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# RUNEQUEST



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# RUNEQUEST



## ESSENTIALS

**Pete Nash & Lawrence Whitaker**

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The Heroes of Meeros who backed the Indiegogo campaign of July/August 2013.

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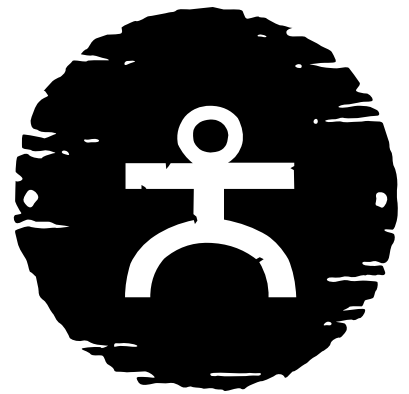
### ABOUT RUNEQUEST ESSENTIALS

This edition of RUNEQUEST is a heavily edited and pared-down version of the full rulebook. Although the core of the system is intact, this Essentials Edition is intended to be a sampler for the main rules and, hopefully, encourage players and Games Masters to invest in the full game. For example, we have only included two of the five magic systems; we have also left out the extensive chapter concerning cults and brotherhoods, and have provided only a fraction of the creatures. Nevertheless, there is enough here to get started and, indeed, enjoy many hours of adventure. At some stage though, you will, we hope, want more, and be curious and eager enough to buy the RUNEQUEST 6th Edition core rules so that you can take advantage of the complete system in all its glory.

*See page 201 for a list of the many extras to be found in the full RUNEQUEST rules.*



# CHAPTER 1: CHARACTERISTICS AND ATTRIBUTES



**T**his chapter outlines the initial steps for Character Creation. The following chapters provide additional detail, but the essentials are found here.

Every player in RUNEQUEST controls a character. A character is the player's alter-ego, his role in the game, and is usually very different, physically and mentally, to the player. RUNEQUEST characters can be from a variety of races – although the Essentials rules only cover the creation of humans.

The basic character is defined by a series of different elements that describe the character's capabilities. These elements are:

- ⇒ Characteristics: such as Strength or Charisma
- ⇒ Attributes: things like Height or Movement
- ⇒ Standard Skills: expertise in fundamental abilities which everyone shares

Most of these elements are described in terms of numbers, and some are dependent on or calculated by others. What each element means, and how they are determined, is described in the following sections.

## BEGINNING TO DESIGN YOUR CHARACTER

Characters are usually recorded on a character sheet, which is a handy way of organizing all the information about the character. A blank character sheet is included on pages 192-193, but it is recommended that you first design your character using scratch paper, and then transfer the information to a character sheet once you have gone through each step of the character creation process. Work through each element one step at a time before proceeding to the next. Use a pencil and have an eraser handy; certain numbers such as skill values will change several times during the character creation process.

## CHARACTER CONCEPT

A good place to start is to have some idea of what sort of character you want to play; a hardened warrior for example, or a cunning thief. Your character concept does not need

### ROUNDING OF NUMBERS AND RESULTS

*On some occasions you will be required to divide numbers - typically the rating in a skill (such as for determining a critical success, which is 1/10th of the skill's value). Whenever a division result creates a fraction, always round up to the whole number. So, for instance, 1/10th of 64% is 6.4; this is rounded up to 7.*





## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

The image below shows a youthful hero, by the name of Zamothis. Throughout these rules we'll be using him as an example of how to create a character and, through his exploits, show how the RUNEQUEST rules work.

Zamothis' saga begins here, with character creation. His player, has already decided that she wants to fashion a grim, stoic warrior, since the RUNEQUEST campaign will be set in a fantasy world based upon myths of ancient Greece, mixed with elements of old-school Sword & Sorcery.

