snow in such conditions. Anyone wearing a winter cloak can add +10% to his Survival or Resilience Skill Tests to avoid the effects of natural cold. A winter cloak may also be used as a warm blanket/bedroll combination.	12 SP
Dress, common	A woman's garment, usually of ankle length.	2 SP
Dress, fancy	As for common dress but cut and decorated to the fashion of the day.	5 SP
Dress, noble	Ceremonial or symbolic robes worn by nobles and official dignitaries when on official business.	150 SP
Gloves, common	A pair of leather gloves, snugly fitting.	5 CP
Gloves, fancy	As for common gloves but with fashionable decoration and often made from silk, rather than leather.	2 SP
Hat, brimmed	Any broad-brimmed hat.	8 CP
Hood	Used by assassins and bandits but also by vigilantes and anonymous heroes, the hood is a fabric garment, which can be pulled up over the head to protect it from bright light or adverse weather. The bottom part extends over the shoulders to shed rain.	1 SP
Loincloth	A piece of leather worn around the waist and designed to protect modesty rather than to offer any real warmth or protection.	1 CP
Robe, woollen	Functional woollen robes often worn by priests or monks when not engaged on official or ceremonial duties.	2 SP
Robe, religious	As for woollen robes but decorated to give the wearer a +10% bonus to his Influence skill when dealing with any member of the faith represented by the robes.	25 SP
Sash, common	A length of brightly coloured fabric worn around the waist and tied, or secured with a sash clasp. Can also be used as a means for securing a weapon.	3 CP
Sash, fancy	As for common sash but highly decorated or patterned and made from fine materials such as samite or silk.	2 SP
Shirt, common	Any thin, cotton or linen shirt or blouse, usually with long sleeves.	2 CP
Shirt, fancy	As for common but fashionably cut and decorated with ruffs, lace or other	2 SP
Shirt, noble	As for common and fancy but dyed and of fine silk or muslin.	75 SP
Shoes, common	Ankle-high shoes, fastened with a strap and toggle.	2 SP
Shoes, fancy	As for common shoes but decorated or dyed.	6 SP
Shoes, sandals	Open-topped footwear usually worn with ankle straps.	1 SP
Skirt/kilt	A hard-wearing skirt or kilt usually made from pleated linen or wool.	5 SP
Tabard, common	A length of cloth with a hole or slit cut for the head and then secured at the waist with either a drawstring or belt. Traditionally peasant garb, used instead of a coat.	7 CP
Tabard, emblazoned	Similar in make to a common tabard but normally constructed of better quality linens and dyes, the emblazoned tabard bears a colourful and easily recognisable insignia or crest of a guild, noble house, or similar group. Wearing such a tabard automatically brings assumptions that the wearer is a member or employee of the group depicted.	10 SP
Toga, common	A length of good quality cotton that is worn in a wrap and drape style. Comfortable and elegant enough for either official occasions or casual wear.	5 CP
Toga, fancy	As for the common toga but decorated tastefully at the hem and in strategic places along the length of the cloth so that the pattern shows in the drapes.	2 SP
Toga, noble	As for common and fancy but made from the finest linen and tastefully decorated.	100 SP
Tunic, common	A sleeveless jacket of sheepskin, wool or thin leather that is secured with buttons, toggles or ties.	6 CP
Tunic, fancy	As for common but cut and decorated in the day's fashions.	2 SP



## WEAPONRY

It would be unthinkable for an Adventurer to set out into danger without the means to protect himself. For many Adventurers a sword or dagger suffices but many soldiers, skilled in a variety of weapons, know that different weapons have different applications and that a sword, whilst good against one type of foe, is completely useless against another.

The assortment of weapons – close combat and ranged – is extensive. Each weapon is described and the description provides any additional effects a weapon might have in a particular situation.

### Close Combat Weapons

Each close combat weapon is characterised by the following qualities:

**Category:** The type of weapon this is.

**Damage Dice:** The damage the weapon deals on a successful attack.

**STR/DEX:** The minimum STR and DEX scores needed to easily wield this weapon. For every point a Characteristic is below these minimums, a –5% penalty is applied to a character's skill when attacking and parrying with this weapon.

**Size:** Each weapon possesses a size rating. This is related to its mass, leverage and stability. The value is used to determine both the weapon's ability to inflict and parry damage. The size categories are Small (S), Medium (M), Large (L), Huge (H) and Enormous (E).

**Reach:** The weapon's length, how far it can reach in combat. The size categories are Touch (T), Short (S), Medium (M), Long (L), and Very Long (VL).

**Combat Manoeuvres:** The Combat Manoeuvres (see the Combat chapter) a weapon can inflict – such as Bashing, Impale and so forth.

**ENC:** The weight and bulk of the weapon. See page 59 for more details on Encumbrance and its effects on characters.

**AP/HP:** The Armour Points and Hit Points possessed by the weapon. When Hit Points reach 0, the weapon is broken and useless.

**Cost:** The average cost in silver pieces to purchase this weapon.

### Close Combat Weapon Descriptions

**Ball & Chain:** This heavy metal ball attached to a short length of chain is notoriously difficult to parry. An opponent attempting

to parry this weapon treats his parrying weapon or shield as one step smaller for the purposes of blocking damage. However, the wielder also suffers the same penalty when trying to Parry with the ball & chain.

**Battleaxe:** A single-bladed weapon with a sturdy haft, the battleaxe may be used with one or two hands, depending on the wielder's preference. A battleaxe can be used to bash through doors and obstacles rather quickly. It suffers no damage when attacking inanimate wooden objects.

**Buckler:** This small, round shield is held in the hand and used to 'punch block' incoming blows. Bucklers are often used to attack with the off-hand, when the main weapon is tied up. Its small size however, provides little protection against larger weapons or missile fire.

**Chain:** This two-metre length of chain is one step above using an improvised weapon. It is very difficult to parry, any weapon interposed against a chain is treated as one step smaller for the purpose of blocking damage. However, the wielder also suffers the same penalty when parrying with this weapon. If an opponent is caught by surprise, it can also be used as a garrotte.

**Club:** Perhaps the simplest of all weapons and almost certainly the oldest, the club is simply a long, stout piece of wood used to bludgeon others. However, there are several cultures that have carved clubs made of stone, or bone – all of which can be sculpted or decorated according to the wielder's preference.

**Dagger:** Essentially a large knife attached to a short handle, the dagger is often carried as a backup or parrying weapon. Thieves, assassins and bandits often enjoy the use of daggers because they can be hidden and drawn with ease. Daggers are usually well-balanced enough to throw effectively.

**Dirk:** This is a short-handled, wide-bladed weapon about half-again the size of a dagger. It is commonly used as a secondary weapon, even though it promises sufficient damage any time its blade bites flesh. Parrying with a dirk increases the damage blocked by one step (it is treated as a Medium weapon when parrying).

**Falchion:** A single edged, cleaver-like sword that delivers heavy, chopping blows.

**Garrotte:** An assassin's weapon, the garrotte is a cord, chain or thin braided metal wire used to loop around a target's neck and strangle him. Only usable during a grapple or from behind on an unsuspecting victim, the garrotte inflicts its damage each and every Combat Action the wielder continues to actively crush his victim's throat. Whilst being strangled, the victim can attempt to wrestle free, or damage his opponent so badly they are forced to let go – but acts at a penalty due to the strangler being directly behind him.



**Great Axe:** Up to 2 metres in length, dwarfing the battleaxe in size, the great axe may be either single or double-bladed and must be used with both hands. It also suffers no damage when used to break inanimate wooden objects.

**Great Club:** Little more than a massive branch of wood banded in metal, a great club is much less a designed weapon and more a makeshift one. Some cultures might create their own varieties of other materials but overall the great club is the weapon of choice for low-intelligence, low-resource beings of massive strength and size.

**Great Hammer:** The great hammer, or maul, is an enormous weapon that deals impressive bludgeoning damage. It is both a tool and a weapon and can sometimes be found with a pick-like spike on the back portion of its head. Great hammers may be used on inanimate objects without being destroyed.

**Great Sword:** This group nomenclature pertains to a number of massive blades that can be found as much as two metres in length. They are used by those warriors who want the enemy at more than arm's length, or cleaved beneath the sheering power of the weapon's strike. Part of the blade is unsharpened and leather-bound on many great swords, allowing the wielder to grip them for more effective parries.

**Halberd:** An axe head combined with a thrusting tip and a hook, mounted on a spear shaft, the halberd is a multi-purpose weapon. Halberdiers are versatile opponents that can bring any version of the weapon's attack to bear in an instant.

**Hatchet:** A simple and cheap one-handed cleaving tool, the hatchet is essentially a smaller version of an axe. It can be used to cut through wooden inanimate objects with no risk to its edge. A hatchet is usually well-balanced enough to throw effectively and many users prefer to call these items 'throwing axes'.

**Heater Shield:** A medium sized shield designed for both mounted and foot use. Most are reinforced with metal edging and commonly have some form of symbol or insignia painted on the outside face. Heater shields can parry ranged weapons.

**Hoplite Shield:** Large circular shields designed for foot combat, which are edged and sometimes faced with metal. This shield is an excellent defence against even two handed weapons and provides decent cover against missile attacks.

**Kite Shield:** Kite shields are large shields with an inverted teardrop shape. This shield can switch between both infantry and mounted use and is extremely popular for those who spend time in both types of combats. Kite shields are also effective against ranged weapons.

**Knife:** Knives can be made from a sharp piece of metal, stone, bone or even glass. They almost always have a short hilt carved from wood. More commonly a tool than a weapon, the knife is a multi-purpose item that should be found in every Adventurer's backpack.

**Lance:** An oversized spear designed to be used from the back of a mount, a lance can be a devastating weapon when charging. A mounted character who uses a lance during a charge may add his mount's Damage Modifier instead of his own to the damage.

**Long Spear:** The long spear is a lengthy piercing weapon with a wide bladed head, often used in ranked units to defeat charging cavalry.

**Longsword:** The longsword is a versatile sword with an elongated grip, which allows it to be wielded with either one hand or two. Its extra length adds to its reach and used two handed, it inflicts greater damage.

**Mace:** The mace is comprised of a large flanged or knobbed weight mounted on one end of a haft, which is often reinforced with metal. Its ability to incapacitate, even heavily armoured opponents, makes this a popular weapon in civilised cultures.

**Main Gauche:** Also called a 'parrying dagger,' the main gauche is a long-bladed dagger with two extremely long and strong quillions. It is normally used in the off-hand in conjunction with a longsword, rapier or sabre. Parrying with a main gauche increases the damage blocked by one step (it is treated as a Medium weapon when parrying).

**Military Flail:** This is a heavy metal ball or rod, usually bristling with spikes or edged flanges, attached to a wooden haft by a short length of chain. Due to its flexible construction, an opponent defending against this weapon treats his parrying weapon or shield as one step smaller for the purposes of blocking damage. However, the wielder also suffers the same penalty when trying to Parry with the flail.

**Military Pick:** Also known as a war hammer, a military pick is a short shafted weapon which has a metal head with a hammer face on one side and a curved pick on the other. The military pick is designed to pierce heavy armour but can also be used on inanimate objects without being destroyed.

**Morningstar:** Carved from a length of wood nearly a metre long, the morningstar is a bladed or spiked cudgel.

**Net:** Used by gladiators, huntsmen and watchmen, the net is more than a mere fishing net to be tossed at a target. A fighter's net is made of thick cord and leather, tipped with numerous hooks and heavy weights. It can be swung like a flail, the weights lashing out to batter an opponent, inflicting the damage listed.

**Poleaxe:** A polearm about the height of a man, it has a hammer head backed with a metal spike and a spear tip for thrusting. This style of two handed war hammer, is very popular against heavy armour types.

**Poniard:** This duellist's weapon is a long dagger, designed to be thrust into a target.



**Quarterstaff:** A simple staff, sometimes banded with metal at either end. In the hands of a skilled user, it is a fast and effective weapon for both offence and defence and can be hidden in plain sight as a shepherd's hook or simple traveller's walking staff.

**Rapier:** Fast and light, the rapier relies more on the thrust than the slash. It is a particularly effective weapon, especially considering its reach.

**Sabre:** The sabre is a slightly curved sword, designed to be used for slashing or thrusting when mounted. It has a basket hilt which adds 1 Armour Point to the limb being used to wield it.

**Scimitar:** A broad-bladed sword, the scimitar has a dramatically curved edge designed for cutting and slashing. It is sometimes wider than a normal sheath can hold and is more often hung from straps or some form of netting.

**Shortspear:** Heftier than a javelin and fitted with a broader head made for stabbing; a short spear is commonly used in conjunction with a shield. The short spear is a popular and ubiquitous weapon,

being cheap to manufacture and having a reach advantage over most other single handed weapons.

**Shortsword:** The shortsword is a straight, broad-bladed sword designed for thrusting. It does carry an edge along its sides but use of the edge is always secondary to the thrusting point.

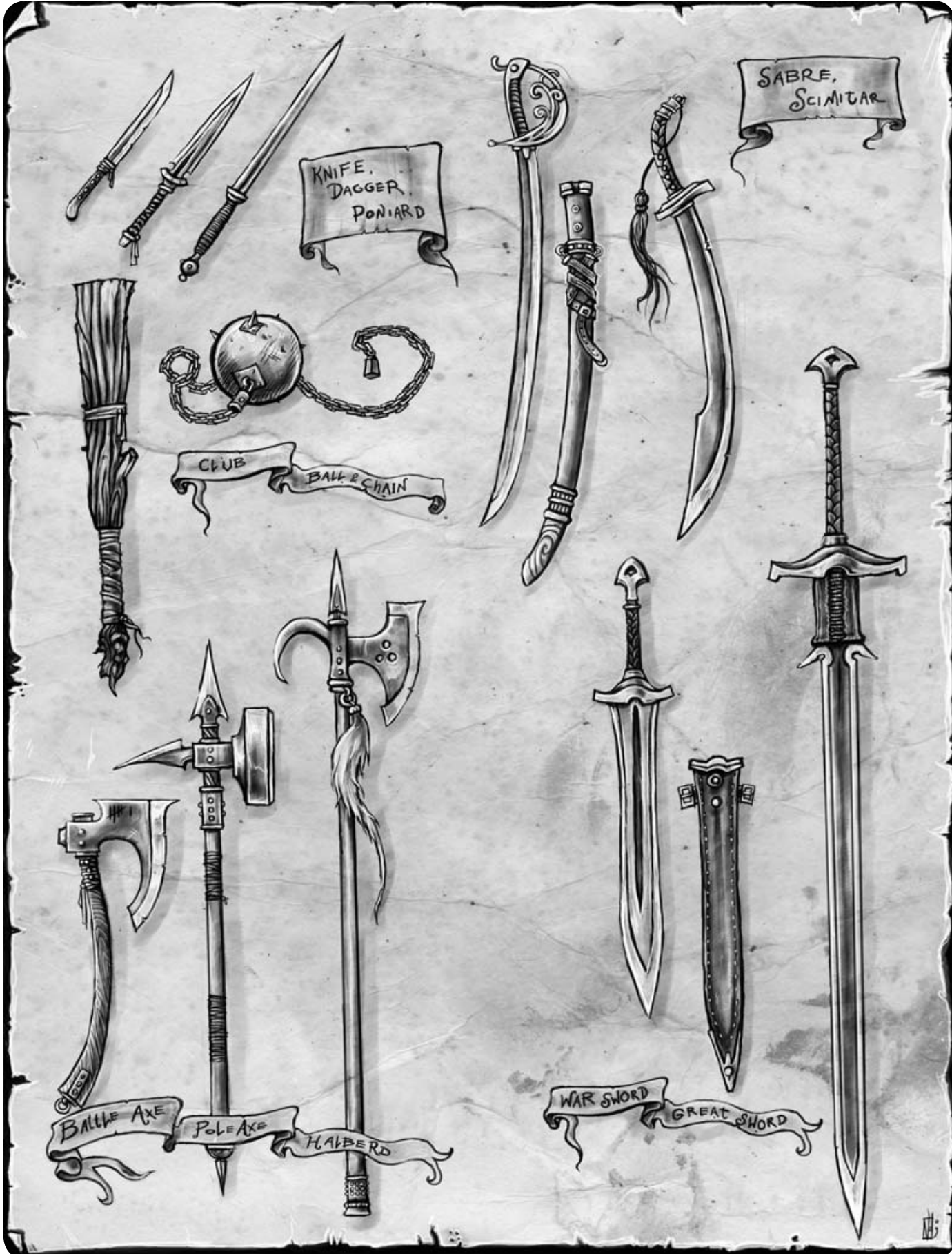
**Target:** A medium sized, round shield made of wood and covered with hide. A target mounts a long spike on its central boss, making the shield a dangerous weapon, as well as being able to parry ranged weapons.

**Trident:** Another tool turned weapon, a trident is a three-pronged or bladed spear that once was used to catch fish in the same way as a harpoon. If a trident impales, its barbed prongs do an extra 1 point of damage when being ripped free.

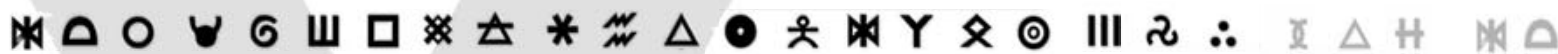
**War Sword:** The most common sword type available, the war sword is generally slightly less than a metre in length and possesses a sharpened tip to thrust with. It is the ubiquitous weapon of choice amongst many Adventurers.

### Close Combat Weapons

Weapon	Damage Dice	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Ball & chain	1D6+1	9/11	M	M	Entangle, Stun Location	2	6/8	250 SP
Battleaxe	1D6+1 1D8+1	11/9 9/9	M	M	Bleed, Sunder (2H only)	1	4/8	100 SP
Buckler	1D3	-/5	M	S	—	1	6/8	50 SP
Chain	1D4	7/12	M	M	Entangle	1	8/6	10 SP
Club	1D6	7/-	M	S	Stun Location	1	4/4	5 SP
Dagger	1D4+1	-/-	S	S	Bleed, Impale	—	6/8	30 SP
Dirk	1D3+2	-/-	S	S	Bleed, Impale	—	6/6	50 SP
Falchion	1D6+2	7/9	M	M	Bleed	1	6/10	200 SP
Garrote	1D2	-/9	S	T	—	—	1/2	15 SP
Great axe	1D12+2	13/9	H	L	Bleed, Sunder	2	4/10	125 SP
Great club	2D6	12/9	H	L	Stun Location	3	4/10	50 SP
Great hammer	1D10+3	11/9	H	L	Stun Location, Sunder	3	4/10	250 SP
Great sword	2D8	13/11	H	L	Bleed, Impale, Sunder	4	6/12	300 SP
Halberd	1D8+2	7/7	L	VL	Entangle, Impale, Sunder	4	4/10	250 SP
Hatchet	1D6	-/9	S	S	Bleed	1	3/6	25 SP
Heater shield	1D4	9/-	L	S	—	2	6/12	150 SP
Hoplite shield	1D4	11/-	H	S	—	3	6/18	300 SP
Kite shield	1D4	13/-	H	S	—	3	4/18	300 SP
Knife	1D3	-/-	S	S	Bleed, Impale	—	5/4	10 SP
Lance	1D10+2	9/9	H	VL	Impale, Sunder	3	4/10	150 SP
Longspear	1D10+1	5/5	L	VL	Impale	2	4/10	30 SP
Longsword	1D8 1D10	13/9 9/9	M L	L L	Bleed, Impale, Sunder (2H only)	2	6/12	250 SP
Mace	1D8	7/7	M	S	Stun Location	1	6/6	100 SP







Weapon	Damage Dice	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Main Gauche	1D4	-/11	S	S	Bleed	—	6/7	180 SP
Military flail	1D10	13/11	L	L	Stun Location	3	4/10	250 SP
Military pick	1D6+1	11/5	M	M	Stun Location, Sunder	3	6/10	180 SP
Morningstar	2D4	9/9	M	S	Stun Location	2	4/10	150 SP
Net	1D4	10/11	S	L	Entangle	3	2/20	200 SP
Poleaxe	1D8+2	11/9	L	L	Impale, Stun Location, Sunder	2	6/10	150 SP
Poniard	1D4	-/7	S	S	Bleed, Impale	—	4/5	60 SP
Quarterstaff	1D8	7/7	M	L	Stun Location	2	4/8	20 SP
Rapier	1D8	7/13	M	L	Impale	1	5/8	100 SP
Sabre	1D6+1	7/7	M	M	Bleed, Impale	1	6/8	225 SP
Scimitar	1D8	7/11	M	M	Bleed	2	6/10	200 SP
Shortspear	1D8+1	5/5	M	L	Impale	2	4/5	20 SP
Shortsword	1D6	5/7	M	S	Bleed, Impale	1	6/8	100 SP
Target	1D6	9/-	L	S	Impale	2	4/12	150 SP
Trident	1D8	10/7	M	L	Impale	2	4/10	155 SP
War sword	1D8	9/7	M	M	Bleed, Impale	2	6/10	175 SP

<sup>1</sup> This weapon may be set against a charge

<sup>2</sup> This weapon suffers no penalty when thrown

<sup>3</sup> This weapon may Parry ranged weapons

**ENC:** The weight and bulk of the weapon. See page 59 for more details on Encumbrance and its effects on characters.

## Ranged Combat Weapons

Just as close combat weapons are defined by certain qualities, so are ranged weapons.

**AP/HP:** The Armour Points and Hit Points possessed by the weapon. When Hit Points reach 0, the weapon is broken and useless.

**Category:** The type of weapon this is. This is used as a basis for Combat Styles.

**Cost:** The average cost in silver pieces to purchase this weapon.

**Damage Dice:** The damage the weapon deals on a successful attack.

### Ranged Combat Weapon Descriptions

**Range:** This is the effective range of the weapon. The maximum range a weapon can be fired or thrown is twice this score.

**Arbalest:** This is a metal-armed crossbow that when stood on its end is as tall as a man. It fires specially crafted arbalest bolts that have been reinforced in order to withstand the sheer force that its braided cord propels them at. Able to drive a finger-thick bolt a full hand's depth into an oak tree, the arbalest hits with force enough to punch through armour as if it were thin cloth but requires the use of a windlass to re-cock it. A character's Damage Modifier is never applied when he is using an arbalest.

**Load:** This shows how many Combat Actions are required to load or reload the weapon.

**Blowgun:** This is a hollow tube or pipe, usually made of wood or bone, which expels a tiny dart when its user blows on one end. As the dart itself is capable of negligible damage, blowguns are seldom used without some kind of poison. A character's Damage Modifier is never applied when he is using a blowgun. If fired at someone wearing more protection than normal clothing, it requires the Combat Manoeuvre of either *Bypass Armour* or *Choose Location* to strike flesh.

**STR/DEX:** The minimum STR and DEX scores needed to easily wield this weapon. For every point a Characteristic is below these minimums, a -5% penalty is applied to a character's skill when attacking with this weapon.

**Size:** Each ranged weapon possesses a size rating. In the case of projectile weapons, this does not relate to the firing weapon itself but rather to how 'forceful' its ammunition is. The value is used to determine whether the weapon can overcome any shield which may parry it. The size categories are Small (S), Medium (M), Large (L), Huge (H) and Enormous (E).

**Bolas:** A thrown weapon comprising of two or more weights tied together with lengths of cord. Whirled and released, the bolas works by entangling its target in the cords and inflicts damage from the winding weights. Unlike other ranged weapons, the bolas cannot be parried by shields. It may only be evaded.

**Combat Manoeuvres:** Any specific Combat Manoeuvres applicable to the weapon or its ammunition.



**Dart:** A dart resembles an arrow with a longer head and shorter shaft (usually slightly less than half a metre in length). Darts are rarely a warrior's weapon and are found in the hands of small game huntsmen and roguish adventurers.

**Discus:** A discus is a flat disc made of stone or metal. Hurling the discus is an old sport and show of physical prowess. However, someone who is good enough with a discus could easily split skin and shatter bone with a forceful throw.

**Heavy Crossbow:** Similar in concept to the light crossbow, this version is larger and reinforced with metal bands to handle the immense pull of the string. Many heavy crossbows come with a metal stirrup so the firer can use his foot for leverage, or a crank to pull back the thick string. A character's Damage Modifier is never applied when he is using a heavy crossbow.

**Javelin:** The javelin is a spear-like weapon with a narrow, pointed head designed for throwing short distances. The thrower of a javelin may use *Pin Weapon* as a combat manoeuvre, against a parrying shield. In this circumstance, the pinned shield cannot be used until the javelin has been removed (which takes one round).

**Light Crossbow:** A simple mechanical bow, the light crossbow often sees service in small armies that lack training in other types of ranged weapons. It can be clutched in one hand and reloaded with the other, making it a good infantryman's weapon. A character's Damage Modifier is never applied when he is using a light crossbow.

**Long Bow:** A long bow has a shaft as much as two metres in length and is designed to be fired on foot. A long bow cannot be used from horseback.

### Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Damage			Load	STR/DEX	SIZ	Combat			Cost
		Modifier	Range					Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	
Arbalest	1D12	N	180m		4	10/9	E	Impale, Sunder	3	6/10	500 SP
Blowgun	—	N	15m		1	-/9	—	Impale	—	1/4	30 SP
Bolas	1D4	Y	15m		—	-/9	—	Entangle	—	2/2	10 SP
Dagger	1D4	Y	10m		—	-/9	S	Impale	—	4/6	30 SP
Dart	1D4	Y	20m		—	-/9	S	Impale	—	2/1	10 SP
Discus	1D4+1	Y	50m		—	-/9	L	Stun Location	—	2/3	30 SP
Hatchet	1D6	Y	10m		—	7/11	S	Bleed	1	4/6	25 SP
Heavy crossbow	1D10	N	150m		3	7/9	H	Impale, Sunder	2	4/8	350 SP
Javelin	1D8	Y	30m		—	5/9	H	Impale, Pin Weapon (Shield)	1	3/8	20 SP
Light crossbow	1D8	N	100m		2	5/9	L	Impale	1	4/5	150 SP
Long bow	1D8	Y	175m		1	13/11	H	Impale	1	4/7	200 SP

**Net:** A net can be hurled at an opponent within five metres. Due to its engulfing size, a thrown net may only be evaded, not parried.

**Recurve Bow:** A recurve, or composite bow is made from a laminated combination of wood, sinew, horn and sometimes even bone. When strung the bow's forward-angled arms give it a distinctive shape, allowing it to be as strong as a long bow but without the length. Recurve bows are mainly used by mounted archers and nomads, since the reduced size means that it does not catch on the mount that it is fired from.

**Short Bow:** Designed to be fired from horseback, the short bow is equally useful as a foot soldier's weapon. It is a good hunting tool as well as a weapon of war and when used to hunt deer and smaller game animals it can make all the difference.

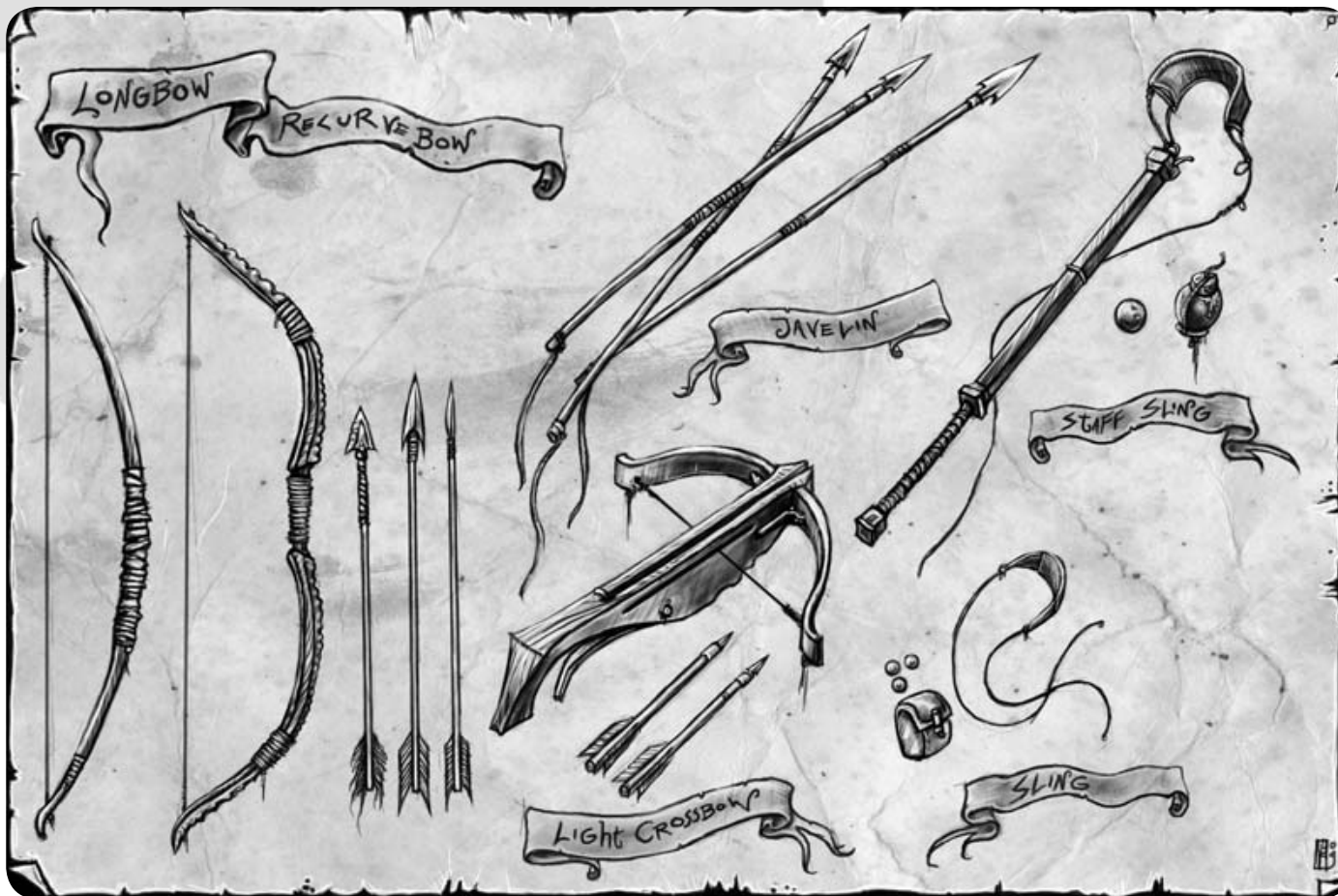
**Sling:** A sling is a long strip of cloth or leather used to fling a stone or bullet at a target. It is as lethal as a bow, able to injure or kill those wearing heavy armour. Many slings also have a sewn-in leather cup or pad in which to hold the projectile while gathering velocity. A sling's range makes it useful against archers.

**Staff Sling:** A simple sling mounted on the end of a wooden haft, the staff sling is used by whipping the shaft overhead to cast its load. Although it cannot match the sling for range, it can be used to throw heavier stones or burning jars of oil (or other noxious substances) in high arcs over walls and fortifications. When not being used as a sling, the leather cup and cord can be wound around the haft and lashed down, effectively turning the staff sling into a quarterstaff.

**Trident:** See entry in Close Combat Weapons.



Weapon	Damage	Damage Modifier	Range	Load	STR/DEX	SIZ	Combat			Cost
							Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	
Net	—	N	2.5m	—	10/11	—	Entangle	3	2/20	200 SP
Recurve bow	1D8	Y	175m	1	13/11	H	Impale	1	4/8	225 SP
Short bow	1D6	Y	80m	1	9/11	L	Impale	1	4/4	75 SP
Sling	1D8	Y	200m	1	-/11	L	Stun Location	—	1/2	5 SP
Staff sling	2D6	Y	100m	3	-/11	H	Stun Location	2	3/6	20 SP
Trident	1D8	Y	10m	—	10/7	L	Impale	2	4/10	155 SP



### Ranged Weapon Ammunition

The following table lists specific types of ammunition, how sturdy they might be, whether they weigh enough to have an ENC score and their cost. Please note that unless an entry has a (#) after its name, the price listed is for a single item.

**Arbalest bolts:** Made of metal-shod hardwood roughly as thick as a man's thumb, arbalest bolts are tipped with heavy metal heads that resemble a stiletto or dagger. They use small fletching from waxy-feathered fowl and are remarkably accurate, if only due to the sheer force with which they are fired.

**Arrows, Bodkin:** These arrows are the most commonly used ammunition in *RuneQuest*. They possess narrow spikes for points. While not as simple to make as sling bullets, they are far more popular for their multiple utilities.

**Arrow, Broadhead:** While a normal arrow can cause quite a wound, these arrows have a broad cutting surface which inflict greater damage, at the expense of range. Using a broadhead arrow reduces the distance it can be fired by 25% but inflicts an extra 2 points of damage on *unarmoured* opponents.

**Arrow, Fishing:** More of a tool than a weapon, the fishing arrow is a thin-headed arrow that has a set of three small barbs facing backwards to catch and hold a wriggling fish. It also has almost no fletching at all (it interferes with underwater propulsion) but rather a small metal ring onto which cord or twine can be tied to retrieve a shot fish. Using fishing arrows to catch fish grants a +10% bonus to Survival Skill Tests.

**Arrow, Signal:** Not made for combat at all, signal arrows have a hollow head bored out in the same fashion as a shrilling whistle.



When fired (preferably upward into the air) the arrow corkscrews and emits a distinct and piercing wail that can be heard on a clear day for up to five kilometres. If actually fired at a target, the arrow has a –20% penalty to hit and will cause half damage if successful.

**Blowgun Darts:** Blowgun darts are small, thin needles or stubby miniature arrowheads that often have a tuft of down or cotton at the end in order to catch the rush of air in a blowgun. They are not designed to do damage but can deliver a single dose of poison to a target quite easily – if the firer can manage to bypass his armour, of course.

**Crossbow Bolts:** Simple and stout, bolts are miniature arrows with smaller fletching designed to carry the bolt on existing force rather than keep it aloft. They tend to have thinner, more compact heads of metal on them to drive deeper with the impact but some have the wider hunting heads commonly seen on arrows. Bolts tend to be thicker than arrows and are purchased to fit a specific type of crossbow – wrist, light, medium or heavy.

**Sling Bullets:** Stone or lead ovals that can reach surprising speeds and accuracy when hurled by a skilled user. Bullets can be retrieved rather easily and most can even be hammered or rolled back into a usable shape with little effort (as lead becomes soft when heated slightly).

### Ranged Weapon Ammunition

Ammunition	AP/HP	ENC	Cost
Arbalest bolts (10)	1/2	1	5 SP
Arrow, bodkin (10)	1/1	—	1 SP
Arrow, broadhead (10)	1/1	—	2 SP
Arrow, fishing	1/2	—	2 CP
Arrow, signal	1/1	—	3 CP
Arrow, wood-headed	1/1	—	2 CP
Blowgun darts (10)	1/1	—	2 SP
Crossbow bolts (10)	1/1	—	2 SP
Sling bullets (10)	1/1	—	5 CP

### Using Ranged Weapons in Close Combat

Just as close combat weapons are not designed to be thrown, so most ranged weapons are not generally designed to be used in close combat. Sometimes, however, adventurers will be left with no option but to club someone with a crossbow butt or stab an enemy with an arrow...

If used in close combat, a projectile weapon or its ammunition is usually treated as an improvised weapon. Use the most applicable combat skill the Adventurer has but apply a –2 modifier to any damage rolled, reflecting the inappropriate use of the weapon.

## FOOD & LODGING

Merchants, explorers and adventurers can rarely expect to sleep in their own beds every night if, indeed, they possess homes. The following therefore illustrate the cost of living for those who are perpetually on the road.

### Food & Lodging

Item	Cost
Lodging, poor	2 CP
Lodging, average	1 SP
Lodging, superior	5 SP
Food & drink, poor, 1 day	1 CP
Food & drink, average, 1 day	5 CP
Food & drink, superior, 1 day	2 SP
Trail rations, 1 day	5 CP

## GENERAL ITEMS

The following items, whilst billed as general, cover a range of specifics as well as day-to-day adventuring needs. Some are more useful than others but resourceful Adventurers will be able to find a use for just about any of the items listed in the following General Items table.

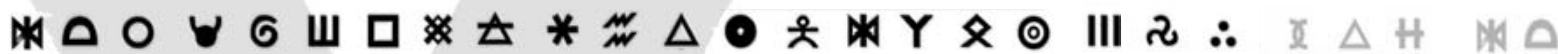
Each item has a description noting any specifics or game effects. The Cultures column notes which cultural backgrounds are *most likely* to have access to the item – although this is offered as a guideline only. If an item has no ENC value, it is light enough to be negligible when carried.



## General Items

Item	Description	Cultures	ENC	Cost
Animal call/ whistle	This is a small wooden, bone or even metallic whistle or instrument used to make attractive sounds in the particular style of animal. Commonly used by hunters to attract prey, or by scouts to communicate signals to one another in non-verbal ways, animal calls are seldom larger than a hand's span in size. Any character using an animal call to hunt can add +10% to his Survival skill for hunting purposes.	All	—	1 SP
Animal snare/ trap	Using a coiled spring or a weight and pulley, the animal snare/trap is designed to snatch small game animals like hares or pheasant with remarkable force – possibly killing the animal with the rapidly yanking noose.	All	2	7 SP
Backpack	This standard piece of adventuring equipment, held to the back with two shoulder straps, can hold 20 ENC of equipment. There is a more expensive version that has a reinforced frame, allowing for an additional 5 ENC of equipment to be strapped to the sides of the backpack as well, costing an additional 2 SP.	All	1	5/7 SP
Bedroll	This includes a blanket and cushioned pad, usually carried tightly rolled and tied with a metre of leather cord.	All	1	1 SP
Block & tackle	This is a mechanism of pulleys and counterweights useful for constructing traps, hauling up heavy items and so forth. It adds a +10% bonus to Mechanisms tests to make or disarm large traps and is required for some Engineering tests.	Civilised	1	15 SP
Bottle, glass	Capable of holding one litre of liquid. The glass can be transparent or opaque at no extra cost.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	—	2 SP
Candle, 1 hour	A small, stubby candle that will burn for one hour before exhausting its fuel. Originally used by miners to mark the passage of time while they were underground, many adventurers have adopted them for the same purpose. A candle illuminates a one metre radius. Any wind stronger than a slight breeze will extinguish a candle.	All	—	1 CP
Candle, 2 hour	As for previous but slower burning.	All	—	3 CP
Candle, 6 hour	As for previous but slower burning.	All	1	1 SP
Chain, 2m	Bronze or iron chain in a traditional chain-link. It has 8 AP and 8 HP per link, applying a –30% penalty to any Brawn roll to use brute force to break. If used as a weapon, it inflicts 1D6 damage.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	2	40 SP
Climbing kit	Consisting of a leather harness, several short lengths of rope, pitons and sundry other tools, a climbing kit provides a bonus of 20% to any Athletics Skill Tests made to climb.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	1	25 SP
Codex	A bound volume of 100 papyrus or parchment sheets. The price is for a blank codex; codices containing sage lore are considerably pricier.	Civilised	1	60 SP
Craft tools	This is a small satchel containing portable tools appropriate to a particular craft. These tools are the bare minimum required to practise the craft without a skill penalty. A set of craft tools is useful for only one craft – a character must buy more sets of tools for any additional crafts.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	2	75 SP
Crowbar	Adds +10% to Brawn rolls to lever open doors, casket lids and the like. If used as a weapon, it is considered a club (wielded with a –10% penalty).	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	1	25 SP
Doorjamb	This wedge of serrated metal is roughly the length of a man's hand, with very rough rasps up and down two of its sides. It is used under a wooden door to keep it from opening. It takes two Combat Actions to place and hammer a doorjamb but when it has bitten into the door and gripped the floor, it makes the door immobile without a Brawn roll pull the door open (with a –20% penalty).	Civilised	2	5 SP

Item	Description	Cultures	ENC	Cost
Dye, coloured	Used for temporarily colouring clothing, hair or even skin, dye comes in a thick paste that must be spooned into a water-vinegar mix to dilute properly. Any dyed object will take on the new colour but it will eventually fade or wash out after 1D6 weeks.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	1	13 SP
First aid kit	A first aid kit is made up primarily of bandages, tourniquets and herbal compresses. It allows the owner to use the First Aid skill without penalty. A first aid kit is good for five uses (whether the Skill Test succeeds or fails) before it is used up.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	—	25 SP
Fish hook	A small metal hook used to catch fish. This item allows a character to use his Survival skill to catch a fish without suffering a penalty on the test.	All	—	2 LB
Fishing kit	Consisting of several hooks, thin but strong line, a segmented rod and corks, the fishing kit grants a character a +20% bonus to his Survival test to catch fish.	All	1	15 SP
Flint & tinder	The fastest and easiest way to start a fire, a character with flint and tinder can build a fire in one minute under normal conditions without having to roll his Survival skill. Games Masters may wish to impose penalties if the character is attempting to start a fire in a high wind or driving rain.	All	—	5 CP
Footpads	Small sheets of layered fur and silk lashed under the user's existing shoes or boots, footpads reduce the noise footfalls make by a remarkable margin. Although the items are heavier than they look, reducing the wearer's movement by 1 metre per movement, they are exceptionally quiet and add +10% to Stealth for silent movement purposes.	Civilised	1	12 SP
Grappling hook	Tied to a rope, it can be lofted up to half the thrower's STR in metres with an Athletics test. It will support the weight of 50 ENC or 50 SIZ, or any combination thereof.	Barbarian, Civilised	—	5 SP
Hammer	Useful in a variety of capacities, a hammer is a tool no adventurer should be without. If used as a weapon, it is treated as a club (wielded with a -10% penalty). Hammers may be used on inanimate objects without being destroyed.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	1	1 SP
Healer's kit	Stocked with bandages, mortar and pestle, poultices, barber's tools, basic surgical equipment and everything else a healer needs to practise his trade on the road, a healer's kit is necessary for a character to use the Healing skill.	All	1	150 SP
Hourglass	This specially blown tube of curved glass set into a wooden or brass frame is filled with fine sand that takes exactly an hour's time to pass through. Fragile and easily disturbed, the hourglass is an important piece of equipment for alchemists and mages, who need to keep track of reaction and application times for future notation and possible adjustments.	Civilised	1	20 SP
Ladder, rope 3m	Made of rope with rope or wooden rungs (increase ENC to 5 for wooden rungs), a rope ladder provides a +20% (+30% for wooden rungs) bonus to Athletics rolls when used for climbing.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	4	2 SP
Lantern, basic	Most lanterns are made of brass or bone and use a leather or metal flap to shield the oiled or waxen mantle inside. A basic lantern provides clear illumination for a three metre radius. It will burn for two hours on a flask of oil.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	1	10 SP
Lantern, cowled	A cowled lantern is a smaller lantern that is always made from bronze and brass with a stiff leather hood that pulls back from its one main opening. Inside the cowled lantern is a ring of polished mirrors that reflect the light of the burning oil into a focused beam that comes out of the opening when the hood is pulled back. The beam of light from a cowled lantern extends 10 metres but is only 1 metre wide. It will burn for one hour on a flask of oil.	Civilised	1	12 SP

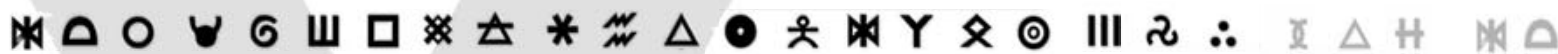


Item	Description	Cultures	ENC	Cost
Lantern, hanging	An extremely delicate and decorative lantern made of coloured paper and thin wood, a hanging lantern is used to cast a dim but pleasing glow to a large area. The coloured light from a hanging lantern provides hazy illumination up to a four metre radius. It will burn for three hours on a flask of oil.	Civilised	1	14 SP
Lock picks	An item no self-respecting thief would ever be without, lock picks allow a character to use his Mechanisms skill to pick a lock. The Games Master may assign penalties or bonuses to this test based upon the specific circumstances.	Civilised	—	75 SP
Magnifying Lens	Whether mounted on a handle or in a pair of wire frames to be worn as spectacles, this specifically shaped piece of ground glass is used to magnify writing, symbols or other tiny clues. While looking through the lens at anything within a distance of one metre, the character gets a +25% bonus to Perception. However, he suffers a -15% penalty to Perception tests concerning everywhere else. Also, a magnifying lens held still and fed sufficient light from the sun or other remarkable source can create a heat source that will ignite flammable objects.	Civilised	—	10 SP
Milling Stone	This is a handheld pair of grinding stones that can be loaded with spices, grains and minerals to be turned to powder. Milling stones are helpful for alchemists, healers, shamans and magicians to have a source for their various and sundry ingredients while on the road. The grinding process takes less than a few minutes for most substances but could take hours for gemstones or other extremely dense materials.	All	2	8 SP
Mining pick	A mining pick allows its user to chip his way through rock (albeit slowly). If used as a weapon, it is considered a club (wielded with a -20% penalty). Mining picks may be used on inanimate objects without being destroyed.	Barbarian, Civilised	1	35 SP
Musical instrument	Any reasonable quality musical instrument costs around 70 SP (for a flute, lute or equivalent, for example). Larger and better quality instruments cost multiples of 70 SP. For example, a good quality lute would cost 140 SP and a reasonable quality cello or bass horn would cost the same.	All	2	70 SP
Net, fishing	This is a two metre by two metre weighted net of woven fibres designed to be dropped into standing or running water to catch fish, crustaceans and the like, for food. It takes 3D10 minutes to use the net properly but adds a +25% bonus to the character's Survival skill for the purposes of catching food in this way.	All	4	10 SP
Oar, collapsible	A hinged piece of metal with a wide wooden end that snaps open to a half-metre length, the collapsible oar gives a +5% to Boating due to its lightweight and expertly crafted design. When used in combat, the collapsible oar acts as a club (with a -10% penalty).	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	2	5 SP
Oil, flask	A single flask of oil is enough to fuel a basic lantern for two hours, or, if broken on the ground and ignited, enough to sustain a small fire for one minute. Oil is packaged in small pottery or glass bottles but can also occasionally be found in waxed leather skins. A skin cannot be 'broken' as mentioned above – either on purpose or accidentally.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	1	1 SP
Oil, Jellied	Mixing sawdust, chalk or hoof shavings into common lamp oil slowly over a period of time can eventually create a combustible jelly that is very useful for smearing on torches and other objects that are to be set alight at a later time. A single spark will light jellied oil on fire and it will then burn as if it were a common flask of oil. After it has been smeared onto something, jellied oil stays combustible for up to a week before it begins to lose its potency.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	2	10 SP



Item	Description	Cultures	ENC	Cost
Oil, weapon	Used to keep rust and tarnish off the precious edges of bladed weapons, weapon oil is extremely thin and is made primarily from the rendered fat and oils from fish or whales. It is relatively odourless and carries with it only a very slight yellowish tint. It is only slightly more flammable than cooking oils and a single bottle of it can upkeep dozens of weapons for weeks at a time. Any blade treated with weapon oil after it has been used in combat will not suffer from mundane rust or tarnish for a week or so.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	1	2 SP
Papyrus, sheet	A papyrus sheet is a sheet of thin, brittle paper useful for taking notes, drawing maps or even making a rubbing of a raised surface. It is painstakingly made from papyrus reeds and is considered a luxury item by most common people. A sheet of papyrus is square, half a metre by half a metre. Once written on, a papyrus sheet can be 'waxed' to make the ink water resistant and smear-proof, though this also makes the sheet more flammable should it ever be exposed to an open flame.	Civilised	—	5 CP
Pole, 3m	A long pole serves many useful purposes to an adventurer, from testing the stability of the ground ahead of him, to functioning as a crude yoke.	All	1	1 SP
Quiver	Quivers can generally hold up to 30 arrows or crossbow bolts.	All	—	2 SP
Razor, folding	The mainstay of any barber's tools, the folding razor is the best implement to painstakingly remove three-day old stubble. Useful for a variety of reasons, the razor can also be used to inflict rather nasty wounds on bare flesh – inflicting 1D3 damage upon scoring a hit on an unarmoured Hit Location. Armour of any kind stops this damage completely and dulls the blade considerably. Apart from the damage, a folding razor has the same statistics as a dagger.	Civilised	—	3 SP
Rope, 10m	An essential piece of equipment for an Adventurer, a standard rope can support the weight of 50 ENC or 50 SIZ, or any combination thereof.	All	2	10 SP
Rope, silken	Lighter, stronger and less abrasive to the skin, silken rope is superior to braided hemp in nearly every way. Like its more common cousin it comes in 10 metre lengths but can support 60 ENC or 60 SIZ, or any combination thereof. Silken rope requires more knots to make it usable for climbing purposes, shortening it by four metres.	Civilised	1	75 SP
Sack, large	A wide sack of leather or canvas, able to hold 10 ENC of equipment.	All	1	5 CP
Sack, small	A small sack can hold 5 ENC of equipment.	All	—	2 CP
Saw, hand	This long piece of hammered metal has been sharpened to have a jagged and serrated edge perfect for ripping through wood, which is attached to a leather-wrapped handle. With enough strokes back and forth, the hand saw can cut through wood at a rate of 1D4 Hit Points per round – ignoring AP from the wooden object. If used as a makeshift weapon it can be used as a crude short sword (with a –15% penalty) but will likely never be usable as a saw again.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	1	1 SP
Scythe	Primarily a tool for harvesting grain, a scythe can be put to work as a weapon when necessary. If used as a weapon, it is considered a bill (wielded with a –10% penalty).	Barbarian, Civilised	2	30 SP
Seal	Often built into jewellery, such as a ring or necklace, seals are carved with an identifying crest or mark representing its owner. These are used to press wax to close letters, scrolls or other similar objects. Recognising a specific family, guild or cult seal requires a Lore (Region) Skill Test (modified as the Games Master sees fit).	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	—	100 SP
Spade	This is a small shovel, sometimes with a detachable wooden handle. It can be used to dig large amounts of soil or sand in relatively short order but is all but useless on stone or very dense earth. If used as a weapon, it is considered a club (wielded with a –20% penalty).	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	1	25 SP





Item	Description	Cultures	ENC	Cost
Tent, 4 person	This folding animal hide or fabric tent can be set up in just a few minutes and will keep up to four human-sized people dry. It is not exceptionally comfortable, which is why so many adventurers invest in good bedrolls and warm clothing for long journeys.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	2	10 SP
Tent, 8 person	Held up by five poles that must be securely driven into the ground, this tent can be set up in just under an hour by two men. Once erected properly, up to eight human-sized individuals can sleep inside without fear from most normal weather conditions.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	5	50 SP
Torch, 1 hour	A torch has one end wrapped in cloth and dipped in pitch or a similar flammable substance. It can be lit with flint and tinder in one round and will burn for one hour. A torch illuminates a three metre radius. If used as a weapon, it is considered a club (wielded with a -10% penalty), except that it does not inflict normal damage – instead, it inflicts 1D4 fire damage and a fumble or critical hit will also extinguish the brand.	All	—	4 CP
Torch, 6 hour	As for previous but treated with longer-lasting materials.	All	1	8 CP
Torch, waterproof	As for previous but the materials are treated with inflammable and water dispelling chemicals so that, even when wet, the torch still lights. It will not burn underwater, however.	Barbarian, Civilised, Nomad	—	2 SP
Waterskin	A lined bladder or sewn leather pouch designed to contain liquids, with a wooden or bone spout at one end for pouring. A typical waterskin can hold enough water to sustain an adventurer for two days but can also be used to hold wine, poison or other liquids equally well.	All	1	5 CP
Wax, block	Used for a variety of reasons in several professions, beeswax is much like rope in that many adventurers find ways to put it to inventive use. Thieves will press keys into it in order to make effective forgeries, mages might need it to seal up potions or component bottles and so on.	All	1	2 CP
Writing kit	The basic writing kit contains several vials of black ink, as well as brushes, quills and pens used for calligraphy and scribing. The largest part of the kit is a thin sheet of wood, the same dimensions as a piece of papyrus. For an additional cost writing kits can also contain other coloured inks.	Civilised	1	45 SP

## MOUNTS AND BEASTS OF BURDEN

A good horse is a treasured possession; a good cow or ox can be every bit as valuable, depending on how the owner makes his livelihood.

### *Mounts and Beasts of Burden*

Animal	Cost	ENC Carried
Ass/Mule	125 SP	30
Donkey	200 SP	40
Cart Horse	250SP	45
Plough Horse	400 SP	70
Poor Quality Riding Horse	350 SP	40
Reasonable Quality Riding Horse	400 SP	50
Good Quality Riding Horse	450 SP	60
War Horse	500 SP	80
Ox/Bison	200 SP	70
Cow	150 SP	50
Chickens (per half dozen)	6 SP	—
Ducks (per half dozen)	10 SP	—
Geese (per half dozen)	15 SP	—
Pig	50 SP	25
Goat	50 SP	25
Falcon (or similar trained bird of prey)	400 SP	—

The normal amount the animal can carry without being overloaded is given in the ENC Carried column. As for Adventurers, mounts and beasts of burden can become overloaded if this figure is exceeded, suffering a -20% penalty to skill rolls and Fatigue tests. No animal can carry more than double the ENC Carried value.

## Riding & Animal Supplies

The Riding & Animal Supplies table shows a number of items and supplies that characters could find very useful when dealing with animals (like those found in the Beasts & Cohorts chapter of this book), how much they weigh in ENC and their general market cost.

## TRANSPORTATION

Whether owned or rented as needs see fit, basic transportation (other than a mount or beast of burden) needs to be considered when travelling long distance.

## Riding & Animal Supplies

Item	Description	ENC	Cost
Bit & Bridle	This is a short piece of leather or metal that is placed in the mouth of a mount and attached to a set of leather or chain reins to allow the rider or driver to steer the beast. Although it does not offer any sort of bonus to Riding or Driving tests, <i>not</i> having a bit and bridle on a mount when a character Critically Fumbles one of these tests can be catastrophic (at the Games Master's discretion).	1	15 SP
Crop	The crop is a piece of wood, bone or metal with a folded leather strap at the end. It is used to force a mount to push harder. Spurring movement with the stinging and noisy 'crack' of a crop on the hindquarters of a ridden mount can sometimes bring higher speeds. In game terms this allows a rider to make an additional Riding Skill Test to increase speed, though he can only do so three turns in a row before the mount becomes numb or angry.	—	15 SP
Driver's whip	A length of thin and flexible wood tipped with a long, thin piece of resin-coated cord or braided leather, a driver's whip is used to sting the flanks of drawing mounts from the driver's bench of a wagon, coach or cart. It is used to bring higher speeds out of the entire team. In game terms this allows a driver to make an additional Driving Skill Test to increase speed but he can only do so a number of turns in a row equal to the number of drawing mounts attached to the vehicle before the team becomes inured.	—	25 SP
Falconer's Kit	This kit includes a thick leather glove or gauntlet with cord sewn to it in order to tether a falcon or hunting hawk when at rest. It also includes a leather or wooden hood that fits over the eyes and ears of the bird in an effort to keep the animal calm before releasing it to perform its duties. Anyone attempting to perform Craft (Falconry) Skill Tests without a full falconer's kit suffers a -10% penalty to his Skill Test.	1	30 SP
Feed/mount rations (per day)	Whether it is a supply of corn mash and oats for a stallion, sardines for a sea lion or osprey, or chunks of raw horsemeat for a griffon, this category covers the road rations needed to keep a mount healthy and strong. If they do not pack additional feed, characters will need to make additional Survival or Tracking rolls every week in order to keep their mounts from becoming sickly or unruly.	1	5 CP
Goad	A thick-hafted piece of ivory, bone or wood tipped with a rounded hook and jabbing pinion, a goad is like a riding crop for thicker-skinned beasts, such as reptiles, pachyderms, rhinos and the like.	1	25 SP
Saddle, flight	A specialised saddle designed for beasts with wings like griffons and sky bulls, this is a must for aerial cavalry. The flight saddle has additional thigh stirrups that keep a rider tethered to the animal as it flies. The straps are difficult to unlatch when in motion - requiring a Mechanisms roll at +10% to do so in combat.	3	100 SP
Saddle, pack	This is basically a riding saddle with two sets of attached saddlebags and an additional wooden cage for goods where a rider would normally sit. The pack saddle can carry an impressive 40 ENC of weight but leaves no room for a rider.	5	65 SP
Saddle, riding	This is the most common form of leather saddle and is the style that most riders prefer for long trips. Even though it does not offer any sort of bonus to Riding Skill Tests, riding a horse at anything faster than a brisk walk without one imposes a -10% penalty to Riding.	3	60 SP
Saddle, war	The heaviest of saddles, a war saddle has a raised front horn and padded back in order to support an armoured rider and several additional buckles to attach to barding. Using a war saddle inflicts one level of Fatigue per full eight hours of use but it does add +10% to any Riding Skill Tests made during combat, or when resisting knockback.	4	90 SP
Saddlebag	A pair of canvas, leather or cloth bags designed to be draped over the shoulders or flanks of a mount in order for it to carry more equipment or goods for the owner. A saddlebag can carry 15 ENC worth of weight.	2	20 SP
Shoes, horse	Common metal shoes nailed to the bottom of hooved animals, 'horse' shoes are designed to keep sharp stones and gravel from chipping or splitting a hoof. Hooved mounts that do not have shoes will need to be rested more frequently in order to remove detritus, imposing a -10% penalty to travel times through any type of rocky or stony terrain.	1	10 SP

## Transportation

Transport	Cost to Buy or Cost per Kilometre
Cart	75 SP
Chariot	600 SP
Travel (by coach)	15 SP per kilometre
Travel (by post-horse)	20 SP per kilometre
Travel (by ship)	10 SP per kilometre
Travel (by wagon)	5 SP per kilometre
Wagon	300 SP

## CHAPTER 5:

# COMBAT

Combat is an inevitable part of *RuneQuest*. Violence, whether it is a squabble descending into fisticuffs between childhood rivals, a drunken bar-room brawl, or a duel to the death between mortal enemies, is handled using these rules.

*RuneQuest* combat has certain hallmarks that are worth bearing in mind; these are as follows:

- \* Combat is a *deadly* business, irrespective of an Adventurer's level of skill. A well-placed blow can take down the toughest or best armoured character.
- \* Combat is *tactical*: good tactical decisions or choices can greatly influence the outcome of a battle. The combat rules are designed to support tactical options.
- \* Combat should be fun. Although it deals with violence – and does so seriously – there is little like a good, well orchestrated melee to get the pulse racing and the adrenalin flowing.
- \* *RuneQuest* combat aims to be cinematic. What is meant here is that melees and ranged combat can emulate the feats seen in television and movies – be they dashing, swashbuckling duels; gritty, bloody one-on-one combats, or large-scale, epic stand-offs between heroes. The combat rules are designed to handle all such confrontations.

## COMPONENTS OF COMBAT

Most combats consist of very similar components using very similar timeframes. These components are as follows:

### Combat Skills and Styles

Combat skills are purchased as *styles*. Learning the style “Broadsword and Shield” costs the same skill points as learning “Greataxe”, thus avoiding the necessity of having to train each weapon in a combination separately. Edric, for example, has the combat style ‘Spear and Shield’; this combat style combines the techniques

### Edric's Saga

*Edric, Thrace and Lilina have penetrated the underground layer of the troll-wife Illsa Skessa, the troll Edric believes was responsible for his father's murder. The three adventurers want vengeance on Illsa Skessa's Battle Champion, Illsa Skarga. Creeping through the narrow tunnels of the underground complex the three companions emerge into a large cavern which, the frail light of their torches shows, is filled with debris, discarded bones from eagerly devoured troll-meals and, over in a corner, slowly roasting something they've captured, a group of trollkin guards. The trollkin look up and squint as torch-light falls over them; hands fall to nearby weapons. Edric, Thrace and Lilina are in no mood to run but are eager for a fight.*

*Combat is about to commence...*

of spear attack and shield defence but does not cost Edric two separate skills to gain – they are trained together.

There is a myriad range of different combat styles and Adventurers can create their own combinations to mirror personal preferences, cultural fighting styles or professional requirements. Some typical examples are:

*Sword and Shield (any one-handed sword and any shield type); Mace and Shield; Sword and Dagger (any one-handed sword coupled with a dagger which is used for parrying but may also be used for attack); Two-Handed Sword (a large sword requiring two hands to stabilise but inflicting greater damage).*

In situations where the user of a ‘two weapon’ or a ‘weapon and shield’ combat style is unable, for whatever reason, to utilise part of the combination, then the wielder's skill is unchanged but he

does lose the advantage of having two weapons or the defensive capabilities of his shield.

Adventurers trying to decide what sort of combat style to select should consider the following:

- \* Two handed weapons normally grant an advantage in both inflicting and parrying damage and give the user a greater reach (see *Weapon Reach*).
- \* Shields allow the user an extra Combat Action per round, as well as protecting against missile attacks – which most other weapons cannot parry.
- \* Using two weapons simultaneously also permits the wielder an extra Combat Action per round and maintains their effectiveness if one weapon is pinned, entangled or dropped. Secondary off hand weapons must be one size category smaller than the main weapon, unless both are small.
- \* Unarmed combat styles have few direct benefits save that the user is always able to fight and protect themselves when lacking a weapon and can freely combine unarmed attacks with any other combat style at no penalty (as long as the opponent is within reach). An unarmed attack can be made with any part of the body, except for the torso. Thus limbs, wings, tails and even the head can be used.

## Combat Rounds

Since fights in *RuneQuest* often involve a large number of skill rolls for attacks, parries and such like, combat is divided into rounds to ease book keeping. As introduced on page 48 of the Game System chapter, each round represents a period of five seconds during which time Adventurers can perform their full number of Combat Actions.

Each Combat Round begins with the participant (Adventurer, adversary or monster) with the highest initiative acting first, spending one of his Combat Actions. This is followed by whoever has the next highest initiative and so forth until the participant with the lowest initiative has acted. Then, if anyone still has any Combat Actions remaining, the cycle repeats until all available Combat Actions for all available participants have been spent. At this point the round ends. If the participants are prepared to continue fighting, a new round begins; if they withdraw from combat or cannot continue to fight, actions revert to Local Time and the combat is over.

### Edric's Saga

*The trollkin guards are some metres distant from Edric, Thrace and Lilana but it is clear that a fight is likely. 'What are you going to do?' The Games Master asks each player. 'We ready our weapons and prepare to fight,' Edric's player says and the others agree. 'Okay,' the Games Master replies and reaches for a sheet of paper to start recording initiative, hits, damage and other combat information, 'we're moving to Combat Rounds; five second bursts measured by Combat Actions. Everybody ready? Good... Initiative rolls please...'*

## Initiative

Who acts first and the order of action is crucial in combat. Initiative is the method of determining in which order the participants act. Initiative is measured in Strike Ranks and rolled at the start of a fight, remaining in play unless something occurs to *force* Initiative to be re-rolled. This is up to the Games Master to decide but at the very minimum an Initiative roll lasts for an entire Combat Round.

### Calculating Initiative

To calculate Initiative, each participant rolls 1D10 and adds his Strike Rank. The highest result acts first, followed by the next highest and so on. If two participants tie scores, then they act simultaneously. If both are attacking simultaneously, a weapon being used to strike cannot also be used to parry a simultaneous blow.

### ARMOUR PENALTY

Strike Rank Penalty = (Totalled Armour Points worn on all locations) divided by five.

Armour has a negative impact on Initiative; the heavier the protection worn, the bigger the hindrance to moving and reacting quickly. An Adventurer's Strike Rank is reduced by one fifth of the totalled value of AP worn on all locations (rounded up).

*For example a full suit of chainmail armour with a closed helm (36 points in total) creates a -8 Strike Rank penalty.*

## Combat Actions

Combat Actions (CA), calculated during Adventurer Creation, are used when attempting any kind of activity during a combat; for example, to attack, defend, change engagement distance, cast spells and so forth.

When a Combat Action is spent, it is gone; Adventurers therefore need to assess *how* they use CA according to the nature of the opponent and the odds being faced.

How an Adventurer's Combat Actions are used is completely up to the player, who may be as aggressive or defensive as he wishes. When combined with Initiative, CA take on a dynamic nature; since how they are used can depend on the order of when one acts in the round.

*For example, Edric is forced into a fight. He has 3 CA and has rolled a better Initiative than his opponent. Going first he decides to attack and the foe succeeds in parrying. Both have used one CA for that round. Then it is the opponent's turn and he counter-attacks, forcing Edric to parry. Now both have used two CAs. Since the lowest Initiative has been reached but both combatants still have a Combat Action remaining; the GM cycles back to the highest Initiative again – allowing Edric to attack a second time that round. His opponent again parries the blow and the round ends, since both foes have no*



### Edric's Saga

The Games Master has called for Initiative. This means Edric, Thrace and Lilina must roll 1D10, add their Strike Rank score and then apply any modifications for armour. Here are the core results of the Initiative Rolls:

- \* Edric rolls 6. Strike Rank of 15 means he has a total Strike Rank of 21.
- \* Thrace rolls 1. Strike Rank of 12 means he has a total Strike Rank of 13.
- \* Lilana rolls 10. Strike Rank of 14 means she has a total Strike Rank of 24.

The Games Master treats all the trollkin as having the same Strike Rank of 12; he rolls 3, so the trollkin have Strike Rank 15. However, armour needs to be factored into all of this.

Edric wears soft leather (2 AP) across four Hit Locations for a total of 8 AP. Dividing this by five and rounding up gives Edric a -2 Armour Penalty, so his Strike Rank is reduced to 19.

Thrace wears similar armour to Edric and so he, too, has a -2 Armour Penalty, bringing his Strike Rank down to 11.

Lilana wears her grandmother's leather breastplate, greaves and vambraces, plus her bronze, plumed helmet. Her armour totals 16 AP which, divided by five and rounded up gives a -4 Armour Penalty; her Strike Rank is reduced to 20.

The trollkin wear a few scraps of armour that create just a -1 Armour Penalty. Their Strike Rank becomes 14.

With Strike Ranks calculated and adjusted for armour, the order of combat is thus:

1. Strike Rank 20 Lilana
2. Strike Rank 19 Edric
3. Strike Rank 14 Trollkin (three of them)
4. Strike Rank 11 Thrace

Each round of combat proceeds in this order unless something happens that causes Initiative to be calculated again.

more Combat Actions remaining. Thus going first allowed Edric to use his CA to attack twice and parry once.

The following are activities a character can attempt by spending **one** Combat Action *during their turn*. Cast Spell, Evade and Parry are special in that they can be used at any time during the Combat Round as a reaction to an incoming threat.

- \* **Attack:** The Adventurer can attempt to strike with a hand-to-hand weapon or fire a missile at an opponent.
- \* **Cast Spell:** The Adventurer can attempt to cast a spell.
- \* **Change Distance:** The Adventurer can attempt to change the range at which he is fighting, either closing with his opponent or putting distance between them (see Closing and Disengaging on page 92).
- \* **Change Stance:** The Adventurer can shift from standing to prone or vice versa and anything in between.
- \* **Charge:** If enough space, the Adventurer may charge into close combat, combining the movement with an attack. If successful, damage may be increased. See Charging on page 89.
- \* **Delay:** The Adventurer may pause to assess the tactical situation. This changes his Strike Rank to the number when he finally does act. If no action is taken before Strike Rank reaches zero, then the Combat Action is lost.
- \* **Do Nothing:** An Adventurer can decide to simply spend his Combat Action doing nothing useful.
- \* **Evade:** Adventurers can attempt to dive or roll clear of missiles or a charging attack. This action can also be declared in advance of an anticipated attack (see Parry). The CA available on the character's next Strike Rank following an Evade attempt cannot be used to make an Attack. This penalty carries over to a new round if the Adventurer uses his last available CA in a round to Evade.
- \* **Mount/Dismount:** The Adventurer can mount or dismount a riding beast.
- \* **Move:** If unengaged, the Adventurer may move his full movement rate.
- \* **Outmanoeuvre:** The Adventurer can engage multiple opponents in a group Opposed Test of Evade skills. Those who fail to beat his roll cannot attack him that Combat Round.
- \* **Parry:** The Adventurer can attempt to deflect an incoming attack. As well as being a reactive response, this action can also be declared *in advance* of an expected attack by adopting a defensive stance. However, once committed, the CA cannot be converted back to any other type of action and is lost if not used before his next Strike Rank occurs.
- \* **Ready Weapon:** The Adventurer may draw, sheath or reload a weapon. Dropping a weapon costs no CA. However retrieving a dropped weapon within reach costs two CA: one to retrieve the weapon and a second to return to a readied stance.

### Edric's Saga

Edric has 3 Combat Actions whilst Thrace and Lilina have 2 CA each – as do the three trollkin. Thus, Edric has a slight edge over his opponents.

## Weapon Size and Reach

Every weapon possesses two ratings, Size and Reach. These are used to determine both the weapon's ability to parry damage



and its reach in combat. The size categories are Small, Medium, Large, Huge, and Enormous. Further sizes are beyond the scope of mere mortal encounters. The reach categories are Touch, Short, Medium, Long and Very Long.

The Equipment chapter provides more information on sizes, along with the reach categories for each weapon in *RuneQuest*. However, as a simple guide, use the following to calculate which size category a weapon belongs to.

- \* Small – Human unarmed combat and light single handed weapons less than a kilo in weight; a dagger, for example.
- \* Medium – Single handed weapons over a kilo in weight; a scimitar, for instance.
- \* Large – Long hafted thrusting weapons such as polearms or spears.
- \* Huge – Two handed slashing, chopping or bashing weapons, like great axes.
- \* Enormous – Weapons used by very large creatures: tree trunks used by giants, for example.

Reach categories use the following guidelines.

- \* Touch – Human reach in unarmed combat, knuckledusters and so on.
- \* Short – Weapons less than half a metre long; such as a short sword.
- \* Medium – Single handed swung weapons longer than half a metre, like a ball and chain.

- \* Long – Single handed thrusting weapons, or two handed swung weapons, such as a great sword.
- \* Very Long – Two handed thrusting weapons, spears or polearms for example.

The unarmed attacks of animals and monsters are assigned categories to determine their reach and how difficult they are to parry.

## COMBAT MECHANICS

Fighting in *RuneQuest* is a brutal recreation of close combat. Most battles are resolved in a blow by blow progression, each attack representing a single swing of a weapon. Even if an Adventurer manages to roll a successful strike at an opponent, the foe is allowed their own roll to see if they can parry the blow. The same mechanism is used whether the attacks are missile weapons against opponents diving for cover, a ferocious wrestling match, or trying to evade a charge of angry dinosaurs.

### Attacks and Parries

To make either an Attack or Parry both the attacker and the defender must spend a Combat Action and roll against their appropriate *combat style*. The attacker's and defender's results are noted because the difference between them, if a difference in level of success exists, is crucial to the outcome of the exchange.

The intention to parry must be declared *before* any attack roll is made. However, if the attack misses then the parrying participant can opt not to complete the parry, thereby saving his CA from



being spent. This does mean, though, that he will not gain a defensive Combat Manoeuvre (see Combat Manoeuvres, page 86), for the exchange. Attack and parry rolls are subject to the 'Opposed Skills Over 100%' rule on p35, despite not strictly being an Opposed Test.

### Successful Roll

If the attacker succeeds with the attack, he rolls weapon damage and adds his Damage Modifier (if any).

If the defender succeeds in *his* Skill Test, then he can reduce the attacker's damage, if any, according to the comparative size of their weapons.

- \* Parrying an attack with a weapon or shield of *equal or greater* size deflects **all** damage.
- \* Parrying with a weapon or shield of *one size less* only deflects **half** damage.
- \* Parrying with a weapon or shield *two or more sizes less* fails to deflect **any** damage.

For example, parrying a great axe with a greatsword would block *all* damage; parrying it with a target shield would *halve* the damage and parrying it with a dagger would stop *no* damage at all.

If the attacker has missed then obviously no damage will be inflicted. However, the defender should still roll to see if his parry succeeds, in case he manages to beat the attacker's level of success – granting them the choice of one or more opportunistic Combat Manoeuvres.

### Unsuccessful Roll and Fumbles

If *both* combatants fail, then the attack/parry sequence ends and combat continues on to the participant with the next highest initiative. No opportunistic combat manoeuvres may be selected.

If either combatant rolls a fumble, then they must also make a roll on the Fumble table appropriate to their weapon or combat type. Fumbling during a combat can have disastrous results and always results in a roll on the appropriate Fumble table.

There are three Fumble tables; one for Close Combat fumbles (including parries and evading), one for Natural Weapons and one for Ranged Weapons. When a Fumble occurs, roll on the appropriate Fumble table for the action involved.

### No Combat Actions Remaining/Taking No Action

In a situation where a defender has no Combat Actions remaining or taking no action, or elects not to parry, he is treated as having automatically rolled a Failure.

## Success Levels and Combat Manoeuvres

After both sides have rolled for attack and defence, compare the *success levels* of the attack and parry Skill Tests. Differences in levels of success are calculated by how many *steps* lie between the two. In other words, if both combatants roll a critical, then the difference between them is 0.

The Levels of Success table summarises the differences in success levels depending on the attacker and defender's rolls.

Gaining a level of success over an opponent allows the combatant to perform an opportunistic *Combat Manoeuvre*. Combat Manoeuvres can be used to put down an opponent quickly, or render them helpless in some other way. These are fun to use, encourage tactical thinking and encourage the adoption of less lethal combat resolution.

*For example, an attacker rolling a critical success against the defender's success gives the attacker a level of success and therefore 1 Combat Manoeuvre.*

*A defender rolls a success against an attacker's fumble giving the defender two levels of success and therefore 2 Combat Manoeuvres.*

For each level of success over their opponent, the winner selects a Combat Manoeuvre from either the Offensive or Defensive list, depending on whether the winner was attacking or defending. So, for example, if the defender beats the attacker by two levels of success, then he chooses two manoeuvres.

Some of the choices are common to both attack and defence – Damage Weapon, for example – whilst others are specific to either attack or defence. Some manoeuvres are also specific to a particular type or weapon; and, some manoeuvres are *only available* if the winner of the outcome has rolled a critical success.

The Combat Manoeuvre chosen *must* be selected before any damage and/or Hit Location is rolled.

Some manoeuvres can be stacked. For instance, a successful attacker with two levels of success could choose Maximise Damage twice rather than choosing two separate offensive manoeuvres.

### Combat Manoeuvres Summary Table

Offensive Manoeuvres	Defensive Manoeuvres
Bash Opponent	Blind Opponent <sup>2</sup>
Bleed	Change Range <sup>1</sup>
Bypass Armour <sup>2</sup>	Damage Weapon <sup>1</sup>
Bypass Parry <sup>3</sup>	Disarm Opponent <sup>1</sup>
Change Range <sup>1</sup>	Enhance Parry <sup>3</sup>
Choose Location	Overextend Opponent <sup>3</sup>
Damage Weapon <sup>1</sup>	Pin Weapon <sup>2</sup>
Disarm Opponent <sup>1</sup>	Redirect Blow
Grip	Regain Footing
Impale	Riposte
Maximise Damage <sup>2,3</sup>	Slip Free
Stun Location	Stand Fast
Sunder	Take Weapon
Tangle	Trip Opponent <sup>1</sup>
Trip Opponent <sup>1</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> Both an Offensive and Defensive Manoeuvre.

<sup>2</sup> This manoeuvre can only be selected if the winner of the outcome has rolled a critical success.

<sup>3</sup> This manoeuvre is stackable.



### Close Combat Fumble Table

1D20	Result	Effect
01–03	Falter	Cannot attack on next active Combat Action; but may defend.
04–06	Drop Weapon	Weapon falls 1D4 metres away.
07–09	Lose Balance	Lose next 1D3 Combat Actions.
10–12	Damage Weapon	Weapon takes damage from opponent's parrying weapon directly to its HP, ignoring its Armour Points. Else weapon strikes an inanimate object (tree, wall, ground and so on) and does damage to itself.
13–14	Stumble	Trip and fall prone. Forfeit next 1D3 Combat Actions. All defensive actions at a –20% penalty.
15–16	Lose Armour	Roll for Hit Location where the armour fell from. If not armoured, roll again.
17–18	Hit Ally	Accidentally strike a nearby companion for normal rolled damage. If no ally within reach, hit self instead.
19	Unlucky	Roll twice, ignoring any rolls of 19 or 20.
20	Doomed	Roll three times, ignoring any rolls of 19 or 20.

### Natural Weapon Fumbles

1D20	Result	Effect
01–03	Hesitate	Cannot attack on next active Combat Action; but may defend.
04–06	Numb Limb	Limb is temporarily paralysed until a successful Resilience roll is made, starting next Combat Action.
07–09	Entangle Self	Lose next 1D3 Combat Actions.
10–12	Damage Limb	Limb is injured from striking opponent's parrying weapon, armour or an inanimate object (tree, wall, ground, and so on) and does damage to itself.
13–14	Sprawl	Trip and fall prone. Forfeit next 1D3 Combat Actions. All defensive actions at a –20% penalty.
15–16	Injure Limb	Limb is reduced to 0 Hit Points, suffering a Serious Wound.
17–18	Hit Ally	Accidentally strike a nearby companion for normal rolled damage. If no ally within reach, damage is done to self instead from wrenching a random location.
19	Fated	Roll twice, ignoring any rolls of 19 or 20.
20	Cursed	Roll three times, ignoring any rolls of 19 or 20.

### Ranged Weapon Fumbles

1D20	Result	Effect
01–03	Disoriented	Attacker loses target and next active Combat Action.
04–06	Drop Weapon	Weapon falls 1D2 metres away.
07–09	Snare Weapon	Lose next 1D3 Combat Actions.
10–12	Lose Weapon	Weapon string either snaps or weapon is lost when thrown.
13–14	Damage Weapon	Weapon, when fired or thrown, suffers rolled damage to itself, ignoring Armour Points.
15–16	Hit Ally	Accidentally strike a nearby companion for normal rolled damage.
17–18	Misfire	Inflict normal damage on self.
19	Bedevelled	Roll twice, ignoring any rolls of 19 or 20.
20	Damned	Roll three times, ignoring any rolls of 19 or 20.

### Levels of Success

		Attacker's Roll			
		Critical	Success	Failure	Fumble
Defender's Roll	Critical	—	Defender gets 1	Defender gets 2	Defender gets 3
	Success	Attacker gets 1	—	Defender gets 1	Defender gets 2
	Failure	Attacker gets 2	Attacker gets 1	—	—
	Fumble	Attacker gets 3	Attacker gets 2	—	—



## Offensive Combat Manoeuvres

**Bash opponent** – Attacks can be used to deliberately bash the opponent off balance. The recipient is forced backwards by one metre for every five points (or fraction thereof) of damage rolled. Bashing works *only* on creatures up to twice the attacker's SIZ. The calculation uses the damage value *originally* rolled by the attacker, before any subtractions due to armour, parries and so forth. If the bash forces the opponent into an obstacle then the recipient must make a *Difficult* (–20%) Athletics skill roll to avoid falling prone.

**Bleed (Cutting Weapons)** – Causes a wound which begins to bleed critically, if the attack overcomes Armour Points and injures the target. The defender must make an opposed roll of Resilience vs. the attacker's original attack roll. If the defender fails, then a major artery or vein is cut and the wound inflicts a level of Fatigue at the start of each new Combat Round. Bleeding wounds can be stopped by the successful use of the First Aid skill but the recipient can no longer participate in any strenuous or violent action without opening the wound up again. Fatigue levels gained by blood loss remain until sufficient time has passed for the body to recover.

**Bypass armour (Critical Success Only)** – The blow finds a gap in the defender's protection. This counts against worn armour or the natural skin/fur/shell of creatures. If striking a target that has both natural protection *and* wearing armour, then the attacker must decide which one is bypassed. Physical protection gained from magic is considered as being worn armour.

**Bypass parry** – The defender's parrying weapon is treated as being one size level less. *For example, Edric uses Bypass Parry against a troll champion he is fighting. The troll is parrying with a glaive (size Large). This means that, for the purposes of parrying, the troll's glaive is treated as size Medium for countering Edric's attack.*

**Change range** – Allows the character to freely change the engagement range between himself and the opponent. This can be used to select a more favourable distance for a particular weapon, or even to disengage from the fight completely if desired (see *Weapon Reach* page 92).

**Choose location** – The attacker may freely select the location where the blow lands, as long as that location is normally within reach.

**Damage weapon (Attack and Defence)** – The opponent's weapon is damaged. The winner rolls the damage for his weapon and applies it to his opponent's. The opponent's weapon uses its own Armour Points for resisting the damage. If reduced to zero Hit Points the weapon breaks.

**Disarm opponent (Attack and Defence)** – The opponent must roll an opposed test of his combat skill vs. the original attack roll (if the attacker won) or the original parry roll (if the defender won). If the recipient of the disarm fails, he loses his weapon. Two handed or entangling weapon wielders may add a bonus of +20% to their skill for this check. Disarming works only on creatures of up to twice the attacker's STR.

**Entangle (Entangling Weapons Only)** – Weapons such as whips or nets immobilise the location struck. If an arm, the target cannot use whatever he is holding; if a leg the target cannot manoeuvre; if the head, chest or abdomen the target suffers a –20% penalty to all activity. On his next action the wielder may spend a Combat Action to make an automatic *Trip Opponent* attempt. An entangled opponent can attempt to break free by either pulling the entangling weapon away from the wielder with *Disarm Opponent*, escaping with *Slip Free*, or cut himself free using *Damage Weapon*.

**Grip (Unarmed)** – As for *Pin Weapon* but requires that the limb used is not holding anything. Being gripped prevents an opponent from disengaging by use of the Evade skill. Breaking free requires the spending of a CA and winning an Opposed Test of the Unarmed skill.

**Impale (Thrusting Weapons Only)** – Weapons such as spears or daggers may impale. Impaling weapons may roll damage twice with the attacker choosing which damage result to use for the attack. If armour is penetrated and damage results, then the attacker has the option of leaving the weapon in the wound, or to yank it free. Leaving the weapon in the wound inflicts a skill penalty; –10% per size category of the weapon (for example, –10% for small weapons such as arrows or daggers, –20% for medium weapons and so on). Successfully withdrawing an impaled weapon during melee costs a Combat Action and requires a successful Brawn roll. This causes further injury to the same location equal to the normal damage roll for that weapon but without any Damage Modifier. Armour does not reduce withdrawal damage. Whilst it remains impaled, the attacker cannot use his impaling weapon for parrying.

**Maximise damage (Critical Success Only)** – One of the weapon's dice automatically does maximum damage. For example a warsword, which normally does 1D8 damage, would instead be treated as an 8 whereas a greatsword with 2D8 damage would inflict 1D8+8 damage. This does not affect the Damage Modifier of the attacker, which must be rolled separately.

**Stun Location (Bludgeon Weapons, Attacker Only)** – Weapons such as maces, hammers and so on, can temporarily numb the location struck. The defender must roll an opposed test of his Resilience vs. the original attack roll. If the defender fails, then a limb is rendered useless, a torso blow causes the foe to stagger winded (may only defend), or a head shot renders the foe unconscious. The duration of incapacitation is equal, in Combat Actions, to the damage that penetrated the armour. If no damage penetrated, then the impact was insufficient to stun.

**Sunder (Two-handed Weapons, Attacker Only)** – Damages armour worn by the opponent. Apply the weapon damage (after reductions for parrying or magic) against the AP value of the armour. Any surplus damage in excess of the AP is then used to reduce the AP value of that armour location. If any damage remains after the armour has been reduced to zero AP, it carries over onto the Hit Points of the location struck. This effect may also be used on the natural armour of creatures, as the blow opens up a horrific gash in their hide, smashes chitin and so forth.

**Trip opponent (Attack and Defence)** – The opponent must roll an Opposed Test of Evade vs. the original attack roll (if the attacker won) or the original parry roll (if the defender won). If the opponent fails, he falls prone. Quadruped opponents may substitute their Athletics skill for Evade and gain a +20% bonus to their skill for this test.

### Defensive Combat Manoeuvres

**Blind Opponent (Critical Success Only)** – The defender somehow blinds his opponent. It could be kicked sand or dust, thrown clothes, sunlight glancing off the shield, or some other manoeuvre that manages to blur the attacker's vision. The Attacker makes an Opposed Test of his Evade skill (or Weapon style if using a shield) against the Defender's original Parry roll. If the attacker fails he cannot attack for 1D3 CA.

**Enhance parry** – The size of the parrying weapon is treated as one step larger for the sake of blocking damage.

**Overextend opponent** – Opponent cannot attack on his next Strike Rank.

**Pin Weapon (Critical Success Only)** – Prevents the opponent from using the pinned weapon or shield, until he spends a CA to wrestle or manoeuvre the weapon free. This requires an Opposed Test of combat skills, the winner of which can free their weapon, or continue the pin as desired. If the character with the pinned weapon desires, he may substitute Brawn for his combat skill. Whilst pinned, the item may not be used for attack or defence and the foe can only avoid an attack by using a weapon in his other hand, disengaging completely (using the Evade skill) or by switching combat style.

**Redirect blow** – The Defender redirects the attack so that it strikes him in a different location, as long as that location is within reach of the Attacker. The Defender cannot *avoid* the damage; he merely chooses *where* it will land.

**Regain Footing** – A prone or similarly disadvantaged Defender uses the momentum of the attack to roll back up to their feet, or grasps the Attacker's extended limb or weapon to pull himself upright.

**Riposte** – The Defender uses a CA to make an immediate counter attack with one of his defending weapons or shield.

**Take Weapon (Unarmed Only)** – As for 'Disarm Opponent' but only when using Unarmed skill. If successful, the Defender ends up with the Attacker's weapon in his own hands.

**Slip Free** – An *Entangled*, *Gripped* or *Pinned* character may break the hold on himself or his weapon.

**Stand Fast** – Skilful or braced footwork allows the defender to avoid the Knockback effects of any damage received.

### Combat Manoeuvres – Optional Rule

Each time that a specific tactic is repeated during a fight, the *opponent* gains an additional 10% bonus to his **next roll in the combat against the repetitive combatant** – be that an opposed roll to resist the manoeuvre, or their next attack or parry roll. This reflects the advantage gained by the opponent recognising and taking advantage of the increasingly predictable strategy. The bonus is cumulative and does not reset until the fight (against that particular opponent) ends, even if other tactics are interspersed during the combat.

## CLOSE COMBAT SITUATIONS

Various modifiers may be applied when using a weapon, or as the result of a Combat Manoeuvre, as shown on the Situational Modifiers table. These modifiers are applied to attacking, parrying and evading equally. The skill modifier applies directly to the skill in question and multiple modifiers stack.

### Close Combat Situational Modifiers

Situation	Skill Modifier
Target is helpless	Automatic Critical Hit
Target surprised	+20%
Target prone or attacked from behind	+20%
Attacking or defending while prone	-20%
Attacking or defending while on unstable ground	-20%
Attacking in a confined situation (for example, a right-handed swordsman hard up against a wall on his right side)	-10%
Defending while on lower ground or against mounted foe	-20%
Fighting in partial darkness	-20%
Fighting in darkness	-40%
Fighting while blind or in pitch black	-60%

The following tactics and circumstances also affect close combat. Each has its own guidelines to reflect the action being undertaken.

## Charging

Charging gains a number of benefits but is subject to a number of additional rules;



- \* During a charge a bipedal creature improves its Damage Modifier by one step. Quadruped creatures improve their Damage Modifier by two steps. For example, a charging horse with a Damage Modifier of +1D6 would improve its Damage Modifier to +1D10.
- \* The recipient of a charge has the choice of either standing firm to receive the charge, or attempting to evade the charge.
- \* Standing firm allows the recipient the opportunity to strike at the charging opponent but he will potentially suffer the brunt of the charge attack, usually resulting in serious damage and/or knockback. If the opponent is mounted they might also face a potential further attack from the mount or be trampled by it. Unlike normal initiative, whichever combatant has the longest reach attacks first (see *Weapon Reach*).
- \* Evading the charge permits the recipient to make an Opposed Test of his Evade skill verses the charging opponent's Ride or Athletics skill (as required). If the recipient wins he throws himself completely clear of the charging opponent (and the mount if they are riding one). If he loses he is instead caught at an inopportune moment and is treated as being defenceless. Using Evade prevents the recipient from making a counter attack.
- \* If the recipient possesses a long shafted impaling weapon (such as a two handed spear or polearm) he may set it against the charge and use the Damage Modifier of the charging opponent (or its mount if the opponent is riding) instead of his own.
- \* Any charge made against a static *formation* of defenders, which does not inflict Knockback on the target, staggers the charging creature into immobility. The charger can also be stopped if one of its legs is incapacitated (assuming it does not have six or more legs!).
- \* Unless the charging creature willingly stops or is forcibly stopped dead, the charge only allows a single Combat Action for the Attacker, their mount (if combat capable) and the Defender during that round, because the speed of the charging creature carries it clear of the engagement zone. The recipient of a charge may not make a further 'Free' Attack as the charger continues past and away, since charging is different from disengaging.

Treat Flyby Attacks the same as Charging.

## Cover

If a target is in cover or partially covered by an object (such as a wall, door or fence), any attack that hits a covered location will instead hit the object. See Inanimate Objects on page 62. Cover affects both ranged and close combat attacks.

The normal way of negating cover is to use the Choose Location Combat Manoeuvre to aim at the visible parts of the target – or to strike through the cover if the weapon is capable of penetrating it.

If the cover is total but the attacker knows his attack will penetrate the cover, he cannot use Choose Location to target a specific location and must rely on randomly determining a location (using 1D20)



as per normal. In addition, the attacker suffers a -40% penalty to his attack. Note that this only applies where the Attacker:

- \* Is 100% certain that the target is behind the cover.
- \* The cover is not so extensive as to permit the target to move freely behind it.

Thus, a target lurking behind a bush can still be attacked, even though the attacker might not be able to see his quarry. However a target behind a lengthy hedgerow is completely obscured and the attack will automatically fail.

## Evading

Some attacks such as missile fire, destructive spells, charging creatures or even dragon's breath, can be very difficult to avoid. In these circumstances all a character can do is hurl himself to the ground, or dive behind cover to escape the effects.

Evasion attempts are always treated as Opposed Tests, pitting the relevant attack skill against the Evade skill of the Defender. If the Attacker wins then inflict damage as normal. If the Defender wins damage is completely avoided. Whatever the result, the evasive gambit momentarily places the Defender at a disadvantage as he regains his balance, preventing him from performing an attack with the CA available on their next Strike Rank.

If the winner of the Opposed Test achieves one or more levels of success over his opponent, the result of the roll may be modified by applicable *Combat Manoeuvres* as per normal combat.



Some circumstances prevent a character from evading:

- \* The character is helpless or prone.
- \* There is nowhere to evade to (balancing on a rope above a lake of lava, for example).
- \* A mounted character may evade only by rolling out of the saddle, automatically dismounting.

If an Adventurer is facing a close combat attack against which he has no applicable defence – either because his weapon has been broken, dropped or because the attacking weapon is simply too big to successfully parry – then he may choose to defend himself by using Evade. However, using Evade as a melee defence involves giving ground or leaping aside, placing the Defender at a disadvantage.

## Knockback

Any attack which causes more damage than the SIZ of the recipient automatically results in a knockback. The recipient must immediately make an Athletics roll to avoid falling prone from the force of the blow. He is also shoved one metre for each five points of damage (or fraction thereof) exceeding the target's SIZ. This calculation uses the original damage roll before subtractions due to parrying and armour.

Note that Knockback is different than the *Bash* Combat Manoeuvre. A Bash is a deliberate tactic based on timing and technique, whereas a Knockback is the accidental side effect of awesomely powerful blows. The former is not directly affected by SIZ, whereas the latter is.

## Leaping Attacks

Some creatures leap upon their targets in order to knock them prone. A leaping attack requires a Combat Action to initiate, using an Opposed Test of the creature's Athletics skill against the Defender's Evade skill. If the leaper wins the test then the Defender is knocked prone and cannot recover his feet for the next 1D3 Combat Actions. Otherwise he suffers no other damage. If the Defender is a quadruped, then it may substitute Athletics for Evade and gain a +20% bonus to roll to avoid falling over.

A leaping attack only affects targets less than twice the SIZ of the Attacker.

## Mounted Combat

Whilst mounted, the combat skills of a warrior cannot exceed the value of the Ride skill. However, the warrior gains the following benefits;

- \* A mounted warrior rolls a 1D10+10 for Hit Location if using a small or medium weapon.
- \* Using a CA the rider may substitute either his own Combat Style or Ride skill instead of his mount's, to defend the mount against attacks.

- \* The warrior may add the SIZ of his mount to his own for the purposes of avoiding Knockback, as long as he can make a successful unopposed Ride skill roll.
- \* He can use the Damage Modifier of his mount *instead of his own* when charging with a braced weapon. A weapon *braced* for a charging attack cannot be used for defence until the charge has been completed. Weapons which impale during a charge remain in the body of their target and will be lost if the mount continues past (see Charging page 89).

## Multiple Opponents

No penalties are suffered if facing multiple opponents. The inherent disadvantage occurs simply in the fact that the combatant will become swamped by his enemies and run out of Combat Actions for parrying before his attackers run out of attacks. An attack against an opponent who cannot parry treats the Defender, by *default*, as having automatically failed their roll.

If outnumbered in an environment where movement is still possible (not pinned against a wall or forced into a corner, for example), a Defender may expend a Combat Action to outmanoeuvre his foes for the *remainder of that round*. The attackers participate in a single (group) Opposed roll matching their Evade skill against the Evade skill of the Defender. Those who fail to beat the Defender cannot attack that round, as they become blocked by the position of their allies. Those opponents who win against the Defender may freely attack as per normal. Unless the Defender wishes to disengage entirely and run away, the number of opponents cannot be reduced to less than one.

*An example of how this works in practice would be a swashbuckler using the tables, chairs, stairs and chandeliers in a tavern to block his multiple foes, whilst he whittles them away one by one.*

### Multiple Opponents – Optional Rule

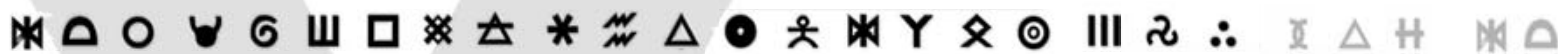
Constant manoeuvring in combat is extremely exhausting. At the end of each round it occurs, the Defender must make an Opposed roll of Athletics versus the **best** Athletics skill of the attackers. If failed, the Defender gains a new level of fatigue. Eventually even the greatest fighters can be worn down.

## Pulled Blows

Sometimes an Adventurer wants to hurt or incapacitate, but not maim or kill, his opponent. By using Pulled Blows, which also includes using the flat of a blade, as well as limiting the force applied, the Adventurer can deliberately halve the damage inflicted for a successful hit. The Adventurer must declare that he is pulling a blow before making the attack; otherwise the damage is applied as per a normal attack.

## Surprise

Surprise is gained when one side in a combat manages to launch an attack without the other side being aware of the intention and



is thus unprepared for it. A carefully staged ambush is the most common situation for surprise to occur but there will be other circumstances.

A surprised character is one who:

- \* Has completely failed to notice an impending attack through a Perception roll.
- \* Is attacked when completely unprepared (asleep, perhaps, or absorbed with another activity). In these circumstances modifiers to combat rolls reflecting the surprised character's status (a -20% penalty for a freshly awoken and groggy character, for example) may apply.

The effects of surprise are as follows:

- \* The surprised party suffers an immediate -10 to his Initiative for this round of combat. For the following round Initiative is determined as normal.
- \* The surprised party is only able to use CA to defend against attacks (not make them), including Evading, for this round, and can only use CA in response to attacks made after his own Strike Rank.

## Unarmed Combat

Characters or creatures who can reach an opponent with their natural weapons may use their Unarmed skill interchangeably with any other weapon style they may be using.

Users who succeed in an opposed unarmed attack may either: inflict damage, establish a grapple, or break free. Grappling can only occur if the appendage being used is empty and capable of gripping. The effects of a grapple depend on the location held. Grappling a limb prevents that limb being used to attack, defend or move. Grappling the head or torso inflicts a -20% penalty to all activity attempted by the victim. Combatants with a poor unarmed combat skill may instead substitute their Brawn skill to maintain or break free of grapples.

Once the grapple is established it continues automatically until the grappler lets go or the opponent breaks free. Whilst the hold is maintained, on his Strike Rank the grappler may make unarmed attacks to inflict damage on the location held, by gauging, twisting, crushing or strangulating the location. The Defender may oppose with his Unarmed or Brawn skill in order to reduce or block the damage.

## Unusual Combat Conditions

Whilst climbing an Adventurer's combat skill cannot exceed the value of his Athletics skill. Bipedal characters may only use a single limb to attack or defend, requiring the others to cling to the surface they are scaling.

Whilst swimming an Adventurer's combat skill cannot exceed the value of his Swimming skill. Only thrusting weapons capable of impaling can be used successfully when immersed in water and those will only inflict half damage. All other weapons are impotent. Natural attacks which involve ramming, biting or strangulation are unaffected.

## Weapon Reach – Closing and Disengaging

Weapon Reach, Closing and Disengaging are optional rules for those desiring more realistic combat. Roughly speaking, a weapon has a reach equivalent to its size. In circumstances where the size of combatants' weapons are different in length by two or more steps, then the wielder with the shorter reach *cannot directly attack the opponent with the longer reach*. They are, quite simply, out of range.

The threat of longer reach is one of the advantages granted by two handed weapons, offsetting some of the benefits lost by not using a shield. The only method of overcoming this situation is if the wielder with the shorter reach closes on their opponent.

Although a combatant may be out of range, unable to hit their opponent, they can reverse the situation by the use of combat manoeuvres... such as endeavouring to disarm or damage the opponent's weapon; or by changing the engagement distance.

In the case of huge monsters using unarmed combat, the appendage being used to strike with can be targeted directly and in this case there are no hindrances to counter attack it.

### Closing

A character whose reach is two sizes less than their opponent, needs to actively close into close combat range, otherwise remain unable to strike at them. Closing on an opponent requires a Combat Action (if not taking advantage of a combat manoeuvre) and requires the opponent to decide whether he wishes to counter the closing action, or whether to strike at the closer instead. Either option uses a Combat Action.

If the opponent decides to counter the closing action, then the closer and the opponent make an Opposed Test using their Evade skills. The winner either closes or maintains distance as desired.

However, if the opponent decides to use the closing action to take an attack instead, then the opponent resists the Evade Opposed Test with his combat skill. Whether or not he is hit, the closer succeeds in reaching close combat distance.

Once within the reach of the opponent's weapon, the advantage switches to the wielder of the shorter weapon. The opponent now cannot parry until he reopens the distance.

### Disengaging

Characters that have been closed upon by opponents with a shorter reach are at a serious tactical disadvantage. Their only

escape is to disengage from combat and in so doing, restore the original range between them. This works in exactly the same manner as Closing. To disengage requires a Combat Action (again, if not taking advantage of a Combat Manoeuvre) and the opponent must decide whether he wants to remain in close combat distance, or whether to take an attack at the disengaging combatant instead. Either option also requires a Combat Action to use.