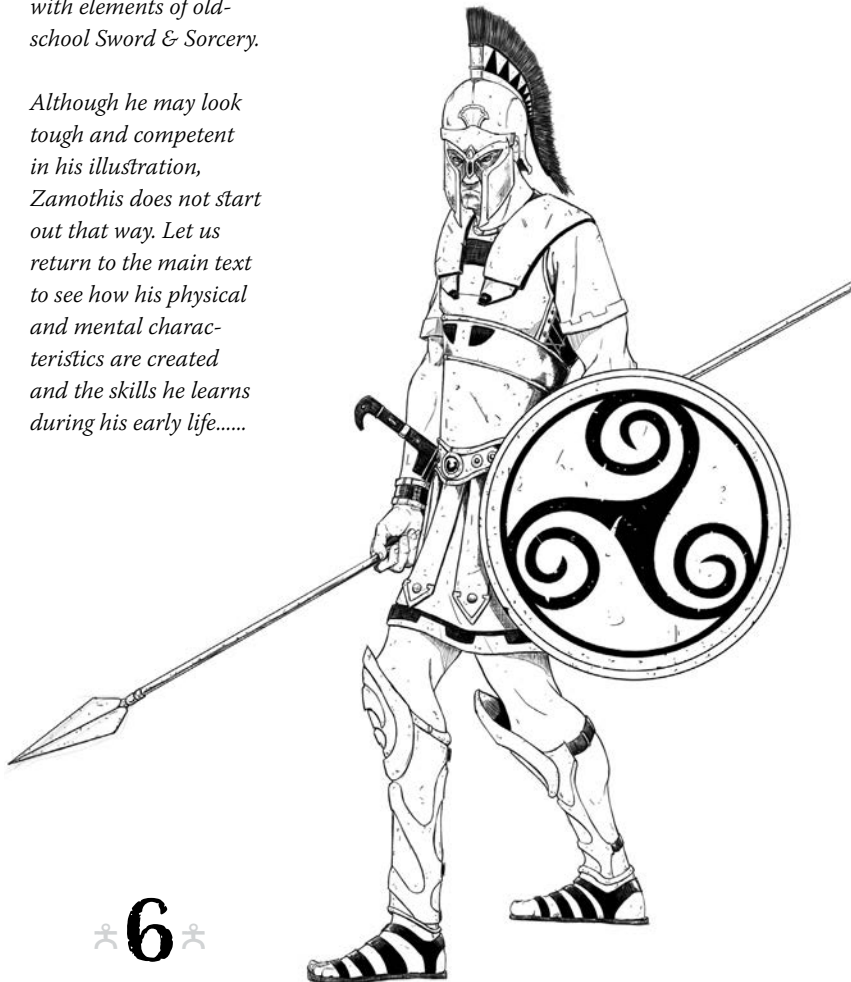
Although he may look tough and competent in his illustration, Zamothis does not start out that way. Let us return to the main text to see how his physical and mental characteristics are created and the skills he learns during his early life.....

to be elaborate at this stage; simply an idea that will help guide certain choices such as race and profession. A few character ideas are listed to provoke your imagination.

- ⇒ Fierce barbarian hunter
- ⇒ Young, naïve wizard
- ⇒ Bad-tempered gemstone miner
- ⇒ Chivalrous, yet disgraced champion
- ⇒ Overly-curious explorer-scholar
- ⇒ Unscrupulous mercenary

## CHARACTERISTICS

Every sapient creature, be it human, elder race or monster, is defined by seven characteristics. Each characteristic tells you something about your character; how strong or fast he or she is; how clever or healthy. Characteristics are at the core of every RUNEQUEST character and form the basis for most of the other elements such as Attributes and Skills.



No matter how alien or strange the race or species, the seven characteristics are:

- ⇒ Strength (STR)
- ⇒ Constitution (CON)
- ⇒ Size (SIZ)
- ⇒ Dexterity (DEX)
- ⇒ Intelligence (INT)
- ⇒ Power (POW)
- ⇒ Charisma (CHA)

Before calculating the characteristics, the following section explains what each represents.

### STRENGTH (STR)

STR represents physical strength: how much one can lift, how hard one can hit, and so on. Characters with a high STR are likely to be more heavily muscled whilst those with a low STR are somewhat on the scrawny side. STR is a component of the Damage Modifier (see page 9). If a character is reduced to zero STR he lacks the ability to move or lift objects, becoming bedridden until STR improves somehow (through natural healing or magic, for example).

### CONSTITUTION (CON)

CON is measure of health and hardiness. Those with a high CON are physically tough and likely to be more resistant to disease or poison. Those with a low CON are less resilient and may be prone to sickness and tire quickly. CON is a component in determining Hit Points (see page 10) and Healing Rate (see page 9). If CON falls to zero for any reason the character dies.