If the opponent decides to remain in close combat, then the disengaging combatant and the opponent make an Opposed Test using their Evade skills. The winner of the contest either retreats or maintains distance as desired. However, if the opponent decides to use the disengaging action to take a free attack instead, he resists the Evade Opposed Test with his combat skill. Whether or not the blow lands, the disengagement succeeds and the advantage returns to the combatant with the longer reach.

## RANGED ATTACKS

Ranged weapons include bows, slings and thrown melee weapons such as spears and daggers. Just as with close combat, ranged combat participants use the skill or style associated with their ranged weapon to attempt a successful attack – as long as they are within range of the target.

Ranged attacks can usually only be parried by shields: Defenders lacking a shield have the option to dive for cover using Evade (see page 37). What this means is that, unless an opponent can take evasive action or parry, an Attacker using a ranged weapon has an immediate advantage because attacks that are undefended automatically gain the Attacker an appropriate Combat Manoeuvre. This is a deliberate design mechanic highlighting the potential lethality of ranged weapons in the hands of a competent warrior.

Certain specific notes concerning ranged attacks are as follows:

### Aiming

By increasing the amount of time spent in aiming a missile weapon, an Adventurer can increase his chance to hit. For every Combat Action that an Adventurer spends aiming, he gains a bonus to his Ranged Weapon skill equal to his critical range (10%) in that skill. For example, Edric has 3 CA and has Sling 46%. By aiming for two CA he would gain an additional +10% bonus, taking his chance to hit to 56%.

### Loading Ranged Weapons

When a ranged weapon is readied, it is either in hand (for throwing weapons) or loaded (for bows and other projectile weapons). While readying most ranged weapons takes only a single Combat Action, others may take more. The number of Combat Actions it takes to load a ranged weapon is listed in its statistical entry in the Ranged Weapons table, page 73.

## Ranged Attack Situational Modifiers

Situation	Skill Modifier
<i>Wind<sup>1</sup></i>	
Strong wind	-10%
High wind	-20%
Fierce wind	-40%
Hurricane	Attack automatically fails
<i>Target Movement<sup>1</sup></i>	
Target has moved 10m or more since attacker's last Combat Action	-10%
Target has moved 30m or more since attacker's last Combat Action	-20%
<i>Target Visibility<sup>1</sup></i>	
Target obscured by smoke, mist or is in partial darkness	-20%
Target obscured by thick smoke, fog or is in darkness	-40%
<i>Target Size<sup>1</sup></i>	
Per 1 SIZ target is under SIZ 5	-10%
Per 10 SIZ target is above SIZ 20	+10%
<i>Target Condition<sup>1</sup></i>	
Target is helpless	+10%
Target is completely obscured	Automatic Failure
Target prone	-20%
<i>Attacker Condition</i>	
Attacker is prone	-20%
Attacker is underwater	-40%
Attacker is on unstable ground	-20%
Attacker is blinded	Automatic failure

<sup>1</sup> Modifiers within these sections are not cumulative. However, modifiers from different sections are cumulative. Therefore, shooting at a target within a mist that has moved more than 10m since the Attacker's last Combat Action imparts a -30% penalty.

<sup>2</sup> Attacker condition modifiers are cumulative.

## Damage Modifier

If a character's Damage Modifier can be applied to the damage of a ranged weapon, this is stipulated in that weapon's entry on the Ranged Weapons table in the Equipment chapter.

## Firing into a Crowd

When firing a ranged weapon into a crowd, close combat or any group where the target is adjacent to one or more other potential targets, there is always a chance the Attacker will hit someone other than the target he was aiming at.

When firing into a crowd, the Games Master should determine which locations of the target have cover from the ranged attack. The ranged attack is then resolved as normal for a target behind cover.



## Humanoid Hit Locations

1D20	Hit Location
1-3	Right Leg
4-6	Left Leg
7-9	Abdomen
10-12	Chest
13-15	Right Arm
16-18	Left Arm
19-20	Head

Some unusual creatures have slightly different Hit Location tables to reflect their own unique physiology. Such creatures have their modified Hit Location tables listed with their description.

If the damage inflicted by the attack is above zero, then the Hit Location sustains that amount of damage, with the damage total being immediately removed from the location's Hit Points. Note how many Hit Points the location has remaining and the wound category that results.

Use the following rules if a location receives a Serious or Major wound. Note that wounds requiring Resilience checks must test them in an Opposed Test against the value of the original attack roll. This reflects the ability of highly skilled warriors to make more deadly strikes. Resilience rolls are not repeated unless the location is wounded again.

### Minor Wound (Hit Location has positive Hit Points)

Minor wounds are cuts, scratches, bruises and contusions. They hurt, they may bleed but are not significant enough to slow down or hamper the victim.

### Serious Wound (Hit Location is Zero Hit Points or Below)

If a location is reduced to zero Hit Points or below, the victim receives a Serious Wound. The location is permanently scarred and the victim cannot attack (but can still parry or evade) for the next 1D3 Combat Actions due to being stunned or distracted by the pain of the wound.

A character suffering a Serious Wound to a limb must immediately make an Opposed Test of his Resilience versus the successful attack roll of his enemy. Failure results in the limb being rendered useless, until the location is restored to positive Hit Points. If a leg, the victim drops prone. If an arm, he drops whatever he is holding unless the object is strapped on (use common sense here).

A character suffering a Serious Wound to the Abdomen, Chest or Head must immediately make an Opposed Test of his Resilience versus the successful attack roll of his enemy. Failure results in unconsciousness for a number of minutes equal to the amount of damage sustained in the attack causing the Serious Wound. First Aid or Healing skills can be used to help an unconscious victim regain consciousness but he will

not be able to rejoin any combat until he has received further healing to the Seriously Wounded location.

### Major Wound (Hit Location has lost twice its starting Hit Points)

If a location is reduced to a negative score equal or greater than its starting Hit Points, the character receives a Major Wound. The location is permanently maimed and the character is immediately incapacitated, unable to continue fighting.

A limb is considered to be severed, transfixed, shattered or ripped off by a Major Wound. The character drops prone, physically incapacitated and must immediately make an Opposed Test of Resilience versus the successful attack roll of his enemy. Failure results in unconsciousness from the agony. If a severed, punctured or ripped-off location is not treated within a number of *minutes* equal to the character's CON+POW, the character dies from blood loss and shock.

The victim of a Major Wound to the Abdomen, Chest or Head drops unconscious, totally incapacitated and must immediately make an Opposed Test of Resilience versus the successful attack roll of his enemy. Failure results in an instant and gratuitous death (decapitated, chopped in half, impaled through the heart, torn apart and so forth). If he survives and the location is not treated within a number of *rounds* equal to half the character's CON+POW, he still dies from blood loss and shock.

Since most Major Wounds require some form of surgery or major magic to heal, the sufferer will be very unlikely to recover from a major wound in time to rejoin combat.

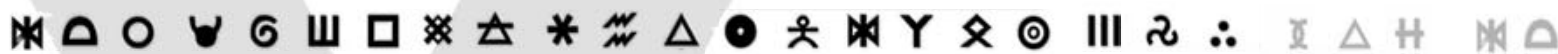
#### HEROIC LAST ACTIONS

In special cases where key characters receive a Major Wound, the Games Master might allow a heroic last action – such as spitting out one last spell, attempting to cut down their slayer, crawling away to hide, or trying to tourniquet their own wound. They must have working limbs applicable to the action and burn a Hero Point. They get a single opportunity to attempt their desire and then immediately collapse into unconsciousness and probable death.

## OPTIONAL COMBAT RULES FOR NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

One of the most time consuming elements of handling Non-Player Characters (NPCs), such as monsters, enemies and so on is keeping track of locational Hit Points during a fight, especially where several NPCs are involved. This can become confusing and often slows-down a game considerably. *RuneQuest* offers several optional ways of dealing with this issue.





## General Hit Points

First, reserve locational Hit Points for major villains and enemies. For all other foes, use General Hit Points instead. General Hit Points are calculated on the average of the CON and SIZ Characteristics, rather than on their sum. So, a foe with CON 12 and SIZ 16 would have 14 Hit Points (12+16, divided by 2).

- \* Every NPC has a 'Critical Wound' rating equal to half the General Hit Points (rounded up). Thus, in our example, a foe with 14 HP has a Critical Wound rating of 7.
- \* Weapon damage is removed directly from the Hit Point total. When Hit Points reach zero, the NPC must make a Resilience test to remain conscious. If the test is successful a Resilience test must be made every combat round until Hit Points are brought up to 1 or more. If the NPC loses consciousness, death results within a number of Combat Actions equal to the Critical Wound value, unless Hit Points are brought up to 1 HP or more.
- \* If General Hit Points are reduced to a negative amount equal to the Critical Wound rating or more death is instantaneous. In our example, if the foe sustains 14 or more points of damage, he dies automatically.
- \* If the NPC suffers a *single* wound that exceeds his Critical Wound rating in one blow, the Games Master may make a roll on the Critical Wound table to determine what additional effects are suffered. The armour value being worn is *subtracted* from the D20 roll.
- \* If the blow inflicted by the Adventurer is a Critical Hit, **add** the damage to the 1D20 roll.
- \* In addition to the effects detailed in the Critical Wound table, the target **always** receives an impressive-looking scar as a permanent reminder of the experience.

*Example: Edric is battling a broo. The broo has 12 General Hits Points and wears 3 points of armour. On the first blow Edric hits*

*and inflicts 7 points of damage (after armour has been taken into account), which exceeds the broo's Critical Wound level of 6. The Games Master rolls 1D20 and scores 13. This is reduced to 10, taking into account the broo's armour. The broo is dazed (losing its next Combat Action) and needs to make a Resilience test (which it does) to avoid unconsciousness.*

*On the next blow Edric again scores a hit, delivering a further 5 points of damage. The broo is now reduced to zero Hit Points. Since it has been reduced to zero Hit Points it must make another Resilience roll or fall unconscious. This time it fails and Edric spends his next action to give it a coup-de-grace.*

## Underlings

Underlings are competent but inconsequential foes usually sent en masse to harass Adventurers. A simple way to handle fights involving lots of underlings is to radically adjust Hit Points to lend the advantage to the characters. Whilst they still have combat abilities and can dispense damage as easily as anyone else (and indeed, they should certainly try), they are there to be sword-fodder for the heroes of the story. If you choose the Underlings option:

- \* Underlings have a number of Hit Points equal to their CON divided by 2. Damage is sustained as normal, with armour protecting but when Hit Points reach zero, the Underling is dead.
- \* A Critical hit inflicted by an Adventurer always incapacitates an Underling, rendering it unconscious. No Resilience roll is necessary.
- \* If half the Underlings' number is incapacitated, the rest flee.

Use this option only when the characters are facing a ravaging horde of relatively inconsequential adversaries which are, to all intents and purposes, completely expendable. Competent NPCs and major villains should be treated differently.

## NPC Critical Wound Table

1D20	Critical Wound Category	Game Effects
01-02	<b>Dazed</b>	Target cannot attack for 1D3 Combat Actions.
03-04		Target knocked back 1 metre and <b>Dazed</b> .
05-06		Target knocked prone and <b>Dazed</b> .
07		Target <b>Dazed</b> and must make a Resilience test to avoid being knocked unconscious.
08-09	<b>Stunned</b>	Target forfeits 1D3 Combat Actions.
10-11		Target knocked back 1 metre and <b>Stunned</b> .
12-13		Target knocked down and <b>Stunned</b> .
14		Target <b>Stunned</b> and must make a Resilience test to avoid being knocked unconscious.
15	<b>Arm Disabled</b>	Target's arm is disabled (broken or paralysed). Target is <b>Dazed</b> and anything held by that arm is dropped.
16	<b>Leg Disabled</b>	Target's leg is disabled (broken or paralysed). Target is <b>Dazed</b> and falls prone.
17	<b>Abdominal Injury</b>	Target <b>Stunned</b> . Must make a Resilience test to avoid death and spilling intestines over the floor.
18	<b>Chest Injury</b>	Target <b>Stunned</b> . Must make a Resilience test to avoid death and coughing up gouts of blood.
19	<b>Head Injury</b>	Target <b>Stunned</b> . Must make a Resilience test to avoid death from a slashed throat, thrust through eye, and so forth.
20	<b>Fatal Injury</b>	A vital location is struck (heart, throat, brain, and so on) and target dies instantly!



## Edric's Saga – The Trollkin Fight

This part of Edric's Saga continues the description of the battle with the three trollkin, picking-up after Initiative and Combat Actions have been determined. The example uses the full combat rules and does not use the Optional Combat Rules from page 95.

Our heroes are facing three angry trollkin.

Edric is armed with a short spear (1D8+1 damage, Size Medium, Reach Long, 4 AP and 5 HP) and a heater shield (1D4 damage, Size Large). His combat style is Spear and Shield at 80%. As Edric uses a shield he gains an additional CA, bringing his CA total to 4.

Lilina is armed with a long sword (1D8 damage, used one-handed, Size Medium, Reach Long, 6 AP and 12 HP) and a heater (1D4 damage, Size Large). Her combat style is Sword and Shield at 64%. As she uses a shield she gains a CA, bringing her total to 3.

Thrace is armed with a long spear (1D10+1 damage, used one-handed, Size Large, Reach Very Long, 4 AP and 10 HP). His combat style is Spear 58%. As he uses only one weapon, he gains no additional CA so his CA total remains at 2.

The trollkin are armed with short swords (1D6 damage, Size Medium, Reach Short, 6 AP and 8 HP) and bucklers (1D3 damage, Size Medium). They all have the same combat style of Sword and Shield at 50% and gain a CA for this style, bringing their CA total to 3.

Having determined the order of Initiative, by Strike Rank, and knowing how many Combat Actions each participant in the fight has, the first round of combat begins.

The Games Master asks each Adventurer, in Strike Rank order, what they intend to do in this first round of combat. Lilina says she will attack the closest of the three trollkin with her sword, defending with her shield. Edric says he will attack the larger of the trollkin, attacking with his spear and defending with his shield. The Games Master states that the three trollkin are prepared for a fight and are closing for the attack. Two trollkin have singled-out Edric, as the largest of the humans and one is advancing on Lilina. Thrace says he is intending to try to circle around the group of trollkin to try and take the pair attacking Edric by surprise.

### First Combat Round

Lilina acts first on Strike Rank 20 and rolls for her Sword and Shield, scoring 55 – a successful hit. This costs her one of her 3 CA. The trollkin attempts a parry, rolling 12 – a successful parry. There is no difference in the success levels, so neither gains a combat manoeuvre; however, Lilina can roll damage, scoring 7 with her 1D8 longsword damage. Her sword is Medium Size and the trollkin's buckler is the same: he counters all Lilina's damage with his shield and has spent one of his CA doing so. The action now passes to Edric on Strike Rank 19.

Edric faces two of the trollkin and singles out the meaner-looking of the two for a lunge with his spear, rolling 94 – a miss. This costs him one CA. The trollkin was attempting to parry with its buckler and scores 19 – a successful parry. The trollkin has one level of success better than Edric (a successful defence against a failed attack) and so gains a combat manoeuvre chosen from the Defensive options. The trollkin chooses 'Trip Opponent'. Edric is caught by surprise by the trollkin's sudden sidestep and must roll against his Evade skill against the trollkin's original parry of 19 to avoid losing balance. With a 46 Edric succeeds and easily wins the Opposed Test, thankfully remaining upright. The action now passes to the three trollkin on Strike Rank 14.

The trollkin facing Lilina has two CA remaining to use this round and makes an attack with its short sword, rolling 39 – a success. Lilina has already said that she is parrying and uses a CA to do so, rolling 69 – a failure. The trollkin has thus achieved one level of success over Lilina and can both inflict damage and select a combat manoeuvre. The manoeuvre must be chosen before damage is rolled and it opts for Impale. This manoeuvre lets the trollkin roll damage twice, taking the best result: it rolls 5 and a 4, so the trollkin retains the first roll. He thrusts his sword into Lilina's right arm (a roll of 13 on 1D20). Lilina's armour on this location is leather, offering only 1 AP of protection. She therefore takes 4 points of damage to her right arm and, as she only has 3 HP in this location, sustains a Serious Wound (her right arm HP are now -1) and cannot attack for the next 1D3 Combat Actions. However, the Impale result for the trollkin allows it to either leave its sword embedded in her arm or withdraw it, causing further damage, if the trollkin can succeed in a Brawn roll. This costs it another CA, meaning that it has used all three of its CA for this round but the Brawn roll is

a success. The trollkin inflicts a further 1D6 damage, with the lucky result of 1, taking Lilina's right arm down to -2 HP. Her wound level remains at Serious for that location and she must make an Opposed Test of her Resilience against the trollkin's successful attack roll. Her Resilience is 45% and she rolls 53, failing. Her arm is badly injured and drops her long sword from pain, her arm rendered useless until healed.

The action now passes to the two trollkin tackling Edric. The meanest looking trollkin has two CA remaining, having parried Edric's spear lunge and the other has three CA. Edric has three CA left this round and will defend against both his foes.

The mean looking trollkin slashes with its short sword scoring 53, a miss. Edric is parrying and so still rolls. His roll is 03, a critical success, and he gains two defensive manoeuvres. He chooses Pin Weapon, slamming his shield onto the trollkin's sword blade and wedging it against the ground. The mean trollkin needs to spend a CA to free its weapon but must wait until his Strike Rank comes round again. Until freed, the mean trollkin cannot attack with its pinned sword. Edric also chooses Blind Opponent, which forces the trollkin to try to successfully beat Edric's critical parrying roll of 03 with an opposed Evade roll. The trollkin miraculously rolls 04: a critical and a higher critical than Edric's parry roll. Edric's Blind Opponent attempt fails.

The second of the two facing Edric also lashes out with its short sword. Edric spends his third CA to parry and fails but fortunately the trollkin rolls 00 – a fumble! As neither succeeded in their rolls, Edric does not get a defensive manoeuvre – but since the trollkin has fumbled, it must roll on the Close Combat Fumble table. The 1D20 result is 4 – the trollkin's sword slips from its grasp and lands a metre distant. Although it cannot attack with the sword until it is recovered, it can still use its buckler to hit him instead, if it wishes.

The initiative moves now to Strike Rank 11 and Thrace, who is yet to act. Thrace asks the Games Master if he has seen what is happening with Lilina and can he do anything about it? The Games Master rules that, as Thrace has not done anything yet and because Lilina is quite close, Thrace can act against the trollkin that has injured her. He thus makes an attack against it.

The trollkin has spent all its CA for this round and so cannot parry Thrace's attack. The Games Master also rules that Thrace is coming at the trollkin from the side and awards Thrace a +20% bonus for flanking. Thrace now rolls against an adjusted skill of 78% and scores 06 – a critical success! With the trollkin's automatic failure to defend, Thrace has two levels of success, resulting in two combat manoeuvres. And, with a critical roll, Thrace can select from those manoeuvres that can only be made on a critical success. Thrace chooses Bypass Armour and Maximise Damage. The first manoeuvre means that the trollkin's scraps of armour, wherever they might be, will not protect it. Maximise Damage ensures Thrace's long spear will inflict its full 11 points of damage, in addition Thrace also adds his +1D2 Damage Modifier, which he must roll, for a total of 13 damage. The Hit Location he rolls is 11 – Chest. Thrace drives his spear straight between the trollkin's ribs: the amount of damage results in a Major Wound which, for the chest, means the trollkin must match its Resilience of 38% against Thrace's attack score of 06. To survive, the trollkin must roll a critical success on its Resilience and gain a higher roll than 06. As this is plainly impossible to do with a 38% Resilience, the trollkin screams as Thrace plunges the spear into its heart and dies instantly.

The action has now cycled through each participant in Strike Rank order. The Games Master quickly notes CA remaining for each combatant:

Lilina – 3 CA but has spent two and cannot attack on her next Strike Rank due to her wounded arm. She has one CA remaining in this Combat Round.

Edric – 4 CA and has used three: one attack and two parries.

Trollin – the one who attacked Lilina is dead. The mean-looking one has its sword pinned to the ground by Edric's shield but has one CA remaining. The other trollkin who dropped its sword has two CA remaining.

Thrace – has one CA remaining and has saved Lilina in spectacular fashion.

Edric can now act with his fourth CA. With one trollkin pinned and the second weaponless, Edric thrusts his spear at the mean trollkin. The trollkin can only parry with its buckler and uses its last CA to defend itself. Edric rolls 24, a success, and the trollkin fails to parry. Edric receives one combat manoeuvre and chooses Impale. He thrusts his spear into the trollkin's abdomen (9 on 1D20). Of the two rolls for damage – 3 on the first and 8 on the second, he naturally chooses the 8 result. His Damage Modifier of +1D2 takes the overall damage to 10 points. With only 2 AP protecting

its stomach and 5HP in that location, the trollkin is reduced to -3 HP: a Serious Wound. This forces the trollkin to immediately make an Opposed Test of its Resilience versus Edric's successful attack roll of 24. The trollkin's Resilience is 38% but it fails with a 69, falling unconscious from the shock and pain. The mean trollkin is out of the fight.

However the trollkin that lost its sword bears down on Edric and prepares to make an Unarmed Attack. Edric's spear is still rammed into the mean trollkin's chest up to its crossbar, but since he has no CA remaining he cannot parry anyway. The trollkin's Unarmed is 33% and its scores 09 – a success. Edric is treated as automatically failing. The trollkin selects Disarm Opponent as his offensive manoeuvre and Edric makes an Opposed Test of his weapon skill against the trollkin's original attack of 09. He rolls 98% and is shocked when his shield is ripped out of his grasp, incidentally taking 2 HP damage to his shield arm from the trollkin's claws!

Action moves back to Thrace and his final CA for the round. He sees that Edric has his spear jammed into a possibly dead trollkin whilst being battered by another. He also has enough room to Charge – and declares this as his CA. The Games Master says that Thrace will connect with the final trollkin on his next CA, which will be in the next round of combat.

### Second Combat Round

Usually initiative is maintained for a fresh round, but given that two trollkin are down, and Lilina hurt, the Games Master calls for new Initiative rolls. The outcome is:

Edric 20            Trollkin 18            Thrace 17            Lilina 16

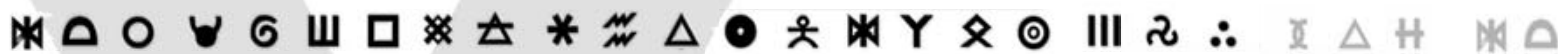
Thus, Edric acts first.

With a trollkin bearing down on him and his spear still stuck, Edric decides to cast his Dragon Breath spell instead of attacking with a weapon. This Common Magic spell only takes 1 CA to cast and so takes effect, if successful, on this CA. Edric rolls against his Common Magic of 64% and scores 28 – a success. Edric's chest swells and he exudes a burst of flame at the trollkin bearing over him. The trollkin unwittingly tries to parry this magical fire with its buckler, immediately failing and thus grants Edric a combat manoeuvre: he chooses Choose Location and directs the burst of fire straight into the trollkin's face. Dragon Breath inflicts 1D10 damage and the result is 3. The trollkin is wearing a leather helm which protects for 1 AP, so it sustains only 2 points of damage. It has 4 HP in the head and is thus reduced to 2 – there is the sickly stench of burning skin but the damage is not enough to put the trollkin down. Edric has also just used two Magic Points for the spell.

Now the trollkin can act. Angered by the burst of fire it lashes out with its buckler and lands Edric a critical blow on a roll of 02. Lacking any shield Edric attempts to parry with his Unarmed combat skill but rolls 85 – a failure. The trollkin has two levels of success now and chooses Maximise Damage and Bash Opponent. It inflicts 3 points of damage and hits Edric in the abdomen; the force of the blow, with Bash Opponent, means that Edric is knocked backwards by a metre; Edric staggers backwards and as his spear is still lodged in the mean trollkin, the Games Master rules that he has been forced to release his grip on it, unless he wants to spend a CA now in making a successful Athletics roll to keep hold. Edric decides to take the consequences and is sent reeling under the force of the blow. The damage is not enough to seriously hurt him since he has 6 HP in his abdomen; but he will have a nasty bruise.

It is now Thrace's turn and he is charging. With a blood curdling scream Thrace runs at the trollkin, spear levelled. The trollkin knowing its buckler cannot stop all the damage from a long spear, uses his last CA in an attempt to dive clear using its Evade of 35%. Thrace rolls 13 – a successful Long Spear check and the troll rolls 49, failing to avoid the attack. Thrace slams into the trollkin and gains a combat manoeuvre too. He chooses Choose Location, opting for the head. Because he is charging, Thrace's Damage Modifier increases by one step from +1D2 to +1D4: his total damage is 6 points for the spear and 3 points for the Damage Modifier. The troll takes 9 points of total damage to its head, its IAP helmet reducing it to 8. Already damaged in the head from Edric's spell, this is a Major Wound for the trollkin and it must make a Resilience roll, opposed by Thrace's 13 attack, to remain conscious: it rolls 55 and expires with the spear rammed into one eye.

All three trollkin are either dead or incapacitated. Lilina's arm is bleeding badly and Edric is standing shieldless and weaponless, sore from the punch to the guts but Thrace's fast thinking and skill with his spear have saved the day. Thrace grins as he cleans his spear tip on the trollkin's rags and names his spear 'Troll Smiter' – The Games Master likes the touch and awards Thrace a Hero Point for his actions. Edric goes over to the injured Lilina and prepares to heal her wounded arm...



## CHAPTER 6:

# MAGIC AND RUNES

Magic is inherent to *RuneQuest*. Access to it is not restricted by culture or profession and, in many cases, magic is a commonplace element used by most people to aid their daily lives. In Glorantha, for example, most Adventurers begin with some common magic, taught to them along with all the other mundane skills of their society. In other settings magic may be less common but still apparent: it remains, however, as fundamental as the physical laws of the planet or plane of existence.

*RuneQuest* supports four distinct types of magic and these receive their own chapters detailing what the magic is, what it does and how it works. This chapter, however, serves as an introduction to magic, preparing the ground for the chapter on each magical type, and explaining the ethos behind magic, runes and other sources of power from the *RuneQuest* perspective.

## THE PURSUIT OF MAGIC

Even though the magical types work very differently and are, to a large extent, mutually exclusive, there is nothing to prevent Adventurers from learning and developing more than one magical style. An Adventurer may therefore freely learn Common Magic, dedicate himself to a god to gain Divine Magic and even learn a smattering of Sorcery. Sorcerers will more than likely have a good understanding of Common Magic but may also pray to their gods to gain a few Divine Spells. A shaman from a primitive culture will follow the spirits and harness their power but can still devote himself to the great animal gods and gain divine power from them also.

In reality Adventurers who desire great magical power will choose one form to pursue above the others and many societies or cults consider some magical styles to be taboo – but these are cultural limitations rather than a limitation of the rules. In reality any Adventurer can pursue any magical style and develop several style simultaneously, if they so wish.

## TYPES OF MAGIC

The four magical types are:

### Common Magic

Spells and cantrips which are ubiquitous to many cultures and societies. Common Magic manipulates the natural order with varying degrees of subtlety and offers a host of effects that ease daily life or augment specific endeavours, such as combat and skill use. The range of Common Magic spells an Adventurer might know may be based on how his culture has shaped and prepared its own use of magic, with some spells being more common, or accepted, than others. However the nature and effects of Common Magic are visible to all, understood by most and recognisable from one culture to another.

Although the name – Common Magic – denotes it as being rather banal, Common Magic spells can still be very powerful, if used carefully and thoughtfully. Sorcerers, Shaman or Rune Priests might sneer at Common Magic's limitations but only the most foolish of them would ignore or denigrate Common Magic's utility and capabilities.

### Divine Magic

Divine Magic stems from the gods. It reflects their natures, ways, spheres of influence, desires, needs, successes, failures and mythic standing. Gaining access to Divine Magic requires a dedication of faith and the willingness to enter into a personal relationship with the deity worshipped. In return for this devotion the worshipper channels aspects of the god's power and abilities. With greater devotion come greater levels of power: the more the relationship deepens the more like the god the worshipper becomes.

Divine Magic is not limited in the same way as Common Magic but it does have certain, inherent restrictions based on the depth of faith and the strength of the relationship between worshippers and worshipped.

## Spirit Magic

Every living thing has a spirit. Any aspect of nature, be it organic or inorganic, also possesses a spiritual resonance that does not exist on the mundane plane but manifests there in things that bring joy, beauty, awe or raw power. Spirit Magic practitioners are shamans and witch-doctors, seers and mediums. Their power lies in the ability to interact with the spirit world, call spirits to them and request they use their power on the magician's behalf. Spirit Magicians can transcend the mundane world and tread the spirit paths; they can perceive truths hidden from mortal eyes and commune with those that have transcended the mortal sphere and attained a level of existence which might be termed immortality but does not make them a god.

Spirit Magicians might view Common Magic as crude and unsophisticated; Divine Magic as a fragile relationship based on the whims of gods and demigods; and Sorcery as a force that seeks to plunder and fracture the natural order. The Spirit Magician sees, hears, smells, tastes and feels the power of the Spirit Plane and, through his heightened senses, draws its power through bonds of natural trust. Not all Spirit Magicians are this pure in their approach: some will capture and force spirits to their own will simply to gain power but most Spirit Magicians are keenly aware of the immense, innate power of nature and, for the most part, keen to work together with the Spirit World rather than to deliberately exploit it.

## Sorcery

Sorcerers find their power by unlocking the fabric of reality and shaping it through their ability to manipulate the rules of creation – moulding it, bending it, or breaking it. Sorcery is not based on a cultural relationship with magic, or a relationship with a god: it is based on formulae and intellect and an overt desire to manipulate reality to suit the caster.

At its most fundamental level sorcery appears to lack power. However through a mastery of manipulation, massive levels of power are possible – effects that go far beyond what is here and now and visible. The best sorcerers are rightly feared; but to pursue sorcery to these levels requires dedication to its cause and a willingness – or need – to engage in lengthy study and research.

The learning of sorcery may be taboo amongst some cultures and societies because it breaks the tradition of establishing a relationship with a god. This does not make sorcery evil necessarily but it does reinforce the belief that sorcery is essentially a self-centred activity – an acquirement of personal power that obviates the need for, and reliance upon, gods. Sorcery is the key to the universe and sorcerers are often driven to seek and attain power that places them on a par with the gods.

## RUNES

This game is called *RuneQuest*. That name implies that runes – sources of power – are real and attainable in some shape or

form. Questing for a rune, however, is not an exercise in locating some physical manifestation; it is instead, a metaphysical quest to understand the power of runes and establish a relationship with them through mastery of a magical style. Runes are not objects to be found scattered around the landscape; runes are, instead, cosmic archetypes from which all things stem.

Runes are symbols that have power inherent in them. They are the magical building blocks from which all existence was created and their presence is woven into the very fabric of the world. Runes are more than just symbology. When a rune is written or inscribed, the real power of the magical image is present within it. Repetition of a rune does not weaken it but strengthens its presence and firms reality in creation.

Within *RuneQuest*, all the magical paths tap the powers of the runes.

- \* **Common Magic:** Power is drawn from the echoes of the Runes. *Ubiquitous but weak.*
- \* **Divine Magic:** Power is drawn by becoming a Rune. *Strength from scalability.*
- \* **Spirit Magic:** Power drawn by coercing a Rune. *Strength from sustainability.*
- \* **Sorcery:** Power drawn by emulating a Rune. *Strength from flexibility.*

The first and most widespread is Common Magic, which is usually available to all cultures. Its power is weak and expensive in terms of Magic Points to cast but it is ubiquitous because it requires no special integration with the runes.

Divine Magic is that power granted by the gods, for those who follow cult tenets. By re-enacting the myths and deeds of a god, a mortal can tap into the Runes that the god encompasses, in effect becoming a personification of that Rune. The strength of Divine Magic is that it is scalable, allowing those more dedicated to their god to cast more powerful spells.

Spirit Magic is the domination of incorporeal magical entities, which are the fractured incarnations of a Rune's sentience. By enlistment or coercion, practitioners force these 'spirits' to draw energy from their Runes. The strength of Spirit Magic is that it allows many magical effects to be maintained simultaneously, each harnessed to a separate spirit.

Sorcery is the study and comprehension of how the Runes work. This understanding allows a sorcerer to engineer reality in the same way as a Rune, by either subverting some of the Rune's power directly, or by actually manipulating the rules of the cosmos. Its strength is that Sorcery is completely flexible in its application.

Not all runes are alike though; some are more powerful than others; some are antagonistic and some are dependent on the existence of others. Despite their metaphysical nature all runes can be classified as follows.



## Elemental or Primal Runes

The components of all creation. Most worlds contain all these runes in different combinations of strength but some worlds may be devoid of a certain rune. A world made without the water rune, or where the water rune is weak, would have no seas, rivers, lakes or even rainfall. It would be a dreadfully arid, probably lifeless place. In a world where the darkness rune is strongest, perpetual night would shroud the place. Thus the strength and combination of runes determines the conditions of the world. Most worlds have the runes in a certain balance, thereby promoting life and the conditions under which life thrives.

The Elemental Runes are: *Air, Darkness, Earth, Fire, Moon and Water.*

## Form Runes

The Form Runes describe the elements of life and the shape it takes. Usually a single form of life – such as man – is associated with a single rune but sometimes a form of life is a combination of two or more runes. A combination of the runes of Man and Beast, for example, might create a form of life such as a centaur or an intelligent, bipedal

cat, or perhaps a man with the intellect, nature and abilities of a particular beast. Much depends on how the runes are mixed by the gods. Of the Form runes, Chaos is the most feared, because it preys on the nature of the other Form runes and denies them consistency. The Chaos rune imposes constant, unremitting change for its own sake. In some worlds the Chaos rune is excluded and guarded against with utmost vigilance. In others it is rampant and causes untold misery whilst the gods watch with glee at the unleashed havoc. Such is the way of gods.

The Form Runes are: *Beast, Chaos, Dragon, Dragonewt (where dragonewts exist, in Glorantha, for instance), Man, Spirit and Plant.*

## Power Runes

The Runes of Power are arranged in diametrically opposed pairs. They characterise the chief motivations of gods and so are invested in whatever they create. They derive from, and are influenced by, the Elemental Runes and influence the Form Runes. They are typically manifestations of a specific type of power derived from a primal source. Most cults are therefore invested with those runes characterising the god or gods they worship and consider



as enemies the opposing rune (and consequently the deities characterised by them) – although outright enmity is not always guaranteed, and depends very much on the mythic relationships and alliances struck by the gods during the creation of the world and its subsequent history.

The Power Runes are:

<i>Cold</i>	<i>Heat</i>
<i>Death</i>	<i>Fertility</i>
<i>Disorder</i>	<i>Harmony</i>
<i>Fate</i>	<i>Luck</i>
<i>Illusion</i>	<i>Truth</i>
<i>Light</i>	<i>Shadow</i>
<i>Movement</i>	<i>Stasis</i>

Adventurers need to be careful in the Power Runes they choose to integrate. Integrating two runes that are opposite (via cult affiliations or disparate schools of sorcery for example) does *not* confer the powers of both runes: instead the powers cancel out as each power rune struggles for dominance in the Rune Touched's soul. Casting magic of either rune is subject to difficulty too; the chance for each spell of an opposing pair is halved and Magic Point costs are doubled.

## Condition Runes

The Condition Runes are the final group and they define how gods, cults or individuals deal with any of the preceding runes. There are five main conditions: Infinity, Law, Magic, Mastery and Trade. Each works in a different way:

*Infinity* – this is the mark of the gods. It implies complete freedom from the bounds of material existence and the ability to act (almost) like a god oneself. It is conferred only on those worthy of the status and is the preserve of demi-gods, true heroes and enormously powerful creatures such as dragons.

*Law* – the Law rune aims to defend against Chaos. It stabilises another rune and helps prevent Chaos from disrupting it. Those who possess or command the Law Rune commit to rationality, steady progress and natural evolution. They tend to dislike anything that attempts to twist or shape reality and thus, in many respects, is the antithesis of the Magic rune.

*Magic* – the Magic rune is derived from the Chaos Rune and lacks its parent's malignancy. It represents the ability to command, shape and control another rune but on a temporary basis.

*Mastery* – the Mastery rune signifies mastery of a particular Form, Power or Condition rune and is an indication of the ascendancy of power. It is meaningless without another rune to define it, although its presence signifies the independence of its owner from the rank and file. Cults possessing the Mastery rune are the true movers and shakers of the world. Individuals possessing it are those destined for greatness (or infamy).

*Communication* – the Communication rune encompasses language, speech, diplomacy and trade. It signifies a willingness to enter into dialogue and to bargain or compromise. It is seen as a rune of agreement and amicability although it can also be employed ruthlessly to dominate or dissemble.

## Becoming Rune Touched

Following a magical path will place an Adventurer in connection with the runes to some degree. Through Divine Magic, for instance, one gains access to the runes associated with the god.

Adventurers can become Rune Touched in any of the following ways:

- \* Divine magic: HeroQuest as part of initiation into a cult, or to advance within it.
- \* Spirit Magic: Dream Hunt to forge relationships with the spirit world.
- \* Sorcery: Delving deep into the secrets of the universe through lengthy arcane study and meditation or mapping-out the fabric of the separate planes of the cosmos via sorcerous HeroQuests.

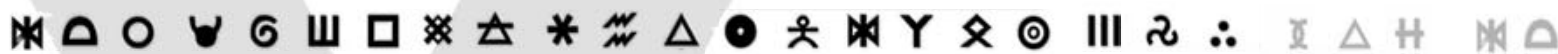
Becoming Rune Touched means that the Adventurer has established a metaphysical relationship with a rune, resulting in a minor manifestation of the Rune's power within them. Rune Touched individuals display their relationship in two ways: through physical adornment in the form of tattoos, warpaint, embroidered clothing, or even inscribed equipment or weapons; and by the way the rune channels its power via the Rune Touched individual. Each rune displays its powers differently and with diverse visible effects. The Rune Touched table describes these effects.

### Runes as Physical Objects – Optional Rule

The first edition of *RuneQuest* introduced runes as physical, tangible objects that Adventurers could quest for and own. Possession of a rune enabled the casting of Rune Magic, which is now termed Common Magic in *RuneQuest* Second Edition.

Runes as physical objects are no longer supported in *RuneQuest*. However, as an optional rule, this part of their nature can be retained by Games Masters if it fits their campaign. Any runes owned by Adventurers can be retained and used in the same way as before although Games Masters will need to refer to *RuneQuest* First Edition rules for details on how that relationship works. No further reference will be made to it in *RuneQuest* Second Edition.





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Rune	Runic Power	Visible Effect
Air	Rune Touched reduces damage from falling by half and adds +10% to Athletics skill when jumping.	The air seems to shimmer about the individual, taking on a slight, silvery quality.
Beast	Rune Touched gains Survival (or +10% to Survival if already possessed) and +10% to Resilience.	The individual possesses slight, animal-like characteristics; the odd bestial grunt, perhaps. If any animals are nearby, they pause and glance in the individual's direction before returning to their routines.
Chaos	Rune Touched gains a Chaotic Feature. He also risks being ostracised by societies who abhor chaos and so suffers a -20% penalty to Influence.	Every now and again, and only fleetingly, something about the individual's appearance alters and then returns to normal. The individual seems to be unaware of the change. If observed again, subsequent physical alterations are always different.
Cold	Rune Touched ignores negative effects from exposure to cold environments.	The individual's skin is cold to the touch, and the temperature around them noticeably cooler.
Communication	Rune Touched gains +10% to Influence skill and gains one new Language skill.	The individual carries an aura that makes what they say seem interesting even when it is not. When the individual listens, he seems to be listening intently even when he is not.
Darkness	Rune Touched gains Dark Sight (see page 161) and +10% to Stealth skill.	The light around the individual flickers and dims slightly, before reasserting itself.
Death	When the Rune Touched <i>inflicts</i> a Major or Serious Wound, the opponent suffers a -10% penalty to Resilience tests to stay conscious or avoid death.	A barely perceptible shadow clings to the individual and they seem to be carrying life as a great burden.
Disorder	Rune Touched adds +2 to all Strike Rank rolls.	Even when immaculately dressed and presented, the individual has a slightly dishevelled appearance.
Dragonewt	Rune Touched will reincarnate as a dragonewt upon death.	The individual behaves, now and again, in ways that, when given some consideration, are distinctly odd. Pauses in conversation are longer than usual; inconsequential items are studied with great intent; words are sometimes given strange meanings.
Earth	Rune Touched gains +1 to STR, CON and SIZ.	The ground at the individual's feet seems to ripple as he walks. If standing in the same place for a period of time, his feet appear to merge with the ground.
Fate	Rune Touched may re-roll one dice roll each day.	There is an air of Great Destiny about the individual, as though this person is marked out for something of great importance, not yet fulfilled.
Fertility	Rune Touched heals and recovers in half the normal time.	The individual blooms. Cheeks are rosy-red, lips full, the complexion glowing.
Fire	Rune Touched reduces damage from fire, magical or otherwise, by half.	An occasional, faint, lick of flame ripples over the individual's skin.
Harmony	Rune Touched may grant a single ally +20% to a single Skill Test, once per day.	It is as if the individual has achieved some form of perfection. Their manners are precise and everything said and done appears to be rational and deliberate. Movements are economical and conversations well structured, as though rehearsed.
Heat	Rune Touched ignores negative effects from exposure to hot environments.	A faint heat-haze accompanies the individual. Their skin is much warmer than usual to the touch; but there is no sign of a fever.
Illusion	Rune Touched gains Disguise skill (or +10% to Disguise if already possessed) and +10% to Sleight skill.	The individual seems to carry an air of distrust about them. Something, that it is impossible to say precisely, does not feel quite <i>right</i> .
Infinity	Rune Touched doubles the duration of all Common Magic spells with the Duration trait.	The individual carries himself with a bearing of quite remarkable grace and power. It is impossible to say what, or why, but the individual <i>seems</i> to be <i>special</i> .

Law	Rune Touched gains +10% to Insight and +10% to Perception.	The individual carries with him an air of justice and fairness that is evident to all who come into contact with him.
Light	Rune Touched gains Night Sight (see page 161) and +10% to Perception skill.	The individual glows imperceptibly. Shadows seem to shy away from them.
Luck	Rune Touched may re-roll one dice roll each day.	Everything seems to be going well and right for the individual. There is an air of fortune and prosperity about them.
Magic	Rune Touched gains either +10% to any two magic skills, or +20% to a single magic skill. Or, all spells cast gain a free level of Magnitude.	There is a distinct feeling of otherworldly power about the individual, occasionally accompanied by the odd, fleeting spark of magical energy across the skin.
Man	Rune Touched gains +1 to DEX, INT and CHA.	The individual appears to be more manly (or womanly) than those around him. He epitomises the essence of his gender.
Mastery	Rune Touched gains +10% to all opposed tests.	The individual exudes an air of being in complete control of everything about him. There is never a sense of panic.
Moon	Rune Touched gains +5% to Influence, Perception, Persistence and Stealth.	If the moon is visible, the individual seems to glow, as though radiating some of its light.
Motion	Rune Touched's Movement increased by +1m.	The individual's movements are fluid and more graceful than one would expect. Crowds seem to unconsciously part for the individual and he never stumbles or trips.
Plant	Rune Touched gains Survival (or +10% to Survival if already possessed) and +10% Resilience.	Plants of all types momentarily turn towards the individual. Withered specimens seem to recover slightly in the individual's presence.
Spirit	Rune Touched gains +20% to the Spirit Walking skill.	The air flickers around the individual and very faint, ghostly whispers can be heard which soon fade into the background noise.
Stasis	Rune Touched is unaffected by Knockback, though he may still cause it himself.	The individual has an innate stillness. When standing, they stand perfectly still without the <i>lightest</i> movement.
Truth	Rune Touched gains +10% to Perception and Persistence skills.	An air of complete sincerity accompanies the individual. They appear to be utterly trustworthy.
Water	Rune Touched gains +20% to Swim.	Raindrops seem to miss the individual; and water flows off the skin without leaving wetness.

## MAGIC POINTS

All living creatures possess a basic affinity with magic, whether or not they ever become trained in it. It is this raw magical power that is nursed and improved by spellcasters over time. This nascent magical power fuels spells and other magical or mystical abilities and can also provide protection against magical attacks. In *RuneQuest*, an Adventurer's magical power is measured by Magic Points. All Adventurers start play with Magic Points equal to their POW Characteristic score. An Adventurer's POW score also acts as a maximum limit for the amount of Magic Points an Adventurer can store at any one time. However there are certain things that affect available Magic Points:

- \* Certain Magic Items or Spells can raise or lower these limits.
- \* POW dedicated to a god or cult cannot be used for Magic Points, reducing the available number for fuelling Common Magic, Sorcery spells or other mystical abilities.

### Regaining Magic Points

Adventurers automatically regain Magic Points equal to their POW, less any POW dedicated to a Pact, every 12 hours. They will regain this amount in 6 hours if they are fully resting, such as sleeping, or through the use of the Meditation Advanced skill (see page 45).

## CHAPTER 7:

# COMMON MAGIC

Common Magic is the name given to a variety of spells that are routinely encountered throughout many societies where magic is used on a daily basis. Separate cultures may place a different emphasis on Common Magic's importance and have very different spells in regular use; but Common Magic is just what it says: magic that is common to all and encountering it is not considered to be out of the ordinary.

Common Magic spells are pale echoes of the primal runes. They require no direct relationship with any rune in order to cast them but the spells are often considered to be inferior to those available to more dedicated magical paths such as Divine Magic or Sorcery.

Common Magic is taught as part of a culture's approach to and understanding of magic. Thus, in settings where magic is prevalent (Glorantha, for example), a certain set of Common Magic spells will be taught to the community as a part of their cultural learning and development. Religious cults, shamanic traditions and schools of sorcery generally offer a certain set of common magic spells reflecting their nature.

## CASTING COMMON MAGIC

The casting of any Common Magic spell requires a successful Common Magic roll. This one skill covers casting of any Common Magic spells known. An Adventurer who knows *Bladesharpen* and *Thunder's Voice* casts both at the same Common Magic value; the two spells do not have discrete casting skills.

Whenever a Common Magic spell is cast there is always a sight and sound that nearby creatures can detect, be it a flash of light, a crack of thunder or a shimmering in the air. The exact effects are up to the Games Master and player to decide for any given spell but will automatically be detected by any creatures within 10 metres times the Magnitude of the spell. Example effects are included with each spell description.

### Edric's Saga

*Being part of an Orlanthei clan living in Ralios, Edric experiences magic every day. As part of his clan education, and interest in the draconic teachings of Orlanthe, Edric has learned *Bladesharpen* 2, *Dragon's Breath* and *Heal* 2. He casts all three spells with his Common Magic skill of 64% and the number following the spell's name is the maximum magnitude at which Edric can cast the spell. In the case of *Dragon's Breath*, which is not a progressive spell and operates at a fixed Magnitude, it does not need a number reflecting its Magnitude and Magic Point cost.*

*It is likely that, given time, Edric will learn more Common Magic – either new spells, or by developing the Magnitude for existing ones.*

## Situational Modifiers for Common Magic

Like any skill, Common Magic is subject to circumstances which may inhibit a spell's chance of success. The Common Magic skill modifiers are as follows:

### Casting Modifiers Situational Modifiers

Situation	Skill Modifier <sup>1</sup>
Spellcaster is gagged or silenced	Automatic Failure
Spellcaster is restrained	-30%
Spellcaster is prone	-20%
Spellcaster is on unstable ground	-20%
Partially obscured target	-20% <sup>2</sup>
Heavily obscured target	-40% <sup>2</sup>
Totally obscured target	Automatic Failure

<sup>1</sup> These modifiers are cumulative – a prone spellcaster casting at a partially obscured target decreases his Common Magic skill by -40%.

<sup>2</sup> These modifiers only apply if the spell has a target other than the spellcaster, his immediate location, his carried possessions or a touched object/individual.

## Casting Time

All Common Magic spells take a number of Combat Actions to cast equal to half their Magnitude (rounded up). Thus a Bladesharp 3 spell would take 2 CA to cast. More powerful spells take longer to cast as the Adventurer seeks to harness the spell's inherent power.

No offensive Combat Action may be taken while casting a spell, though the Adventurer may slowly walk up to half his Movement rate or can act defensively, Parrying or Evading, for instance.

A spell's result takes effect at the end of its last casting Combat Action.

Distractions or significant injuries inflicted on a spellcaster as he casts (such as a Serious Wound) require unopposed Persistence tests to maintain concentration on the spell. If the spellcaster is incapacitated from a Major Wound or by some other effect, blinded for instance, then the spell automatically fails.

## Dismissing Spells

As a single Combat Action, a caster can dismiss any spell he has cast. Ceasing to focus on a Concentration spell is immediate and not a Combat Action.

## LEARNING COMMON MAGIC SPELLS

In order to learn a spell, an Adventurer must locate a teacher who already knows it and is willing to teach it in exchange for money, services or even undertaking a quest to prove themselves worthy. An Adventurer with connections to a religious, sorcerous or spirit cult will have an easier time finding teachers for more powerful spells. Beginning Adventurers may already have a selection of Common Magic spells at the start of their adventuring career, depending on their cultural background.

Every Common Magic spell is graded by its Magnitude, a score that indicates its relative power. Magnitude 1 spells are the weakest and easiest to learn. Learning a new spell takes one day per point of Magnitude and costs the equivalent number of Improvement Rolls.

### Learning Common Magic Spells

Magnitude	Cost	Time to Learn
1	1 Improvement Roll	1 day
2	2 Improvement Rolls	2 days
3	3 Improvement Rolls	3 days
4	4 Improvement Rolls	4 days
5	5 Improvement Rolls	5 days
6	6 Improvement Rolls	6 days
7	7 Improvement Rolls	7 days
+1	+1 Improvement Roll	+1 day

## Paying for Common Magic Spells

### - Optional Rule

At the Games Master's discretion, Common Magic spells can be bought from either a cult or appropriate teacher, rather than costing Improvement Rolls. If so, then the monetary values, based on Magnitude are as follows:

Magnitude	Cost
1	100 silver
2	200 silver
3	400 silver
4	800 silver
5	1,600 silver
6	3,200 silver
7	6,400 silver
+1	12,800 silver

A spell's Magnitude also defines the intellect required by the individual to absorb, memorise and articulate its fabric. The maximum Magnitude of a Common Magic spell any Adventurer can learn is equal to his INT divided by 3 (rounding up). Thus Edric, with INT 16 can learn any Common Magic spell up to a maximum Magnitude of 6.

Increasing the Magnitude of a known spell is similar to learning the spell at that Magnitude from scratch. Thus, if Edric wanted to increase from Bladesharp 2 to Bladesharp 3 he would need to find a teacher who knows Bladesharp 3 and spend three days in study of the spell. However, the number of Improvement Rolls required to learn a higher Magnitude version of a spell, is equal to the difference in their Magnitudes, learning Bladesharp 4, when you already know Bladesharp 2, only costs a further 2 Improvement Rolls.

Learning a spell at a higher Magnitude means that the Adventurer can still cast the spell at a lower Magnitude if he so chooses or needs. Thus Edric could learn Bladesharp 3 but still cast Bladesharp 1 and Bladesharp 2.

## Common Magic in Glorantha

Magic is ubiquitous in Glorantha; almost every society employs magic on a daily basis and foremost of these magical styles is Common Magic.

As noted in the Adventurer Creation chapter, new characters begin the game with 6 points of Magnitude in Common Magic, choosing from spells available to their culture (more detail on cultural Common Magic follows in *Glorantha: The Second Age*).



## SPELL TRAITS & DESCRIPTIONS

Every Common Magic spell is defined by a series of traits that tells you what kind of spell it is and how it is used in the game. A description then follows describing the spell's precise effects. The traits used by spells are detailed here.

**Area (X):** The spell affects all targets within a radius specified in metres.

**Concentration:** The spell's effects remain in place as long as the character concentrates on it. Concentrating on a spell is functionally identical to casting the spell, requiring the spellcaster to continue to chant and ignore distractions.

**Duration (X):** The spell's effects will stay in place for the number of minutes indicated.

**Instant:** The spell's effects take place instantly. The spell itself then disappears.

**Magnitude (X):** The strength and power of the spell. Also the minimum number of Magic Points required to cast it. If two identical spells are cast on the same target, only the spell with the greater Magnitude takes effect – their Magnitudes do not stack.

**Progressive:** This indicates that the spell can be learnt and cast at greater levels of Magnitude. The spell can also be cast at a lower Magnitude if the caster desires.

**Ranged:** Ranged spells may be cast upon targets up to a maximum distance of the character's POW x 5 in metres.

**Resist (Evade/Persistence/Resilience):** The spell's effects do not take effect automatically. The target may make an Opposed Test of their Evade, Persistence or Resilience (as specified by the spell) against the casting roll, in order to avoid the effect of the spell entirely. Note that Resist (Evade) spells require the target to be able to use a Combat Action in order to Evade.

**Touch:** Touch spells require the character to actually touch his target for the spell to take effect. The spellcaster must remain in physical contact with the target for the entire casting.

**Trigger:** The spell temporarily lies dormant until an event stated in the description takes place. The spell then takes effect and is expended. If the triggering event does not occur within five minutes, the spell fades.

## COMMON MAGIC SPELLS

### Abacus

Instant, Magnitude 1

This spell allows the caster to instantly count the quantity of individual pieces, parts or units that one collection of something

has. The caster must specify what is being counted: sacks of grain on a barn floor, trollish infantry in an army, arrows in a stockpile and so on. This number will be exact and unerring but will not account for miscalculations due to poorly defined terms for counting.

### Armoursmith's Boon

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Trigger

This spell grants the caster a +10% bonus per point of Magnitude to his next Craft Skill Test involving any sort of forged metal and cannot stack with any other spell-effect bonuses.

### Babel

Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

If this spell is successful, it garbles the language of the affected creature. The target can still think and, for the most part, act normally but anything it says comes out as gibberish. Thus, a commanding officer would be unable to give orders to his men and a spellcaster would be unable to cast spells.

### Bandit's Cloak

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Trigger

This spell grants the caster a +10% bonus per point of Magnitude to his next Stealth Skill Test involving any sort of hiding or lurking and cannot stack with any other spell-effect bonuses.



## Bearing Witness

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Trigger

This spell grants the caster a +10% bonus per point of Magnitude to his next Skill Test made to discover lies, secrets or hidden objects and cannot stack with any other spell-effect bonuses.

## Beast Call

Instant, Magnitude 2, Ranged, Resist (Resilience)

The Beast Call serves to attract an animal within range. When the spell is cast, it affects a targeted creature with a fixed INT of 7 or less. If it fails to resist, the creature will be naturally drawn to the place where the spell is cast, whereupon the spell effect terminates. Any barrier, immediate threat or counter control also ends the effects of the spell, leaving the creature to react naturally. For example, the Beast Call spell might cause a horse to turn and walk towards the spell but a single yank of its reins by the rider would end the spell's effect. This spell is a potent aid to hunters and herders.

## Bestial Enhancement

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

This spell causes the creature to become more bestial, augmenting its natural weapons and reflexes. For every point of Magnitude, it increases the target's chance to hit with natural weapons by +5% and they deal one point of extra damage. This extra damage is magical and will affect creatures that can only be hurt by magic. The base natural weapon damage remains non-magical.

## Becalm

Instant, Magnitude 1, Touch

This spell gives the target the ability to sleep for exactly 10 hours uninterrupted by bad dreams, pains, aches or even gentle movement. Unless stirred by a loud noise or abrupt physical contact, the target will have a full night's rest. It should be noted that the spell does not put the target to sleep, merely calms their mind in order to better enjoy their next slumber. This spell is useful to spellcasters who wish to fully regain their Magic Points.

## Befuddle

Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

If successful, this spell confuses an opponent to the extent that it may forget who it is or who its friends are. The affected target may not cast spells and may only take non-offensive actions. The target may run if it so chooses or Evade and Parry normally in combat, though it may not make any attacks unless it is attacked first.

Spirits and non-corporeal creatures are not affected by this spell.

## Bladesharp

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

This spell can be cast on any weapon capable of cutting and/or thrusting. For every point of Magnitude, it increases the attack chance with the weapon by +5% and deals one point of extra damage. This extra damage is magical and affects creatures that can only be hurt by magic. The weapon's base damage remains non-magical. A weapon under the effects of Bladesharp cannot benefit from other damage enhancing spells such as Pierce or Fireblade.

## Bludgeon

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

This spell can be cast on any crushing or smashing weapon, such as a warhammer, club or mace. For every point of Magnitude, it increases the attack chance with the weapon by +5% and deals one point of extra damage. This extra damage is magical and will affect creatures that can only be hurt by magic. The weapon's base damage remains non-magical.

## Boon of Lasting Night

Area Special, Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

If successful, the spell turns the area of effect into a sphere of darkness equal to a moonless night. As the description above states, all non-magical light (including sunlight) passing or present within the boundary is reduced to the equivalent of a candle. This radius of the area is equal to the Magnitude of the spell.

## Cauterise

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Trigger

This spell grants the caster a +10% bonus per point of Magnitude to his next First Aid or Healing Skill Test made to mend open wounds and cannot stack with any other spell-effect bonuses.

## Chill

Instant, Magnitude 1, Touch

This spell allows the caster to drastically lower the temperature of any mundane object. With this ability he can speed up the cooling of metal in a forge, make pub drinks cold for his companions, along with several other interesting tricks. It is up to the Games Master to decide the exact effects this would have in a given situation.

## Clear Path

Duration 5, Magnitude 1

This spell allows the caster to move through even the most tangled, thorny brush as if he were on an open road.



## Coordination

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

For every point of Magnitude of this spell, the caster's DEX score increases by +2. This may have an additional effect on his skills and Attributes, such as Combat Actions and Strike Rank. The caster cannot increase his DEX in this way to more than twice its original value.

## Countermagic

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged

Countermagic is used to dismiss another spell within range. The targeted spell is nullified if the Magnitude of the Countermagic equals or exceeds its own. Countermagic can be cast *reactively* to neutralise offensive spells, by using the *Cast Spell* Combat Action.

*Exploring an ancient tomb, Lilina encounters her dreaded enemy, Rhazil the Vivisectionist. On his first Combat Action Rhazil casts a Befuddle spell. Lilina immediately declares that she is using the Cast*

*Spell Combat Action to defend herself. She casts Countermagic 2, which fortunately dismisses Rhazil's spell before it can hit her.*

## Countermagic Shield

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

This spell actively disrupts offensive spells aimed at the caster or his equipment. Countermagic Shield will attempt to block the effects of any spells cast toward it. It will not have any effect on spells that are already affecting a character. The effects of Countermagic Shield depend on the relative Magnitude of both itself and the incoming spell.

### Countermagic Shield Results

Incoming Spell's Magnitude is. . .	Effect
1 or more points weaker than Countermagic Shield's Magnitude.	Incoming spell eliminated and Countermagic Shield remains.
Equal to the Countermagic Shield's Magnitude.	Both incoming spell and Countermagic Shield are eliminated.
1 or more points stronger than Countermagic Shield's Magnitude.	Countermagic Shield eliminated and incoming spell takes effect.

## Darkwall

Area Special, Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Ranged

By casting this spell, the character creates a patch of pitch blackness that fills the target area. Light sources within this area shed no illumination and normal sight ceases to function. Other senses such as a bat's sonar function normally. The radius of the area is equal to the Magnitude of the spell.

## Demoralise

Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

The target of this spell will become demoralised, losing all hope of victory and losing faith in its own abilities. When *attacking*, the target's weapon skills are halved (before modifiers) and it may not cast offensive spells. However, the target continues to defend at its full skill. If this spell takes effect before combat begins, the target will try to avoid fighting and will either run or surrender. The effects of this spell are automatically cancelled by the Fanaticism spell and vice versa.



## Detect X

Concentration, Magnitude 1, Ranged, Resist (Special)

Detect is several spells, which allow the caster to locate the targets of the spell within its range. This effect is stopped by dense or thick materials such as metal, or earth and stone at least one metre thick. It is also blocked by Countermagic Shield (or equivalent spells) of a greater Magnitude. The separate Detect spells are listed here.

*Detect Enemy:* Gives the location of creatures who intend to harm the caster. Targets attempting to keep their motivations hidden may resist with Persistence.

*Detect Magic:* Gives the location of enchanted items, magical creatures or active spells.

*Detect Species:* Each unique Detect Species spell will give the location of members of the specified species. Examples of this spell include Detect Duck, Detect Rhino or Detect Trollkin.

*Detect Substance:* Each unique Detect Substance spell will give the location of substances of the specified type. Examples of this spell include Detect Coal, Detect Gold or Detect Wood.

The Games Master should provide the rough power of the detected subject ('weak magic' or 'rich gold lode') and require further Common Magic tests for more detailed information.

## Disruption

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged, Resist (Resilience)

A particularly grisly offensive spell, Disruption literally pulls a target's body apart. For each point of Magnitude the target suffers 1D3 points of damage to a random Hit Location, ignoring any Armour Points.

## Dragon's Breath

Instant, Magnitude 2, Ranged, Resist (Evade)

With this spell, the caster spits a stream of fire at his target. If the fire is not evaded, it inflicts 1D10 points of heat damage to a random location. Armour Points are effective against this damage and it counts as both magical and fire damage.

## Dullblade

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged

This spell can be cast on any weapon but will not affect unarmed attacks or natural weaponry. For every point of Magnitude, it reduces the damage dealt by the targeted weapon by two.

## Endurance

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

For every point of Magnitude, this spell restores one level of Fatigue that the target is currently suffering from.

## Entertainer's Smile

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Trigger

This spell grants the caster a +10% bonus per point of Magnitude to the target's next Dance, Sing or Play Instrument Skill Test involving the observations and appreciation of others and cannot stack with any other spell-effect bonuses.

## Extinguish

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged

This spell instantly puts out fires. At Magnitude 1, it can extinguish a Flame, Magnitude 2 a Small Fire, Magnitude 3 a Large Fire and Magnitude 4 will put out an Inferno (see page 58).

## Fanaticism

Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

The target of this spell becomes fanatical, believing he can defeat any foe and overcome any obstacle. His *attacks* with close combat Weapon skills are increased by half but he may not attempt to evade, parry or cast spells. The effects of this spell are automatically cancelled by the Demoralise spell and vice versa. Willing targets of Fanaticism may surrender to the spell without resisting it.

## Fate

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch, Resist (Persistence)

This spell allows the caster to influence fate, either for the good or ill of the target. The caster can increase or decrease the target's next Skill Test by 10% for each point of the spell's Magnitude. The caster must choose at the time of the casting whether to increase or decrease the target's chances – allowing him to give his friends an advantage or hobble his enemies. Only the next Skill Test made after (resisting) the spell's casting is affected.

## Firearrow

Instant 1, Magnitude 1, Touch, Trigger

Casting this spell on a missile weapon (such as an arrow, bolt, rock or dart) will cause it to burst into flame when it is fired or thrown. When it hits a target, the missile will deal an extra 1D6 points of magical fire atop its normal damage. A missile under the effects of Firearrow cannot benefit from Multimissile or Speedart.

## Fireblade

Duration 5, Magnitude 3, Touch

By touching a cutting or impaling weapon, the caster causes its blade to burst into flame. For the duration of the spell, this weapon will deal an extra 1D6 points of magical fire damage atop of its normal damage. A weapon under the effects of Fireblade



cannot benefit from other damage enhancing spells such as Bladesharp or Pierce.

## Frostbite

Instant, Magnitude 2, Ranged, Resist (Resilience)

This attack spell allows the caster to freeze his opponent, dealing 1d3 points of damage (rolled once) to all Hit Locations, ignoring any Armour Points. Magical effects that protect against cold damage can block this effect but mundane items (such as cold weather gear) are ineffective.

## Glamour

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

For every point of Magnitude of this spell, the caster's CHA score increases by +2. This may have an additional effect on his skills. The caster cannot increase his CHA in this way to more than twice its original value.

## Golden Tongue

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The caster gains a bonus to any Commerce, Evaluate or Influence test equal to +5% x the Magnitude of the spell. This bonus only applies when a character is evaluating, buying or selling goods or equipment.

## Hand of Death

Instant, Magnitude 4, Resist (Resilience), Touch, Trigger

This fearsome spell allows the caster to deal an awful wound with the merest touch. Casting the Hand of Death, charges his body with the spell. Touching an unsuspecting target, or succeeding at an Unarmed attack against a wary target, releases the spell's effect. If the Resilience test to resist the effect is failed, the Hit Location touched immediately suffers enough damage to cause a Major Wound. If the Resilience test is a success, the target only loses 1d3 Hit Points. Armour does not protect against this damage.

## Heal

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

For every point of Magnitude of this spell, the caster can repair one Hit Point of damage to an injured Hit Location. Casting this spell on creatures of a different species will have half the Hit Points restored.

This spell cannot re-attach a severed limb, or heal a maimed one. Such wounds require stronger magic.

## Ignite

Instant, Magnitude 1, Ranged, Resist (Resilience)

Ignite sets fire to anything flammable within range, creating a Flame (see page 58). Living creatures *cannot* be ignited and if the target is worn or held by a living being (such as clothing) then the wearer/wielder may resist.

## Light

Area Special, Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Ranged

When cast on an inanimate object, this spell produces a steady radiance which extends 1 metre per point of Magnitude. The area is considered to be illuminated. Note that only the specified area is illuminated – everything outside the area of effect is not.

## Lucky

Instant, Magnitude 2, Trigger

This spell allows the caster to re-roll his next *failed* Skill Test but cannot be used to re-roll a fumble. Whatever the result of the second roll may be, the caster must accept it. A caster can only benefit from one casting of Lucky at a time.

## Mason's Boon

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Trigger

This spell grants the caster a +10% bonus per point of Magnitude to his next Craft Skill Test involving any form of natural earth, stone or sand and cannot stack with any other spell-effect bonuses.

## Mindspeech

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged

This spell affects one target for every point of Magnitude. It allows telepathy between the caster and any target, though targets will not have telepathy with one another. The words transmitted by telepathy must be whispered and will be heard directly in the head of the recipient, in the same language in which it was spoken.

## Mobility

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

For every point of Magnitude of this spell, the target's Movement score is increased by one metre.

## Multimissile

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch, Trigger

Cast on a missile weapon (such as a knife, arrow, javelin or rock), this spell is triggered when it is fired or thrown. Multimissile creates one additional magical missile for every point of Magnitude. Each magical missile's attack is rolled for separately and compared against the target's *single* Evade or (shield) Parry roll. They use the same dice of damage as the original but will not benefit from the firer's Damage Modifier. The additional missiles created through Multimissile will affect creatures that can only be hurt by magic. A missile under the effects of Multimissile cannot benefit from Firearrow, Pierce or Speedart.

## Parry

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

Parry improves the caster's defences whilst parrying with the targeted weapon or shield. Each point of Magnitude increases his parry chance by +5% and the Armour Points of the weapon by 1.

## Pierce

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

This spell can be cast on any weapon with a blade or point. For every point of Magnitude, it ignores two Armour Points when it strikes an armoured location, including magical Armour Points. A weapon under the effects of Pierce cannot benefit from other damage enhancing spells such as Bladesharp or Fireblade.

## Protection

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

For every point of Magnitude of this spell, one Armour Point is added to every Hit Location of the caster. This stacks with any existing armour and is treated in the same manner.

## Push/Pull

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged, Resist (Resilience)

This spell allows the caster to move an item of up to 1 SIZ or ENC per point of Magnitude either towards or away from the caster in a straight line, as if pushed suddenly from one direction or the other. The item is not moved with significant enough force to inflict damage unless it is naturally damaging (a bottle of acid, for instance) and the caster has no control over the distance pushed or pulled; as this depends on the location of the item or the surface it rests on. Living creatures targeted by this spell are allowed a Resilience roll to resist.

## Repair

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

Every point of Magnitude of this spell repairs one Hit Point of damage to a non-living target. The marks of repair remain visible, probably reducing the target's market value, unless an appropriate Craft test is made at the time of casting.

## Second Sight

Duration 5, Magnitude 3, Ranged

Second Sight allows the caster to gauge the POW aura of every creature and magic item within range, which is not blocked from his vision. The caster will know if each aura is less than his own POW, within three points of his own POW or greater than his own POW.

Second Sight also reveals invisible entities, such as spirits or ethereal undead, though only a hazy image will show (treat such targets as partially obscured).

## Skybolt

Instant, Magnitude 3, Ranged, Resist (Evade)

The caster summons a lightning bolt from the heavens regardless of the weather. The target must be outdoors in plain view. Skybolt inflicts 2D6 points of damage to a single chosen location. Only *magical* Armour Points offer protection against this damage.





## Slow

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged, Resist (Resilience)

For every point of Magnitude of this spell, the target's Movement score will be decreased by one metre. A target's Movement may not be reduced to below one through use of this spell.

## Speedart

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch, Trigger

Cast on a missile weapon (such as a knife, arrow, javelin or rock), this spell is triggered when it is fired or thrown. Attempts to parry or evade the missile suffer a -5% penalty per Magnitude of the spell and damage is increased by one point per Magnitude. A missile under the effects of Speedart cannot benefit from Firearrow, Multimissile or Pierce.

## Spirit Bane

Area Special, Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Resist (Persistence)

This spell creates a zone with a radius of 1 metre per point of Magnitude, which spirits find exceptionally hard to enter. Any spirit with a POW less than the caster's attempting to enter the protected area must resist the spell in order to do so. Spirits within the zone at the time of its creation must resist it or be compelled to leave as quickly as possible.

## Strength

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

For every point of Magnitude of this spell, the caster's STR score increases by +2. This may have an additional effect on his skills and Attributes, such as Damage Modifier. The caster cannot increase his STR in this way to more than twice its original value.

## Thunder's Voice

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

This spell grants the caster a thunderous voice of command. For every point of Magnitude of this spell, the caster has +10% added to his Influence skill and can also be heard at up to the spell's Magnitude x 100 in metres.

## Understanding

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

This spell grants the caster a +5% per point of Magnitude bonus to any Language skill he currently knows.

## Vigour

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

For every point of Magnitude of this spell, the caster's CON score increases by +2. This may have an additional effect on his skills and Attributes. The caster cannot increase his CON in this way to more than twice its original value.

## Warmth

Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive

This spell keeps the caster warm and comfortable in a bitter cold environment. He suffers no penalties to Fatigue tests from a cold environment while this spell is functioning. Warmth also protects the caster from one point of cold damage (magical or mundane) for every point of Magnitude.

## Water Breath

Duration 5, Magnitude 2,

This spell allows the caster to breathe water for the duration of the effect. Water Breath has no effect on the target's ability to breathe air.



## CHAPTER 8:

# DIVINE MAGIC

Whereas Common Magic is available directly to Adventurers, Divine Magic is not. Divine Magic is gifted by the gods and is usually available only through membership of a cult – and even then, only to cult members who have attained an appropriate level of standing within the cult. Lay members of a cult – those who follow the cult's precepts and generally adhere to the faith but make no formal commitment to it – have no access to Divine Magic. Initiates and above – those who have opted to serve the cult and their god directly – do have access to Divine Magic and Divine spells are often a significant enough lure to secure this depth of commitment.

## HOW DIVINE MAGIC WORKS

Divine Magic has a number of essential characteristics separating it from other types of magic:

- \* Spells offered reflect the runes the god embodies. Most gods are inextricably linked with one or two runes – sometimes three – that reflect their creation, their nature, their power and their sphere of influence. Divine Spells are, to some extent, a more powerful demonstration of runic power but they are not, in themselves, runes. They are the channelling of runic forces via the behaviour of the god associated with those runes – meaning that two different gods associated with the same runes may provide very different Divine Spells.
- \* Divine spells are significantly more powerful than Common Magic spells in that no Magic Points are needed to cast them; instead they are channelled directly from the god. However, the amount and strength of Divine Magic any Adventurer can use is dependent on how deep a relationship that Adventurer has cultivated with his god, through the dedication of POW and increasing the pact with the deity.
- \* Divine Magic relies on two skills: the Pact skill, which reflects the strength and depth of the divine relationship and is used to both gain and regain spells; and Lore (Specific Theology) to cast the spell.

## Pact (CHA+Dedicated POW)

Essentially a Pact is a commitment to serve a god through devoting one's soul through worship. The making of a Pact is represented by *dedicating* one or more points of POW to the god. The Adventurer still possesses the POW for calculating skills but it is the god which harvests the Magic Points from the dedicated POW.

Making a Pact is simple: the character, at the point of cult initiation, declares how many points of POW he intends to dedicate to the Pact. He must dedicate a minimum of 1 point and a maximum of one quarter of his available POW. The dedicated POW then forms the basis of his Pact Skill.

An Adventurer may be initiated into more than one cult and thus have several concurrent Pact skills.

The Magic Points available to the Adventurer are limited to the amount of his *undedicated* POW. Thus, a character with a POW of 12 dedicating 7 points to his cult would have only 5 Magic Points available for use elsewhere. Once a point of POW has been dedicated to a cult, it cannot be used for any other Pacts, *until membership of that cult is renounced*. Thus, a follower of Orlanth Dragonbreaker with a POW of 10 might dedicate 6 points to the Dragonbreaker cult but this would leave only a further 4 points to be dedicated to another cult. Leaving a cult reduces the related Pact skill to zero and prevents him from using any Divine Magic from that god – but releases the POW previously dedicated to that Pact.

Dedicated POW forms the basis of a 'pool' of points used to power Divine Magic spells. *For example, a Rune Lord with 4 POW dedicated to his god has 4 POW to invest in Divine spells.*

The starting value of the Pact skill is equal to CHA + Dedicated POW. Like any other skill it can be developed through the spending of Improvement rolls, improving the CHA characteristic,

## Multiple Pacts

Adventurers may join more than one cult, thereby establishing more than one Pact with a deity – as long as the different cults are compatible (being allied in some way or a sub-cult of a larger organisation). The only restriction on having multiple cult membership is the amount of POW the Adventurer is willing or able to devote to each Pact: a Pact always requires a dedication of at least one POW.

or dedicating further POW. Pact can also be increased in other ways, as the Pact Improvement table, following, demonstrates. The higher the Pact skill, the more dedicated the follower. It is not a measure of how much an Adventurer knows about the cult or god; that is still measured by the Lore (Specific Theology) skill.

### Pact Improvement

Circumstance	Pact Improvement
Undertaking and completing a HeroQuest successfully.	1D10+1
Undertaking an unsuccessful HeroQuest.	1D6
Undertaking a successful mundane quest for your god or cult.	1D4+1
Undertaking an unsuccessful mundane quest for your god or cult.	1D2
Dedicating more POW to the Pact.	1 per point of POW dedicated
Emulating the behaviour of your god in extreme circumstances.	1 point per instance

These improvements are in addition to any Improvement rolls an Adventurer wants to use for developing the relationship with his god.

As the Pact increases, so does the propensity to act in the way or ways the god or focus of veneration acts – much in the way that Myth Resonance influences behaviour. *The higher the Pact, the more like the god, or object of veneration, the character becomes.* Thus his character, judgements, deeds and actions reflect those of his god, because the character is essentially becoming more and more like his god. This kind of behaviour requires roleplaying for its effectiveness and Games Masters should watch for situations where the strength of the Pact will assert itself in a character's actions. Characters can, as their Pact increases, undergo complete personality changes as a result, although the circumstances where this happens are judgement calls for the Games Master.

## Limits to Dedicated POW

The amount of POW that can be dedicated to any particular Pact is dependent on the rank and the cult itself. Some cults will have a minimum dedication but all cults have a maximum dedication, based on the rank. The Cults section of this chapter provides more detail on the different ranks.

- \* Lay Member – No Dedicated POW
- \* Initiate – ¼ of POW
- \* Acolyte – ½ of POW
- \* Rune Lord – ¾ of POW
- \* Rune Priest – All POW

## Lore (Specific Theology) (INT x2)

A specific theology skill is associated with every god. Thus Lore (Storm God) exists discretely from Lore (Moon Goddess). The skill is used in two ways: first as a measure of the knowledge the Adventurer has of the god's myths, aspects, behaviour and so forth and of the rituals, ceremonies and practices associated with the god's cult. Secondly Lore (Specific Theology) is used as the skill roll for casting any Divine Spells associated with the god successfully. So, an Adventurer with Lore (Storm God) 60% has a 60% chance to cast any of the Divine Spells he has gained from his worship of the Storm God.

If a deity is part of a wider pantheon then the Adventurer understands the Lore of gods associated with the pantheon at half his Lore (Specific Theology) value but he cannot use this to cast Divine Spells. Pantheistic cults do, frequently, teach the spells from one member god to cult members of an allied cult and where this is permissible then the Adventurer uses his full Lore (Specific Theology) for spell casting.

## Casting Divine Magic

Divine Magic spells are prayed for by the worshipper before they can be called upon. Each Divine spell takes up a single point of *Dedicated POW* to store. However, Divine Spells do not cost any Magic Points when cast, as the caster is channelling the power of their god and is not fuelling the spell through his own, personal, magical reserves.

As a measure of the faith of the worshipper, when a Divine spell is cast it possesses an inherent Magnitude of one tenth of the caster's Pact skill. Rune Priests and Rune Lords are able to channel so much of their god's power that their spells are exceptionally hard to block or dismiss.

The same Divine Spell can be learned multiple times.

To cast the spell the Adventurer must successfully roll against his Lore (Specific Theology). Note the result of the roll.

**Critical Success:** The spell is cast and may be cast again. It is not placed beyond use.

### Edric's Saga

*Edric has become an initiate of the Orlanth the Dragon cult, a cult strongly represented in his own community. The cult believes fervently that Orlanth, the chief of the storm gods, has draconic powers following various encounters with dragons, including slaying them.*

*In becoming an initiate Edric has dedicated 4 POW to the Pact, giving him a Pact (Orlanth the Dragon) 14%. His POW, for the purposes of available Magic Points, is lowered from 14 to 10 but it also means that Edric has 4 points that can be dedicated towards Orlanth the Dragon's Divine Magic.*

*Edric also has Lore (Orlanth the Dragon) 52%. The skill means that any Divine Magic spells Edric gains as an initiate of the cult are cast at 52%. It also means that Edric knows the lore of the associated cult, Ernalda the Scale, at 26% because Orlanth the Dragon and Ernalda the Scale form part of the draconic storm pantheon. However Edric cannot cast any Ernalda Divine spells unless they are taught to him as part of allied cult rituals. If he gains any allied cult spells then they will operate at 52%, his Lore (Orlanth the Dragon) percentage.*

*So at this point in his life Edric's understanding of Orlanth the Dragon is reasonably strong as he has spent most of his life exposed to its rituals and practices. However his direct relationship with Orlanth the Dragon, represented by his Pact, is still very weak. Edric has only just embarked on the road of devotion to his god and will need to strengthen and deepen his Pact over time.*

**Success:** The spell is cast successfully and is then placed beyond use until the Adventurer can regain it as per his rank in the cult (see the Regaining Divine Spells).

**Failure:** The spell does not work but the Adventurer can attempt to cast it again later.

**Fumble:** The spell does not work and is also placed beyond use until the Adventurer can regain it as per his rank in the cult (see the Regaining Divine Spells).

When a spell is placed beyond use it is not forgotten; it is merely the case that the Adventurer cannot channel his god's power via that spell again, until he has successfully regained the god's ongoing trust in their relationship.

### Regaining Divine Spells

Depending on their rank within the cult, a spell can be regained upon a successful Pact test, showing that the Adventurer has re-established their faith with the god and is able to channel that god's power once more through the Divine spell.

- \* Lay Members – No access to Divine spells.
- \* Initiates – May test to regain a Divine spell the day after it was used but must return to a shrine or temple to pray for the spell. It requires a successful Pact test to recover; failure requires that they try again the following day.
- \* Acolytes – May test to regain a Divine spell the day after it was used; however, if the test fails they must return to a shrine or temple and recover the spell there.
- \* Rune Lords – May test to regain a Divine spell an hour after it was used; however, if the test fails they must return to a shrine or temple and recover the spell there.
- \* Rune Priests – May test to regain Divine spells an hour after they have been used; failing the roll simply incurs a delay of another hour before they can try again, whereas a fumble means the spell must be recovered at a temple.

### Edric's Saga

*As an Orlanth the Dragon initiate, Edric learns Dismiss Elemental, Mindlink, Soul Sight and Channel Strength. This takes all of his 4 points of Dedicated POW to store. The spells are cast at Edric's Lore (Orlanth the Dragon) of 52%. His Pact (Orlanth the Dragon) of 14% governs the Magnitude of all the Divine Spells he can cast: at a tenth of his Pact, rounded up, each of his four Divine Spells can be cast at Magnitude 2 ( $14/10 = 1.4$ , rounded to 2).*

*During an adventure Edric successfully casts Mindlink. As the spell was a standard success he cannot use it again until he has returned to a shrine of Orlanth the Dragon and succeeded in a Pact roll of 16% or less.*

*Later in the same adventure Edric critically succeeds in casting Soul Sight. This means he can use Soul Sight again without having to attempt a Pact roll to re-establish his relationship with Orlanth. He is forced to cast Soul Sight once more but this time fumbles in the attempt; not only does the spell fail to work but this level of failure places the spell beyond Edric's use until he can return to a shrine and attempt a Pact roll to recover it.*

### Dismissing Divine Magic Spells

Like Common Magic, a caster can dismiss any Divine Magic spell(s) he has cast as a single Combat Action. Ceasing to maintain a Concentration spell is immediate and not a Combat Action.

A character may also willingly release a Divine Magic spell from their Dedicated POW. This immediately frees the spell from their psyche, harmlessly dissipating the divine link and liberating the point of Dedicated POW to store a different spell if desired.

Acquiring a new spell from a Gloranthan cult involves gaining the permission of the Rune Priest of the shrine or temple and participating in a ritual re-enactment of the mythic story of how that power was gained by the god. The supplicant undertakes a mundane form of HeroQuest within the confines of a shrine or temple and, once it is completed, he gains access to that spell from the god's portfolio of Divine Magic.

## Acquiring Divine Magic

Learning Divine Magic requires a sacrifice of time and effort. To acquire a *new* Divine Magic spell, the Adventurer must possess the Lore (Specific Theology) skill appropriate to the religion from which the spell is requested and be of sufficient rank within the cult.

The Minimum Cult Rank denotes the rank the Adventurer must be within the cult to be granted access to that spell. The most powerful Divine Magic is withheld for those who have proven their faith and prowess.

The Minimum Temple Requirement represents the fact that the character must be at a sufficiently holy site in order for the god in question to grant the spell to the character. Such temples will also have experienced Acolytes or Rune Priests that can aid the character in their religious supplications. Once learned, the Adventurer must return to a temple of similar status in order to regain the spell.

The Cost of the spell is how many Improvement Rolls it takes to learn a new Divine spell. Once taught, there is no further cost to regain the spell by prayer.

Depending on the setting, cults rarely charge a monetary cost for learning Divine Magic, although they sometimes set tests for worshippers to prove themselves worthy of being granted such spells. This is for the simple reason that anyone learning Divine Magic from a cult is already an active member and it benefits the cult to make active members more powerful.

## DIVINE MAGIC SPELL TRAITS & DESCRIPTIONS

Every Divine Magic spell is defined by a series of traits describing the spell and how it is used in the game. A description then follows describing the spell's precise effects. By default, the Magnitude of

any Divine spell is equal to one tenth of the caster's Pact. Unless specifically stated in its description, Divine Spells take 1 Combat Action to invoke. The other traits used by Divine Magic spells are detailed here.

**Area (X):** The spell affects all targets within a radius specified in metres.

**Concentration:** The spell's effects remain in place as long as the character concentrates on it. Concentrating on a spell is functionally identical to casting the spell, requiring the spellcaster to continue to gesture with both arms, chant and ignore distractions.

**Duration (X):** The spell's effects stay in place for the number of minutes indicated.

**Instant:** The spell's effects take place instantly. The spell then disappears.

**Ranged:** Ranged spells may be cast upon targets up to a maximum distance of the character's POW x 10 in metres.

**Rank:** The minimum cult rank the spell is available to. Cults of gods which specialise or control a particular rune, may offer certain spells to lower ranking cult members.

**Resist (Evade/Persistence/Resilience):** The spell's effects do not take effect automatically. The target may make an Opposed Evade, Persistence or Resilience test (as specified by the spell) in order to avoid the effect of the spell entirely. Note that Resist (Evade) spells require the target to be able to use a Combat Action in order to dodge.

**Touch:** Touch spells require the character to actually touch his target for the spell to take effect. The spellcaster must remain in physical contact with the target for the entire casting.

## Absorption

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell absorbs incoming spells aimed at the target or his equipment, converting their magical energy into Magic Points which are then available to the target. Once cast on a subject, Absorption will attempt to absorb the effects of any spells cast at the target. It will not have any effect on spells that are already affecting a character. The effects of Absorption depend on the relative Magnitude of both itself and the incoming spell – see the

### Learning a new Divine Magic Spell

Minimum Cult Rank of Spell	Minimum Temple Requirement	Cost	Prayer Time
Initiate	Shrine	1 Improvement Roll	1 day
Acolyte	Minor Temple	2 Improvement Rolls	2 days
Rune Lord or Rune Priest	Major Temple	3 Improvement Rolls	3 days

Absorption Results table for more details. Any spell absorbed by this spell is cancelled and has no effect.

### Absorption Results

Incoming Spell's Magnitude is . . .	Effect
Equal to or weaker than Absorption's Magnitude.	Incoming spell absorbed and Absorption remains.
1 or more points stronger than Absorption's Magnitude.	Absorption eliminated and incoming spell takes effect.

A character may not accumulate more Magic Points than his undedicated POW while Absorption is in effect – excess Magic Points garnered through Absorption simply vanish. Absorption is incompatible with Reflection, Shield and Spirit Block.

### Alter Target

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Ranged

The caster of this spell has the ability to re-direct ranged attacks away from their intended target. Each missile attack or spell of lesser Magnitude requires a Combat Action to deflect, turning it away from its original target and towards another victim of the caster's choice. This new recipient has to be a viable target for the source of the attack and cannot be the original source of the attack.

### Amplify

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

The caster requests that his god boosts the magical abilities of the recipient. While the spell is in effect all castings of Common Magic with the Progressive trait have their Magnitude boosted by the Magnitude of this spell. No Common Magic spell can have its Magnitude boosted beyond 10. This increase in Magnitude does not cost the recipient any more Magic Points than normal.

*For example, Thrace casts a Magnitude 3 Bladesharp, spending the required 3 Magic Points and makes the Common Magic Skill Test. Since he is currently under the effects of a Magnitude 5 Amplify cast by Lilina a few minutes before, the Bladesharp counts as having been cast with Magnitude 8 for all purposes.*

### Aphrodisiac

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell increases the target's sexual attraction. Any failed Influence or Streetwise rolls toward members of the opposite sex (or those of the same sex that would find the target sexually attractive), are treated as successes instead. Fumbles, normal successes and criticals are unaffected. Aphrodisiac makes all opposite-sex individuals around the target friendlier and more focussed upon them – which could be a very good or very bad thing depending on the circumstances.



### Beast Form

Duration 15 Rank Acolyte, Touch

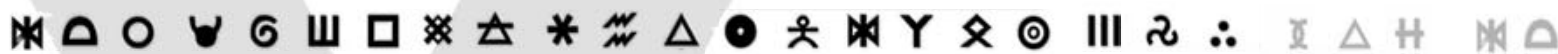
This spell transforms the caster and all his personal belongings into an animal that is sacred to his cult or faith. The caster retains his INT, CHA and POW scores but exchanges his STR, DEX, CON and SIZ scores for average values of the animal shape and gains a bonus to each physical Characteristic of +1 per point of Magnitude. He also gains the natural abilities of the creature. The animal cannot be mystical or magical in any way and the Games Master should have the final say as to what manner of creature would fit a specific cult if it is not obvious.

### Behold

Duration 15, Rank Initiate

The caster sees what another cult member of equal or lesser rank is currently experiencing. The image is from the point of view of the cult member being beheld, so there could be some confusion as to what is happening in certain circumstances (member is sleeping, blindfolded and so on). This spell does not convey sound, only image and if the member is dead or magically protected against scrying by a spell of greater Magnitude the caster will be rendered effectively blind for the duration.





## Berserk

Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence), Touch

The recipient of this spell is overcome with bloodlust, causing him to disregard his own safety and loyalties but imbuing him with tremendous stamina and combat ability.

For the spell's duration the Close Combat skills of the recipient are increased by half again, his Damage Modifier increased by one step and he automatically succeeds any opposed or unopposed Resilience or Fatigue test... although a Major wound will still incapacitate him. However, in return the subject may not Parry, Evade or cast any magic while under the influence of Berserk.

Unwilling targets receive a chance to resist. Normally, the recipient remains in the Berserk state for the entire duration of the spell but Games Masters may allow a Berserk character to shake off the effects with an unopposed Persistence test. At the end of the spell, the recipient immediately drops two Fatigue levels. Berserk may not be combined with Fanaticism – Berserk will always take precedence in such cases.

## Bless Crops

Duration Special, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Touch

Cast on cultivated farmland Bless Crops affects a number of square kilometres equal to the Magnitude of the spell. It guarantees a harvest if maintained for a year irrespective of weather or other conditions. This spell cannot be recovered or released, for as long as the spell is maintained.

## Blessing

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell grants a bonus to a cult skill. The target receives a bonus of +5% per Magnitude of the spell. The specific skill is determined by the caster but must be one of the cult's skills. For instance, an Earth Cult might grant a bonus to Craft (Masonry) but a War Cult could grant the bonus to all Weapon Skills. This bonus cannot be stacked with any other spell-effect bonuses.

## Breathe Water

Duration Special, Rank Initiate, Touch

Breathe Water allows an air-breathing creature to breathe water (the subject will still be able to breathe air as well), for up to one hour per point of Magnitude. This spell cannot be recovered or released, until the spell ends.

## Call Winds

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

Allows the caster to summon or bend the winds to his will, in an area whose diameter is equal to the Magnitude of the spell in kilometres. The maximum strength of winds the caster can

control or invoke depends on their Cult Rank. Acolytes can summon up to Moderate Winds, Rune Lords up to Gales and Rune Priests up to Hurricanes. If the caster can control the wind he may reduce it to Calm or change its direction if desired. This spell cannot alter magically-created weather effects of greater Magnitude.

## Channel Strength

Duration 1 hour, Rank Initiate, Touch

Through this spell the caster can help to prevent the target from suffering from the ill effects of Fatigue. The target of this spell will not receive another level of Fatigue for up to one hour per point of Magnitude. This spell cannot be recovered or released, until the spell ends.

## Clear Skies

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

This spell grants a short reprieve from poor weather. The caster creates mild, pleasant weather conditions in an area whose diameter is equal to the Magnitude of the spell in kilometres. Rain stops, sweltering heat becomes cool breezes and dark clouds separate to reveal the bright and warming sun. This spell cannot alter magically-created weather effects of greater Magnitude.

## Consecrate

Area Special, Duration Special, Rank Rune Lord/Priest

This spell is as much a part of a temple's foundation as is its cornerstone but may actually be cast almost anywhere. It creates a sphere with a radius of 10 metres per point of Magnitude. The consecrated sphere is sacred to the spellcaster's god. Consecrate by itself does nothing to keep outsiders at bay but the caster of the spell will know immediately if a spell, spirit or someone who is not a member of his cult crosses the boundaries of the Consecrate spell.

While within the area of a Consecrate spell, an initiate of the same religion gains a bonus to Lore (Specific Theology) tests made to cast Divine Magic spells equal to 5% per point of Magnitude. Initiates of other gods suffer an equal penalty to such tests.

Consecrate requires one hour per point of Magnitude to cast. This spell cannot be recovered or released, for as long as the spell is maintained. It is usually the duty of the Rune Priest in charge of a temple or shrine to maintain the spell.

## Crash of Thunder

Area Special, Instant, Ranged, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Resilience)

This spell allows the caster to summon a powerful blast of thunder from the open sky, directed toward his foes. The spell affects an area around the caster equal to 10 times the Magnitude in metres, forcing all non-Cult members to resist the spell. Those who fail are

knocked from their feet for 1D2 Combat Actions and struck deaf for 1D6 minutes. Should anyone fumble the resistance roll against the spell, they are struck permanently deaf. Also, any items of glass or pottery will shatter automatically within the area of the spell.

## Cure Disease/Poison

Instant, Rank Acolyte, Touch

This spell lifts the effects of any mundane disease or poison afflicting the target; or magical ones whose potency is less than the Pact % of the caster.

If the disease is the result of a Disease Spirit and therefore magical in nature, the spell exorcises the Spirit as long its POW is within three times the spell's Magnitude. For example, a Magnitude 5 Cure Disease/Poison will exorcise any Disease Spirit of POW 15 or less.

## Disarm

Instant, Ranged, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence)

This spell gives the caster a powerful ability to take weaponry from the hands of a number of targets equal to the Magnitude of the spell. When cast, the target makes a resistance roll for every weapon or shield in their hands at the time. Each failed roll means that the item is flung or torn from the target and lands 1D6 metres away in the direction toward the caster. It obviously has no effect on natural weaponry of any type.

## Dismiss Elemental

Instant, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist (Resilience)

Dismiss Elemental may be cast against Gnomes, Salamanders, Shades, Sylphs or Undines. The spell affects an elemental of up to 1 cubic metre in size per point of Magnitude. Failure to resist the spell causes the elemental to be dismissed and leaves the material substance of its body in place.

## Dismiss Magic

Instant, Ranged, Rank Initiate

Dismiss Magic may be cast against either a general target or a specific spell. Dismiss Magic will eliminate a combined Magnitude of spells equal to its own Magnitude, starting with the most powerful affecting the target. If it fails to eliminate any spell (because the spell's Magnitude is too high), then its effects immediately end and no more spells will be eliminated. A spell cannot be partially eliminated, so a target under the effects of a spell whose Magnitude is higher than that of Dismiss Magic will not have any spells currently affecting it eliminated. The caster can also target Dismiss Magic against a single specific spell.

As long as Dismiss Magic's Magnitude equals or exceeds the target spell's Magnitude, the target spell is eliminated. Dismiss Magic may be fired *defensively* to neutralise incoming offensive spells, by using the *Cast Spell* Combat Action.

## Ebb and Flow

Duration Special, Rank Initiate, Ranged

This spell allows a caster to seriously speed up or slow down a water-going vessel of any kind by forcing the water it rests in to either push faster or work against it. The caster can increase a craft's speed by half-again, or decrease it to one-half, chosen at the time of the spell's casting. The spell continues until dropped, allowing for higher-powered castings of the spell to make considerable changes to travel time by boat, ship or raft. This spell cannot be recovered or released, for as long as the spell is maintained.

## Eclipse

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

This spell turns day into night for a short period of time. Animals flee in confusion, people tend to question what they are seeing and fear is widespread. Whatever the reason for doing so, the caster can choose whether it is twilight or midnight black in an area whose diameter is equal to the Magnitude of the spell in kilometres.

## Elemental Summoning

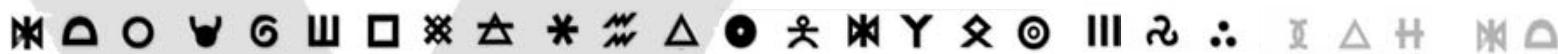
Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell summons forth an elemental associated with the rune or runes of a cult. For example cults associated with the Earth Rune would summon Gnomes. The caster summons an elemental of one cubic metre per point of Magnitude in 1D3 Combat Rounds and remains in the area for the entire spell duration. For obvious reasons, the caster must have access to the same volume of the element's material to cast this spell successfully. If less volume is available, then the caster can animate the material with a smaller elemental if desired. The elemental follows the directions of the caster for the duration of the spell but disperses once the spell expires.

## Evergreen

Duration Special, Rank Initiate, Touch

This Spell grants the caster the ability to bless a single plant to become immune to the ravages of natural weather. A tree will not lose its leaves, flowers will not cease to bud and bloom even in winter and vines sprawl through the withering heat of high summer. Although this spell alters the natural state of the enchanted plant, it remains healthy – although some plants may not be able to seed if enchanted in this manner. This spell cannot be recovered or released, for as long as the spell is maintained.



## Excommunicate

Permanent, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Resist (Persistence), Touch

This spell takes one hour to cast and can only be cast on a member of their own cult. It severs the mystical link a worshipper enjoys with his god, causing the target of the spell to immediately and permanently lose all Divine Magic from the cult the caster is a Rune Lord or Rune Priest of. In addition, the target also loses the Pact skill, freeing any POW dedicated to that god. The target will never again be able to learn or use Divine Magic spells from the cult, though he will still be able to use Lore (Specific Theology) for purely academic purposes.

## Exorcism

Instant, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence), Touch

By means of this spell, a divine spellcaster calls upon their god to drive out a spirit currently possessing a corporeal being. Whether the possession is dominant or covert is immaterial. The spellcaster must be open to the spirit world in order to cast this spell – he may not be shielded by a Spirit Block, or similar effect.

The spirit receives a -5% penalty per point of Magnitude to resist the spell. Failure severs the possession but leaves the spirit free to engage any *other* nearby target in Spirit Combat if it desires. Thus this spell can be potentially dangerous for the caster.

## Extension

Duration Special, Rank Acolyte

This spell lengthens the duration of any Divine Magic spell with the Duration trait, for as long as the caster wishes to maintain it. Extension, and the spell it is extending, is cast simultaneously by the caster – this is an exception to the normal rule that only one Divine Magic spell may be cast during a single Combat Action.

If the Extension spell fails to cast while the augmented spell succeeds, the augmented spell is not extended and operates normally. If the augmented spell fails to cast while the Extension spell succeeds, the Extension spell is not cast.

Extension prevents recovery or release of both the extended spell and the Extension itself, for as long as the spell is maintained.

## Fear

Instant, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist (Persistence)

This spell causes the target to be gripped with overwhelming fear. Fear has no effect on unconscious targets, targets without an INT Characteristic or targets that are currently under the effect of another emotion controlling spell of higher Magnitude.

Targets which fail to resist, flee in terror for a number of minutes equal to the Magnitude of the spell. Victims will avoid engaging in combat unless forced to.



## Fog

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

The caster creates a thick fog that obscures all vision and muffles hearing, in an area whose diameter equals the Magnitude of the spell in kilometres. Anyone caught in the fog has their Perception skill reduced by half. The fog will remain in the area it was cast but can be pushed away or dispersed by a significantly strong wind. This spell is useful for stealthily moving large numbers of animals or troops.