### SIZE (SIZ)

SIZ measures mass, and helps indicate height and weight. The larger the SIZ the heavier or bigger the creature is likely to be. Most creatures' SIZ has a higher minimum value than other characteristics, representing the smallest example of an adult of that race; which in the case of humans is 8. SIZ is used to help figure Hit Points (see page 10), as larger, heavier creatures tend to have greater endurance against damage. SIZ can also be used to determine a character's Damage Modifier,

since mass helps to increase the force of a blow. SIZ provides rough limits to Height and Weight, depending on the character's body frame (see page 10). If SIZ drops below the species minimum they are considered to have wasted away to the point they are bedridden.

## DEXTERITY (DEX)

Agility, balance and reflexes are measured by DEX. Characters with high DEX are fast, nimble and graceful of movement. Those with a low DEX tend to be lumbering and clumsy. DEX is an important aspect of Action Points (see page 8) and Strike Rank (see page 11). If a character is reduced to zero DEX they suffer functional paralysis, unable to move until the situation is rectified.

## INTELLIGENCE (INT)

INT is measurement of cognitive ability. It indicates the capacity for a character to think both logically and creatively. Those with a lower INT score are not necessarily stupid, but they are likely to be constrained in how creatively they can employ their wits. Creatures with an INT of 7 or below are considered sentient, retaining animal level instinct and able to react to stimuli. Individuals with an INT of 8 or higher are deemed fully sapient. INT is a factor in calculating Action Points (see page 8) and Strike Rank (see page 11). If INT is reduced to zero the character becomes completely mindless.

## POWER (POW)

Power is a measurement of a character's soul, spirit, inner drive and capacity for magic. It encompasses a number of different things and is a relatively abstract measurement, but is also one of the most important. POW is the characteristic that marks a character out to the gods or other supernatural powers and is an indication of divine or magical potential, as well as being an indication of the force of their personal determination. POW governs a character's Magic Points (see page 11) and Luck Points (see page 11). If a character's POW ever drops to zero they lose all independent will.

## CHARISMA (CHA)

Charisma measures personality and is independent of physical appearance. Someone with a high CHA for example might be ugly or plain to look at, but blessed with a charm and wit that more than compensate for not being handsome. Likewise a low CHA might indicate someone who is radiantly beautiful but utterly shallow or simply meek. A good CHA is often useful for those who wish to be leaders or centres of their local community. Diehard loners and submissive followers tend towards the other extreme. CHA affects a character's Experience Modifier (see page 9). If CHA ever falls to zero, the character can no longer socially interact with others, becoming so painfully shy or antisocial they are ignored or even driven away.

## CALCULATING CHARACTERISTICS

Each characteristic has a numerical value to determine how potent it is. Characteristic values can be calculated in one of several ways, either by random dice rolls or by allocating a predetermined number of points. Which method should be used is governed by the Games Master.

Games Masters are free to modify rolling techniques or values to suit their own campaigns. For instance if the Games Master wished randomly rolled player characters to be more heroic, or at least free from handicap, he could permit the re-roll of an unusually low result; or allow the player to take up to three points from one characteristic and assign them to another providing the new scores do not exceed the normal characteristic range; or even permit one of the dice used to roll each characteristic to be substituted for its full value. Likewise if using point allocation, a character can simply be assigned a larger pool of characteristic points.

By default, the options listed overleaf are suggested.



### NON-HUMAN SPECIES

*Whilst humans are the default characters to play in the Essentials rules, they are not the only species which can be used as player characters in RUNEQUEST.*

*It is possible to play just about any sapient race or species described in the RUNEQUEST 6th Edition rulebook, such as Minotaurs, Serpent People or even the traditional Halfling. This is possible because all creatures, regardless of type, are defined in the same way.*

*Many RUNEQUEST settings offer further creature options to use as Player Characters and guidance is offered on how to integrate them into a campaign.*





## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*The player, Emma, prepares to create Zamothis, a human adventurer. As the campaign uses the Dice Roll in Order method, she rolls five sets of 3d6, followed by two sets of 2d6+6, placing them into the characteristics as ordered.*

*Emma rolls the following on 3d6: 11, 8, 11, 5 and 13. A rather discouraging set of numbers. However, as humans calculate their SIZ and INT using different dice, she then rolls 2d6+6 twice and gets a 15 and 16, redressing the earlier rolls. Since the dice results must be placed in order of their roll they are assigned thusly:*

STR 11, CON 8,  
SIZ 15, DEX 11,  
INT 16, POW 5,  
CHA 13

*For a human, Zamothis is of average strength, susceptible to illness, but big, granting him a tall, lean build. His reflexes are nothing special. However, Zamothis is quick witted, although prone to lassitude and procrastination. Finally, his natural charm and open personality make him well-liked.*

## DICE ROLL, IN ORDER

Roll the indicated dice for STR, CON, SIZ, DEX, INT, POW and CHA taking each rolled score as it comes. Since the results of these rolls can be somewhat random, it is often better to decide on a character concept after the dice are rolled. Otherwise the final characteristics may preclude a preconceived role.