## Gleam

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This Spell enchants a single weapon with a speck of bright light that dances along its edge, always shining through the eyes of the target opposing its attacks. Anyone attempting to Parry or Evade a weapon currently under the effects of Gleam has their Skill Tests reduced by -5% per point of Magnitude, due to the dazzling light. Gleam is incompatible with any damage boosting or weapon skill improving magic, such as Bladesharp, Bludgeon or similar spells.

## Heal Body

Instant, Rank Acolyte, Touch

This powerful spell instantly heals a number of Hit Locations equal to its Magnitude. Each Hit Location thus healed is restored to its maximum Hit Points. The caster may choose which Hit Locations



are healed. Heal Body will even heal maimed, or reattach severed, locations if cast within an hour of receiving the Major Wound. Beyond this period the Regrow Limb spell is required.

## Heal Mind

Instant, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell gives the caster the ability to remove derangements from a single target. In the case of magically-induced madness or similar instabilities, the spell works on a permanent basis if its Magnitude is equal to or greater than that of the magical disorder.

## Heal Wound

Instant, Rank Initiate, Touch

Heals one location back to its full Hit Points but will not cause a severed limb to reattach or regenerate.

## Illusion

Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist Special

This spell is used to temporarily modify the sensory *projections* of a single target, for example a cow can be made to look like a tiger, sound like a howling wolf when it moos, smell of roses, taste of butterscotch, feel like it is icy cold, or a combination of these. The caster can adjust one sensory projection per point of Magnitude. Once set, the illusion can no longer be modified for the duration of the spell.

Depending on the target, the illusion can extend up to its Magnitude in metres in any dimension. To cover a larger target, multiple castings of Illusion can be combined together, thus a small fortress could be made to appear as a briar covered hill for example.

If the spell is cast directly upon an unwilling living target, it may resist with its Resilience. Observers who interact with the illusion are permitted an opposed Persistence roll against the spell, in order to resist any debilitating psychosomatic effects it creates, deafness, pain, nausea and so on. The illusion itself is incapable of causing harm but the underlying target remains as dangerous as it was before the spell.

## Laughter

Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist (Persistence)

This spell infects the caster's foes with laughter, making common activity difficult and exhausting. The caster picks a number of targets equal to the Magnitude of the spell, who all must resist the spell individually. Those who fail are subject to gut-wrenching laughter for the duration of the spell, suffering a -20% penalty to all DEX-related Skill Tests and a level of Fatigue when the spell expires.

## Lightning Strike

Instant, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist (Evade)

This spell causes a sizzling bolt of lightning to streak from the hand of the caster toward the target. If the bolt is not evaded, the spell will cause 3D6 damage to a specified Hit Location. Natural and worn armour offers no protection against this damage but magical protection does. However, any *magical* Armour Points the target possesses are reduced by 1 AP per point of Magnitude.

## Madness

Instant, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist (Persistence)

This spell causes the target to lose contact with reality and become a gibbering loon. Madness has no effect on unconscious targets, targets without an INT Characteristic or targets that are currently under the effect of another sanity influencing spell of greater Magnitude.

Targets which fail to resist, gibber and rave uncontrollably for a number of minutes equal to the Magnitude of the spell. Victims will perform random Combat Actions during this period. Roll 1D6: 1 – Move to close combat attack a random target; 2 – Run in a random direction; 3 – Cast a spell at random target; 4 – Use ranged attack against random target; 5 – Shout at random target; 6 – Dance wildly. In non-combat situations, the Games Master should allow the target to perform passive but perhaps more frightening or entertaining actions.

## Meditate

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This Spell grants a single target the ability to regain their magical strength through mystic meditation. This requires the target to spend a quarter of an hour in solitude without interruption but will replenish all of the target's spent Magic Points after that time. This meditation is not deep and can be interrupted by any outside contact but the target can make a Persistence Skill Test to ignore any outside stimuli that might wake him (as long as it is not a direct attack).

## Mindblast

Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist (Persistence)

This spell applies a penalty to the victim's INT equal to the Magnitude of the spell. This may cause the target to lose access to some Sorcery spells, or reduce the maximum magnitude of cast Common Magic. If the target's INT is reduced below 8 they lose the power of speech and become animalistic in their thought processes.



## Mindlink

Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Initiate

This spell allows the transmission of conscious thoughts, spell knowledge and Magic Points between participants. Each point of Magnitude in Mindlink allows mind-to-mind communication between two people, either creating several separate pairs of Mindlinked people, or making the caster the central hub of a small Mindlink network. In the second case, only the 'central' character is linked directly to other participants. Thus, if Edric is linked to Lilina and Thrace, Lilina and Thrace are not linked to each other.

Mindlink must be cast upon all participants at the same time and it is limited to consenting participants. Those participating in a Mindlink may use the spells and Magic Points of others they are linked to without consent but only if they have the appropriate skill to cast it, to use one of Edric's Divine spells, Lilina must possess the Lore (Orlanth the Dragon) skill. Divine spells used in this way must be recovered normally by the original owner.

Participants in a Mindlink have a special vulnerability to INT, POW, CHA and morale-affecting spells. Such a spell cast against any member of a Mindlink will affect all those connected, though all participants are entitled to resist individually.

Although participants in a Mindlink share Magic Points and conscious thought, they remain their own entity. Mindlink does not include hidden thoughts, memories, unconscious urges, skills or permanent spell knowledge. Any participant may sever their connection to the Mindlink as a Combat Action, or by leaving the spell's range.

## Rain

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

This Spell grants the caster the ability to bring rain from a clear sky. For the duration of the spell rain falls from the sky in an area whose diameter equals the Magnitude of the spell in kilometres. The rain can be as heavy or light as the caster desires, though not heavy enough to cause severe flooding but can be the difference between life and death for plants and thirsty men. If Rain is cast in subzero temperatures, snow is created instead.

## Reflection

Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Initiate

This spell reflects incoming spells aimed at the target or his equipment, redirecting the spell back at the original caster. It will not have any effect on spells that are already affecting the target. The effects of Reflection depend on the relative Magnitude of both itself and the incoming spell – see the Reflection Results table for more details.

Reflection is incompatible with Absorption, Shield and Spirit Block.

## Reflection Results

Incoming Spell's Magnitude is . . .	Effect
Equal to or weaker than Reflection's Magnitude.	Incoming spell reflected and Reflection remains.
1 or more points stronger than Reflection's Magnitude.	Reflection eliminated and incoming spell takes effect.

## Regenerate Limb

Concentration Special, Rank Acolyte, Touch

This spell causes a location severed or maimed by a Major Wound to regenerate, or if the detached location is still present, for it to reattach itself to its stump.



Regenerate Limb takes a number of rounds equal to the location's HP to reattach or repair, during which time the caster must maintain concentration on the spell. The Hit Location is immediately restored to 1 Hit Point at the end of this period. Regenerating a severed location works the same way but takes minutes instead of rounds.

## Resurrect

Concentration Special, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Resist (Persistence), Touch

This spell brings the dead back to life. The body of the deceased must be present and cannot be lacking any Hit Locations vital for life. If the target died due to disease or poison, the ailment must be eliminated first or the spell will fail.



Resurrect summons the deceased spirit to approach its former body. The caster of the spell must then persuade the returning spirit to re-enter its body – while those with unfinished aims or seeking revenge may be more than willing to return to life, those who died in lingering pain due to old age or persistent illness may be less than happy at a return to corporeality and may resist the summoning.

Resurrect takes a number of hours equal to the target's POW Characteristic to take effect, during which time the caster must maintain concentration on the spell. A resurrected character returns to life with 0 Hit Points on all locations.

After death, Resurrect must be cast within a number of days equal to the Magnitude of the spell, otherwise the magic automatically fails.

## Sever Spirit

Instant, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Resist (Resilience)

This spell severs the bond between body and soul, to devastating effect. The target may resist the spell by opposing his Resilience with the caster's Lore (Specific Theology) roll made to cast the spell. If the resistance attempt fails, then the target dies. If the resistance roll succeeds, then the target takes 1 point of damage for every 2 Magnitude of the spell to each Hit Location simultaneously. This may, in some cases, still result in the death of the spell's target, if further Resilience rolls for the damage sustained are failed.

## Shield

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell protects the caster from physical and magical attacks. Each point of Magnitude *either* gives the caster one Armour Point on all Hit Locations or one point of magical protection, as per Countermagic Shield, or a combination thereof. These effects are cumulative with other Common Magic spells, as well as any physical armour the caster is wearing. Shield is incompatible with Absorption, Reflection and Spirit Block, as well as further castings of Shield on the same recipient.

## Soul Sight

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell allows the recipient to see the POW aura of anyone he looks at, enabling him to discern that creature's current Magic Points, as well as the nature of any active spells, the source of their magic and any enchanted items the creature is carrying. It also allows the recipient to see into the spirit world.

## Spirit Block

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

Spirit Block is one of the most powerful ways in which to block the malign influence of ghosts, wraiths and other creatures of the spirit

world. The recipient of Spirit Block may only be affected by spirits with a POW greater than the spell's Magnitude, squared.

## Spirit Block Effectiveness

Spirit Block's Magnitude	Recipient May Only Be Harmed By Spirits With...
1	POW 2 or higher
2	POW 5 or higher
3	POW 10 or higher
4	POW 17 or higher
5	POW 26 or higher
6	POW 37 or higher
7	POW 50 or higher
8	POW 65 or higher
9	POW 82 or higher
10	POW 101 or higher

Spirit Block is incompatible with Absorption, Reflection and Shield.

## Sunspear

Instant, Ranged, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Resist (Evade)

This spell will only function in direct sunlight. When cast a shaft of light, two metres wide, streaks from the sky to blast a single target. If the target does not evade, the blazing light will burn it for 2D6 damage per Hit Location (roll separately for each location). Armour Points are not effective against this damage and it counts as both magical and fire damage.

## Sureshot

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

Sureshot magically guides the trajectory of missiles thrown or fired by the recipient so that they almost always hit, no matter the situational modifiers or cover, as long as the target is within range of the weapon.

For the duration of the spell, any failed missile attack roll is treated as a success instead. Fumbles, normal successes and criticals remain unaffected. The target of the missile attack can still attempt to Parry or Evade as normal.

Sureshot may not be combined with Firearrow, Multimissile or Speedart – Sureshot will always take precedence in such cases. Precise Attack attempts do not work whilst this spell is operating.

## True (Weapon)

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

Cast on the specified type of close combat weapon, this spell doubles that weapon's normal damage dice. Other bonuses, such as Damage Modifier, are not affected. The wielder of the weapon should roll the weapon's damage twice and total the result.

## CHAPTER 9:

# SORCERY

The runes are at the heart of creation, permeating its fabric and establishing rules through their relationships and interactions. Sorcery seeks to manipulate those interactions directly: if the way things work can be understood then they can be tampered with – engineered, enhanced, changed and broken. This is the essence of sorcery.

Sorcery uses formulae, both written and mentally envisaged, to achieve magical effects. Sorcery is not magic that derives from the powers of runes but magic specifically created by mortal races to impose a new set of rules on existing runic and mythical relationships. A somewhat crude way of looking at sorcery is to consider it as short-cuts and bypasses that alter the fabric of creation to serve the caster's own ends. Whereas Common Magic draws on runic echoes to channel a magical effect and Divine Magic channels the powers of the gods (and by extension their runic affiliations), Sorcery is a deliberate attempt to bend the way the universe functions.

## SORCERY GRIMOIRES

Sorcerers record their spells in grimoires. A grimoire can hold just one spell or many. Some grimoires are disparate collections with no single theme whereas others are deliberate collections of spells of a particular nature, gathered together to reflect a particular mindset or requirement.

Grimoires can take unusual forms. In some cultures they are often recorded on scrolls or within tomes. However these are perishable, so some civilisations engrave grimoires on plates of metal, carve them into stone walls or even embed them in crystalline formations. Since the recording of a spell takes up a large amount of space, most enduring grimoires are near immovable and even the smallest scroll with a single spell is large and unwieldy.

## SORCERY AND OTHER TYPES OF MAGIC

Because sorcery is based on deliberate endeavours and has little basis in naturally occurring magic, many cultures view it with deep suspicion and may shun it completely. Sorcery may be viewed as heretical and manipulative – magic that breaks the very nature of a divine relationship or corrupts the stability of the spirit world.

Some sorcerers view Common, Divine and Spirit Magic with contempt. A good sorcerer does not need to rely on the relationships these kinds of magic; all he needs is his own intellect and his grimoire. Sorcery can remove the tiresome, restrictive constraints necessary to the other kinds of magic. He can, if he chooses, stand alone and still wield great power. In more open minded societies where sorcery forms part of a cult's structure, it is often at the expense of Divine or Spirit Magic – either because those who established the cult possessed no celestial or otherworldly relationships to begin with, or have lost it through overly dedicating their energies to developing the power sorcery offers.

## HOW SORCERY WORKS

A sorcerer works magic through two skills, Sorcery (Grimoire) and Manipulation.

### Sorcery (Grimoire) (INT x2)

The Sorcery (Grimoire) skill reflects the knowledge of all the spells *learned* from within a particular grimoire. It is this skill which a sorcerer rolls against to see if they cast a spell correctly. The skill also limits the effect of the spell. A sorcerer can study more than one Grimoire and thus possess many Sorcery (Grimoire) skills. Sorcerers are not in the habit of carrying their grimoires around with them: a grimoire is a powerful document and the physical thing is often closely guarded. Therefore sorcerers are forced to



memorise spells from their grimoire(s). The complex equations, symbols, incantations and arcane gestures consume a great deal of mental capacity. Therefore no sorcerer can ever memorise more spells, from one or multiple grimoires, than he has INT, with one spell occupying 1 point of the INT characteristic. A sorcerer with INT 16 could thus keep in his mind up to 16 spells from the same or multiple grimoires. Casting a spell does not erase it from his mind; but to change which spells he has memorised a sorcerer must spend 1D6 hours expelling an old spell from memory and memorising a new one from its grimoire.

*For Example, Jedekiah is a sorcerer of one of the illustrious God Learner cults of Glorantha. As a member of the True Malkioni sect he has Sorcery (True Malkioni Grimoire) 60% and Sorcery (Bardan's Book) 45%. His INT is 14. The True Malkioni grimoire has over a dozen spells in its pages whilst Bardan's Book has only six. Jedekiah can therefore memorise any combination of spells from either grimoire as long as the total number of spells does not exceed 14. To successfully cast those spells found in the True Malkioni Grimoire he needs to roll 60% or less; and 45% or less to cast those from Bardan's Book.*

If the same spell is found in one or more grimoires a sorcerer knows, he always casts it at the highest rated Sorcery (Grimoire) percentage.

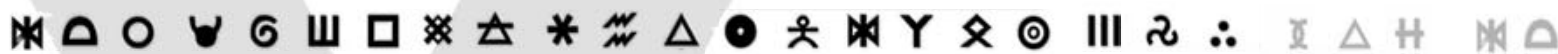
## Manipulation (INT+POW)

On their own, sorcery spells can be quite weak and limited in their scope. However a sorcerer's true power lies in his ability to extend the fundamental aspects of all spells, enhancing their reach. By default, sorcery spells cast without any manipulation have a Magnitude of 1, a Range of touch, a Duration equal to the caster's POW in minutes and focus upon a single target. However, the Manipulation skill allows a sorcerer to modify the spell's Magnitude, Range, Duration, Targets and even Combine several spells into a single casting.

Manipulation is a single skill which can be applied to all known sorcery spells; a separate Manipulation per Grimoire is not necessary.

The Manipulation skill is never rolled against when casting a spell. Instead, each 10% or fraction thereof of the Manipulation skill allows 1 point of Manipulation to be assigned to a single sorcery spell component. Sorcerers therefore need to specify at the moment of casting how the points of their Manipulation skill will be used. *For example, Jedekiah with Manipulation 50% could place 3 points into manipulating Duration and 2 into manipulating Range; or 5 into a single component.*





## Sorcery Manipulation Table

Points of Manipulation	Magnitude	Range	Duration (minutes)	Targets	Combine
None	1	Touch	POW	1	None
1	2	1m x POW	2xPOW	2	2 Spells
2	3	5m x POW	3xPOW	3	3 Spells
3	4	10m x POW	4xPOW	4	4 Spells
4	5	50m x POW	5xPOW	5	5 Spells
5	6	100m x POW	6xPOW	6	6 Spells
6	7	500m x POW	7xPOW	7	7 Spells
7	8	1km x POW	8xPOW	8	8 Spells
8	9	5km x POW	9xPOW	9	9 Spells
9	10	10km x POW	10xPOW	10	10 Spells
10	11	15km x POW	11 x POW	11	11 Spells
Each point...	+1 Magnitude	+5km x POW	+1 x POW	+1	+1 Spells

Manipulation of the following components is possible:

- \* **Magnitude:** Used to penetrate magical defences or resist magical attacks.
- \* **Range:** Used to increase the distance a spell can be cast over.
- \* **Duration:** Used to extend the period of time the spell's effects last.
- \* **Targets:** Used to increase the number of targets affected by the spell.
- \* **Combine:** Used to fuse together several spells into a single casting.

The Sorcery Manipulation Table shows what effect each point of Manipulation has on the different spell components. It takes no Manipulation to cast a Sorcery spell in its basic format (as indicated by the 'None' row).

### Magnitude

Sorcery spells have a default Magnitude of 1 at no additional Magic Point cost. It costs one Magic Point to augment the Magnitude of a sorcery spell, regardless of its final intensity.

Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to increase the Magnitude of a spell. For sorcery spells Magnitude is only used to see if it will overcome magical defences or resist magical attacks. It does *not* modify the effect of the spell which is controlled by the Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.

### Range

Sorcery spells have a default Range of touch, at no additional Magic Point cost. It costs one Magic Point to augment the Range of a sorcery spell, regardless of its final distance.

Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to increase the Range of a sorcery spell. Unlike other manipulations the range value does not progress linearly, enabling sorcerers to cast spells over great distances. However since most spells require the target to be under direct observation, a sorcerer often needs other forms of perception or magical aid to cast sorcery reaching beyond their immediate senses.

Spells cast at a Range of Touch require the sorcerer to make a successful Unarmed attack on a resisting target. To avoid touch spells a recipient must use Evade to dodge the attack, since defending with a combat skill will still transfer the magical effect through the parrying weapon or shield.

If Range is augmented beyond touch then the caster automatically strikes his intended target, unless the target is able to dive for cover or flee out of reach *before* the spell is completed.

### Duration

Sorcery spells have a default Duration equal to the POW of the caster in minutes, at no additional Magic Point cost. It costs one Magic Point to augment the Duration of a sorcery spell, regardless of its final time span.

Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to increase the Duration of a sorcery spell. The maximum Duration to which the spell can be increased to is noted in the Sorcery Manipulation table.

### Targets

Sorcery spells have a default Target of one person or item, at no additional Magic Point cost. It costs one Magic Point to augment the Targets of a sorcery spell, regardless of the final number of recipients.

Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to increase the number of targets of a sorcery spell. The maximum number of targets the spell can affect is noted in the Sorcery Manipulation table. If the spell is cast successfully, the *effect* of the spell is applied multiple times, once for each target included; the spell's potency is never divided between them.

### Combine

Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to combine the effects of multiple sorcery spells in a single casting, so they will affect the target simultaneously. This is the most powerful aspect of sorcery, as it allows a skilful sorcerer to use his Magic Points judiciously and achieve multiple effects within a short space of time.



- \* A spell may not be combined with itself – only different spells may be combined.
- \* If the combined spells come from different grimoires, then the lowest Sorcery (Grimoire) skill is used as the base casting chance.
- \* The spells must all have the same target or targets. A sorcerer cannot combine a Palsy targeting an enemy and a Spell Resistance targeting himself, for instance.
- \* Any other Manipulation effects applied in a combined spellcasting apply to each and every one of the spells involved. Only one Magic Point need be spent per Manipulation effect, regardless of the number of spells involved.
- \* Each additional spell added to a combined spellcasting costs one extra Magic Point *and* reduces the casting chance by 10%.

## CASTING SORCERY SPELLS

A sorcerer must be able to gesture with his hands, be able to visualise the lay-out of the spell as it appears in the grimoire and be able to chant in order to complete the casting. Whenever a spell is cast, there is always a sight and sound that nearby creatures can detect, be it a flash of light, a crack of thunder or a shimmering in the air. The exact effects are up to the Games Master and player to decide but attempting to invoke a spell subtly permits nearby observers an opposed roll of their Perception versus the casting roll spot the invocation.

Casting a sorcery spell requires a successful Skill Test of the Sorcery (Grimoire) skill to which that spell belongs.

### Magic Points

Sorcery spells cost 1 Magic Point plus as many Magic Points as the number of Manipulation effects applied to it. Jedekiah, for example, casting a sorcery spell upon himself with no Manipulation uses only a single Magic Point. Applying five Manipulations would cost 6 Magic Points (one for the basic spell, plus one point per Manipulation).

### Casting Modifiers

Sorcery spellcasting tests apply the same modifiers as Common Magic spellcasting tests.

### Casting Critical Successes

If the Sorcery (Grimoire) roll is a critical success, the spell costs no Magic Points to cast, irrespective of the amount of Manipulation applied to it.

### Casting Failures

If the casting test fails the spell does not take effect and costs the caster a single Magic Point.

### Casting Fumbles

If the Sorcery roll is fumbled the spell fails and the sorcerer loses the full Magic Point cost of the spell.

## Casting Time

All sorcery spells take as many Combat Actions to cast as the number of Manipulations used to cast them, with a minimum casting time of 1. No other Combat Action may be taken while casting a spell, although the character may still walk up to his movement rate while spellcasting.

A spell's effect takes effect at the end of its last casting Combat Action.

Physical and magical attacks on a sorcerer as he casts automatically ruin the spell if he suffers a Major Wound, is immobilised, or is prevented from observing the target. Lesser distractions require successful Persistence tests to maintain concentration on the spell.

## Dismissing Sorcery Spells

Like Common Magic, a caster can dismiss any active sorcery spell(s) he has cast as a single Combat Action, at any point.

## ACQUIRING SORCERY

Characters desiring to learn sorcery must fulfil certain conditions:

- \* Have access to the grimoire from which the spell originates.
- \* Be able to read the language of the grimoire.
- \* Have time to conduct the study in quiet and solitude.
- \* Possess enough Improvement Rolls to learn the Sorcery (Grimoire) skill for that grimoire.

No matter how many spells are contained within, it requires one week of studying a grimoire to gain its specific Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. This is treated as learning a new Advanced Skill and starts at a base percentage of INT x2. Once the theories and philosophy described by the grimoire are understood, the sorcerer may then begin to learn the spell or spells contained within.

Each spell takes a further week and two Improvement Rolls to learn, after which the sorcerer will then be able to cast that spell using the Sorcery (Grimoire) skill for the grimoire it belongs to. A sorcerer belonging to a sorcery cult is usually forbidden from transcribing the spells from the grimoire – as doing so may allow the knowledge to spread beyond their reach.

Depending on the setting and culture, admittance to such grimoires may be difficult. Whilst membership of some sorcery cults or schools may allow study of their grimoire free of charge; others might require gifts paid, quests performed or attaining a specific membership rank before granting access.

## SPELL TRAITS & DESCRIPTIONS

Every sorcery spell is defined by several traits defining the spell and how it is used in the game. A description then follows describing the spell's precise effects. The traits used by sorcery spells are detailed here.



By default all sorcery spells are binary in effect rather than progressive: they either work or they do not. The strength of the effect, or scope of the target they can affect, is dependent on the caster's Sorcery skill in the grimoire from which that spell comes.

**Autonomous:** The spell's effects will remain until its duration ends, without need for concentration.

**Concentration:** The spell's active effects continue so long as the character concentrates on it. Once focus is dropped, the spell's effect ceases or remains static until concentration can be resumed. A sorcerer may move or perform non-complex actions without penalty. More stressful situations, such as walking a narrow ledge, engaging in combat, suffering serious injury or casting another spell immediately require a Persistence roll to maintain focus. By default a sorcerer may only concentrate on a single Concentration spell at any one time.

**Resist (Evade/Persistence/Resilience):** An offensively cast spell does not take effect automatically. The target may make an Opposed Test of their Evade, Persistence or Resilience skill (as specified by the spell) against the casting roll of the sorcerer, to avoid the effect of the spell entirely. To resist using the Evade skill, the character must expend a Combat Action.

## Abjure (Substance/Process)

Autonomous

There are many Abjure spells; for instance, Abjure Air, Abjure Food, Abjure Water and so on. Each discrete Abjure spell permits a sorcerer to forgo a single specific substance or process necessary for life, such as air, water, food, sleep and so forth. The sorcerer can affect a living target of up to three points of SIZ for every 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill, utterly removing the need for that particular requirement until the spell ends. Thus an Abjure (Air) spell could allow a sorcerer to move underwater without needing to breathe.

Many exotic versions of this spell exist, which affect dreams, pain or even aging.

## Animate (Substance)

Concentration, Resist (Special)\*

This spell animates a specific type of substance as indicated by the particular spell; thus there are many variants of Animate available. The sorcerer animates 3 points of SIZ or a cubic metre of insubstantial material for every 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill, causing it to move about and interact clumsily with its surroundings. The substance moves at a rate of 1 metre by default, although points of SIZ or ENC may be substituted for extra movement on a three for one basis; and cubic metres on a one for one basis.

*Jedekiah knows the Animate (Wind) spell and has increased his Sorcery (True Malkioni Grimoire) to 73%. He is sailing a small skiff across the Middle Sea when he sees a warship bearing down on him. In desperation he tries to escape and invokes the wind to his aid. The Games Master decides that the skiff's sails hold 2 cubic metres of air, so the remaining 6 cubic metres Jedekiah can normally control may be used instead to increase the wind's speed. Converting them over and adding to the base 1 metre speed provided by the spell, allows the skiff to be blown at an additional 7 metres per round. More than enough to outdistance the warship.*

The sorcerer's chance to have the animated object perform any complex physical skill is equal to his own chance to perform that action halved (before any modifiers). If combined with the appropriate Form/Set spell (through application of the Combine manipulation), the caster can perform much finer manoeuvring of the target. In this case, the animated object will use the caster's full skill scores for physical activities.

\*The myriad versions of this spell normally only affect inanimate matter, such as clay, steel, dead flesh and so on; or ethereal substances such as air, fire, darkness. If the substance is already under magical control or is a living elemental, then the target gains a resistance roll of some form, such as an opposed magical skill or Persistence. Darker versions of this spell are rumoured which allow sorcerers to animate living creatures and control them like puppets.

## Attract (Harm)

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

This spell steers attacks of a singular type *within its range*, so they strike the recipient instead. It works differently according to the type of harm affected by the spell variant. This can even cause a spell or missile attack to turn back upon its own caster!

- \* Magic – Draws offensive spells of up to 1 Magnitude per 10% known in the Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.
- \* Missiles – Attracts all missile attacks which inflict up to a maximum (including magical augments) of 1 Hit Point per 10% known in the Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.
- \* Spirits – Bait any hostile spirit with up to 3 POW per 10% known in the Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.
- \* Runes – Redirects all sources of harm linked to a particular rune, whether they are magical, spiritual or physical, using the guidelines above (for example Attract (Darkness) would draw the missile fire, darkness spells and spirits of creatures associated with the Darkness rune to the victim).

## Banish

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

Allows a sorcerer to dismiss spiritual or demonic entities of up to 3 POW per 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. If the spell



overcomes the Persistence of the targeted entity it is sent back to the Plane from whence it originally came. The spell does not work against otherworldly beings which are bound within a material object or fetish. However, if the entity is temporarily freed from its binding to perform a service, then the spell breaks whatever magical hold linking it to its owner/master. Likewise the spell cannot cast forth a spirit or demon possessing a victim, only one that is first tricked into abandoning the host.

## Castback

Autonomous

Castback is a defensive invocation shielding the sorcerer from hostile magic and has a chance of sending it back to the attacking spellcaster. It reflects hostile magic of up to 1 Magnitude per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill and only affects spells that target the user specifically and possess the Resist trait. Such spells may affect the protected character normally but if it is resisted, the spell is launched back at the person who cast it.

## Damage Enhancement

Autonomous

This spell can be cast upon anything capable of inflicting physical damage; weapons, traps, unarmed attacks or even other offensive spells. Attacks and weapons, where maximum damage does not exceed 2 Hit Points per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill, will always do the maximum amount of damage without needing to roll.

Thus a sorcerer with Damage Boosting 43% could cast the spell on a War Sword, which normally does 1D8 damage. If successful, the sword would then automatically inflict 8 points of damage every hit until the spell ended.

## Damage Resistance

Autonomous

This spell protects the body of the recipient (including clothing and small belongings carried upon his person) by generating an invisible force field which deflects incoming damage. Any attack where damage does not exceed 1 Hit Point per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill, glances off with no effect – although the protected character may still suffer from Knockback if applicable. Attacks that inflict more damage than the spell can handle, completely bypass it with no reduction.

Damage Resistance may be combined with other spells which provide magical Armour Points. In this case the damage is compared to the Damage Resistance spell first and only encounters the Protection spell if the Damage Resistance is bypassed.

## Diminish (Characteristic)

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence/Resilience)

A Diminish spell exists for each characteristic (so, Diminish Strength, Diminish Constitution and so on). The spell temporarily reduces a target's characteristic by 2 points per 10% of the sorcerer's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. To be effective, the targeted creature must possess the characteristic in question. If used malevolently Diminish (STR, DEX, CON or SIZ) are resisted with Resilience; Diminish (INT, POW or CHA) are resisted with Persistence. The minimum value any characteristic can be reduced to is 1.

Note that creatures affected by Diminish SIZ actually shrink, rather than becoming wasted and skeletal as they do with the Tap spell. Diminish is incompatible with any other Characteristic reducing spell.

## Dominate (Species)

Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

This spell gives the caster control over a creature belonging to a specific species: thus many variations of this spell exist. A sorcerer may attempt to dominate a target of up to 3 INT per 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. If the target fails to resist, it must obey the commands of the caster for the duration of the spell. Suicidal commands instantly break the spell, although the target might be tricked into doing something indirectly fatal. Commands which run contrary to the target's ethics or instincts allow the dominated subject another opposed Persistence roll to escape control.

The controlled target shares a limited one-way telepathic link with the sorcerer by which it can receive orders. If the sorcerer and the dominated creature do not share a common language, the sorcerer can order it by forming a mental image of the actions he wishes it to perform. However, control of the subject lapses once it leaves the normal Range parameters. To keep track of what a dominated subject is doing once out of sight; the sorcerer must use some other form of magic.

A separate Dominate spell must be learned for different species. However, each variant is quite broad in scope, covering an entire *family* of a type of creature. For example: felines, canines, bears, fish, snakes and so forth.



## Glow

Autonomous, Resist (Evade)

This spell causes an area to glow with a soft light, bright enough to be able to read by. Sorcerers can illuminate a space of up to 1 metre radius for every 10% of their Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.

The light is able to counter Darkness spells equal to or less than its Magnitude. However, if the Darkness spell is centred upon an animate creature, then the target may resist using its Evade skill.

## Haste

Autonomous

Haste increases the movement rate of whatever it is cast on. The spell affects targets of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. By default, the base Movement of the target is doubled. To further improve speed a sorcerer may substitute surplus points of SIZ for extra movement, each 3 SIZ giving an extra 1 metre. Haste is incompatible with other Movement boosting spells.

## Hinder

Autonomous, Resist (Evade)

Hinder decreases the movement rate of whatever it is cast on. The spell affects targets of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. By default, the base Movement of the target is halved. To further reduce speed a sorcerer may substitute surplus points of SIZ for extra effect, each 3 SIZ giving an additional reduction of 1 metre per round. A target's Movement cannot be lowered to less than 1 with this spell. Hinder is incompatible with other Movement slowing spells.

## Holdfast

Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

Holdfast causes an object of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill, to merge with another, contacting surface. The binding is unbreakable by normal means, save for the destruction of the target or the surface it is bonded to. Only magic can dispel the effect, by overcoming the Magnitude of the Holdfast.

This spell can affect both organic and inorganic substances. However, if a sorcerer attempts to bond a living being, or anything it is holding or wearing, the spell may be resisted using the Resilience skill. Failing to resist indicates the victim is bound to an object it touches, or his sword is bound inside its scabbard for example.

## Intuition

Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

Intuition allows a sorcerer to discern the emotions and motives of the target, as if he had made a successful Insight roll. The caster may affect targets of up to 3 POW per 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. The sorcerer however is unable to read memories or guarded thoughts, so a target who is aware that this spell is being used may attempt to veil his feelings, gaining another opposed test of their Persistence roll against the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) percentage, each time the caster attempts to discern a new fact.

## Mystic Vision

Concentration

This spell allows the caster to perceive magic, by augmenting his primary senses. It allows him to see, hear or perhaps even smell spells, enchanted items, and even a creature's Magic Points. The sorcerer must be able to actually detect the creature or object for this spell to work. Mystic Vision also enables observation into the hero, spirit and essence planes – although the spell does not grant access.

Sorcerers will either roughly know how many Magic Points an object or creature currently has (1–10, 11–20, 21–30 and so forth), or will automatically be aware of a spell's magical origin (common, divine, spirit or sorcery).

Spells or enchantments of up to 1 Magic Point (or POW) per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill, have all their attributes revealed – including what the spell does, whether it has been overcharged, enchantment conditions and the unique 'aura' of who cast it; which can be used to identify other spells cast by the same person.

## Neutralise Magic

Autonomous

Neutralise Magic negates a combined Magnitude of spells on a target. The spell affects up to 1 point of Magnitude for every 10% of the sorcerer's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. It works by dismissing the most powerful spell it can act on, reducing its *own* effect by the Magnitude of the eliminated spell, then continues to dismiss the next most powerful spell it can still affect. A spell cannot be partially eliminated, so only 'complete' spells are negated.

*Jedekiah is under the effect of a Magnitude 2 Protection spell, a Magnitude 4 Haste spell and a Magnitude 6 Damage Resistance spell. When hit by a Neutralise Magic cast at 44% (affects 5 Magnitude), the Damage Resistance spell is ignored as it is too powerful. The Haste spell is neutralised but this reduces the Neutralise Magic's effect to 1, which is not enough to take out the Protection spell.*



Enchantments and other permanent magical effects are temporarily neutralised for the duration of the spell.

Neutralise Magic can be used defensively, as if parrying or evading to neutralise incoming spells.

## Paralyse

Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

This spell paralyzes one random Hit Location on the target. The sorcerer can affect locations of up to 1 Hit Point per 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. The effect of the spell depends on the location struck. A limb stops working; the abdomen causes both legs to collapse and the head or chest results in unconsciousness.

## Phantom (Sense)

Concentration, Resist (Special)

Each specific Phantom spell produces an illusion which affects a different sense or perception. There are five basic versions, one for each of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch; but there are also variants for unusual sensory mechanisms (such as the darksense of trolls). Illusions produced by each Phantom spell are stimulations of the *target's* own perceptions and nervous system – not temporary manifestations of reality.

Targets of a phantasm must succeed in an opposed test of their Persistence against the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire), otherwise they truly believe what they are experiencing.

Phantasms cannot cause direct harm, although they may be injurious in an indirect manner, such as creating an illusion of a cow over a griffon, or by masking the taste of a virulent poison. However, most effects are psychosomatic in nature and permit further resistance rolls when used offensively.

Phantom spells can react to their surroundings as long as the sorcerer maintains concentration over them. If concentration lapses, then the illusion remains static within the victim's mind, continuing to produce the last effect imagined by the caster – the smell of roses, a moaning wind, bone biting cold and so on. The sorcerer can resume concentration at a later time to change the illusion as long as the spell has not expired. Multiple Phantom spells can be concentrated on simultaneously as long as they are cast as a single spell using the Combine manipulation.

Spells providing magical protection block a Phantom (Sense) spell of equal or lesser Magnitude.

## Odour

This spell reproduces *any* single scent, anything from the delectable odour of lotus perfume to the stench of rotting flesh. If used offensively and the caster overcomes the target in an opposed roll of Sorcery (Grimoire) versus Resilience, an odour can be created which incapacitates or entrances those who smell it.

## Taste

This illusion creates or hides *any* single taste for consumables, substances or persons within the spell's effect. If used offensively, such as creating the burning effect of hot chillies to cause the victim to gag, the caster must overcome the target in an opposed roll of Sorcery (Grimoire) versus Resilience. Several Phantom (Taste) spells could, for example, make a meagre meal of boiled worms, sour berries and nettle leaves taste like the recipient's favourite meal – although the texture might need some work.

## Sight

Creates a visual illusion of anything the caster can imagine. The vision is completely non-corporeal, so physical interaction passes straight through. If used subtly, it can augment or modify the appearance of an already existing target; granting outlandish clothing or changing colour for example. Creating a complete fabrication out of context with the setting, or physically interacting with it, allows the viewer an opposed roll of their Perception against the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire). Animate creatures produced by this spell, which *appear* to perform complex physical actions, use the relevant skills of the sorcerer. For example, an illusionary giant ant sent to attack the recipient would use the caster's own Unarmed combat skill to fight.

## Sound

This spell creates an audible illusion, anything from a whisper to a clap of thunder. The caster can manipulate the nature and volume of the sound as long as he continues to concentrate upon it. Although a sorcerer can create very loud sounds, he cannot cause permanent deafness or damage with them. However, the illusionary volume can be such that recipients standing next to each other need a Perception roll to hear each other speak; and any task which requires hearing one's own voice or maintaining concentration (such as spell casting), must win an opposed test of Persistence against the spell to continue.

## Touch

This spell creates an illusion of tactility, which can be Combined with other illusions to give them a greater sense of reality. It can simulate any type of tactual sensation from feathery to prickly, soft to hard and even hot and cold. Since the spell simply produces an illusionary sensation in the nerves of those who touch the phantasm, it cannot inflict and is itself, immune to damage. However, victims of the spell may still believe they have been wounded and must succeed in opposed rolls of Resilience versus the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) in order to avoid the (psychosomatic) effects of receiving a Serious or Major Wound, even though they have not suffered any actual harm.

## Protective Ward

Autonomous

This spell requires the use of the Combine manipulation. It must be coupled with Damage Resistance, Spell Resistance, Spirit Resistance or any combination of these three spells. When



completed, the Protective Ward creates an area of protection of up to 1 metre radius per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. Casting the spell requires that the ward be inscribed into a solid surface, such as hard packed earth, stone flagstones or even a wooden deck of a ship. Once cast it cannot be moved, although the surface it is inscribed upon can be.

The Protective Ward's perimeter contains the benefits of its combined Resistance spell(s). It only inhibits spells or attacks entering the circle from the outside – attacks or spells originating within the circle are unaffected. Thus a Protective Circle against spirits would block out external spirits but have no effect on those already inside its perimeter. A Protective Circle against damage or spells would block out incoming attacks/spells but have no effect on those attacks made within the sphere (including attacks targeting those outside the sphere).

Diverse versions of this spell are known which rely upon different geometries (circles, triangles and so on) or runes.

## PROJECT (Sense)

Concentration

Each 'Project (Sense)' is an individual spell, specific to one of the five primary senses but there are also variants for unusual sensory mechanisms, such as Darksense. The spell allows the sorcerer to project one of the recipient's senses beyond his body via an invisible and intangible receptor, which transmits the specified type of sensory input back. This permits the recipient to use his Perception skill (with that sense) anywhere the receptor is.

The sorcerer decides at the time the spell is cast where the receptor initially manifests – either beside the spell's recipient or a location well known to the sorcerer within the spell's range. The receptor has a Movement of 1 metre per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. Concentration is only required to move the receptor – when stationary, the spell is treated as Autonomous instead.

A sorcerer can use Project (Sense) to be able to aim a second spell at a target who is out of direct observation – whether because of distance or blocking obstacles. The piggy-backed spell must also have sufficient Range to reach the target.

Project (Sense) can be detected by those using magical perception and, if desired, dispelled. Attacking the receptor with a magically augmented weapon or a spell, will transfer the magical damage/effect back to the recipient.

## REGENERATE

Concentration

This spell functions much like the Divine Magic spells of Heal Wound and Regrow Limb, in that it will repair Serious or Major Wounds, even allowing a severed or maimed limb to be

reattached or grow anew. The sorcerer may rejuvenate locations with a maximum of 1 Hit Point per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. This spell cannot raise a character from death.

Regenerate heals a damaged location back to 1 Hit Point (and no more), requiring the sorcerer to concentrate for a period of one entire round per HP recovered. Locations which have been severed and cannot be reattached take one minute per HP healed to regenerate.

## RESTORATION

Concentration

One of the few methods known of healing Characteristic damage, such as that caused by the Tap spell, Restoration works in a similar manner to Regenerate. The sorcerer may restore Characteristics of up to 3 points per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. If the original value of the Characteristic was higher than this, then it cannot be healed. Each point restored takes one minute to regenerate.

## SENSE (Object OR Substance)

Concentration

Eminently useful for finding valuables, lost possessions or hidden objects from afar, this spell has a variant for every substance imaginable. Sense (Substance) causes all sources of that substance within range of the spell to resonate to the caster's dominant sense. For example, diamonds may visibly gleam like ice; amber could taste like cinnamon; water tinkle with a crystalline chime and so on. Whilst the spell can be cast over extreme ranges, it has difficulty detecting substances concealed or blanketed behind significant layers of solid material. The spell can penetrate a combined thickness of up to 1 metre of wood/earth/rock/water, or 1 centimetre of metal per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. For example, if a sorcerer is seeking a hidden hoard of gold in a castle, his Sorcery skill's value must be able to penetrate the *combined* thicknesses of all the walls between him and the treasure.

Although each Sense spell is specific to particular objects or substances, the categories can be quite broad. For instance: gems, flesh and bones, metals, weapons, cult specific artefacts or even chaos.

## SHAPECHANGE (Species) TO (Species)

Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

Shapechange morphs the shape and form of a target from one species to another. A sorcerer can affect, in total, up to 3 points of SIZ per 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire). The SIZ of the original form, added to the *difference* in SIZ between the original and modified form, must be within this range. The target acquires the average physical (STR, CON, SIZ and DEX) characteristics of the creature assumed, plus whatever natural attacks and modes of





## Tap (Characteristic)

Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

Each characteristic has a Tap spell; thus Tap (Strength), Tap (Constitution) and so on. These devastating spells allow the caster to *permanently* strip a target of characteristic points, transforming the tapped characteristic points into Magic Points for his own use. It works only on creatures possessing the characteristic being tapped. It is possible for a sorcerer to Tap his own characteristics... but that is truly the act of a desperate sorcerer.

The characteristics of targeted creatures can be reduced to a minimum of 1. However, Tap only consumes and transfers one point per round, making it less versatile in combat. Characteristic points lost to Tap are destroyed permanently, though the victim can regain them via certain healing magic, or by raising them through the normal means of increasing a characteristic.

A characteristic may be tapped for up to 1 point per 10% of the sorcerer's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill, from which the sorcerer gains an equivalent number of Magic Points. The sorcerer can only increase his Magic Points to double his normal maximum, although he may simply Tap a target and dissipate any excess – a truly malicious use of the spell. All Magic Points above his normal maximum gained through Tap disappear once the spell expires.

Note that creatures affected by Tap (SIZ) become wasted and skeletal, rather than shrinking as they do with the Diminish spell.

There are reputed to be exotic and very rare versions of the Tap spell which consume other aspects of a victim, such as Tap (Youth), Tap (Emotion), Tap (Memory) and so forth. Without exception, these are regarded with even more loathing and hatred than the more common Tap spell!

## Treat Wounds

Concentration

This spell dramatically accelerates the natural healing rate of the target. It heals up to 1 Hit Point per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill, at the end of each round. The amount healed can be divided across multiple locations as the recipient desires. However, the healing does not affect Serious or Major Wounds, which require the Regenerate spell instead.

## Telepathy

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

The telepathy spell allows a sorcerer to not only mentally communicate with the target but also receive its sensory perceptions as well. If this is undesired the target may resist the spell. The caster can establish a link with creatures of up to 3 INT per 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. The more skilful the sorcerer, the better able he is to penetrate the mental complexities of more intelligent creatures. If sub-sentient, such as in the case of an animal, the sorcerer gains limited comprehension in terms of feelings – but can still communicate.

## Teleport

Concentration, Resist (Evade)

Teleport allows a sorcerer to instantaneously move himself, or a target to anywhere within the range of the spell, as long as the destination is in direct observation, there is solid footing and no object bars their arrival. If these conditions are not met, the spell automatically fails. The caster is able to teleport objects up to 3 points of SIZ per 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.

## Wrack

Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

This spell injures victims by wracking them with magical force. If the target fails to resist, every Combat Action the sorcerer can inflict a random location with an amount of damage according to their Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.

1–20% 1D2 damage, 21–40% 1D4, 41–60% 1D6, 61–80% 1D8, 81–100% 1D10, 101–120% 2D6, 121–140% 1D6+1D8, 141–160% 2D8 and so on.

Armour provides no protection but magical defences (such as Countermagic Shield or Spell Resistance) reduce rolled damage by the Magnitude they normally block (assuming the Wrack spell penetrates).

There are many versions of this spell according to the rune from which it was derived. For example a Wrack (Darkness) would slowly freeze the target with frigid tendrils of shadow, whereas Wrack (Stasis) may cause their limbs to crack and shatter and Wrack (Plant) may simply inflict an agonising poison.

## CHAPTER 10:

# SPIRIT MAGIC

Spirit Magic is the practice of animism and ancestor worship. Spirit magicians call upon spirits which manifest their powers on behalf of their summoner or binder. These beings have many names... dryads, nymphs, diseases, ghosts, nightmares, elementals, ancestors; yet in truth, are all sentient fragments of the Runes from which everything is derived. A spirit does not teach or use magic, rather they are magic.

Spirits flow between the mundane plane and the spirit plane, eternally transferring the power of their runic source to the mundane world and back again. Ancestors are parts of the Man rune; animal spirits come from the Beast Rune; Shades from the Darkness Rune and so forth.

Spirit magicians interact with these beings, utilising the spirit's magic to augment or protect themselves. Such sentient immaterial beings are powerful allies, being capable of independent action and manifesting their powers for unlimited periods of time.

## THE SPIRIT PLANE

The spirit world is a place which exists tangentially to the material world. Nothing physical can exist there, only the immaterial. The spirit world is populated by many spirits, which are linked to the natural geographical features, animals and plants of the material world. Also present are the faint *souls* of mortal beings whose spirits are still bound to a material body. These appear as pale shadows and are hard to perceive.

The landscape of the spirit plane is abstract, similar to the terrain of its counterpart, but the size, colour and vividness of individual features are dependent on the spirits that inhabit it. Thus a wild, craggy mountain in the real world may appear as a tremendous spirit on the spirit plane, whereas an urbanised region might show as grey lifeless area full of translucent apparitions.

A soul or spirit which inhabits a physical body or item is defined as being *corporeal*. A corporeal spirit cannot enter the spirit world until drawn forth from its material residence. A soul pulled from its physical body up onto the spirit plane, or a spirit which resides there, is considered *discorporate*. Whilst discorporate, souls are separated from the senses and sensations of their body.

## HOW SPIRIT MAGIC WORKS

Spirit magicians do not use spells to find or influence the spirits from which their power derives. Instead they learn two mystical skills, Spirit Walking and Spirit Binding. The first enables them to perceive spirits and spiritually enter the Spirit Plane. The second allows them to summon, bind and dominate spirits in spirit combat.

### Spirit Walking (POW+CON)

This skill represents the spirit magician's awareness of the Spirit Plane and its denizens. Anyone with this skill can, with a successful roll, detect (but not observe) the presence of spirits within a range of their POW in metres. The skill is capable of far more – but such secrets are jealously guarded by tribal shamans and only revealed to those who progress higher in a spirit cult's hierarchy. Each further level of knowledge allows the skill to be used in new ways, permitting observation, communication and eventually freedom to travel the Spirit Plane.

Utilising any of the following abilities requires entering a trance-like state, which takes a number of minutes equal to the Species Maximum POW – their Characteristic POW and costs a single Magic Point.

If the Skill Test is successful then the spirit magician can perform the following dependant on his rank:

- \* Follower – Can see and identify spirits within range.
- \* Spirit Worshipper – Can communicate with spirits within range.
- \* Shaman – Can project their own soul onto the Spirit Plane.

- \* High Shaman – Can drag the souls of others onto the Spirit Plane with them, at a cost of 1 extra Magic Point per additional person. Unwilling participants resist using their Persistence in an opposed roll against the Spirit Walking skill of the High Shaman.

Shaman and High Shaman may travel the Spirit Plane to observe and locate other spirits. The skill provides an abstract understanding of the geography and nature of the region and the shaman can travel up to his skill's value in kilometres away from his body. From the Spirit Plane a shaman who succeeds in a Perception test, can also distinguish the spirits of corporeal creatures in the material world and thus hunt for particular species or even seek out specific people.

If the roll is a critical success then entering the trance is achieved in a single minute. If the roll is fumbled, the shaman is barred from entering the spirit plane for a full day.

### Spirit Binding (POW+CHA)

Spirit Binding is used to bind spirits into fetishes and control their actions once bound. Additionally, it can be used to summon and coerce a known spirit to perform a single deed for a mutually acceptable service. The POW of the largest spirit which can be bound or controlled cannot exceed three times the critical range of this skill. Thus a character with a Spirit Binding skill of 45% could control spirits of up to 15 POW.

The binding skill is also used for spirit combat – using mental domination to overcome immaterial beings in a battle of willpower. In this case the value of the Spirit Binding skill is used to calculate the amount of damage inflicted by the spirit magician during spirit combat.

#### *Spirit Damage*

Skill Value	Magic Point Damage Inflicted
01–20	1D2
21–40	1D4
41–60	1D6
61–80	1D8
81–100	1D10
101–120	2D6
121–140	2D8
141–160	2D10
161–180	2D12
181–200	3D10

If the Spirit Binding roll is a critical success, then maximum damage is inflicted. If the roll is a fumble, then the shaman overstrain's himself and sustains the rolled damage to his own Magic Points!

#### The Fetch

A fetch is a shaman's guardian spirit, which is usually related in form or nature to the totem spirit of his tribe or cult. In order

to become a shaman, a spirit magician must first locate his fetch in a dangerous initiation ritual. Such spirit-quests involve the re-enactment of his cult's mythic foundation to locate his guardian and culminate in a dangerous battle against the traditional enemy of his practice.

The fetch aids the shaman, protecting and guiding him in the spirit world. It is in every way his spirit brother.

The benefits of a fetch are:

- \* The shaman can see spirits, souls and magical auras without needing to enter a trance.
- \* The shaman can transfer the Magic Points of the fetch to replenish his own.
- \* The fetch can incorporate the soul of a mundane living being, who may resist with an opposed roll of his Persistence against the spirit's Discorporation skill.
- \* The fetch can possess the shaman's body whilst he is discorporate, protecting it.
- \* The fetch can substitute itself instead of the Shaman in spirit combat (if in the same location).
- \* The fetch and shaman are in permanent mental contact and are aware of each other's senses.
- \* The shaman may invoke any power or ability his fetch knows and likewise the fetch may cast any Common Magic the shaman knows.
- \* The bond between shaman and fetch is not vulnerable to magical dismissal.

The detriments of a fetch are:

- \* The fetch may influence the personality of the shaman depending on its totem nature (a bear spirit fetch may cause the shaman to become soporific during the winter).
- \* The fetch may draw upon the Magic Points of the shaman in times of dire need.
- \* The fetch will abandon the shaman if he betrays the teachings of his shamanic tradition.

A fetch starts with 200 skill points to be assigned to its skills. Fetches can grow in experience just as the shaman does. If desired, a shaman can transfer any or all of his skill improvement rolls to his fetch instead.

## LOCATING AND GAINING SPIRITS

Spirits can be found in the spirit world inhabiting objects or locations relevant to the rune from which they were derived; subterranean caves for Darkness spirits, forests for Plant spirits and so on. Most are found in remote places where they can dwell without the magical disturbances which accompany higher civilisation or the crowding of other, possibly hostile, types of spirit. Often the location is a place of striking or beautiful appearance but in the



Commanding a released spirit is a free action but requires the owner make a successful Spirit Binding Skill Test to ensure that his instructions are understood and followed. Each attempt costs a single Magic Point. If the roll is failed, hostile spirits may act maliciously against the best interests of their owner. Fumbling the roll breaks the binding, returning the spirit to the Spirit Plane and potentially turning on him if hostile.



If the spirit's POW is greater than the limit set by the user's Spirit Binding skill, any attempt to command it fails.

Spirits may range up to their owner's POW in metres. Recalling a spirit back to its binding fetish is automatic.

The greatest strength of spirits is that their effects are *persistent*, lasting as long as it is let out from its fetish. This can make spirit magicians formidable foes, yet their spirits are vulnerable to spells such as the Banish, Spirit Block, or even blasting them with some form of magical damage. Once dismissed or destroyed, the spirit is gone for good until a new replacement can be summoned. Thus most practitioners of shamanism tend to keep their spirits carefully hidden away in fetishes until the most propitious time to use them.

## SPIRIT COMBAT

Spirit combat can only occur on the Spirit Plane. Since the souls of mortal beings are tied to their flesh, they cannot enter the Spirit Plane

### What is a Fetish?

A fetish is a ceremonial physical symbol, usually portable, that embodies magical power. Any form of item can become a fetish for a spirit but amongst primitive cultures fetishes tend to be items made from an item associated with that spirit. Thus, a fetish holding a tiger spirit might be a necklace of tiger teeth; or an ancestor fetish might be a bone from the ancestor's body.

Fetishes are jealously guarded by their owners and it is usually taboo to touch a shaman's fetish unless specifically invited to do so by its owner.

naturally without aid; and are therefore normally insulated from spiritual attack. Likewise spirits which have been *bound* to a physical fetish are tied to the material world and removed from the Spirit Plane.

However, many spirits such as those of diseases, predatory animals or the malevolent dead, have the ability to *discorporate* the soul of a corporeal creature. This literally drags the mortal's spirit out of its body and fully into the Spirit Plane. Once there, they become vulnerable to spiritual combat. In addition, some mortals such as shaman can learn to *discorporate* themselves and High Shamans can even bring others with them into the spirit world. Other methods exist too. Some narcotics and rare herbs are said to be able to separate the soul from the body and there are even spells that can replicate the effect magically.

Encountering a spirit on the Spirit Plane does not necessarily mean that combat will inevitably occur. Many encounters, even with spirits who have discorporated a mortal, can be peaceful, mutually beneficial and informative. However, if the spirit is hostile then battle generally follows. Fleeing spirit combat is impossible for souls who do not have the Spirit Walking skill, or some form of magic to escape from the spirit world.

### Spirit Domination - Optional Rule

In many genres the soul of a possessed victim can sometimes fight against the spirit dominating him, temporarily regaining control of their own body before the possession is re-established. In settings supporting such circumstances Spirit Combat is permitted within the material world but only if both spirits are concurrently occupying the same body or fetish.

Spirit combat is run in a very similar way to physical combat, save that lacking physical bodies on the Spirit Plane, Attributes are calculated using different characteristics. A spirit or discorporated soul's *spiritual attributes* are calculated the following way:



**Combat Actions** are determined from its average of INT and POW, rather than the average of DEX and INT.

**Strike Rank** is calculated from the average of INT and CHA, instead of the average of DEX and INT.

**Magic Points** are calculated as normal but are used by spirits and souls as their Hit Points.

**Spirit Damage** is based upon the value of a spirit's *Spectral Combat* skill or a soul's *Spirit Binding* skill; see the Spirit Damage Table. If a disincorporated Adventurer lacks Spirit Binding, they use half the value of their Persistence on the table instead.

Spirit combat progresses just like normal combat. Initiative is rolled and the character or spirit with the highest adjusted Strike Rank goes first, the second highest goes second and so on. Thus a Spirit Combat can be run simultaneously with physical combat using the same SR countdown.

Instead of weapons, most spirits have a *Spectral Combat* skill which they use in spirit combat. Spirit magicians use their Spirit Binding skill instead, whereas those uninitiated in spirit magic must rely on half of their raw Persistence skill. Attacks are made by rolling an Opposed Test between the attacker and the defender, using their relevant skills.

If the attacker wins the Opposed Test they inflict an amount of damage equal to their Spirit Damage to the opponent's Magic Points. If the defender wins, then no damage is incurred.

If the defender runs out of Combat Actions with which to defend themselves, then they are left wide open and the attacker may attempt to make an unopposed attack roll. A character engaged in spirit combat may forgo their attack in order to cast magic instead.

Combat continues until one of the combatants is reduced to zero Magic Points. At this point the loser may automatically be either Possessed (if mortal), Bound (if a spirit), Exorcised (if currently possessing a mortal) or Dissipated (destroyed). If the dissipated spirit was a disincorporated mortal, then the physical body dies with the destruction of its soul. Some spirits can recover from being dissipated if they have the *Recurring* trait.

## POSSESSION AND EXORCISM

A possessed creature is one whose control of their physical body has been usurped by another spirit or soul. This is normally the result of losing a Spirit Combat, whereupon the victor entwines itself around the defeated soul and rides it back to the loser's corporeal body in the material world. There are two forms of possession, Dominant and Covert.

Dominant Possession occurs when the possessing entity literally takes complete control of the possessed body. The victim is fully aware that its body has been taken over but is absolutely helpless, unable to take any action at all. The possessor does not have access to any of the memories, skills or magic of the possessed but substitutes its own instead.

To detect a dominant possession requires a successful, unopposed test of either Perception if viewed magically, or Spirit Walking.

Covert Possession is when the spirit hides in the body of the possessed, riding it like a hitchhiker. The victim retains complete control over his body and remains completely unaware of his possession, unless the spirit chooses to inform him of its presence. Some spirits take over the victim's body at night when they are sleeping, thus keeping their existence secret – save for inevitable physical exhaustion and fleeting nightmares. Another example of covert possession is a curse or disease spirit which infects that creature with some form of debilitation. No manner of magic or healing will stop the effects until the spirit responsible is somehow cast out.

Detecting a covert possession requires a successful Opposed Test of the investigator's Perception (if viewed magically) or Spirit Walking skill versus the spirit's Stealth skill.

No creature can ever purge *itself* of a possessing entity. They may only be exorcised by a *separate* individual defeating the possessor in spirit combat, or by successfully casting a specific type of expulsion magic. If the original body of a mortal possessor has been killed in its absence, then its soul dies when it is exorcised. Spirits merely return to the spirit plane.

Needless to say, a possessing spirit or soul can willingly abandon a possession at any time – unless they have been maliciously *bound* to that particular body.

## SPIRIT TYPES

There are many forms and types of spirits. They range in power from minor sprites all the way up to the Great Spirits who may be seasonal storm winds, plagues, turbulent rivers, terrifying wildfires or huge mountains.

- \* A spirit is linked to a particular Rune.
- \* A spirit can be an incarnation of an abstract magical or natural effect.
- \* A spirit can be a collective soul of a species of plant or animal.
- \* A spirit can be the venerated soul of a dead ancestor.
- \* A spirit can be the vengeful remnant of a dead creature.

All spirits are sentient, although the degree of sentience and freewill is likely to be dictated by the nature of the spirit. Ancestor spirits, for example, will display all the intelligence and coherence of their mortal form; but nature spirits are likely to see, view and articulate themselves in ways that reflect their origin. Shamans are capable of communicating with spirits, interpreting their sometimes incoherent ways of communicating, through their training and exposure to the spirit world.



## Ancestor Spirits

Ancestor spirits are the souls of family members who reside on the Spirit Plane after death, rather than joining a deity in the God Plane, or transcending to the philosophical purity of the Essence Plane. A spirit magician who quests on the Spirit Plane will only ever encounter ancestors with whom he has a relationship, finding both venerated ancestors and despised enemies. Such spirits continue their existence in houses, halls, tribes or communities resembling those they occupied before death.

Spirit magicians may ask questions or request aid from their honoured ancestors; or conversely attempt to bind and imprison an enemy ancestor, preventing it from being called upon by their foes.

Ancestor spirits are a source of knowledge. They possess skills in which they excelled during their life, the mastery of which has prompted their continued veneration. The spirits of those who died without noteworthy deeds tend to fade and dissipate, once their immediate descendants pass on. Thus most ancestor spirits are noted heroes, remembered many generations after their death.

Normally an ancestor spirit may only be summoned to the material world by a spirit magician of direct descent. If no blood tie exists, a shaman must travel to the home of that ancestor on the Spirit Plane. Once summoned or located, the spirit can be asked questions concerning the family line, or events which happened during its lifetime. Such requests only require the successful use of the Influence skill and cost nothing further.

Alternatively, the spirit magician may request the ancestor's aid in performing an important deed. Such appeals come at a cost, usually involving a personal sacrifice (a treasured item, a habit, a relationship and so on) and votive gifts to that particular spirit. This veneration keeps the memory of the ancestor alive, promoting his continued existence. In return the ancestor will possess the body of its descendant. This bargain places the supplicant at a dangerous disadvantage since he cannot prevent the ancestor from using his body in any way the spirit likes. Unsympathetic ancestors often succumb to long forgotten passions, or attempt extreme acts to further their renown – being in little danger of personal harm if their host dies.

However, most venerated ancestors are content to remain in the peace of the afterlife. To prove both themselves and the task are worthy of its stature, the magician must defeat his ancestor in mock Spirit Combat. If the descendant is defeated, then the ancestor considers the request below their dignity and refuses aid. If the ancestor is defeated, it is roused into providing aid and will possess their descendant.

Whilst possessed, the spirit magician may substitute certain of his own skills for the heroic level skills of the ancestor. The older and more powerful the ancestor, the higher its skill mastery. They normally know 1d3+2 skills at a heroic level of 90%+POW. Warrior ancestors have combat skills, shaman ancestors have spirit skills, hunter ancestors have stealth and tracking skills and so on.

## Designing Spirits

Most of the spirits listed here are simply examples of an almost infinite range of possibilities. To help Game Masters create new and unique spirits, use the following guidelines:

- \* A spirit usually provides a single advantage. This can be either knowledge, an attribute (not characteristic) boost, a Heroic Ability, domination of a particular species, control or resistance to a particular Rune, or inflicting a detrimental effect.
- \* Whatever the advantage, it has to be capable of being a permanent effect – being constantly on. The effect must also be balanced according to other comparable spirits, Divine Magic and Sorcery.
- \* The magnitude of the spirit's advantage is always proportional to its POW. Since many spirits have a variable amount of POW, you can have weak to great versions of most sorts of spirit.
- \* The majority of spirits by default possess a minimum Spectral Combat skill equal to their POWx5% and a Persistence of POWx4%. Those which attack mortals by discorporation have a Discorporate skill of POWx5% and those which *covertly* possess victims also have a default Stealth skill of POWx4%.

In addition, every ancestor has 1d3 Heroic Abilities.

Whilst possessing the body of a descendant, the ancestor cannot be called upon by other tribal members. For this reason, an ancestor spirit usually only remains until it has achieved the objective for which it was summoned. Since ancestors refuse to be bound into fetishes (unless forced to by an enemy shaman) they do not count towards the normal limit of spirit bindings.

INT – As per mortal of the species.

POW – Usually 1d10+10 and greater.

CHA – As per mortal of the species.

Skills (at 90+POW%): Choose from any skill relevant to the ancestor's profession and culture, plus Persistence at POWx4% and Spectral Combat at POWx5%. Ancestors know as many points of Common Magic as they have POW. Lacking fetishes, they do not have any bound spirits but can summon favoured spirit allies they used during their life (shaman still have their fetch however).

## Bane Spirits

Derived from the Chaos Rune, bane spirits strive to absorb the essence of other spirits. Due to their entropic touch, the Magic





Point damage they inflict is permanent and spirits dissipated by them are forever destroyed.

Bane spirits are so abhorred by most shaman that they are often bound and imprisoned in remote or accursed locations, preventing them from causing harm. They are rarely used, save by the insane, or those driven to suicidal revenge. If constrained to a fetish, bane spirits can be sent against other spirits to engage them in spirit combat. If the bane spirit wins, it consumes the defeated spirit, destroying it utterly, including other bane spirits.

Their characteristics are 1d6 for INT and CHA and a POW which ranges from 3d6 upwards.

### Elemental Spirits

Elemental spirits originate from the Elemental Runes, *Air*, *Darkness*, *Earth*, *Fire*, *Moon* and *Water*. They are the same beings summoned by such spells as Elemental Summoning but a spirit magician can invest their powers within his *own* body.

For example, a shaman could bind a salamander and use it to give himself a burning touch, a gnome to move himself through earth and rock, an undine to survive underwater and swim fast and so on.

An elemental spirit's INT, CHA and abilities are equal to an elemental of corresponding size. The spirit's POW is 1D6+6 for the equivalent of a 1 cubic metre elemental. Each further +6 increases its size by another cubic metre.

### Guardian Spirits

These spirits originate from the Magic Rune and ward the summoner from hostile magic. They are often found in places where vast sorceries have been cast, or holy sites where a god invoked the power of a Rune. They can also be drawn to intense concentrations of magic, large ceremonies or battlefields for example.

A guardian spirit protects the holder of its fetish by interposing itself before offensive spells. The spell must first overcome the Persistence of the guardian spirit. If it fails, the spell is negated. If the spell overcomes the spirit, it continues onto the spirit magician, who may then also resist the spell.

The spirit can neutralise spells of up to one Magnitude for every three points of its POW. If the spell's Magnitude is greater, the spirit is

unable to affect it. If a magic spirit encounters an anti-spirit spell, such as Spirit Block or Banish, it may attempt to resist the spell, before it is affected.

Guardian spirits characteristics are 2d6 for INT and CHA and have a POW which ranges from 3d6 upwards

### Nature Spirits

These are the spirits of natural things which live and grow in the material world. They are descended from the Beast or Plant Rune and embody an aspect of the Rune's power. Sometimes specific animals or plants are worshipped as totems – the spiritual guardian and strength of a tribe. Spirit magicians who devote themselves to a particular species in this way are always on friendly terms with spirits related to their totem but suffer neutral or hostile reactions from other nature spirits.

Nature spirits embody a myriad of different abilities depending on the plant or animal they originate from. In general each spirit should encompass **one** of the following effects, something which represents a quality expressed by its species' corporeal form. If two or more nature spirits *with the same ability* are used at the same time by the same magician, only the stronger spirit will take effect.

- \* Boost an attribute – Armour Points, Damage Bonus, Hit Points, Magic Points, Movement or Strike Rank.
- \* Dominate species – Can control behaviour of members of its own species (even plants!).
- \* Increase a skill – Gain a bonus to a skill used by that species.
- \* Manifest a Trait – Use a Trait possessed by the species, such as a special sense or movement.
- \* Combat Manoeuvre – Grants a specific combat manoeuvre which can be automatically used if they succeed in the relevant attack or parry, in addition to any they may have gained for the better level of success.



The intensity of the effect is equal to either:

- \* The number of steps an Attribute is increased, such as increasing Hit Points by 2 on each location would be two steps.
- \* The number of creatures which can be controlled simultaneously.
- \* Each 10% increase to a skill.

The Characteristic POW of nature spirits is based on the intensity of their effect. A level 1 intensity spirit has a POW of 1d6+6, an intensity two spirit a POW of 1d6+12, an intensity three spirit a POW of 1d6+18 and so on.

Spirits which embody Combat Manoeuvres or Traits are the exception. Those which grant a Combat Manoeuvre have a minimum POW of 1d6+18 (1d6+24 for critical only manoeuvres); whereas those which grant Traits have a minimum POW of 1d6+12 and sometimes more if the particular effect warrants it.

The other characteristics of a nature spirit match those of its corporeal cousins. A lion spirit would have an INT of 5 and a CHA of 5, for example. If no example characteristics are available for the species, they can be randomly generated by rolling 1d4+2.

Some example nature spirits follow. Remember that these are individual spirits and others of their kind may be more or less powerful.

*Rhino Hide* (Intensity 3 boost AP, rhino spirit) – INT 3, POW 20, CHA 3. CA 2, SR +3, HP 20, Spirit Damage +1d10. Persistence 80%, Spectral Horn 100%. Increases the natural Armour Points of the magician by 3 points. These do not affect the wearing of additional armour, or reduce Strike Rank.

*Strong Claw* (Intensity 1 boost Damage Bonus, bear spirit) – INT 5, POW 10, CHA 5. CA 2, SR +5, HP 10, Spirit Damage +1d6. Persistence 40%, Spectral Claw 50%. This spirit boosts the Damage Modifier of the magician by one step, a shaman whose Damage Modifier was normally +1d2 would be increased to +1d4.

*Tawny Might* (Intensity 2 boost Hit Points, griffin spirit) – INT 6, POW 16, CHA 7. CA 2, SR +7, HP 16, Spirit Damage +1d8. Persistence 64%, Spectral Gore 80%. Adds an extra 2 HP to each location of the magician.

*Green Vigour* (Intensity 4 boost Magic Points, oak spirit) – INT 1, POW 25, CHA 1. CA 3, SR +1, HP 25, Spirit Damage +2d8. Persistence 100%, Spectral Roots and Branches 125%. Increases the magician's Magic Points by 4.

*Long Hoof* (Intensity 3 boost Movement, horse spirit) – INT 4, POW 22, CHA 5. CA 3, SR +5, HP 22, Spirit Damage +2d6. Persistence 88%, Spectral Hoof 110%. The spirit boosts the magician's Movement by 3 metres.

*Swift Thought* (Intensity 2 boost Strike Rank, mongoose spirit) – INT 4, POW 17, CHA 5. CA 3, SR +5, HP 22, Spirit Damage +1d10. Persistence 68%, Spectral Bite 85%. Augments the Strike Rank of the magician by 2 points.

*Fang Brother* (Intensity 1 Dominate Species, wolf spirit) – INT 5, POW 9, CHA 5. CA 2, SR +5, HP 9, Spirit Damage +1d6. Persistence 36%, Spectral Bite 45%. Spirit will allow the magician to dominate and control a single wolf.

*Tenacious Life* (Intensity 2 Increase Skill, ivy spirit) – INT 1, POW 14, CHA 1. CA 2, SR +1, HP 14, Spirit Damage +1d8. Persistence 56%, Spectral Hoof 70%. Increases the magician's Resilience skill by 20%.

*Sharp Ears* (Intensity 2 Manifest Trait, bat spirit) – INT 3, POW 18, CHA 3. CA 2, SR +3, HP 18, Spirit Damage +1d10. Persistence 72%, Spectral Squeal 90%. Magician gains the Echolocation Trait.

*Savage Snip* (Intensity 3 Combat Manoeuvre, praying mantis spirit) – INT 3, POW 23, CHA 3. CA 3, SR +3, HP 23, Spirit Damage +2d6. Persistence 92%, Spectral Foreclaw 112%. Grants the automatic free use of the Choose Location combat manoeuvre whenever the magician succeeds in his attack.

### Sickness and Curse Spirits

Sickness and curse spirits are malevolent beings which attack and covertly possess mortals. Once in possession they emulate specific disease effects (as in the Poisons/Disease chapter). Sickness spirits are tied to the Death Rune, whereas Curse spirits are tied to the Disorder Rune.

Sickness spirits tend to gather (on the Spirit Plane) near the bodies of the recently dead, attracted by the eventual departure of its soul. From there they usually lay in wait for mortals to approach and follow them until they sleep or pass into an unconscious state. At this point they use their Discorporation skill to drag the target's soul onto the Spirit Plane. If they succeed in defeating the victim in spirit combat then they covertly possess him and inflicting the effect of their disease.

Curse spirits are similar in effect to sickness spirits but they are normally captured by shaman at sites of great disaster and misfortune. Once bound they are used as offensive weapons to overtly possess the spirit magician's enemies.

Both types of spirit have an INT and CHA of 2d6. Their POW can range from 1d6+6 upwards. The bigger the POW the stronger they are in spirit combat and the more difficult to exorcise once discovered. Each +6 grants an additional disease/poison effect (see Poisons & Diseases).

## CHAPTER 11:

# CULTS

A cult is any body of people who come together in veneration of a common symbol. This could be a god, a spirit or ancestor, an ideal or even a heroic personality. Cults fulfil many purposes: protection, progress and tuition, enlightenment and very often they are the focus for a complete community.

Where divine cults are concerned, a god may have several cults dedicated to different aspects of the god's personality. For example, the Gloranthan god Orlanth has several aspects (Orlanth Adventurous, Orlanth the Dragon, Orlanth the King and so on) each of which embodies a particular behaviour or ethos whilst Orlanth himself still remains recognisable as the chief of the Storm Tribe. Thus a single god may have many cults or just one, embracing all aspects of the god's nature.

Spirit cults are often more inclusive: although the chief focus might be a single great spirit, the cult often embraces lesser spirits and ancestors as part of its rites and traditions.

Cults are not limited to gods or spirits: a cult can form around a hero or heroine or even around a religious or philosophical ideal – as is found with sorcery orders, for example.

## WHY JOIN A CULT?

Adventurers join cults for many reasons but the most common are:

- \* Cultural influence: all members of a particular clan worship a particular god and it has always been thus. Cult membership is not just expected but mandatory.
- \* Reinforce beliefs and behaviours: cult members cleave to a particular ideal or way of behaving and, in the cult, find a way of both expressing it and being rewarded for it.
- \* Power, Glory and Status: Rising through the cult's ranks brings magical power, as explored earlier in Divine Magic but aside from that, cults offer rewards in the form of training and, perhaps, other gifts. Similarly, the most active and successful

cultists can become feted as heroes by their communities and enjoy the trappings of that success. High Lords, for example, are the champions of a cult; gaining that level of status guarantees renown and, often, the adoration of hundreds or even thousands.

## CULTS AND MAGIC

The kinds of magic offered vary depending on the cult's nature.

Divine Cults offer Divine Magic and Common Magic to their members. Divine cults have, as their focus, a god or a pantheon of gods – beings of divine power who, through a relationship with their faithful, extend both their magic and characteristics to the membership.

Spirit Cults focus on a totem, an ancestor, or even a group of spirits important to the community. Spirit cults tend to offer only Common Magic and Spirit Magic, mainly in the form of fetishes crafted for cult members. The responsibilities of summoning and binding Spirits is usually limited to the shaman of the cult.

Sorcery Orders. Sorcery orders may have a god or a particular personality as the object of veneration but the order itself does not derive its magic from a Divine source, as would a Divine cult. Rather the order derives its magical power from the direct study of sorcery, formulating grimoires reflecting the needs, deeds and myths of its object of veneration.

## MEMBERSHIP

Becoming a member of a cult can be as simple as proclaiming worship of a god, following of a personality or ideal, or undergoing some form of initiation rite. For most, this is enough for their personal requirements and, as Common Members they will progress no further in the cult and have no desire to do so.

## Comparative Rank Titles

Although the different cults have, for the sake of simplicity, the same structure of ranks, the names given to each rank differ between cult types. The Comparative Rank Titles table provides the comparisons:

### Comparative Rank Titles

Rank Title	Divine Cult	Spirit Cult	Sorcery Order
Common Member	<i>Lay Member</i>	<i>Follower</i>	<i>Novice</i>
Pious Member	<i>Initiate</i>	<i>Spirit Worshipper</i>	<i>Apprentice</i>
Fervent Member	<i>Acolyte</i>	<i>Shaman</i>	<i>Adept</i>
High Lord/High Priest	<i>Rune Lord/Priest</i>	<i>High Shaman</i>	<i>Mage</i>

However, the more dedicated and devout – those who want to make a real commitment to the focus of their veneration – must go somewhat beyond the Common Membership requirements and become Pious Members. Pious Members dedicate themselves to the inner workings of the cult and place themselves on a track for progression, allowing the cult to become the focus for their activities.

Initiation involves a ritual of some form. The precise nature needs to be defined as part of the cult framework and can take any of a number of forms: some examples are:

- \* Initiation ritual involving much pomp or ceremony, such as a communion rite, baptism or other, symbolic acceptance into the cult's ways.
- \* Trial or ordeal.
- \* Vigil, fasting or abstinence.
- \* Swearing of a binding oath.
- \* Making a sacrifice.

Performing the initiation ritual can either be a focus of a roleplaying session, or, for simplicity, abstracted to a roll against a particular skill (such as Resilience, Persistence, or a Lore). Once the initiation rite is complete and if the Adventurer meets any prerequisites for membership (see Ranks), then he is considered a Pious Member.

By becoming a Pious Member, the character becomes liable for any Gifts, Compulsions, Superstitions, Taboos and Geases the cult holds. He is making a commitment to the cult's ways and, by undergoing the initiation ritual, is making a bond with the focus of the cult's veneration. Cult ranks, from Pious Member onwards, start to channel the cult's behaviour, reflecting the nature of the god, the will of the spirit or the ethos of the order. In return, they gain benefits appropriate to their cult: runic associations, cult secrets, the cult's type(s) of magic and Heroic Abilities (see page 156).

## RANKS

Part of the cult framework is to determine what ranks are available and how characters progress from one to another. The core rank structure is summarised here, along with the advancement

requirements and appropriate benefits. If the cult has any specific duties that members must perform, they will be outlined in the description of the rank.

### Common Members

The first step in joining a cult and rising through its ranks is to become a Common Member. A character can belong to several cults as a Common Member, as long as they are not diametrically opposed. The vast majority of members of a cult are Common Members, casual worshippers who follow the basic doctrine of the cult and attend regular ceremonies.

### Pious Members

This is the start of the inner membership of the cult and Pious Members have to donate a substantial amount of time and money to the organisation. In return, they receive benefits denied to Common Members. It is possible for a character to be a Pious Member of more than one cult at a time.

### Fervent Members

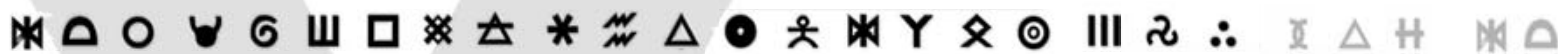
Few members of the cult will rise to the position of Fervent Member, a rank that requires dedication and service but where the inner secrets of the cult begin to be revealed. Fervent Members can be Common Members and even Pious Members of other cults but cannot be Fervent Members of more than one cult.

### High Priests

The most senior Fervent Member of each congregation of the cult, High Priests live to serve their faith. They are leaders among the cult and each looks after an entire congregation and place of worship.

### High Lords

The heroes of the cult, High Lords are masters of everything the cult stands for and have access to its deepest secrets. When trouble threatens the cult, it is the High Lords who will fight for its survival and prosperity.



### *Cult Ranks – Requirements, Duties and Benefits*

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Duties</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
Common Members	Candidate must have at least a basic understanding of the beliefs of the cult and make a small donation each time they visit the shrine or temple.	There are very few duties required by Common Members – they will be expected to attend celebrations on special Holy Days but unless they are aiming to rise in the ranks of the cult, they will not even be expected to attend regular ceremonies.	The character will automatically be able to find tutors for any skills the cult teaches. They must still pay the normal rates for these services.
Pious Members	Candidates will be tested to determine their knowledge of the cult, their sincerity for joining and even their current reputation. The character must know five of the cult skills of at least 30%.	Pious Members are expected to donate 10% of all income to the cult and attend services at their place of worship at least one day every two weeks. They must also attend all ceremonies during Holy Days.	As well as all the benefits enjoyed by Common Members, the Pious Member will have automatic access to Common Magic spells (those only taught by their cult). Pious Members pay half the normal price for being taught both these spells and any cult skills.  If a character is a Pious Member of a cult, he will usually be considered a Common Member of all allied cults without being required to make any donation.
Fervent Members	Candidates must have been a Pious Member of the cult for at least two years and must have at least five cult skills of at least 50%. – A valuable gift must be made to the cult, in accordance with its tenets and its status	Fervent Members are expected to donate 25% of all income to the cult and attend services at their place of worship at least one day every week. They must also attend all ceremonies during Holy Days.	Fervent Members may also call for Divine Intervention.
High Priests	Candidates must have been a Fervent Member of the cult for at least two years and must have five cult skills of at least 75%.	High Priests are expected to donate 50% of all income to the cult and lead services at their place of worship every day of the week, though one day a week may be left for his own time at his option. They must act as administrators of their place of worship, monitoring both tithes and members. A High Priest can never become a High Lord.	Cult skills are learnt for free while cult spells are learnt at half the usual cost.  Moreover, High Priests have the resources of their entire congregation at their disposal though they are advised not to abuse the trust of the cult's members.
High Lords	Candidates must have been Fervent Member of the cult for at least three years and must have at least five cult skills of at least 80%.	High Lords are expected to donate 50% of all income to the cult and spend a similar proportion of their time pursuing cult duties – this may range from simply attending services to being sent on Quests by their High Priest, recovering sacred items or protecting cult members. A High Lord can never become a High Priest.	Cult skills are learnt for free while cult spells are learnt at half the usual cost.  High Lords are also given a metal weapon by the cult, such as iron or silver, for the duration of their service to the cult.



### Calling For Miracles

In situations of great need or impending disaster, a member of a cult can call for a miracle. This is known by various names according to the magical tradition of the cult. Divine cults call it *Divine Intervention*, spirit cults name it *Spiritual Deliverance* and sorcerous cults refer to it as *Arcane Invocation*.

When calling for a miracle, the cult member is directly drawing upon the Runes to which he is linked, via his god, spirits or grimoire. Invoking such power is risky and comes at great personal cost. In exchange for manifesting a supernatural phenomenon, the cult member burns away part of his divine relationship, spiritual authority or sorcerous knowledge; in other words, the skill used to call for a miracle is placed at risk. If the miracle is granted the likelihood is that the value of the skill will be reduced as the raw powers of the rune are channelled to render the effect. Cult members need to be aware of the risks they run when calling for intervention of this nature. The effects can be substantial but the chances are that the cultist's abilities to work magic are reduced as a result. Calling for miracles really should be left for 'Do or Die' situations.

Any cult member of fervent rank or above may attempt to call forth a miracle. The character must roll 1D100 against the relevant skill.

- \* Divine Cult – Pact (Deity).
- \* Spirit Cult – Spirit Binding.
- \* Sorcery Cult – Sorcery (Grimoire).

If the number rolled is greater than their skill, then the miracle fails. If the number is less than or equal to their skill then the miracle manifests. However, in this case the value of the skill used is permanently reduced by the number rolled. This may potentially cause the complete loss of the skill and have associated secondary effects. For example, if a Pact with a god is lost, then any POW dedicated to the Pact is returned to the character. Lost skill points can be recovered over time by the normal use of Improvement Rolls.

High Lords, being the performers of deeds, *automatically* succeed when calling for Miracles. However, each request reduces the relevant skill by 2D10% and costs two Hero Points to invoke.

Miracles can take many forms but their effects are always limited to the Rune or Runes associated with the cult. For example a member of the Gloranthan cult of Humakt possessing the Death Rune could not ask for healing or resurrection, whereas they could ask for the mutual death of their slayer!

## Runes

Not every *RuneQuest* cult has or needs Runes; in most cases, Glorantha in particular, Runes are a fundamental part of the cult framework since they derive from the object of worship and determine the magic available to cult members.

A cult can have up to three runes, of any of the types detailed in the Magic Introduction chapter. The most powerful cults will have a mixture of Primal, Form and Power runes but this is by no means a hard and fast rule. Some powerful cults have an affinity with a single rune.

Certain Rune combinations are *not* compatible:

This Rune...	Is Incompatible with...
Cold	Heat
Death	Fertility
Disorder	Harmony
Fate	Luck
Motion	Stasis
Illusion	Truth
Light	Shadow

So, a cult could have Mastery and Death but it could not have Fertility as well, as Fertility and Death are incompatible.

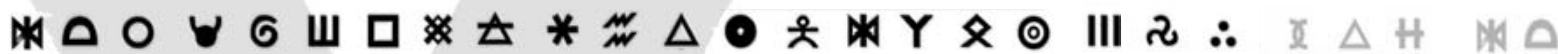
### Common Magic

Cults can offer Common Magic. The range of Common Magic available may be far wider than its Divine, Spirit or Sorcery Magic portfolio; or be limited to a handful of spells the cult finds especially useful. It is therefore not uncommon to see a cult listed as providing 'All' Common Magic spells – meaning all the spells found in *RuneQuest's* Common Magic chapter. Similarly some cults may only provide a list of named spells – or may have special Common magic spells of their own development.

### Divine Magic

The runes a cult has determine what Divine Magic is offered. As already discussed, Divine Magic is a channelling of the runic associations a god has and reflective of that god's behaviour or deeds. A war god, for example, can be expected to have Divine Spells relating to combat and battle; whereas a fertility goddess can be expected to have spells related with healing and growth. Again, there are no hard and fast rules here, save the description of the cult and the compatibility of Divine Spells with the runes associated with the cult. A cult allied with the Motion rune, for instance, will be unlikely to offer a Divine Spell that clearly results in stasis or immobility. Similarly a cult allied with the Light rune will not offer Divine Spells that create darkness or extinguish light.

The number of Divine Spells a cult offers depends on the cult's size and standing. However most cults will offer around four or five Divine Spells to Pious Members or above.



## Spirit Magic

Shamanic cults, or spirit cults, may not offer any Divine Magic or Sorcery, only offering spirits instead, as described in the Spirit Magic chapter. Spirit cults tend to be found amongst primitive, nomadic and barbarian cultures with an animal totem or beast spirit forming the focal point for the cult. Ancestor worship is also prevalent and may even be encountered in civilised cults where the ancestors have performed great deeds. Again, the cult's description readily identifies spirit cults and the magic available.

## SORCERY

Those cults following a sorcerous tradition may have an ideal or philosophy as the focus of veneration, or a particular god, demi-god or saint. The sorcery spells offered are collectively known as a grimoire and cult members have access to the cult's grimoire as described in the Sorcery chapter.

## Cult Skills

These are skills mastered by the cult and considered important to it. Training in these skills is more or less guaranteed with cult members being able to find access to a teacher via a temple, academy, school, shrine or through cult contacts. Cult skills are usually trained at a discount and if so this will be mentioned in the cult's description.

Additionally increasing competence in cult skills is usually mandatory for Adventurers to progress from one rank to the next. Thus, when considering training and spending Improvement Rolls, Adventurers need to consider and then balance-up, their cult advancement requirements.

## Myths

Every cult has myths. A myth is a story or set of stories that describe and exemplify what the cult stands for and how it behaves. Myths are, typically, timeless and concern the deeds of gods or the object of veneration. They may be considered unassailable truths, or stories that provide a meaning or parable but are known to be a work of fiction. The important fact is that a myth explains, teaches and promotes the ethics, values and behaviours of the cult.

Myths can be as simple or elaborate as one wishes them to be. Many myths concern the eternal questions of:

- \* How was the world made?
- \* How did people come into being?
- \* How does the god/spirit/hero handle certain challenges and problems?
- \* How were enemies defeated?
- \* How will the world follow its course and how might it end?
- \* What does my god/spirit/hero do for me?

Myths are powerful because, when observed, they reinforce behaviour and belief. A cult with many myths may have many answers to many questions but each myth will reinforce a certain pattern of behaviour, or demonstrate the right kind of behaviour to a certain set of circumstances.

It is usually the case that no one knows who created the myth and how it came into being; a myth simply is – whether written down or communicated through word of mouth. Myths are typically unquestioned (although the myths of other cults, especially where they conflict with a cult's own myths, may certainly be challenged, even violently), even when it is known that much is fabrication, because the power of the lesson is inherent in the myth's structure. It is easier to reinforce behaviour if one tells a story to show that behaviour in action, rather than simply listing a set of rules and restrictions. Children are particularly receptive to the power of myth and cults ensure that myths form a part of a child's education so that patterns of behaviour and belief can be established early-on.

However, myths go beyond the merely educational. Myths can be entered and experienced. This is the essence of HeroQuesting: a person enters the realm of myth and takes part in its story, re-enacting the deeds of the focus of the cult and emerging at the other end with enlightenment, treasure, power or other benefits relating to the key elements of that myth. For *RuneQuest* purposes, myths, with the right kind of magic, community support or other devices, can become fully immersive and interactive – important stories within stories. Anyone who enters a myth experiences the same things – the same challenges – as the myth's subject. He may not become the god, hero or great spirit but he channels similar experiences. When the experience is over, the individual retains some of that power, even though it may be only a small part, and certainly some of the same insight.

## Mythic Resonance

Every myth has a strength, known as a Resonance. The myth's Resonance represents its power in terms of conveying lessons, wisdom and desired behaviours. The more resonant the myth, the greater its ability to resonate with the character and determine how he behaves.

Every myth has a percentage value reflecting its importance. The higher the value, the more important and valuable the myth.

Resonance has several game effects, depending on circumstances, Adventurers and the cult itself.

### Calling upon a myth to inform actions or for insight

If an Adventurer wants to call upon a myth to gain some insight into a problem or challenge, or gain some general inspiration when faced with a problem, he may attempt to call upon his knowledge of a myth. All the character needs to do is make a standard test against Culture (Own); if his success is *lower* than the myth's Resonance, then he gains insight in one of the following ways:



<i>Critical Success</i>	The character is fully and heroically inspired by the myth; he can clearly see how the myth relates to his situation and determines, from the myth's context, how to prevail. He gains a +30% bonus to a single skill roll (weapon or otherwise) that is used in overcoming the challenge.	just a handful. Note, also, that success does not always mean winning. Myths often have heroes learning valuable lessons from their defeats – so the objective of a particular stage might not be to win but to actively <i>lose</i> – although the character may not be aware of this.
<i>Success</i>	The character gains partial insight or inspiration from the myth. He gains a +15% bonus to a single skill roll (weapon or otherwise) that is used in overcoming the challenge.	* The strength of the challenges and foes he will encounter. As a general rule, the opposing skills used by any challenges, be they magical, combative or otherwise, will be equal to the myth's Resonance but may be adjusted by Games Master to suit circumstances. So, a myth with a 72% Resonance will have adversaries with combat skills or magical skills of at least 72% themselves. The stronger the myth, the greater the challenge.
<i>Failure</i>	The Adventurer gains no particular insight on this occasion.	* Resistance to tampering. In some settings (Glorantha being the most obvious), myths can be altered, radically affecting the culture of those who rely on them – changing their magic, philosophies and so on. The God Learners of Glorantha are the arch Myth Breakers. The myth's Resonance is the resistance of each stage of the myth to <i>fundamental</i> alteration. Whoever is trying to manipulate a myth to fundamentally change it must defeat the stage's Resonance resistance with an appropriate deed or magic; it is impossible for normal myth interaction to result in fundamental change – it must be a dedicated, wilful, magically-supported act.
<i>Fumble</i>	The character has completely misinterpreted the myth in a way that places him at a disadvantage. He suffers a –15% penalty to a single skill roll (weapon or otherwise) that is used in overcoming the challenge.	* Level of reward. The myth's Resonance indicates, but does not guarantee, the level or quality of the reward for completing it. What the reward is requires Games Master fiat; it could be knowledge, a spell, a magical item, gaining an affinity with a rune, or the saving of an entire society from destruction. Myths with a strong Resonance have far-reaching implications for those who believe in them, with rewards that match that strength. Weaker Resonance myths have shallower consequences and, perhaps, less obvious rewards.

#### Interacting with a myth

All myths are interactive and can be entered through appropriate magic. The Resonance score indicates the difficulty of entering the myth, completing the myth, the level of challenge to be expected and the rewards one gains from it.

To enter the myth, a specific ceremony must be undertaken, usually communal and usually led by a High Priest or High Lord of a cult. The myth can resist entry with its Resonance in an Opposed Test against the casting magic skill of the leader of the ceremony (for example Lore (Specific Theology), Spirit Walking, or Sorcery (Grimoire)). If the myth wins the test, the hero cannot enter it until a particular period of time has passed – usually measured in days rather than hours; but could be months, if the character fumbled his roll.

Once inside the myth, the character is forced to re-enact the story of that myth, stage by stage, emulating the actions and deeds of the gods, spirits, heroes or the object of veneration the myth concerns. Here, the myth's Resonance determines several things:

- \* The number of stages (or encounters) that the character *must* face to complete the myth and emerge with a reward of some kind. Myths can have many stages but as a rule of thumb, a myth has *up to* a number of stages equal to its Resonance divided by 10, and rounded up. So, a myth with a Resonance of 72% would have up to 8 stages. The Games Master should decide how many stages must be completed successfully for the character to emerge victorious; it might be all the stages or

#### Myth-enforced behaviour

Although characters can gain special insight from a myth, as described earlier, everyday life myths become ingrained into the psyche and enforce certain patterns of behaviour. Stronger myths are more successful at this. For every myth created, decide what forms of behaviour it seeks to exemplify. These should be simple, clear statements such as...

*Lying is wrong*  
*Bravery is necessary*  
*Tricksters cannot be trusted*  
*Hospitality to enemies and friends is essential*  
*Hard work provides the best rewards*

A single myth can have a number of such behaviours up to its Resonance divided by 20, rounded up.





Whenever a character is faced with a challenge, problem, situation or dilemma where he has a choice of action, where a myth would or could be influential, the appropriate myth asserts itself through its Resonance, forcing the character to behave in a certain way. The character should make a 1D100 roll and note the result. If the roll is *below* the myth's Resonance, he is compelled to behave according to the moral of the myth. If he rolls higher than the myth's Resonance, he may act as he pleases, ignoring the lessons the myth has ingrained into him.

## SAMPLE CULTS

Three cults are presented here as examples of the cult structure explained earlier.

### Orlanth the Dragon

Orlanth the Storm God battled and even slew dragons but in doing so realised his own draconic nature: the capacity to transcend and the self-knowledge that, in all things, the heart of the Cosmic Dragon beats hard and fast. Orlanth split his tongue to learn the draconic language of Auld Wyrnish and Ernalda, his wife, realised her own draconic nature by bearing First Egg.

The cult reveres Orlanth as both Thunder Chief and Dragonfriend. Through worship, Orlanth's draconic wisdom, impetuous and imperfect, can be channelled and made pure, leading to eventual enlightenment through the understanding of the Seven Scrolls of Revelation. Obduran, a left-handed mystic born in the early years of Glorantha's Second Age, explored these mythic concepts and understood the Orlanth Dragonfriend revelation, bringing it to the Orlanthi and enfolded them in the draconic path. This path understands that every man, woman and child possesses Arangorf the Inner Dragon and through acceptance and understanding might attain the levels of enlightenment Orlanth himself underwent, contributing to a greater transformation.

Worship is usually conducted at an existing temple to Orlanth or, if none exists, at a specially created shrine built of stone and bone and decorated with Orlanth's runes and inscriptions or pictograms of his draconic transformation. This is a cult for males and male warriors at that; those who are accepting of Arangorf the Inner Dragon and keen to realise their position in the clan and in battle.

#### Runes

Mastery, Motion

#### Magics

**Common Magic:** Co-Ordination, Mobility, Thunder's Voice.

**Divine Magic:** Blessing (any Cult Skill), Consecrate, Lightning Strike,



#### Myths

**Orlanth Becomes the Dragon** (Resonance 75%) – Behaviours: Accepting Draconic Wisdom; Realising the Inner Dragon.

*Example Rewards: Increased Damage against Dragon-Kind Enemies. Heroic Ability – Heroic Aura*

**Myth of Obduran's Orlanth Dragonfriend Revelation** (Resonance 55%) – Behaviours: Attaining Personal Wisdom; Seeing the Dragon in All Things.

*Example Rewards: Affinity with the Mastery Rune. See Through Trickery (Double Insight skill when dealing with non-draconic worshippers).*

#### Membership, Officers and Ranks

##### Lay Members

Lay Members are any who accept dragons and are prepared to offer worship at the shrines of Orlanth or Orlanth the Dragon.

##### Initiates

Initiates must have five cult skills at a minimum of 30%. They must all dedicate at least 1 POW to their Pact with Orlanth the Dragon.



### Acolytes

Acolytes are the proselytisers of the cult, moving through Genertela spreading the news of Orlanth's draconic Enlightenment. They pave the way for the Runelords. Acolytes must have slain a dragon enemy, have five cult skills of at least 50% dedicating at least 3 POW to their Pact with Orlanth the Dragon. The Pact skill must also be at a minimum of 50%.

### Rune Lord (Dragon Voice)

Dragon Voices must have defeated at least one enemy champion of the draconic way in combat. They must also dedicate at least 5 POW to their Pact with Orlanth the Dragon. Five cult skills must be 80% or higher and the Pact skill must also be 80% or higher. As the heroes of the cult, they are expected to challenge all enemies of Orlanth the Dragon wherever they are found.

The cult has no Runepriests.

### Cult Skills

The cult offers training in the following skills. Pact is mandatory as one of the five skills for joining and advancing within the cult: *Acrobatics, Athletics, Pact (Orlanth the Dragon), Persistence, Resilience, any Sword style and any Spear style.*

## The Cult of Fire Dancer (Spirit Cult)

Fire Dancer was a major fire spirit who danced in the wilds during the dream time. Worshipped by the hunter gatherer tribes, she was trapped between two hilltop monoliths when the darkness came and remained entombed until awoken by the new sun when she was awoken by tribal heroes who inadvertently completed her quests and freed her.

The fire spirit's cult is local to the region, popular with the tribes living on the open plains of the sweeping wilderness: she gave them the gift of fire and venerating her prevents the bush fires that have devastated the lands of non-worshippers. However, the cult's vibrant, passionate nature is attracting a growing number of worshippers from regions bordering the wilds who have heard rumours of her power. She is linked with the Runes of Fire and Spirit and provides both Common Magic and salamander spirits to her followers.

She dislikes all water divinities, which are her antithesis.

### Runes

Fire, Spirit



### Magic

**Common Magic:** Fireblade, Ignite

**Spirits:** Ancestor Spirits (original tribal heroes who freed the Fire Spirit), Guardian Spirit, Salamanders

### Myths

**Myth of the Fire Dancer** (Resonance 50%) – Behaviours: Abhor Slavery, Revere the Ancestors

*Example Rewards: Affinity with the Fire Rune; Gain Fetch: the Great Fire Daughter*

**Imprisonment of the Goddess** (Resonance 70%) – Avoid Water, Always Free Slaves

*Example Rewards: Heroic Ability: Fire Immunity*



## Membership

### Followers

Followers of the Fire Spirit must have five of the cult skills.

### Spirit Worshipper

Spirit Worshipers must have five cult skills at 30% and must perform a raid, involving fire, upon an enemy tribe.

### Shaman

Shaman must have five cult skills at 50% and must perform the Myth of the Fire Dancer to prove their worth as a shaman of the Fire Goddess's tribe.

### High Shaman

High Shaman must have five cult skills at 75% and must perform the Imprisonment of the Goddess myth to prove their devotion to the Fire Goddess's tribe.

### Cult Skills

The Cult offers training in the following skills which reflect the goddess's myths – *Acrobatics, Dance, Persistence, Resilience, Spirit Binding, Spirit Walking and Survival.*

## Order of the Black Serpent (Sorcery Cult)

The Order of the Black Serpent follows the teachings of Menakhem Ka, the insane demi-god of the Ziggurat of the Eclipse. His desire to become a true god was articulated in his blasphemous grimoire before he departed into the depths of the great desert.