The dice used depends on the creature or race chosen. For humans roll 3d6 for STR, CON, DEX, POW and CHA; then 2d6+6 for SIZ and INT.

## DICE ROLL, ASSIGN

As above, except that the player may exchange values between characteristics with the same dice range. For example when rolling up a human, the player could swap values between the STR, CON, DEX, POW and CHA characteristics which share a 3d6 range, or between the SIZ and INT characteristics with their 2d6+6 range – but never switch over rolls from one group to the other.

## POINTS BUILD

Instead of rolling dice to determine characteristics, players build their character from a pool of 80 points. Certain rules apply to the points build option:

- ⇒ 1 point in a characteristic costs 1 Point from the Points Build pool
- ⇒ Characteristics cannot be *lower* than the minimum value or *greater* than maximum value of that characteristic
- ⇒ All Characteristic Points must be used in the design process. Points cannot be held over or used for anything else.

## OTHER OPTIONS

There are dozens of different options that can be used to generate Characteristics, not all are perfectly balanced, particularly when considering different species who might possess exceptional STR or SIZ for example.

Although players always desire high Characteristics, they are not as vital for Player Character progression and survival in *RUNEQUEST* as they are in other roleplaying games.

## ATTRIBUTES

Each character also has a set of attributes. These are particular capabilities derived from their characteristics and species, that are used to govern certain factors of game play. The attributes are:

- ⇒ Action Points
- ⇒ Damage Modifier
- ⇒ Experience Modifier
- ⇒ Healing Rate
- ⇒ Height and Weight
- ⇒ Hit Points
- ⇒ Luck Points
- ⇒ Magic Points
- ⇒ Movement Rate
- ⇒ Strike Rank

## ACTION POINTS

How often a character can act in a combat round (see the Combat chapter) is determined by Action Points. How they are used is discussed in more detail on page 81, but to determine a character's base number of Action Points take the sum of INT and DEX and consult the chart below:

### ACTION POINTS

INT + DEX	Action Points
12 or Less	1
13–24	2
25–36	3
For every additional 12 points	+1

### The Reasons Why...

- ⇒ INT: Clever characters can more easily exploit openings and opportunities that lend them an edge in combat
- ⇒ DEX: Agile characters react more quickly and can therefore act more often during combat

## DAMAGE MODIFIER

The bonus amount of damage a character inflicts when they physically strike or apply force. It is generally used in combat situations, but can also be utilised when attempting to break objects. The damage modifier is



**THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS**

*Emma now calculates the attributes of Zamothis.*

*Action Points: with INT and DEX totaling 27, Zamothis has 3 Action Points, meaning he can act rapidly in combat situations.*

*Damage Modifier: Zamothis has STR 11 and SIZ 15 giving a total of 26, which results in a Damage Modifier of +1d2. Though wiry, Zamothis' stature allows him to augment his power when attempting to damage something.*

*Experience Modifier: A CHA 13 grants Zamothis an Experience Modifier of +1. His popularity allows him to ask others for favours and gain their trust.*

*Healing Rate: His mediocre CON 8 leaves Zamothis with a Healing Rate of 2. Whilst tall and moderately powerful, he does not heal from wounds especially quickly.*

an extra die roll which is either added to, or subtracted from, the damage inflicted by the weapon or tool. If a negative damage modifier takes a weapon's damage to zero or below then no damage at all has been inflicted.

Add together STR and SIZ and consult the Damage Modifier table:

**DAMAGE MODIFIER**

STR + SIZ	Damage Modifier
5 or Less	-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	+1d8+1d6
81-90	+2d8

*The Reasons Why...*

- ⇒ STR: stronger characters can apply more brute force
- ⇒ SIZ: greater size usually indicates greater mass or leverage

**EXPERIENCE MODIFIER**

Over the course of play characters improve their skills and capabilities. This is achieved through the use of Experience Rolls which are explained in more detail on page 63.