Since then, the order has swollen in size from the original eight disciples and now numbers some 800 eager, would-be gods who seek to overthrow the established order wherever they establish one of their heretical schools.

The cult's power stems from the Beast and Earth runes, twisting the power of both through the tortuous formula of the Black Serpent Grimoire – which all members of the order are forced to study.

### Runes

Beast and Earth

### Magic

**Common Magic:** Disruption, Mobility and Speedart

**Sorcery (Black Serpent Grimoire):** Animate (Sand), Dominate (Serpent), Form/Set (Sand), Shapechange (Human to Serpent).

### Myths

The Transfiguration of Menakhem Ka (Resonance 90%) – Worship the Black Snake, Become a God, Destroy Mongooses.

*Example Rewards: Affinity with the Beast Rune, Heroic Abilities: Immunity to Poison; Reincarnate as Black Snake.*

## Membership

### Novice

Novices must allow themselves to be bitten by one of the cult's feared Grey Mambas. Those who survive are permitted membership!



## Edric's Saga - Orlanth the Dragon

*Edric lives in Ralios, a region where dragon worship persists amongst some tribes. Edric's tribe believes that the storm god, Orlanth, became a dragon when he gained draconic enlightenment. The villages the tribe occupies have many shrines to Orlanth the Dragon, depicting the storm god clad in dragon scale armour and their myths speak of Orlanth's deeds in draconic form.*

*At the age of 21 all males of the tribe are expected to become initiates of the Orlanth the Dragon cult and Edric is no exception. On his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday he is taken into the tribe's most sacred shrine where he must undergo certain testing rituals – of his courage, his magic and his understanding of Orlanth the Dragon myths.*

*The cult skills are Spear fighting, Lore (Orlanth the Dragon), Evade, Perception and Common Magic. Edric has each of these skills at more than 30% and so passes the tests involving his skills.*

*Next is his commitment to the cult: this is sealed through Edric establishing a Pact with Orlanth the Dragon. In a deeply mystical ceremony Edric is tested with fire and words and, in the final act, slices his palm and lets some of his blood drop into the Sacred Cauldron representing the vessel used to collect Orlanth's own blood when he fought the mighty dragon, Sh'kabarzeel. This rite creates the Pact (Orlanth the Dragon) and Edric's player enters this onto his character sheet. Edric dedicates 4 POW to the Pact, making his Pact (Orlanth the Dragon) 14% (CHA + 4 dedicated POW). He is now an initiate of the cult and bound by its teachings.*

*The benefits Edric derives from his cult are as follows:*

- \* *Edric can learn the cult's Divine Magic spells and cast them at Lore (Orlanth the Dragon) 52%. The inherent Magnitude for any Divine Spell he casts is equal to his Pact divided by 10 and rounded up, so Edric's Divine Spells will have a Magnitude of 2. As his Pact deepens, so will the potency of his Divine Magic. He can also pray for up to four Divine Spells – the amount of his POW dedication. Edric learns, through his initiation and later progress in the cult, Dismiss Elemental, Mindlink, Soul Sight and Channel Strength.*
- \* *He can gain access to training in the cult's skills at a much reduced cost with dedicated teachers. The cult also specialises in several Common Magic spells, which again Edric can learn at reduced cost and with dedicated teachers.*
- \* *His behaviour is now subject to the cult's two myths: Orlanth Raises the Dragon (Resonance 65%) and Orlanth's Draconic Enlightenment (Resonance 58%). Although these myths influence his behaviour, they also lend specific lessons and insight, from a draconic perspective. Edric will gain useful knowledge through interpreting and applying his understanding of these myths to his own actions.*
- \* *Most importantly, Edric has the support of the entire cult behind him. As an initiate he will be expected to work long and hard for the cult but in return he will be able to call upon colleagues and fellow cultists for help or advice. Furthermore, initiation into the cult marks Edric as a Man within the tribe and this is a moment of great pride for the young Adventurer.*

### Apprentice

Apprentices must have five of the cult skills at 30% at least and must have killed at least one foe of the cult using poison or one of the cult's sorcery spells.

### Adept

Adepts must have five of the cult skills at 50% at least and undertaken the Transfiguration myth, emerging with the Immunity to Poison Heroic Ability.

### Mage

Magi of the order must have five of the cult skills at 75% and have undertaken the Transfiguration myth emerging with the Affinity with the Beast Rune and Black Snake Reincarnation Secret.

### Cult Skills

The cult offers training in: Craft (Poison), Resilience, Stealth, Any Dagger style, Any Bow style, Sorcery (Black Serpent Grimoire) and Manipulation.

## CHAPTER 12:

# HEROIC ABILITIES

What separates a hero from an Adventurer?

Actions, deeds, reputation and history, obviously, but in some cases a hero is defined by his capabilities. A lucky few demonstrate innate talents that distinguish them from the rank and file. These talents and capabilities are known as *Heroic Abilities*.

Heroic Abilities are powers and enhancements available through seeking reclusive masters, HeroQuesting or progression within a cult. Adventurers gain these abilities, which augment their existing skills and magic, as rewards for heroic aspirations and actions.

Gaining a Heroic Ability is not as simple as training in a skill or buying a spell. Heroic Abilities need to be earned and usually in one of the following ways:

- \* Attaining a certain rank, usually High Lord or High Priest, in a cult.
- \* Undertaking epic or heroic quests, either as part of cult business or some other endeavour decided by the Games Master.
- \* Studying with another hero – learning from them, emulating them and, eventually, developing a similar technique.

At their simplest, Heroic Abilities are gained once an Adventurer has accrued enough Hero Points to buy one. However, this should never be the *sole* criteria for gaining a Heroic Ability. Games Masters should bear in mind that a Heroic Ability is not a piece of merchandise a character can pick up at the market after accumulating enough ‘money’ in the form of Hero Points. These are rare and wonderful abilities, not merely a ‘character sheet upgrade’. In order to learn these abilities, an Adventurer must have proved himself heroically and not simply on a one-off endeavour. True heroes continue to live up to their reputations and are prepared to undergo countless hazards with a more or less selfless outlook. A Rune Lord, for example, might have completed a quest concerning a cult’s core myths and come across a teacher for a particular Heroic

Ability as a result – and he may have had to undergo a further quest after that to prove his worth to the teacher.

Thus, although an Adventurer might reach the rank of, say, Rune Priest in a cult and thereby become eligible for a Heroic Ability (if his cult offers them) he is not necessarily entitled to add it to his character sheet. The Games Master may very well require the Adventurer to earn the Heroic Ability through a specific scenario or further adventure.

On some occasions Adventurers will encounter heroes who already have Heroic Abilities and seek to learn from this master. This is permissible of course but no self respecting hero will ever gladly, easily or freely impart knowledge and expertise that he has spent years earning unless the prospective pupil demonstrates his own worth. Even though a student wanting to learn a Heroic Ability might have the right amount of Hero Points to spend, the Games Master is fully within his rights to insist on the character proving himself in some fashion before the Heroic Ability is taught.

## USING HEROIC ABILITIES

The description of the ability indicates how it is used in game play. However, invoking a Heroic Ability always costs the Adventurer one Magic Point whenever it is used. Although Heroic Abilities are not magical powers, they are, to some extent, fuelled by the same reserves that power Common Magic. Invoking a Heroic Ability involves delving into one’s own character, channelling the intangible forces that fire deeds of heroism.

To invoke a Heroic Ability no skill roll is needed; simply the spending of one Magic Point and the clear statement of the ability to be used in advance of any skill roll it applies to.

The duration of the ability is given in its description and at the end of the ability’s duration, its effects end. The Adventurer can invoke the ability again immediately afterwards, as long as he has the Magic Points to do so and as long as the ability’s effects do not leave him incapacitated (through fatigue, for instance).

## HEROIC ABILITIES DESCRIBED

### Arrow Cutting

**Requirements:** DEX 15 or higher, any close combat style at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** A number of melee rounds equal to CON

Your reactions are preternatural, allowing you to parry missile attacks with melee weapons instead of being limited to a shield.

### Awesome Smash

**Requirements:** STR 15 or higher, any unarmed or bludgeon weapon style at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 12

**Duration:** One melee attack

Invoked whilst wielding a bludgeoning weapon or using Unarmed combat, you cause an automatic knockback of 1 metre per 2 points of rolled damage *before* it is reduced by parrying, armour or magic. If the victim strikes any obstacle they smash into it, fall prone and automatically receive the attacker's Damage Bonus to a random location, ignoring any protection.

### Battle Fury

**Requirements:** CON 15 or higher, any close combat style at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 12

**Duration:** A number of melee rounds equal to CON

You are a terrible foe on the battlefield, as fearsome and unstoppable as a raging wild boar. You can enter a Battle Fury as a Combat Action. While in a Battle Fury, you automatically succeed in any Resilience roll required for sustaining a Serious or Major Wound. You also automatically succeed in any Persistence roll when resisting mental or emotional attacks. Upon leaving Battle Fury, you automatically gain three levels of Fatigue.

### Born to the Saddle

**Requirements:** POW 15 or higher, Riding 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 8

**Duration:** Until the terrain or situation has been cleared, or if in combat, a number of melee rounds equal to CON

Sitting in the saddle is more natural to you than walking. Each time this ability is invoked you may ignore any and all riding based situational modifiers for terrain or the mount's behaviour. In addition while mounted you may use your Riding skill instead of your Evade skill when evading missiles.



### Dead Eye

**Requirements:** DEX 15 or higher, any ranged Weapon skill at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** One missile attack

Your accuracy with either thrown or projected missile weapons (whichever type you have mastery in) is the stuff of legends. Invoking this ability allows you to increase the range of your chosen type of missile weapons by 50% and if you successfully hit you may automatically select the location struck – permitting you to bypass the effects of anything less than total cover.

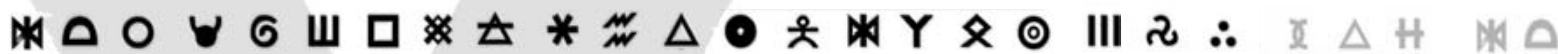
### Defiant Leap

**Requirements:** STR 15 or higher, Athletics 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** One extraordinary jump

You are able to defy gravity when performing a single vertical or horizontal jump. You may roll your Damage Bonus and add this value in metres to the distance achieved.



## Deflecting Parry

**Requirements:** DEX 15 or higher, any close combat weapon style at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** One parry

You may increase the size of your parrying weapon or shield by two steps for a single parry. This might allow an unarmed defender to ward off a halberd, or the user of a buckler to deflect a mounted lance attack.

## Disease Immunity

**Requirements:** CON 15 or higher, Resilience 70% or higher

**Hero Points:** 8

**Duration:** Continuous – body automatically burns 1 Magic Point when it is infected

You are immune to all normal diseases. Each time you are exposed to a disease, your body unconsciously invokes this ability and purges the infection. Magical diseases will still affect you, though you gain a +20% bonus to tests to resist them.

## Duellist

**Requirements:** DEX 15 or higher, any 1H combat style at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** One melee round

Mastery of your chosen duelling weapon allows you, for brief moments, to react with blinding speed. As a free act you can invoke this ability to grant yourself a *single* extra Combat Action for that round. This extra CA may only be used for attacks or parries.

## Empathic Wound

**Requirements:** POW 15 or higher, Influence skill at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** One injury

One of the more unusual of the Heroic Abilities, Empathic Wound is a dangerous and taxing ability and is normally only used by those who shun or forswear violence. When invoked, any damage you suffer from being harmed is mirrored upon your attacker, whether it be from torture, stuck by a weapon, or targeted by a spell. Your inviolate sanctity causes the assailant to psychosomatically or mystically suffer the exact same effects of any damage caused to you.

## Heroic Aura

**Requirements:** CHA 15 or higher, Influence skill at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 12

**Duration:** One melee round

Your presence is not only heartening to your comrades, you are also a shining example to others. You may take a Combat Action to bolster all allies within your CHA in metres with your presence, either gaining your CHA as a bonus to any Persistence or Resilience tests they are called upon to make, or as a bonus to all combat styles for the remainder of the Combat Round.

## Linguist

**Requirements:** INT 15 or higher, two Language skills (aside from your native tongue) at 50% or higher

**Hero Points:** 8

**Duration:** Several hours

Your study of languages has taught you the common roots of all tongues, allowing you to pick up new foreign languages with startling ease. Invoking this ability, you must either converse with a speaker of a strange language for one hour, or simply hear the language being spoken for two or more hours. You then automatically gain the Language skill in that language at its basic score. A successful improvement roll when improving a Language skill doubles the skill points gained (roll 2D4+2 rather than 1D4+1).

## Loremaster

**Requirements:** INT 15 or higher, four Lore skills at 50% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** One recall attempt

You are a font of knowledge, possessed of more learning than even you can readily remember. Any time you fail a Lore Skill Test, you are entitled to make an immediate Persistence test (with the same modifiers as the original Lore test) to see if you can recall some shred of knowledge relating to the subject at hand. Typically, this will reveal less information than a successful Lore test would have but it should still be enough to be of benefit to you.

## Mighty Blow

**Requirements:** STR 15 or higher, any close combat weapon style at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** One melee attack

You can increase the size of your weapon by two steps for a single attack. This helps the blow overwhelm any parry which intercepts it, allowing damage to penetrate.

## Poison Immunity

**Requirements:** CON 15 or higher, Resilience 70% or higher

**Hero Points:** 8

**Duration:** Continuous – body automatically burns 1 Magic Point when it is poisoned

You are immune to all normal poisons. Each time you are poisoned, your body unconsciously invokes this ability and purges the toxin.



Magical poisons will still affect you, though you gain a +20% bonus to tests to resist them.

## Reincarnation

**Requirements:** POW 15 or higher, Pact, Spirit Walking or Sorcery (Grimoire) 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 12

**Duration:** One Use

Upon death you are reincarnated as an animal or creature reflecting the runic affiliation or nature of your cult. Your physical characteristics (STR, CON, SIZ and DEX) become those of the creature you are reborn into but your INT, POW and CHA remain those of the character. This Heroic Ability does not require a Magic Point to use. It can only be used once and it is gone.

## Severing Slash

**Requirements:** DEX 15 or higher, any cutting weapon style at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** One melee attack

If wielding a cutting weapon, you can maximise its damage for a single blow.

## Sundering Strike

**Requirements:** STR 15 or higher, any close combat weapon style at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 12

**Duration:** One melee attack

You can smash or cleave an inanimate object with no harm to your weapon. Any damage you roll completely ignores the Armour Points of the object. Thus you could cut a chain, or smash a door with a single blow. If attacking an opponent's weapon, you must succeed in the attack and equal or beat the opponent's level of success to successfully strike the parrying object.

## Tireless

**Requirements:** CON 15 or higher, Athletics 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 8

**Duration:** Special

Your stamina is Heroic, allowing you to continue fighting or working long after others drop from exhaustion. Each time you invoke this ability you reduce your Fatigue by one level.

## Wall Leaping

**Requirements:** DEX 15 or higher, Acrobatics 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 10

**Duration:** One round of running

Displaying incredible agility, you can run along or up walls for short distances to escape or gain a better position against

an enemy. You may only use Wall Leaping if not Overloaded, Exhausted or Debilitated. The entirety of your movement in a Combat Round may be made along a vertical surface, allowing you to bypass an obstruction that might otherwise block your path or even climb a wall at lightning speed. However, you cannot continue moving along a vertical surface from Combat Round to Combat Round – you must reach level ground (or a suitable perch) by the end of your last Combat Action in a round or fall.







## CHAPTER 13:

# CREATURES



The world is wide and dangerous. Beasts of all descriptions – natural and supernatural – hunt, lurk and prey on the unwary. Non-human, intelligent races co-exist with humankind, sometimes in competition, sometimes harmoniously and sometimes acrimoniously. Adventurers, whether at home or on their travels, will encounter creatures of all persuasions and will hunt them, be hunted by them, trade with them and, inevitably, battle them.

This chapter details a selection of creatures for *RuneQuest*, along with the rules that distinguish them from Adventurers. However, as is evident from each creature's entry, they possess the same characteristics and attributes as humans and, very often, similar skills. This means that some creatures can also be played as Adventurers, for those players and Games Masters who want, and enjoy, a mixture of human and non-human races in their *RuneQuest* games.

## ADVENTURING CREATURES

Every creature detailed in this chapter has a set of statistics that may be used to represent most individuals of that species that the players face – these are considered to be 'average' members of the species.

Alternatively, Games Masters are free to generate their own creature characters, using all the normal rules in the Adventurer Creation chapter. Every creature listed in this chapter has random Characteristics and any important traits listed, allowing Games Masters to create a character from each creature race. In addition, Games Masters might like to use the experience rules from the Improving Adventurers section to make more powerful creatures for players to confront. This is particularly relevant when creating 'leader' type characters. For example, if

there is a broo lair within a scenario, it makes perfect sense to have perhaps a dozen of the 'average' broo and a leader who is much more powerful than the rest.

## CREATURES AND INTELLIGENCE

Some of the creatures listed in this chapter have randomly determined INT, such as the broo with an INT of 2D6+6. Others have only a single number listed as INT. A creature with a randomly determined INT is considered sapient – it is a rational creation capable of logical thought and self-determination. A creature with a fixed INT (any INT listed as a single number, rather than a die roll) is sentient but not sapient.

Fixed-INT creatures tend to operate on instinct, rather than logic or intuition. This does not mean that all fixed-INT creatures with the same INT score are identically intelligent but it does mean that all lions (INT 5) are more intelligent than horses (INT 4). Creatures with a very large fixed INT have rudimentary reasoning abilities, as well as a set of complex and finely-honed instincts.

## TRAITS

Many creatures have Traits. These are special abilities above and beyond their normal Characteristics, Attributes and Skills. The full description of these Traits and their effect on the game is covered here.

### Breathe Flame

The creature may breathe flame over an area as a Combat Action. The flame covers a cone in front of the creature, which stretches for its POW in metres. At its furthest extent, the cone is equal to ½ the creature's POW in width.

Any character caught in the flame suffers the noted fire damage to all Hit Locations, though a character may dive for cover to halve this damage and Armour Points count as normal.

A creature may only breathe flame once in a specified time period (usually once per hour or once per day). Further attempts to breathe flame within this time period require the creature to make a Resilience test, with a cumulative –20% penalty for every attempt.

#### Dark Sight

Allows the character to treat pitch black conditions as darkness.

#### Diseased

The creature carries a contagious disease, which is passed on to anyone who is wounded by its attacks, or remains in close proximity to its body without sanitary precautions. The description will describe the particular contagion the creature employs.

#### Earth Sense

Some creatures are so in tune with the rock around them that they can work perfectly well in the total darkness of the deep. By sensing heat and air pressure, a creature with Earth Sense can fight and make Perception tests with no penalty, so long as their target is no more than 10 metres away.

#### Formidable Natural Weapons

This creature's natural weapons are as tough and durable as metal. As such they may parry weapon attacks. The SIZ of the weapon, for parrying purposes, is given in the description of the creature's attacks.

#### Life Sense

In tune with the rhythms of nature, this creature can determine the vitality of any living creature by touch alone. If the creature touches another and makes a successful Perception test, it will learn of the target's current Hit Points, Fatigue level and whether it is currently afflicted by any poison or disease.

#### Magic Sense

This allows supernatural creatures, such as spirits, to perceive the magical aura of other creatures. A successful Perception test reveals the current Magic Points and any extant spells or magical effects upon another creature or object.

#### Night Sight

Allows the creature to treat partial darkness as illuminated and darkness as partial darkness.

#### Poison

One of the creature's attacks, or possibly its very form, is poisoned. The description will describe the particular poison or venom the creature employs.

## CREATURE DESCRIPTIONS

The following are just a few species of creatures that can be found in traditional fantasy settings, including Glorantha and many other worlds. More creatures will be found in *RuneQuest* expansions – both setting books and those dedicated to creatures and monsters, such as the forthcoming *Monster Coliseum*.

**Characteristics:** Both random and average characteristic scores are listed here. Use the average characteristics for a typical member of the species; but for detailed creatures, randomly generated versions can be used.

Some creatures have no entry for CHA: this reflects animals, mostly, and indicates that CHA is not an important characteristic for this kind of creature.

**Hit Locations:** As well as the random scores for determining which Hit Location is struck in combat, there are two scores listed – the first is the natural Armour Points of the location (if any) and the second is its Hit Points.

**Attributes, Traits, Skills and Magic:** Skills, Combat Actions, Strike Rank Modifier, Movement, Traits, Typical Armour and Special Rules are noted beneath the Characteristic and Hit Location entries. The skills are the basic skills for the creature type – individual creatures may well possess enhanced scores or additional skills.

All creatures have Persistence and Resilience scores. Generally, Persistence is calculated as the creature's POW multiplied by 3 with a +10% bonus added and Resilience using the same formula but based on CON. Some creatures have higher or lower Persistence or Resilience values than these formulae generate, reflecting their innate nature.

Where a creature is capable of using magic, the magical type it is skilled with is quoted, along with the appropriate skill value (Common Magic %, Pact and Lore %, and, for Sorcery, Sorcery (Grimoire) and Manipulation %). The spells the creature typically has are also listed but for custom designed creatures these can be varied, in line with the creature's magical type.

Where a creature can fly (dragons, for example), or swim, two Movement rates are given, separated by a slash. The first Movement rate is the creature's ground movement; the second for flying or swimming, as appropriate.

**Weapons:** The creature's preferred and available attacks and/or combat styles are listed. Where a combat style is concerned, the weapons are noted and the respective sizes and reach listed. Where weapon and shield styles are listed, size and reach for the weapon and then the shield are separated by a slash. The AP/HP for the weapons are similarly listed in the same order.



## Broo

Creatures of Chaos, broo are twisted hybrids of men and deer, antelopes or goats. They are the beastmen of legend and engage in the foulest practices, rubbing dung into their fur and worshipping the gods of disease. There is no standard form for a broo and all are mongrels roaming wastes, deserts, swamps and mountain ranges. Raiding any group of creatures weaker than themselves, they often take prisoners for sadistic torture or food.

Broo frequently carry disease: the chance of a broo having a disease is equal to its POW x5 (so 55% for a typical broo). If so, anyone wounded by the broo is exposed to its disease.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+6	13	1-3	Right Leg	-7
CON	1D6+12	16	4-6	Left Leg	-7
SIZ	1D6+12	16	7-9	Abdomen	-8
INT	2D6+6	13	10-12	Chest	-9
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Arm	-6
DEX	3D6	11	16-18	Left Arm	-6
CHA	2D6	7	19-20	Head	3/7

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D2
<i>Magic Points</i>	11
<i>Movement</i>	8m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+12

Typical Armour: Horns (AP 3, Head only)

*Traits:* Diseased (Creeping Chills – see page 55)

*Skills:* Athletics 60%, Dodge 40%, Perception 50%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 55%, Sleight 45%, Stealth 15%, Survival 40%, Tracking 25%

## Weapons

Type	SIZ	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Head Butt	S	T	60%	1D6+1D2	As for Head
Club	M	S	60%	1D6+1D2	4/4
Shortspear & Shield	M/L	L/S	50%	1D8+1D2/ 2	4/5 and 4/12





## Brown Bear

Bears are often unpredictable and can display vicious or cowardly behaviour on a whim. Some adventurers manage to scare them away from camps with bravado while others have paid a heavy price for this approach. Sleeping for long periods over winter, bears will occasionally forage the snow-bound wilderness, typically preying on cattle and deer but, being true omnivores, they are also opportunistic when it comes to food.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+15	26	1-3	Right Hind Leg	3/8
CON	2D6+6	13	4-6	Left Hind Leg	3/8
SIZ	3D6+15	26	7-9	Abdomen	3/9
INT	5	5	10-12	Chest	3/10
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Front Leg	3/8
DEX	3D6	11	16-18	Left Front Leg	3/8
CHA	—	—	19-20	Head	3/8

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D12
<i>Magic Points</i>	11
<i>Movement</i>	24m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+8

*Typical Armour:* Fur, 3 Armour Points

*Traits:* Formidable Natural Weapons

*Skills:* Athletics 60%, Perception 50%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 49%, Stealth 15%, Survival 60%, Tracking 25%

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	S	T	60%	1D8+1D12	As for Head
Claw	M	S	50%	1D6+1D12	As for Leg



## Dark Troll

Ancient, intelligent beings possessing a natural affinity with the Darkness rune, dark trolls inhabit caves and subterranean lairs and wastelands. Their appetites are voracious and trolls can digest most materials, including rock and metal. Dark trolls stand at over 2 metres in height and weigh in the region of 130 kilos. With snouted faces and large, tusks projecting from the lower jaw they present a fearsome sight. Their skin is usually dark grey and mottled and their bodies tend towards muscular obesity (considered a healthy sign by members of their own species).

Dark trolls can be skilled magicians, especially with spells involving darkness. The statistics given here show a dark troll's typical spells but those dark trolls belonging to one of the many trollish cults will also have access to Divine Magic.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+6	17	1-3	Right Hind Leg	1/6
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Hind Leg	1/6
SIZ	3D6+8	19	7-9	Abdomen	1/7
INT	2D6+6	13	10-12	Chest	1/8
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Front Leg	1/5
DEX	3D6	11	16-18	Left Front Leg	1/5
CHA	3D6	11	19-20	Head	1/6

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D6
<i>Magic Points</i>	11
<i>Movement</i>	8m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+12

*Typical Armour:* Toughened skin (AP 1)

*Traits:* Darksense

*Skills:* Athletics 40%, Brawn 46%, Perception 40%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 43%, Stealth 30%, Survival 40%

*Magic:* Common Magic 32%: Bludgeon 2, Darkwall

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Club	M	S	50%	2D6	4/4
Great Hammer & Shield (Kite)	H/H	L/S	40%	1D10+3+1D6	4/10 and 4/18
Sling	L	—	30%	1D8+1D6	1/2



## Dragon

Vast, intelligent and awe-inspiring, dragons are enormous flying reptiles that can breathe flame. The statistics given here relate to the traditional western dragon of legend but many varieties exist. Dragons tend to be solitary creatures but all are equipped with claws, fangs, astoundingly long lifespans and a surfeit of magic. Where magic is concerned, dragons typically have a selection of Common Magic spells at their disposal. The statistics here give an example of the sorts of spells a dragon has but different individuals may well have more. As intelligent beings, dragons can also work sorcery.



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	20D6	70	1-2	Tail	12/20
CON	10D6	35	3-4	Right Hind Leg	12/20
SIZ	10D6+30	65	5-6	Left Hind Leg	12/20
INT	6D6	21	7-8	Hindquarters	12/21
POW	4D6+12	26	9-10	Forequarters	12/21
DEX	4D6	14	11-12	Right Wing	12/19
CHA	6D6	21	13-14	Left Wing	12/19
			15-16	Right Front Leg	12/20
			17-18	Left Front Leg	12/20
			19-20	Head	12/20

<i>Combat Actions</i>	3
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+3D12
<i>Magic Points</i>	26
<i>Movement</i>	12m/20m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+18

*Typical Armour:* Dragon scale (AP 12)

*Traits:* Breathe Flame (4D6, 1/hour), Dark Sight, Formidable Natural Weapons, Night Sight

*Skills:* Athletics 120%, Brawn 135%, Evaluate 100%, Influence 150%, Lore (all) 100%, Persistence 88%, Resilience 115%, Tracking 110%

*Magic:* Common Magic 68%: Countermagic 4, Demoralise, Detect Gems, Detect Gold, Glamour 2, Mobility 4

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	E	L	125%	1D10+3D12	As for Head
Claw	E	VL	95%	1D8+3D12	As for Leg
Tail	H	VL	90%	1D6+3D12 / 2	As for Tail



## Dwarf

Often at conflict with elves, an ancient conflict that stretches back to their creation, dwarfs are servants of the Earth, revering The Great Maker and often have considerable skill as artificers and artisans. They will, however, set aside their differences to take up arms against the forces of Darkness – making them the enemies of trolls. They have a great love of their underground homes, venturing to the surface only to gain treasure and knowledge before returning to their halls to hoard both. Dwarf character is often avaricious but usually has a strong sense of duty.

Dwarfs are practitioners of sorcery, which fits with their world-view. Common Magic is sometimes available to them but usually dismissed as a lesser magical discipline, inferior to the craft and skill sorcery requires.



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	4D6	14	1–3	Right Leg	5/6
CON	2D6+12	19	4–6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ	1D6+6	10	7–9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	2D6+6	13	10–12	Chest	5/8
POW	3D6	11	13–15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	2D6	7	16–18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	3D6	11	19–20	Head	5/6

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+0
<i>Magic Points</i>	11
<i>Movement</i>	6m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+10 (+3 if armoured)

*Typical Armour:* Chainmail (AP5, –7 Strike Rank Penalty)

*Traits:* Earth Sense, Dark Sight

*Skills:* Athletics 50%, Brawn 53%, Craft (stone or metal working) 70%, Engineering 35%, Evaluate 60%, Lore (Mineral) 80%, Mechanisms 40%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 67%

*Magic:* Sorcery (Dwarf Grimoire) 56%, Manipulation 54%: Animate (Rock or Metal), Damage Resistance, Form/Set (Rock or Metal), Holdfast

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Mace & Shield (Target)	M/L	S/S	75%	1D8	6/6 and 4/12
Battleaxe – 2H	M	M	65%	1D8+1	4/8
Light Crossbow	L	—	45%	1D8	4/5



## Elementals

Elementals are otherworldly entities that manifest themselves as animate natural forces or materials. They represent the quintessential incarnation of a particular element. The most common are gnomes, salamanders, sylphs and undines, which form bodies from earth, fire, air and water, respectively.

Elementals are dimly intelligent entities that lack CHA or CON and are thereby immune to any effects which require Resilience rolls. An elemental's SIZ is represented as a volume rather than a number, as these nebulously formed creatures have no set proportions. For example, an elemental may be described as having a SIZ of three cubic metres. When a numerical value is needed for an elemental's SIZ, the elemental's normal Hit Points may be used as its SIZ. For example, if an elemental with 10 Hit Points climbed into a box and was lifted by an adventurer, its SIZ could be treated as if it was 10. Normally, however, salamanders, shades and sylphs have little or no mass, composed as they are of fire, darkness and air.

As fixed INT creatures, elementals tend to act on very basic instincts. They do not have the base physical needs biological entities have, such as eating, sleeping and reproducing and are usually inactive. If threatened, elementals will defend themselves or flee, otherwise they simply do what is natural for their form: undines flow to the lowest spot and sit there, shades lurk in the shadows, sylphs float on the wind, gnomes stand immobile and salamanders lounge about setting fire to nearby objects.

Elementals are most often encountered when they are summoned and dominated by a spellcaster. Many spell users with the requisite knowledge make frequent use of elementals, as they are powerful creatures whose rudimentary INT is nonetheless sufficient to understand and carry out the orders of the summoner.

When an elemental is summoned, there must be enough of the appropriate raw material or force present for the elemental to manifest itself. For example, a 10 cubic metre salamander would require an inferno and would be unable to manifest in a rainstorm with no source of nearby flame larger than a lantern. Likewise, a one cubic metre undine would require a tub or cauldron filled with water and would be unable to manifest in a desert. No matter how much of the element is available, an elemental may not be larger than its SIZ. If insufficient material is available, the elemental will simply not form. For this reason, earth elementals (gnomes) and air elementals (sylphs) are the most commonly summoned elementals, as there is almost always plenty of earth and air at hand.

All elementals, no matter their composition, may be struck and damaged with normal weapons, breaking up their construction

and eventually disrupting the underlying matrix. Elementals have only one Hit Location and no armour. When an elemental is reduced to zero Hit Points, the material being animated as its body immediately dissipates (or collapses, in the case of gnomes and undines) and its spirit returns to the other world. The spirit may be summoned again to inhabit another vessel of the appropriate type.

Elementals attack by engulfing their enemies and cannot be parried, only evaded. Failing to evade usually leads to being harmed by some secondary effect.

A successful attack roll is always required to strike an elemental, even if the striking character is currently engulfed by one. Elementals do not parry or evade blows in combat, but are compensated by being naturally immune to most combat manoeuvres which might be used against them.

## Gnomes

A gnome is an elemental of the earth, composed of soil and pebbles. A gnome cannot be summoned or travel through areas composed of solid rock. Instead gnomes move through the earth, travelling just below the surface and often leave a trail of disturbed soil that marks their passage. A gnome cannot leave the earth and when seen in the open, it appears to be a slow whirlpool of dirt.

## Abilities

A gnome can open up pits in the soil, make tunnels and find buried objects. It can also be used for holding objects stuck into the dirt, keeping loose tunnel roofs from collapsing and forming mounds, ridges and ditches in the soil no larger than the elemental's volume.

A gnome can carry a person with it as it swims through the soil, provided it is strong enough to lift the person. The gnome cannot, however, provide air for that person and unless the person being carried has some magical means of breathing, he may suffocate during the trip. A gnome can only carry an unresisting passenger in this manner. A gnome can carry as many people as its STR can handle.

## Combat

A gnome attacks by dragging its victims into the ground. It can swallow up targets of up to 10 points of SIZ for each cubic metre of its volume. If it can engulf over half the SIZ of an enemy, the victim is dragged down to its waist (or fore and hind quarters) and cannot manoeuvre. A creature so trapped may make an opposed Athletics or Brawn test against the gnome's Brawn skill to break free. If the gnome can engulf the entire SIZ of an enemy, then he begins to suffocate. Escape requires the same opposed test but this time at a -20% penalty.





If the gnome is large enough, it may attack several enemies simultaneously, provided they are in close proximity to each other.

Once a gnome has engulfed its victim, it may additionally crush them – inflicting the gnome’s Damage Modifier to all Hit Locations engulfed every round. Armour protects against this damage.

### CHARACTERISTICS & ATTRIBUTES

All of a gnome’s Characteristics except its DEX are predicated upon the size of the gnome. Each cubic metre the gnome possesses gives it 1D6+6 STR, 1D6 POW, one point of fixed INT and 1D6+6 Hit Points. All gnomes have a DEX of 1D6. A gnome’s Brawn skill and Damage Modifier is computed with the gnome’s STR x 2, rather than STR + SIZ.



The following statistics are for a gnome of three cubic metres.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+18	29	1–20	Body	–/29
CON	—	—			
SIZ	3 cubic m	3 cubic m			
INT	3	3			
POW	3D6	11			
DEX	1D6	4			
CHA	—	—			

*Combat Actions*  
*Damage Modifier*  
*Magic Points*  
*Movement*  
*Strike Rank*

1  
 +1D12  
 11  
 4m  
 +4

*Typical Armour:* None

*Traits:* Earth Sense

*Skills:* Brawn 58%, Engulf 100%, Perception 35%, Persistence 43%

## Salamanders

Salamanders are elementals of fire, composed of living, writhing flame. They must be summoned from an existing fire large enough to accommodate the salamander's SIZ. Once formed, a salamander can move about at will without being extinguished – except by a large amount of water or earth. A salamander does not even need fuel, though considering that setting things on fire is more or less the salamander's *raison d'être*, it is likely to ignite anything it can.

### Abilities

A salamander will ignite any flammable object it touches. Given sufficient time it will heat (and eventually melt) metal, bake pottery or even crack stone. A salamander can be used to douse natural fires, so long as it has a volume equal to or greater than that of the fire. A salamander cannot quench other salamanders, nor can it extinguish a Fireblade spell or other magical flames. The salamander simply enters the fire and sucks it into itself, incidentally healing itself a number of Hit Points equal to a round's worth of damage from the quenched fire.

Salamanders can float through the air at the same rate as they move on the ground. A salamander must touch an object to ignite it.

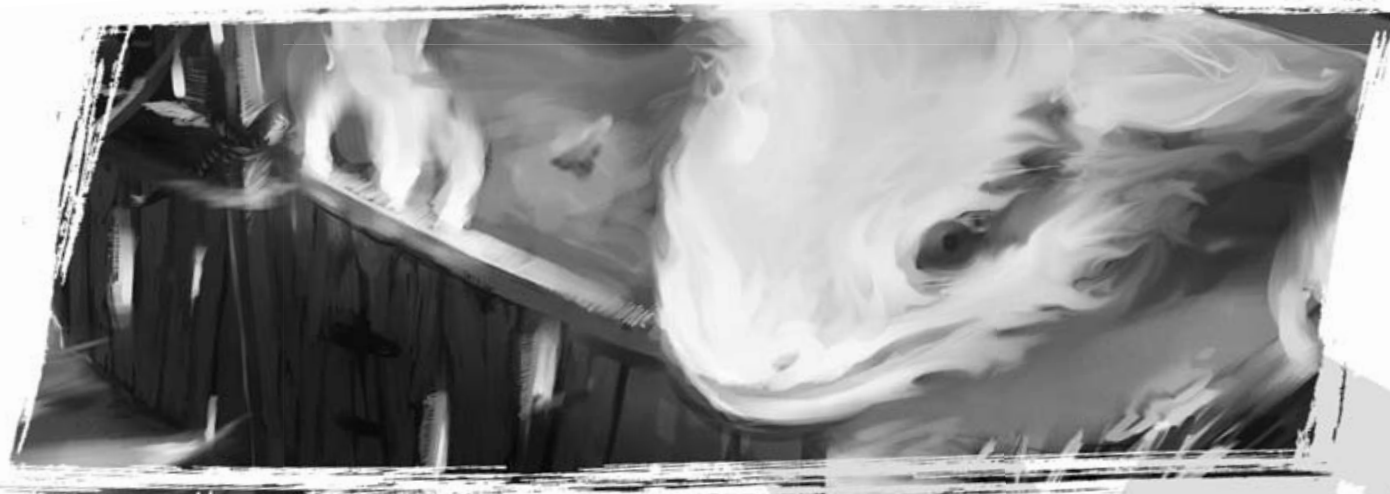
### Combat

In combat, a salamander engulfs its foes in flame. It can swallow 10 SIZ points of an enemy per cubic metre of volume. For the sake of simplicity, if the salamander can envelop over half the SIZ of its victim then it has engulfed either the lower half of the body (both legs and the abdomen), or the upper half of the body (Chest, Arms and Head) if floating. If it can fully encompass its victim, then it affects all its Hit Locations.

Every round, a salamander inflicts one point of damage per cubic metre on all locations it has engulfed. For example, a five cubic metre salamander can completely engulf a normal-size human and will inflict 5 Hit Points of damage every round to every one of the human's Hit Locations. Armour protects against this damage at half its usual AP value.

### Characteristics & Attributes

All of a salamander's Characteristics except its DEX are predicated upon the size of the salamander. Each cubic metre the salamander possesses gives it 1D6 STR, 1D6 POW, one point of fixed INT and 1D6+6 Hit Points. All salamanders have a DEX of 3D6. A salamander lacks any Damage Modifier since it never attacks with kinetic force.



The following statistics are for a salamander of three cubic metres.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6	11	1–20	Body	–/29
CON	—	—			
SIZ	3 cubic m	3 cubic m			
INT	3	3			
POW	3D6	11			
DEX	3D6	11			
CHA	—	—			
<i>Combat Actions</i>		2		<i>Typical Armour:</i> None	
<i>Damage Modifier</i>		—			
<i>Magic Points</i>		11		<i>Traits:</i> None	
<i>Movement</i>		8m			
<i>Strike Rank</i>		+7		<i>Skills:</i> Engulf 100%, Perception 30%, Persistence 43%	



## Sylphs

Sylphs are elementals of the air and thus can be virtually anywhere that is not underwater. They are tangible, formed out of what feels like solidified air. Sylphs are always invisible, though a sylph that wishes to be seen may pick up loose dirt or incorporate smoke into its body to make itself visible. Sylphs have no fixed volume and SIZ is primarily used to determine how much damage the creature can inflict in combat.

### Abilities

A sylph can carry objects or people with a total SIZ equal to or less than the sylph's STR. A sylph may also be used in indirect ways, for example creating a cooling breeze, scattering dead leaves over a trail or blowing dust into the eyes of enemies.

### Combat

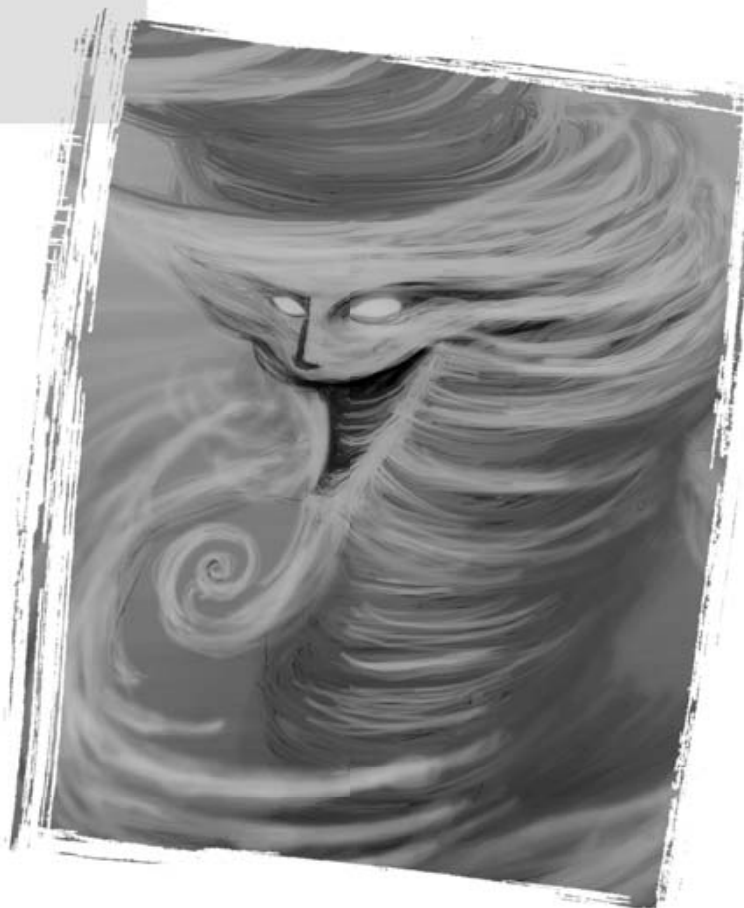
A sylph's primary form of attack is by enveloping and tossing its enemies. It can seize and lift a number of victims with a total SIZ equal to or less than the sylph's STR. The victims are thrown two metres (vertically) for every cubic metre of SIZ the sylph possesses. Normal falling rules are used to determine damage.

If he cannot evade the attack, a victim can resist being lifted by a sylph by grabbing hold of a fixed object (such as a tree) and matching his Brawn against the sylph's in a standard opposed test. Alternatively, he may try to destroy the sylph through damage before the elemental can toss him into the air. A sylph can lift multiple targets by dividing its STR between them.

A sylph may also attack by hurling objects at its enemies. In the case of a flying creature, for example, picking it up and dropping it is likely to be ineffective. A sylph's chance to hit with a thrown object is always its DEX x 3. Damage is worked out normally depending upon the item the sylph hurls.

### Characteristics and Attributes

All of a sylph's Characteristics except its DEX are predicated upon the size of the sylph. Each cubic metre the sylph possesses gives it 2D6 STR, 1D6 POW, one point of fixed INT and 1D6+6 Hit Points. All sylphs have a DEX of 4D6. A sylph's Brawn and Damage Modifier is computed with the sylph's STR x 2, rather than STR + SIZ.



The following statistics are for a sylph of three cubic metres.

	<b>Dice</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>1D20</b>	<b>Hit Location</b>	<b>AP/HP</b>
STR	6D6	21	1-20	Body	-/29
CON	—	—			
SIZ	3 cubic m	3 cubic m			
INT	3	3			
POW	3D6	11			
DEX	4D6	14			
CHA	—	—			
<i>Combat Actions</i>		2		<i>Typical Armour:</i> None	
<i>Damage Modifier</i>		+1D8			
<i>Magic Points</i>		11		<i>Traits:</i> None	
<i>Movement</i>		20m			
<i>Strike Rank</i>		+9		<i>Skills:</i> Brawn 42%, Engulf 100%, Persistence 43% Stealth 75%	



## Undine

Undines are elementals of the water, their bodies composed of a formless mass of liquid. An undine may form in any liquid that is at least 95% water, such as beer, diluted milk or diluted wine. An undine moves overland like a huge, amorphous amoeba and moves through water like a rippling current. There is no difference between undines formed of fresh water and salt water.

### Abilities

An undine can purify itself of sediment and insoluble substances by sitting and churning for a full Combat Round per cubic metre of the elemental. It cannot remove dissolved chemicals such as salt or miscible liquids such as alcohol in this way, though it could purge itself of dirt or oil. They can also be used to form fountains, make fluids flow against gravity – acting like a pump or form stable cavities in volumes of liquid.

An undine can carry objects or beings if its STR supports their SIZ, or conversely drag them under the surface of a large body of water. Spellcasters capable of summoning and commanding undines sometimes use them in the place of ships, sitting serenely atop the creature as it rushes through the water.

### Combat

An undine can engulf 10 SIZ points of a creature for every one cubic metre of volume the elemental possesses.

An undine attacks by enveloping its victim and on each successive Combat Action forcing itself into the victim's lungs. If the victim fails to evade being engulfed, he must succeed in an opposed test of his Resilience verses the undine's Brawn skill, to prevent it forcing itself into his lungs. If he fails, the victim cannot hold his breath and immediately begins to suffocate. Even if the undine is unable to force itself into the victim's lungs, it may still cut its victim off from oxygen, though in this case the victim can hold his breath.

The following statistics are for a three cubic metre undine.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	6D6	21	1–20	Body	–/29
CON	—	—			
SIZ	3 cubic m	3 cubic m			
INT	3	3			
POW	3D6	11			
DEX	2D6	7			
CHA	—	—			
<i>Combat Actions</i>		2			
<i>Damage Modifier</i>		+1D8			
<i>Magic Points</i>		11			
<i>Movement</i>		12m			
<i>Strike Rank</i>		+5			

An undine may attempt to suffocate water-breathing creatures by drawing oxygen away from their gills, a tactic that results in the usual drowning rules. Evading an undine in the water requires the use of the Swim skill instead of Evade.

### Characteristics & Attributes

All of an undine's Characteristics except its DEX are predicated upon the size of the undine. Each cubic metre the undine possesses gives it 2D6 STR, 1D6 POW, one point of fixed INT and 1D6+6 Hit Points. All undines have a DEX of 2D6. An undine's Brawn and Damage Modifier is computed with the undine's STR x 2, rather than STR + SIZ.



*Typical Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

*Skills:* Brawn 42%, Engulf 100%, Perception 30%, Persistence 43% Stealth 45%

## Elf

Originating from forested realms, elves are seen all over the world, embarking on long Quests for ultimate knowledge. However far they are from their homes, they remain tied to their forests in ways other races could never understand. Though a little humanlike in appearance, elves are slighter in build with a greenish tinge to their skin. Some even have leaves instead of hair. They are passionate in their fight against Darkness, even putting aside their enmity for dwarfs if necessary. Elves are often removed from other characters on an emotional level coming across, to humans, as lofty and aloof.

As they are tied to their forests, elves have a natural affinity with the Plant rune and work with Common, Divine and Spirit Magic but abhor sorcery, which they consider perverts the natural order and harmony of the world. The elf statistics show an elf with both Common Magic and a Divine Pact with Aldrya, one of the Grower gods, hence the 3 points of Dedicated POW and subsequent lowering of Magic Points for Common Magic.



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+3	10	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	2D6+6	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	3D6+6	17	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	2D6+6	13	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	3D6+6	17	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	3D6	11	19-20	Head	3/5

Combat Actions	3
Damage Modifier	+0
Magic Points	10
Movement	10m
Strike Rank	+17 (+14 if armoured)

*Typical Armour:* Leather (AP 2, -3 Strike Rank Penalty)

*Traits:* Life Sense, Night Sight

*Skills:* Acrobatics 56%, Athletics 46%, Evade 56%, First Aid 40%, Insight 45%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 50%, Persistence 49%, Resilience 43%, Stealth 56%, Survival 55%, Tracking 30%

*Magic:* Common Magic 54%: Clear Path 2, Co-Ordination 2, Multi-Missile 2

Pact (Grower) 60% - 3 points of Dedicated POW; Lore (Grower) 60%: Alter Target, Behold, Evergreen

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Longbow	H	—	80%	2D8	4/7
Longspear	L	VL	60%	1D10+1	4/10



## Giant

Giants are enormous, ugly humanoids with misshapen features and notoriously bad dispositions. At as much as 16 metres, a full-grown giant is a terrible enemy. Giants usually grow at the rate of 1D6 SIZ and 1D6 STR every five years.

Giants tend to use mighty clubs (and sometimes even tree trunks) in battle. Because of the sheer size of a giant, characters of SIZ 20 or less only roll 1D10 to determine Hit Location when attacking it in close combat. A giant's Movement is equal to six plus its height, in metres.

The following Characteristics reflect a six metre high giant. For every two metres of height, a giant rolls 3D6+6 for STR, 2D6+6 for CON and 3D6+6 for SIZ.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	9D6+18	50	1-3	Right Leg	5/18
CON	6D6+18	39	4-6	Left Leg	5/18
SIZ	9D6+18	50	7-10	Abdomen	5/19
INT	3D6	11	11-12	Chest	3/20
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Arm	3/17
DEX	2D6+3	10	16-18	Left Arm	3/17
CHA	2D6	7	19-20	Head	3/18
<i>Combat Actions</i>		2	<i>Typical Armour:</i> Tough Hide (AP 3), Heavy Leather Apron (AP 2, Abdomen and Legs only, -2 Strike Rank Penalty)		
<i>Damage Modifier</i>		+2D12	<i>Traits:</i> Formidable Natural Weapons		
<i>Magic Points</i>		11	<i>Skills:</i> Athletics 44%, Brawn 112%, Lore (Regional) 20%, Perception 40%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 99%, Survival 30%		
<i>Movement</i>		12m			
<i>Strike Rank</i>		+11 (+9 if wearing apron)			

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Huge Club	E	VL	84%	2D6+2D12	3/12



## Griffin

Prized as mounts and feared as enemies, griffins are large flying carnivores with the body of a lion and the head, talons and wings of a great eagle.

Griffins are usually found in family groups of up to 10, nesting in their desert lairs and mountain eyries. Such a group usually consists of several mated pairs of griffins and their offspring; they often set up their home near a trading road or caravan path, as griffins highly prize horsemeat.

In combat, a griffin prefers to drop on its prey from above, seize its target and then return to the air.



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	8D6	28	1-2	Right Hind Leg	3/11
CON	3D6+12	23	3-4	Left Hind Leg	3/11
SIZ	8D6	28	5-7	Hindquarters	3/12
INT	6	6	8-10	Forequarters	3/12
POW	2D6+6	13	11	Right Wing	3/10
DEX	3D6+12	23	12	Left Wing	3/10
CHA	—	—	13-14	Right Front Leg	3/11
			15-16	Left Front Leg	3/11
			17-20	Head	3/11

<i>Combat Actions</i>	3
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D12
<i>Magic Points</i>	13
<i>Movement</i>	12m/16m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+15

*Typical Armour:* Tough Hide (AP 3)

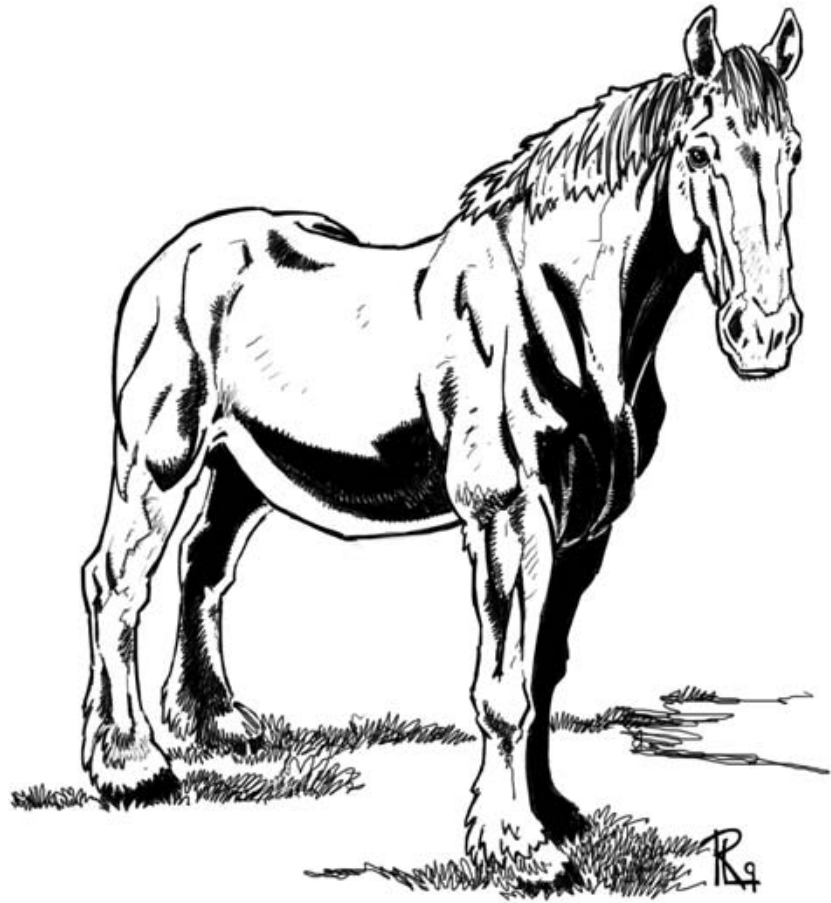
*Traits:* Formidable Natural Weapons, Night Sight

*Skills:* Athletics 80%, Brawn 66%, Evade 40%, Persistence 49%, Resilience 79%, Survival 60%, Tracking 50%

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	M	T	60%	1D8+1D12	As for Head
Claw	L	L	70%	1D6+1D12	As for Leg





## Horse

Many different breeds of horse have emerged over the millennia, as humanity has bred this useful servant to fill a variety of specialised needs. The horse described below is a typical working horse, suitable for riding or as a beast of burden.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+18	25	1-3	Right Hind Leg	2/9
CON	3D6+6	17	4-6	Left Hind Leg	2/9
SIZ	2D6+18	25	7-9	Abdomen	2/10
INT	4	4	10-12	Chest	2/10
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Front Leg	2/9
DEX	2D6+3	10	16-18	Left Front Leg	2/9
CHA	—	—	19-20	Head	2/9

*Combat Actions*  
*Damage Modifier*  
*Magic Points*  
*Movement*  
*Strike Rank*

2  
 +1D10  
 11  
 16m  
 +7

*Typical Armour:* Hide (AP 2)

*Traits:* None

*Skills:* Athletics 75%, Brawn 60%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 61%, Survival 20%

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Kick	M	M	40%	1D6+1D10	As for Leg





## Lion

Largest of the big cats, lions hunt in arid grasslands and live communally in packs known as prides.

A pride of lions is composed of lionesses, juveniles and a single adult male who acts as the leader. The lionesses do the majority of the hunting, whilst the males act mostly to defend the pride. A male lion is usually easy to spot, as the majority have a dramatic mane of fur framing their faces.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+12	23	1-3	Right Hind Leg	2/6
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Hind Leg	2/6
SIZ	2D6+12	19	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
INT	5	5	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Front Leg	2/6
DEX	3D6+6	17	16-18	Left Front Leg	2/6
CHA	—	—	19-20	Head	2/6

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D8
<i>Magic Points</i>	11
<i>Movement</i>	12m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+11

*Typical Armour:* Fur, (AP 2)

*Traits:* Night Sight

*Skills:* Athletics 70%, Evade 45%, Perception 55%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 43%, Stealth 50%, Survival 40%

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	M	T	60%	1D8+1D8	As for Head
Claw	M	M	60%	1D6+1D8	As for Leg







## Skeleton

A skeleton is a magical construct that is animate only until the magic powering it runs out or the skeleton is destroyed. A skeleton has no mind of its own – it only follows the commands of its creator as literally and completely as possible.

Skeletons have a score of 0 for INT, POW and CHA, as they have no intelligence, will or personalities of their own. As such, attempts to control a skeleton's mind or influence its personality will automatically fail. Skeletons are also immune to fatigue, disease, poisons and weapons that only cause impaling hits.

Most skeletons are the dead remains of humans or humanoids but it is entirely possible to encounter a skeleton formed from the remains of any creature with a bone structure. A skeleton has the same Movement the creature had in life but as a skeleton it cannot naturally fly or swim (if the creature had those abilities while alive).



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+6	13	1–3	Right Leg	6/4
CON	1D6	4	4–6	Left Leg	6/4
SIZ	2D6+6	13	7–9	Abdomen	6/5
INT	—	—	10–12	Chest	6/6
POW	—	—	13–15	Right Arm	6/3
DEX	1D6+12	16	16–18	Left Arm	6/3
CHA	—	—	19–20	Head	6/4
<i>Combat Actions</i>		2		<i>Typical Armour:</i> Ancient Bronze Plate (AP 6, –9 Strike Rank Penalty)	
<i>Damage Modifier</i>		+1D2		<i>Traits</i> Dark Sight, Night Sight	
<i>Magic Points</i>		11		<i>Skills:</i> Athletics 30%, Evade 45%, Persistence 0%, Resilience 22%	
<i>Movement</i>		8m			
<i>Strike Rank</i>		+8 (–1 if armoured)			

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Longspear	L	VL	36%	1D10+1+1D2	4/10
Shortsword	M	S	36%	1D6 +1D2	6/8



## Trollkin

Smaller than their dark troll parents, trollkin are the result of a curse that produces these inferior, stunted, troll-like creatures. Trollkin typically endure short subjugated lives, though some escape to a wider world. Those who remain serve as slave labour, sword fodder and even food during lean times.

A few lucky trollkin might be taught a handful of useful Common Magic spells by the dark trolls but it is rare for trollkin to be entrusted with anything that might give them any kind of power, or a means of escape.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6	7	1-3	Right Leg	1/5
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Leg	1/5
SIZ	1D6+6	10	7-9	Abdomen	1/6
INT	1D6+6	10	10-12	Chest	1/7
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Arm	1/4
DEX	3D6+3	14	16-18	Left Arm	1/4
CHA	2D6	7	19-20	Head	1/5

*Combat Actions*

2

*Typical Armour:* Thick skin (AP 1)

*Damage Modifier*

-1D2

*Magic Points*

11

*Traits:* Dark Sight, Earth Sense

*Movement*

8m

*Strike Rank*

+12

*Skills:* Athletics 42%, Evade 42%, Perception 40%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 43%, Stealth 40%, Survival 35%

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Club	M	S	35%	1D6-1D2	4/4
Shortspear & Shield (Bucker)	M/M	S/S	33%	1D6-1D2	4/5 and 6/8



## Wolf

Consummate hunters, wolves gather in groups ranging from a few individuals to packs as large as 50 or more. They tend to prefer mountains and forest terrain, although they can be found almost anywhere.

Wolves fight as a group. In combat, several of them target a single enemy, raising the chances that one of them will be able to get through any defence. Larger wolves of the pack will often attempt to throw an enemy off his feet with a Leaping Attack (see page 91); allowing the remainder of the pack to rush in while the enemy is off balance.

Though wolves are hated by ranchers and farmers for their tendency to dine on livestock, they rarely attack humans.



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6	11	1–2	Right Hind Leg	2/5
CON	3D6+3	14	3–4	Left Hind Leg	2/5
SIZ	2D6+3	10	5–7	Hindquarters	2/6
INT	5	5	8–10	Forequarters	2/6
POW	3D6	11	11–13	Right Front Leg	2/5
DEX	3D6+3	14	14–16	Left Front Leg	2/5
CHA	—	—	17–20	Head	2/5

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	0
<i>Magic Points</i>	11
<i>Movement</i>	10m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+10

*Typical Armour:* Fur and Hide (AP 2)

*Traits:* Night Sight

*Skills:* Athletics 80%, Evade 55%, Perception 60%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 52%, Stealth 55%, Survival 40%, Tracking 60%

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	M	T	60%	1D80	As for Head
Claw	M	M	30%	1D30	As for Leg



## Wurm

Wyrms resemble nothing so much as snakes with wings. Utterly limbless, they have draconic heads and thick scaly armour that betrays their relationship to dragons.

Solitary hunters, it is very rare to find a group of wyrms acting in concert, though sometimes a few individuals join together for a common purpose. Possessed of intelligence akin to that of a human, a wurm is a patient, dangerous foe.

Upon hatching, a wurm is about two metres long and has 3D6 SIZ and STR. The wurm grows at the rate of 1D6 SIZ and STR every five years until it reaches the age of 35, when the creature's growth slows dramatically. By this point the creature is some nine metres in length. After 35, a wurm will continue to gain 1D6 SIZ and STR every 50 years. A wurm may live for many hundreds of years.

The statistics given here are for a wurm between 35 and 85 years old.



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10D6	35	1-4	Tail	8/10
CON	4D6	14	5-8	Abdomen	8/11
SIZ	10D6	35	9-12	Chest	8/12
INT	3D6	11	13-14	Right Wing	8/9
POW	3D6+6	17	15-16	Left Wing	8/9
DEX	3D6	11	17-20	Head	8/10
CHA	2D6	7			

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+2D6
<i>Magic Points</i>	17
<i>Movement</i>	8m/16m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+11

*Typical Armour:* Wurm scales (AP 8)

*Traits:* Dark Sight, Formidable Natural Weapons, Night Sight

*Skills:* Athletics 80%, Influence 60%, Persistence 61%, Resilience 52%

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	L	M	85%	1D10+2D6	As for Head
Tail	L	VL	60%	1D6+2D6 / 2	As for Tail





## Zombie

A zombie is a corpse that has been animated by dark magic. A zombie has only shreds of its original mind left and is generally either under the control of a master or follows its natural hunger to feed on living flesh. Since a zombie is comprised of rotting flesh, they sometimes carry diseases which can be passed on via wounds they inflict.

Zombies have very low INT, POW and CHA, as they have virtually no intelligence, will or personalities of their own. As such, attempts to control a zombie's mind or influence its personality will suffer a -50% penalty. Zombies are also immune to fatigue, disease and poisons.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+12	23	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	1D6	4	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	2D6+6	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	1D3	2	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	1D3	2	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	1D6+3	7	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	—	—	19-20	Head	-/4

<i>Combat Actions</i>	1
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D6
<i>Magic Points</i>	2
<i>Movement</i>	4m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+5

*Typical Armour:* None

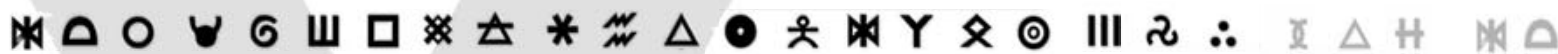
*Traits:* Dark Sight, Diseased (GMs choice), Night Sight

*Skills:* Athletics 35%, Persistence 16%, Resilience 22%

## Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Unarmed	S	T	50%	1D3+1D6	As for Arm





## CHAPTER 14:

# GAMES MASTERING RUNEQUEST



This chapter offers specific advice to Games Masters, both novice and veteran, on running *RuneQuest* and getting the most out of it. It includes specific advice regarding key themes in *RuneQuest*, rules and guidance on a variety of situations likely to arise that may not necessarily be addressed by specific rules in the earlier chapters, plus some guidance on creating scenarios for *RuneQuest*.

As with any amount of guidance, the material found in this chapter is here to suggest and prompt ideas and creativity: it is not intended to be prescriptive. A tenet to always bear in mind is ‘Your *RuneQuest* Will Vary’, meaning that, as Games Master, how you choose to use these rules and how you want to develop your game should always take precedence. There are few rules in this book that cannot be modified in some way and it has been part of the *RuneQuest* tradition for Games Masters to tinker with, alter and ignore rules that do not fit their style of play or campaign objectives. The same holds true for *RuneQuest II* as it has for previous editions of the game.

## THEMES

One of the hallmarks of *RuneQuest* is the way in which certain themes are handled, both as part of the rules and during game play. The mechanics of the system engender a certain style of play that emphasises character development, skill-use and an approach to the wider community above simply killing monsters, avoiding traps and accumulating treasure. Not that these things are unimportant or wrong; more that *RuneQuest* places a different emphasis on adventuring. This section examines themes Games Masters may wish to keep in mind when developing scenarios for play and then running them with players.

### Community

Community and relationships are integral to *RuneQuest*. Adventurers do not exist in isolation; they have pasts, families, social and cultural groups they belong to or have belonged to and

the rules encourage ongoing community interaction through the joining of cults.

The rules for establishing cultural background and community in the Adventurer Creation chapter provide a template for Adventurers to establish certain things before play begins: where they come from, who their family is/was, who they know (friends and foes) and key things that have influenced their lives. These details are deliberately vague to act as a catalyst for players and Games Masters, working together, to build interesting portraits of Adventurers’ past lives through discussion, conjecture (‘what if my long-lost twin brother is now an evil sorcerer...?’) and, hopefully, exploration during play. Using the ideas provided by the cultural background and community sections Adventurers become far more than a set of figures on a character sheet: they have a history, a context and, in many cases, a reason for being. Using the guidance on contacts and enemies provides a set of plot hooks for further development that keep Adventurers involved with their history. It is therefore worth investing some time in this part of the Adventurer Creation process to gain a deeper understanding of the character and how he might develop during play.

Another aspect of community that is worth exploring is continued attachment to it. In many roleplaying games the Adventurers are created and embark on their adventures with little or no thought for the communities that nurtured them. This is different in *RuneQuest*. In many *RuneQuest* settings Adventurers remain within their communities (Glorantha, for example, but also historical settings such as Land of the Samurai) and continue to serve them. Such local heroics are a key principle of *RuneQuest* play. Grand quests are certainly important and concern the Adventurers but often a scenario or set of scenarios focus on serving the daily requirements of the clan, tribe, village or town, with little financial reward as the incentive but the thanks and kudos afforded by the community when the Adventurers are successful. Many very successful *RuneQuest* campaigns have concerned the daily lives of the Adventurers, with dangerous quests, epic battles and dour foes





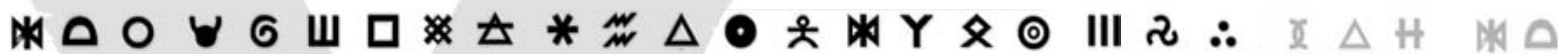
being introduced sporadically, reflecting the more likely nature of such events. As the Adventurers serve their communities, so they grow with them. Relationships deepen, their place in the community progresses and, eventually, those lowly Adventurers are chieftains, champions, lords and kings.

## Magic

The availability of magic is reflected in the four magic systems presented in the *RuneQuest* rules. In settings such as Glorantha, magic is ubiquitous with even the lowliest primitive having some magical charm that protects him or aids him in his life. Naturally not all fantasy settings rely on magic to such an extent and the rules are presented in a way to allow Games Masters to tailor the availability of magic to the campaign. Low magic settings, for instance, might only have Sorcery available as the magical system of the world and access to it restricted by culture or taboo. Similarly if the gods of a world are distant, uncaring beings, Divine Magic might be non-existent or, at best, extremely rare.

Thought therefore needs to be given to the availability of magic and this depends on the setting. Some examples follow.

- \* In Glorantha, all the magic systems presented in *RuneQuest* exist and work. Common Magic is available to all although Divine, Spirit and Sorcery are dependent on cultural background and cult membership.
- \* In gritty, Sword and Sorcery settings, only sorcery – which is seen as a dark and malevolent force – is available and then only to the few who are prepared to undergo its corrupting influence to attain it. Most people are fearful of magic and attempt to limit their exposure to it, for fear of what it might do to their immortal souls.
- \* In High Fantasy settings Divine, Spirit and Sorcery may be available but only to certain races, cults or orders. Common Magic is not something the general populace is exposed to but it is present and worked by those who use it as a gateway to more refined powers.
- \* Dark Fantasy settings, such as the *Eternal Champion* series, rely on magicians to be willing to bargain their very souls for magical power – although all kinds of magic are available to those willing to enter into such contracts. Magic is sinister, although not necessarily evil and Adventurers who use it are forever in jeopardy of losing their humanity as they use magic for whatever ends they have in mind.



## Quests

Despite what has been said about community, Adventurers should find themselves engaged on quests – mundane and magical – for either the thrill of the adventure, to defeat a foe or to advance or protect their community’s interests.

### Magical Quests

Magical quests are a feature of *RuneQuest*, especially the concepts of HeroQuesting, found predominantly in Glorantha (and to be covered in far greater depth in *Glorantha: The Second Age*). However, Adventurers are likely to be engaged in magical quests in many ways, some of the most common being:

- \* Finding a fabled treasure for the good of the community.
- \* Aiding a sorcerer or other magician in creating a magical treasure through finding components.
- \* Delving into a myth, dream or Otherworld experience, with a magical treasure or power as the prize.
- \* Returning a magical treasure to its place of origin or a place of destruction, to avert doom of some form.
- \* Seeking magical power to advance within a cult or for personal kudos/gain.

Magical quests by their nature usually involve much risk – either in the form of protective magic, powerful guardians or the nature of the treasure/quest itself. This is the reason for carefully considering the place of magic in the setting. If magic is rare, then lower levels of magical threat might be employed as part of the quest: the Adventurers, being unfamiliar with magic largely, are likely to find any degree of magic daunting and need to counter it with mundane abilities, wits and ingenuity.

If magic is commonplace, as in Glorantha, then higher and deeper levels of magic are likely to be necessary, and the backing of a cult is a prime requisite in completing the quest successfully.

Whatever the basis, *RuneQuest* is not a game that is littered with magical items to be found randomly as part of a treasure hoard. Magical items, even in magic-rich worlds like Glorantha, are treasured artefacts that are not lost or misplaced carelessly, nor packed into chests and trunks along with a stash of gold. Magic is never a commodity in *RuneQuest*; it is a valuable resource and, as such, needs handling with care, especially in the case of magical items or the objects of magical quests. Magical quests tend to be focused affairs that have, at their heart, some measure of life-changing experience – even though the basic nature of the quest may appear to be mundane.

## Cults

Cults are an important part of *Runequest*. Aside from the obvious advantages of access to magic, training and information, cults offer several benefits for Games Masters:

Cult membership offers a ready excuse for adventuring. Cults frequently need to defend themselves against enemy or rival cults

and frequently engage in quests of many kinds to advance their knowledge, power and status. Even low-level cult members can be engaged on important cult business.

Cults provide an additional layer of community for Adventurers. Usually this will not be at odds with the Adventurers’ existing communities but, depending on the cult type, it may offer an interesting conflict leading to interesting, cult versus community stories.

Through cults, the gods and other foci of cult veneration become real and visceral things, driving and shaping behaviour and destinies. Cults lend purpose and drive to Adventurers and adventures. Simply joining a cult and being initiated into its ways can form the focus of several sessions of storytelling.

Of course cults need not play such a large part in a *RuneQuest* game but their unique place in the central heart of *RuneQuest* makes them a natural – and very important – mechanism for developing adventures that can break away from the usual tropes of fantasy fiction and roleplaying games. Cults have their own agendas and beliefs which, when explored, lend a satisfying depth to both character and social development.

Future *RuneQuest* supplements will develop the cults available – both for specific settings and generically – allowing Games Masters to take full advantage of the diversity of cults.

## A Good Story, Well Told

*RuneQuest* is concerned very much with both storytelling and character development. The game mechanics for *RuneQuest*, whilst being comprehensive and sophisticated, are intuitive enough to fade into the background of the game, intruding only when necessary to resolve a particular outcome. Indeed, *RuneQuest’s* mechanics should be part of the background as much as possible. Everything, mechanically, that is needed for *RuneQuest*, is contained on the character sheet: skill values, Hit Points, weapon statistics and so forth. Whilst the Games Master will inevitably need to refer to the rules during play, most questions can be resolved by consulting the character sheet and rolling 1D100 or 1D20.

What this means is that the game session can focus on developing a Good Story, Well Told. The game mechanics do not drive the story: the Adventurers do – and the bulk of the rules found in *RuneQuest* are geared towards investment in the character: characteristics, attributes, skills, combat styles, magic and cult details, each element is designed to invest in the character – not the player, Games Master or even the concepts of the game – and enable Adventurers to shine through as individuals, supported by elements that develop them as part of a group or team (community, once again). How well Adventurers develop along with the investments the game system makes depends very much on the players but in *RuneQuest* the rules are designed to work *with* and *for* the Adventurers, aiding imagination, providing opportunity and diversity, rather than reducing either to a series of available or not available, on/off abilities and options.



For the Games Master this theme of storytelling and character focus means that it is worthwhile spending time with the players and taking an interest in how their Adventurers are created. Some tips to consider are:

- \* Help players develop the community section of Adventurer Creation. Have in mind a common theme that all players can subscribe to and assist in developing close character relationships early-on. This establishes a sense of fraternity amongst the players and develops instant bonds before play begins.
- \* Introduce cults and cult membership reasonably early. Cults are not something to be withheld until Adventurers reach a certain level; they exist to get Adventurers to a certain level. And, because cults in many settings for *RuneQuest*, but Glorantha especially, are all around, it makes sense that cult membership will come sooner rather than later.
- \* Encourage players to think about their skills when coming to make Improvement Rolls. It is natural to focus on skills for combat and magic but social and knowledge skills are equally important. Try to encourage diversity amongst the players but have them think 'in character' when choosing which skills to improve. Would a new initiate of a cult really seek to improve non-cult skills or would he, perhaps, focus on those skills that will help him gain status in the cult and prove his devotion? Looking at these mechanics from a slightly different, character-driven perspective contributes to developing diverse and believable Adventurers.

## CAMPAIGNS AND SCENARIOS

A scenario is a story, played through in one or several sessions of play. A campaign is a linked set of stories that may or may not have a definite conclusion. One way to differentiate between the two is to consider scenarios as short stories or chapters of a novel and a campaign as an anthology of short stories or as the novel itself (or trilogy of novels, if the campaign is of a grand scale). Campaigns may take months or years to complete – and some are ongoing sagas, reflecting the lives of the Adventurers.

The Games Master is responsible for presenting the scenario and campaign to the players. Scenarios tend to fall into one of the following categories:

**Published** – a pre-written *RuneQuest* scenario offered for sale or download, either as a one-off adventure or a complete campaign. Published scenarios take a great deal of the preparatory work out of the Games Master's workload allowing play to begin swiftly. However, Games Masters still need to be familiar with the scenario's content, structure, themes and goals and it may be that the Games Master needs to adapt certain elements to fit with his existing campaign, play-style and so forth. If using a published scenario be prepared to adapt and change elements – perhaps substantial ones!

**Home-Written** – here, the Games Master writes the scenario, developing the plot, the Adventurers and creatures involved, events, encounters and so forth. Writing scenarios can be time-consuming but allows for the best fit of themes, play-style and plotting to fit with a campaign. The restrictions come in two forms: the amount of detail and time needed to be invested in the scenario and the likelihood that the players will want to make choices that fall outside of what the Games Master has planned. Even the most meticulously planned scenario can be sidelined by players who choose option C when the Games Master had only planned for options A and B. However, such diversions can often be the most entertaining (or frustrating) as the Games Master, forced to improvise, develops new and interesting plots that may complement or even replace those of the planned scenario. It is therefore quite often better to keep the details of a home-written scenario as loose and flexible as possible, making it easier to deal with the unexpected actions and decisions of the players.

**Scenario Seeds** – a kernel of an idea, often perhaps no longer than a paragraph or a sentence, is used as the basis of the adventure with the Games Master improvising the action and using stock, pre-generated or typical creature statistics, to support encounters. Handling a scenario seed is always a challenge since it requires the Games Master to think on his feet; however, the investment both players and Games Master make in the overall story may well turn out to be far more rewarding than if using a home-written or published scenario. This is improvisational story-telling at its best – although the Games Master's level of experience is often the key to its success.

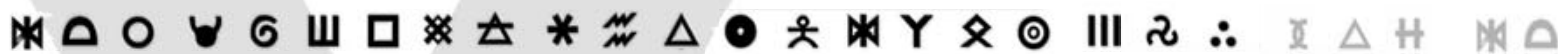
However, irrespective of the nature of the scenario, there are some guidelines that benefit every Games Master, and these follow.

### Campaign Planning

A campaign is a series of linked scenarios and can be as long or as short as one needs them to be. Some campaigns last years, charting the full lives of the same Adventurers. Others are more episodic, ending at an agreed point and picked up again after several years of game time have passed. In others, new Adventurers might be created to suit the style or theme of the campaign.

Whatever the campaign's nature, it needs a style. The style is very much dependent on where the campaign is set, so setting, too, is of utmost importance.

*RuneQuest* provides a default setting in Glorantha, mentioned throughout this book but it is not the only one and there are several very different setting books already published that cover historical periods (Pirates, Land of the Samurai) and fantasy genres (Elric and Hawkmoon; Lankmar). Others will appear in future releases. And, of course, Games Masters can create their own.



Published settings do a great deal of the background work for the Games Master but may not be to everyone's taste or style of play. Self-penned settings, whether historical or fantasy based, always require a great deal of work and research by the Games Master.

Things to consider:

- \* Historical or pure fantasy? If historical, then there is a wealth of material to draw upon, from encyclopaedias and text books through to historical settings from other game systems. The key thing will be to fit the RuneQuest rules to the requirements of the setting, or be prepared to alter the historical context to accommodate the rules (magic is the prime consideration here: will your historical setting use magic and, if so, how is it rationalised and explained? How will it affect the nature of the world?).
- \* If you are creating your own fantasy world, then you have carte-blanche to create what you want but remember that most successful and convincing fantasy worlds function to a certain set of rules that help make them work and feel real. It is also tempting – and can be a great deal of fun – to mix lots of different fantasy elements into a single setting (magic, Industrial Revolution machinery, giant robots and so on). If you do this, consider how each element impacts on its fellows. Also try to resist throwing too much into the mix at the beginning: this can prove overwhelming for the players who may not grasp the nature and concepts of the setting as easily as the creator.

Whatever the basis for the setting, be prepared to invest some time in its themes, coherence and the kinds of stories it will generate. Taking the time to prepare will help the campaign develop into something memorable rather than something that fizzles out after a few sessions of play.

## Presenting the Scenario

As Games Master it is your task to present the scenario to the players. How you handle this is a matter of personal style; some Games Masters like to have prepared notes concerning all the important things the Adventurers can see, hear and feel, whilst others prefer to focus on details concerning the story at hand. In time you will develop a style that is uniquely yours but, to assist in developing that style, some pointers for scenario presentation are as follows.

**Preparation:** Some preparation is always necessary, although the degree of prep depends on the Games Master's confidence, the nature of the scenario and the campaign, and, more often than not, time. If using a published scenario you should have read it at least once and made notes on changes you need to make, based

on what you know of the players and Adventurers, including, where necessary, amendments to encounter statistics to make the scenario rewarding but neither too easy or too hard. If using your own material then notes on the general flow of the story, encounters and so on will be necessary but need not be extensive. Bullet-points or one-line notes concerning the importance of a Non-Player Character, an event, encounter and so forth may be enough. It is common for the flow of play to determine which details need lengthy description and what can be summarised in a simple sentence: very often, the areas where lots of description has been lavished are those that least require it – usually because the action leading up to that point has helped create a strong enough mental image in the players' minds.

**Statistics:** It is not necessary to create, from scratch, monsters, creatures and Non-Player Adventurers. Use samples from published adventures if you do not have time to create your own but even then, it is not always necessary to roll the characteristics for every single trollkin in a group of 20 – use the average value given in a creature's description, instead. Even then, you may only need a handful of statistics: Magic Points, Combat Actions, Movement, Combat Skills, Persistence and Resilience and a couple of major skills, such as Athletics and Evade. If you use General Hit Points for underlings and minor Adventurers, as outlined in the Combat chapter, then you may not even need to use the Hit Locations, either. The watchword is expedience: where statistics are concerned, note down only what you are certain to use. If other values are needed for some reason, then there is nothing wrong with a little improvisation as long as percentages you use reflect that nature of the creature and fit the general risk of the scenario. All creatures are different – just like Adventurers!

## Book Keeping

Keeping track of how Adventurers develop and progress is as important for the Games Master as the players. By keeping a note of Adventurer's key skills, their levels, magic and magnitudes and so forth, scenarios can be more easily tailored to the capabilities of the Adventurers, thus keeping them challenged and rewarded. Things Games Masters should note, in some form:

- \* Gains or losses of possessions and equipment.
- \* Community – parents, siblings, uncles and aunts: how many, where they live and who they are. Use this information for scenario inspiration and background colour. Rescuing a family member from peril is often far more emotionally rewarding than a random Non-Player Character invented for the sake of the scenario.
- \* Training and mentoring – what have the Adventurers trained in recently? How was the relationship with the trainer? Does training come at something more than a financial cost? Do



Adventurers need to prove what they have learned before more training becomes available?

- \* Magic – how was magic improved or more spells learned? As with training, there may be an onus on the Adventurers to do something in return.
- \* Major foes, rivals and enemies. Having recurring villains and antagonists helps bring a scenario to life and mirrors popular fiction and drama. Note also how the relationship with these antagonists changes with circumstances – a deadly foe might need to become an ally for a while, in certain circumstances.
- \* Skills – what skills do the Adventurers routinely improve? How are they changing compared with other skills and the other adventurers? Games Masters might need to make suggestions for helping an Adventurer to remain balanced and some skills, particularly those related to cults, might need more attention than others.

If the campaign has truly engaged the players much of the book keeping will be collaborative as the scope of the campaign will be discussed between scenarios and game sessions. This is to be encouraged as it helps to maintain momentum and involvement. The players gain a true stake in their Adventurers, resulting in a richer, more rewarding experience.

## Risk

How hard is the scenario for the Adventurers? If the dangers and encounters they face are too easy, then little challenge or threat is posed and the players may feel short-changed as a result. Although players like to succeed, few players want to have had an easy ride. Likewise, if the scenario is too tough, resulting in lots of wounds or character deaths, the players may feel hard-done by: success should not be a certainty but then again, neither should instant death: the scenario needs to balance risk.

A reasonable way of approaching risk is to look at the skills of the Adventurers – combat and magical skills, certainly, but also skills that will aid fight, flight and negotiation. How high are the skills, generally? What is the highest skill possessed by any one Adventurer? How much magic and at what Magnitude do they have it? Are there any special things the Adventurers have that can aid them – contacts, cult affiliations and so on – that they can call upon if things become very tough?

Now, gauge the strength of the threats, especially combat encounters that the Adventurers are likely to face. If using a published scenario, adjust the skills and magic of the encounters and, if using your own material, create the encounters at a suitable level.

What *constitutes* a suitable level depends on the nature of the reward or objective of the scenario but, in general, use the following checklist:

- \* Skills of enemies should not be more than 20% higher than the average opposing skills of the Adventurers. Around a third of the creatures should be around 20% lower, representing easy challenges, one third about the same and one third 20% higher. Of course, particular Non-Player Adventurers may have much higher skills reflecting their status and position but think long and hard about whether or not such encounters will result in a conflict and, if so, what resources the Adventurers have to help them deal with it.
- \* Consider what Combat Manoeuvres foes will use in combat ahead of the encounters. Might they have favoured combinations or specialities? Do not rely on manoeuvres that inflict high amounts of damage – like Bypass Armour and Maximise Damage – all the time; think creatively about the encounter's aims, skills and nature; not all fights should end in death. Jot down these options next to the encounter's statistics. Do not be afraid to vary them according to the nature of the fight but also try to remain consistent with your plans. Knowing that the elves of Grimwood Forest always try to Pin Weapon as a first combat manoeuvre can assist the Adventurers in their own strategies and may encourage them to use different tactics for different foes.
- \* Enemies should have roughly the same Magnitude of spells available to them as the Adventurers. Challenging opponents may have a few extra Magnitude more but spread around different spells and effects. Thus, if the Adventurers tend to have an average Magnitude of 4 in typical Common Magic spells, an opponent might have Bladesharp 5 or 6 but not Bladesharp 10.

## SCENARIO AIDS

This section provides some additional rules and reference materials to assist Games Masters in presenting and planning scenarios. None of these rules additions or the encounter tables are compulsory; they are here to act as inspiration and, when necessary, a fast way of providing colour, information or spurs for action when necessary.

### Weather

Weather conditions can be of importance in any scenario. Some spells affect the weather or rely on certain kinds of weather for their effect; poor weather can inhibit travel or other activities. Weather therefore includes wind strength, cloud cover, temperature and rain (precipitation).

## Wind

Wind has a STR score, determining its effect on objects and the landscape. If a random wind STR is needed, roll 1D100.

Where a wind can disturb and carry loose material, which may affect visibility, treat its STR as the percentage reduction in visibility for Perception rolls and other skills relying on sight. A hurricane, for example, reduces visibility (and Perception rolls) by a minimum of 46%. A moderate wind in a desert reduces visibility by between 19% and 24%.

### Wind Strength

Wind STR	Wind Type	Effect on Ranged Attacks
01–10	Calm, with little air movement	0%
11–40	Light air movement; leaves rustle and candles gutter but are not extinguished	0%
41–55	Breeze; candles are extinguished	0%
56–70	Light Wind. The lower limit for good sailing in a sail-powered boat	–5%
71–80	Moderate Wind. Dangerous to flying creatures; many take shelter or roost	–10%
81–85	Strong Wind. Humans may be knocked down. The wind's STR has a value of 3D6 which is applied as though using Knockback from the Combat chapter.	–50%
86–90	Gale. As for previous but the wind's STR imparts 2D6+12 Knockback.	Impossible
91–95	Strong Gale. Humans cannot remain standing. Nothing less than SIZ 21 can remain standing upright. All SIZ less than this are knocked-back 2D6 metres.	Impossible
96–00	Hurricane. Anything less than SIZ 50 is hurled into the air and suffers 1D6+6 damage to 1D6 locations	Impossible

## Cloud Cover

The amount of visible sky is determined by cloud cover. The cloud cover percentage also determines the percentage chance of rainfall in any six hour period. For randomly determined cloud cover, roll 1D100 and adjust by season:

Spring +0 Summer –20 Autumn +10 Winter +20

Percentage of Cover	Scale of Cover	Rain Duration	Scale of Rain
Less than 10	None	—	—
11 – 20	Scant cloud	1D20 minutes	Very light (0–10mm)
21 – 30	Scattered cloud	10+1D20 minutes	Light (11–20mm)
31 – 40	Slightly Overcast	1D2 hours	Moderate (21–30mm)
41 – 50	Moderately Overcast	1D3 hours	Heavy (31–40mm)
51 – 65	Mostly Overcast	1D6 hours	Very Heavy (41–50mm)
66 – 80	Completely Overcast	1D8 hours	Monsoon (51–80mm)
81 – 100+	Storm clouds	1D12 hours	Deluge (81–100mm)

Rain scales of Very Heavy and above may cause local flooding, landslides and so forth, according to the terrain.

Depending on the time of year and the ambient temperature, precipitation may well be snow rather than rain. If so, the Scale of Rain entries should be read as Snow Depth instead and the value doubled.

## Travel and Encounters

Adventurers will, most likely, spend a good deal of their time travelling. Often it is enough to simply state 'after three uneventful days, you reach the outskirts of the city' but in many scenarios or stories, the journey is the story, with the method of travel and the things that happen whilst travelling forming the core of the adventure.

Encounter tables are provided for a variety of situations, useful for improvising or acting as the catalyst for a planned encounter.

### Getting There

The cost of travel depends primarily upon the standard of living maintained. Adventurers travelling by land can, ostensibly, travel for free, provided they are willing to walk the entire distance, gather or kill their own food on the way and sleep beneath the bushes at night. Such a method of travel is slow and exhausting, however, and Adventurers will often need to move from place to place in a hurry.

Be aware that the distances shown on the Comparative Movement Table found on page 62, represent the optimum for unencumbered Adventurers; but weather conditions, terrain, armour and other burdens will inevitably reduce the rates of travel. There is no hard and fast rule on how local conditions will affect travel distances but use the following as a guide:

### Travel Conditions

Travel Conditions	Reduce Movement Rate by...
<b>Weather</b>	
Hot or humid day	One Quarter
Heavy rain	One Quarter
Thunderstorm	Half
Gale	Three Quarters
Light snow	One Quarter
Medium snow	Half
Heavy snow	Three quarters
<b>Terrain</b>	
Rough terrain (few roads, lots of inclines and hills)	Half
Inhospitable terrain (dense forests, deserts, mountains)	Three Quarters

### Travel Costs

The costs for land travel on the Travel Expenses table assume the Adventurers are using one or more pack animals and are spending their nights in some kind of shelter. These costs are meant to be used as guidelines by the Games Master. There are a variety of factors that may increase or decrease the cost for any manner of travel. If the Adventurers are renowned heroes, for example, the merchant caravan will probably not charge them anything (and may even pay the Adventurers) to travel with them, on the assumption the Adventurers will be able to deal efficiently with any threat. On the other hand, if the Adventurers are known to have enemies that have, in the past, attacked and destroyed ships they were travelling on a ship's captain may refuse to allow them on board without adding a zero to the end of the daily cost of passage.

There are no variations in the costs given for different settlement sizes, as it is assumed Adventurers travelling for any length of time will pass through hamlets, towns, cities and wilderness.

### Travel Expenses

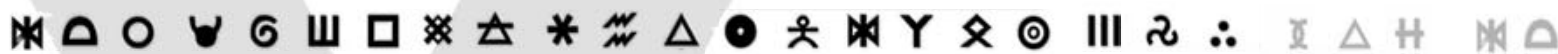
Living Standard	Daily Cost	Room & Board	Total
<i>Land</i>			
Poor	6 CP	3 CP	9 CP
Common	30 CP	15 CP	45 CP
Superior	14 SP	7 SP	21 SP
Noble	50 SP	25 SP	75 SP
<i>Water</i>			
Poor	4 CP	3 CP	7 CP
Common	20 CP	15 CP	35 CP
Superior	10 SP	7 SP	17 SP
Noble	35 SP	25 SP	60 SP

### Encounters

Whilst many days may go by before a traveller encounters another soul, when that encounter happens, it might be significant. Travellers face the hazards of banditry but also fellow travellers or encounters made on the open road might be a source of news, information or even further adventures.

Use these encounters as random events to spice-up a period of travel, or as the basis for a crafted encounter leading up to the next crucial event in a story. The encounters are divided into terrain types but the Nature of Encounter table is common to all encounter tables.





### Urban and Road Encounters

1D100	Result
01	1D6 travelling nobles, each with an entourage of a further 1D6+1 servants, advisers and so on.
02	Solitary nobleman with his servant or squire.
03	As previous, but travelling incognito or in disguise.
04-05	2D10 servants of a noble, but the noble in question. Is he lost? Have they killed him?
06	Priest of a cult with an entourage of 1D6 servants, students or disciples.
07	Solitary priest of a cult engaged on cult activity or business.
08	Lone scholar, bard or minstrel, travelling to the next settlement.
09-10	Sorcerer, priest or reasonably skilled magician with 1D4 disciples or students.
11-14	1D4+1 Warriors of some form; soldiers, militia, guard patrol, and so on.
15	As previous; but actively stopping and questioning travellers.
16-17	Large (1D10+10) carts or wagons travelling as a merchant caravan.
18-19	Small (2D10) carts or wagons travelling as a merchant caravan.
20-25	1D4 peddlers or beggars who take the opportunity to plead for aid.
26-27	Crafter travelling by cart to sell his wares at a market.
28-29	Drover taking 1D6 x10 herd animals to market.
30-35	Lone merchant or trader bearing his goods on his back.
36-40	1D6+1 Farmers on foot, going to or from their fields.
41-55	As previous; but travelling by cart or wagon.
56-65	1D8+2 pilgrims travelling to a shrine, temple or church, fervent in their views.
66-90	A general sway of locals travelling to and from their business.
91-95	Thief, pickpocket or bandit.
96-00	Adventurers are lost; roll on the Rural Encounters table.

### Rural Encounters

1D100	Result
01-05	Lost – roll on the Urban and Road Encounters table.
06	Lord of the nearest settlement with an entourage of 1D6+1 servants, including at least one bodyguard.
07	Holy man of the nearest town.
08	1D4 Warriors from the nearest town.
09	Townspople travelling on local business.
10	A town of 1D8 x1,000 people.
11	Thief, pickpocket or bandit.
12-14	1D6+1 Farmers on foot, going to or from their fields.
15-16	A trail that proves promising but leads to the Adventurers getting lost. See result for 01-05.
17-26	Fields filled with crops – useful for food.
27-29	A village of 1D10 x20 people.
30	A manor house or manse, surrounded by a small, peasant community of 1D10 x20 people.
31-50	Open fields with grazing animals.
51-55	As previous; but being tended by 1D4 herdsman who may or may not appreciate the intrusion.
56-59	A large, wild herbivore.
60	A large predator – hungry, perhaps.
61-65	1D6 hunters, either hunting a herbivore or a predator.
66-70	2D4 Local roughs out to cause mischief.
71-75	1D6+1 Bandits or 1D4 highwaymen, lying in ambush – robbery their aim.
76-80	A roaming band of 1D8+1 cut-throats and murderers – robbery and murder their aim.
81-00	Lost – roll on the Wilderness Encounters.

### Wilderness Encounters

1D100	Result
01	Lost. Roll on the Rural Encounters table.
02	1D6 travellers heading in the direction of a village.
03–04	Cultivated fields with crops – useful for food.
05	A village of 1D10 x20 people.
06–10	Group of 1D6+3 primitives or nomads (family group).
11	Clan of 2D10 x3 primitives or nomads.
12	Primitive or nomadic shaman with an entourage of 1D6+1 followers, including one warrior.
13	A hermit who is a local seer, holy man or shaman.
14–15	1D6+3 non-human nomads.
16–18	1D6+1 Bandits.
19–20	Hunting lodge. 30% chance it is occupied by 1D6 hunters, either hunting a herbivore or a predator.
21–30	Empty pasture.
31–35	Open fields with grazing animals.
36–45	As previous, but being tended by 1D4 herdsmen who may or may not appreciate the intrusion.
46–50	Fields populated by wild carnivores.
51–60	Rough, dense forest.
61–70	Scrublands with wild herbivores and a 30% chance of a hunting predator close by.
71–75	As previous, but with a 70% chance of a predator.
76–80	A monster or huge, legendary predator, complete with nearby lair and a 20% chance of prisoners.
81–00	Lost. Roll on Wastelands table.

### Wastelands Encounters

1D100	Result
01	A village of 1D10 x20 people.
02	A hermit who is a local seer, holy man or shaman.
03–05	1D6+1 Fur trappers or hunters.
06–10	1D6+1 non-human but humanoid species, out on local business.
11–70	2D8 wild herbivores. 30% chance of protecting their young.
71–80	1D8 wild carnivores protecting their hunting territory.
81–90	A monster or huge, legendary predator, complete with nearby lair and a 20% chance of prisoners.
91–95	Dangerous terrain – quicksand, rockfalls, pits or swamps.
96–00	A magically potent foe: sorcerer, monster of legendary abilities and so on, with a nearby lair.

### Nature of Encounter Table

1D100	Result
01–10	Extremely friendly and willing to impart important news or information to Adventurers at no cost.
11–30	As previous but seeks payment of some kind (money, food, drink or protection).
31–50	Friendly but with little to share save local gossip.
51–60	Friendly but reticent. Influence rolls needed to gain information and payment of some kind wanted.
61–80	Neutral. Encounter is neither friendly nor hostile.
81–85	Unfriendly. Encounter is angry for some reason and Influence rolls needed to turn the situation into a Neutral encounter.
86–90	As previous but Influence rolls are at –20%.
91–95	Hostile. Influence rolls at –20% are needed to avoid a confrontation of some kind.
96–00	Very Hostile. Encounter launches an unprovoked attack.

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# RuneQuest II

PLAYER - \_\_\_\_\_

ADVENTURER - \_\_\_\_\_

WEAPON      SIZE      REACH      DAMAGE      AP      HP      COMBAT MANOEUVRES      RANGE      LOAD      ENC

## Fatigue

Ⓞ Ⓜ Ⓚ Ⓝ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ ⓐ ⓑ ⓓ ⓔ ⓖ ⓗ ⓘ ⓙ ⓚ ⓛ ⓜ ⓝ ⓞ ⓟ ⓠ ⓡ ⓢ ⓣ ⓤ ⓶ ⓷ ⓸ ⓹ ⓺ ⓻ ⓼ ⓽ ⓾ ⓿

LEVEL	SKILLS EFFECT	MOVEMENT	STRIKE RANK	CA
Fresh	-			
Winded	-10% to all skills			
Tired	-20% to all skills	-1m		
Weary	-30% to all skills	-1m	-2	
Exhausted	-40% to all skills	Halved	-4	-1
Debilitated	-50% to all skills	Halved	-6	-2

DISEASES, POISONS, HEALTH

## EQUIPMENT

## ENC

MONEY, WEALTH AND POSSESSION

CONTACTS, FRIENDS, ENEMIES AND RIVALS

NOTES

## Cults

Ⓞ Ⓜ Ⓚ Ⓝ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ ⓐ ⓑ ⓓ ⓔ ⓖ ⓗ ⓘ ⓙ ⓚ ⓛ ⓜ ⓝ ⓞ ⓟ ⓠ ⓡ ⓢ ⓣ ⓤ ⓶ ⓷ ⓸ ⓹ ⓺ ⓻ ⓼ ⓽ ⓾ ⓿

CULT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

RANK: \_\_\_\_\_

DEDICATED POW: \_\_\_\_\_

PACT: \_\_\_\_\_

LORE: \_\_\_\_\_

CULT SKILLS - \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIFIC DUTIES - \_\_\_\_\_

GIFTS/COMPULSIONS - \_\_\_\_\_

DIVINE SPELLS - \_\_\_\_\_



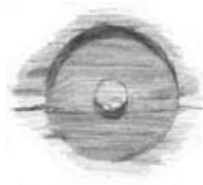
AIR



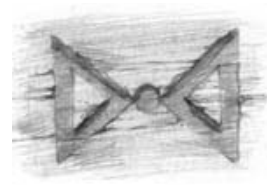
BEAST



CHAOS



COLD



COMMUNICATION



DARKNESS



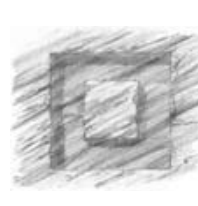
DEATH



DISORDER



DRAGONEWT



EARTH



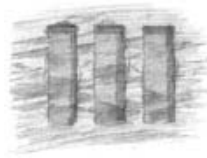
FATE



FERTILITY



FIRE



HARMONY



HEAT



ILLUSION



INFINITY



LAW



LIGHT



LUCK



MAGIC



MAN



MASTERY



MOON



MOTION



PLANT



SPIRIT



STASIS



TRUTH



WATER