A character's CHA score may adjust the number of Experience Rolls the character has, reflecting the relationship he has with his peers and his reputation in his community. If CHA is high people are willing to put themselves out to help train or support the character whilst they undergo tuition. Conversely, if CHA is particularly low, there may be some difficulty improving one's capabilities without the assistance of others; finding someone to spar against for example.

**EXPERIENCE MODIFIER**

CHA	Exp. Modifier
6 or Less	-1
7-12	0
13-18	+1
Each 6 points	+1

*The Reasons Why...*

- ⇒ CHA: charismatic characters possess greater force of personality and the ability to encourage co-operation from friends, comrades and peers

**HEALING RATE**

After receiving injuries, a character needs to recuperate. Healing Rate determines how quickly they naturally recover from wounds. Depending on the severity of the injury (see page 72), the Healing Rate denotes how many Hit Points are recovered per day, week or month.

**HEALING RATE**

CON	Healing Rate
6 or Less	1
7-12	2
13-18	3
Each 6 points	+1

*The Reasons Why...*

- ⇒ CON: the more vitality a character has, the faster he recovers

**HEIGHT AND WEIGHT**

A character's height and weight depend on two things: SIZ and the character's body frame. Three body frames are provided; lithe (slender, athletic, underweight), medium and heavy (broad shouldered, barrel-chested, overweight). Players are free to pick their preferred frame depending on how they envisage the character.

Cross reference SIZ with the body frame selected. The result is a range of values that your character's height and weight falls into. You should choose the actual value from within this range.



The Height and Weight table can, of course, be used to determine the physical properties of anything, but is primarily designed to reflect humanoids.

**HEIGHT AND WEIGHT**

SIZ	Height (cm)	Lithe (Kg)	Medium (Kg)	Heavy (Kg)
1	1-45	1-5	1-7	1-9
2	46-80	6-10	8-14	10-18
3	81-105	11-15	15-21	19-27
4	106-120	16-20	22-28	28-36
5	121-130	21-25	29-35	37-45
6	131-140	26-30	36-42	46-54
7	141-150	31-35	43-49	55-63
8	151-155	36-40	50-56	64-72
9	156-160	41-45	57-63	73-81
10	161-165	46-50	64-70	82-90
11	166-170	51-55	71-77	91-99
12	171-175	56-60	78-84	100-108
13	176-180	61-65	85-91	109-117
14	181-185	66-70	92-98	118-126
15	186-190	71-75	99-105	127-135
16	191-195	76-80	106-112	136-144
17	196-200	81-85	113-119	145-153
18	201-205	86-90	120-126	154-162
Each point	+5 cm	+5 Kg	+7 Kg	+9 Kg

**HIT POINTS**

Hit Points represent how much injury an area of the body can withstand before it becomes useless, possibly resulting in incapacitation and ultimately the character's death. The body of every creature is divided into separate locations – humans for example have seven; the head, chest, abdomen, arms and legs – each location with its own hit points.

Some creatures, such as monsters or different classes of animal, by their very nature often have radically different body structures, yet each location they possess still has Hit Points. When a location's hit points are reduced to a certain level through damage of any kind, then the character suffers certain consequences that reflect the severity of the injury. For further information concerning wounds see page 72.

To calculate the Hit Points of each location, add CON and SIZ together and cross-reference on the Hit Points table.

*The Reasons Why...*

- ⇒ CON: healthy, resilient individuals can withstand more punishment than frailer ones
- ⇒ SIZ: greater bulk helps absorb damage and reduce the significance of an injury

**LUCK POINTS**

Luck Points represent that strange force differentiating adventuring heroes from everyday folk. Call it fate, karma or simple good fortune. Luck Points can be used to:

- ⇒ Re-roll the dice, if they are unfavourable
- ⇒ Mitigate physical damage or other unfortunate circumstances
- ⇒ Gain an edge at a vital moment in combat

Exactly how they are used, and when, is described on page 74.

Once a Luck Point is spent, the pool decreases; when one is out of Luck Points, no more are available – unless the Games Master makes an impromptu award – until the next game session when they replenish to their normal value.

**HIT POINTS PER LOCATION**

**CON+SIZ**

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

## LUCK POINTS

POW	Luck Points
6 or Less	1
7–12	2
13–18	3
Each 6 points	+1

### *The Reasons Why...*

- ⇒ POW: power is a measure of luck and divine favour; a gift of fate, or the ability to cheat it

## MAGIC POINTS

Mystical abilities and spells cast in RUNEQUEST usually rely on Magic Points. Since the availability of magic may be limited by a campaign setting or to specific magical professions, some characters will find this Attribute superfluous.

For those who can utilise such powers, a character's Magic Points are equal to their POW. These points are used to cast spells, the cost of which is dependent on the type of magic used. When the caster runs out of Magic Points he has exhausted his ability to cast any spells until they are replenished.

### *The Reasons Why...*

- ⇒ POW: Power is a measure of both willpower – used to command the magical fabric – and the psychic strength the character channels from their environment

## MOVEMENT RATE

Movement is not calculated from Characteristics but is a default value which differs from race to race. The base Movement Rate for humans is 6 metres, although certain skills can improve this. The section on Movement, on page 60 offers more detail.

## STRIKE RANK

The moment at which someone reacts in combat is governed by initiative. Strike Rank acts as a modifier to initiative rolls; the higher the Strike Rank, the faster one responds in a

combat situation, determining when you can act. Further factors – armour for example – modify it. The Combat chapter goes into more detail on how Strike Ranks are used (see page 81).

Strike Rank is the average of the DEX and INT characteristics.

### *The Reasons Why...*

- ⇒ INT: clever fighters can predict attacks and anticipate their opponent's strategies
- ⇒ DEX: faster characters react and respond more quickly than slower ones

# STANDARD SKILLS

By default, every Adventurer has a range of Standard skills allowing him to perform a variety of actions with varying degrees of expertise. These skills are detailed more fully in the Skills chapter, but cover a range of everyday activities and local knowledge which anyone can use without specialised training. At this point of character creation, players will only need to know the base values of each Standard skill.

The basic score of each Standard skill is determined by the sum of two characteristics or a multiple of a single characteristic. The value represents the character's innate competence in a given area, in effect their raw talent before any formative training received as part of his culture and profession.

The Standard Skills Table overleaf 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 detailed skill descriptions are provided in the Skills chapter.

Note that the basic percentages for some skills will be modified by both culture and profession, so these starting values will change as character creation progresses.



## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*Height & Weight: Emma decides that Zamothis will be lithe. With a SIZ 15 she selects a height of 186cm and weight of 75 kilos to fit her visualisation of tall and slender.*

*Hit Points: CON 8 and SIZ 15 means Zamothis will have 5 Hit Points in his Head and Legs, 7 in his Chest, 6 in his Abdomen and 4 in each Arm. He is reasonably tough despite his poor CON.*

*Luck Points: With a dire POW of 5, Zamothis only receives 1 Luck Point. Thus, he can only call on his Luck Point once per game session and must keep himself alive more by wits than fortune.*

*Magic Points: As Zamothis intends to be a warrior, his meagre 5 Magic Points are not an issue to him. Only dark sorcerers and corrupt priests need such things.*

*Strike Rank: With INT 16 and DEX 11, Zamothis has a Strike Rank of 14. Whilst he lacks the reflexes of a leaping panther, his decent reaction speed is faster than most people's.*





## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

To recap, Zamothis has the following characteristics: STR 11, CON 8, SIZ 15, DEX 11, INT 16, POW 5, and CHA 13. His Standard Skills work out as follows:

Athletics 22%, Boating 19%, Brawn 26%, Conceal 16%, Customs 32%, Dance 24%, Deceit 29%, Drive 16%, Endurance 16%, Evade 22%, First Aid 27%, Influence 26%, Insight 21%, Locale 32%, Native Tongue 29%, Perception 21%, Ride 16%, Sing 18%, Stealth 27%, Swim 19%, Unarmed 22%, Willpower 10%.

As a youth Zamothis is naturally gifted at communication and knowledge skills, whereas his lack of Willpower makes him easy to influence. Despite what, at first glance, appear to be poor values, these skills will be further improved by his cultural upbringing and chosen profession as described in the next chapter.

### STANDARD SKILLS

Skill	Basic Percentage
Athletics	STR+DEX
Boating	STR+CON
Brawn	STR+SIZ
Conceal	DEX+POW
Customs	INTx2
Dance	DEX+CHA
Deceit	INT+CHA
Drive	DEX+POW
Endurance	CON x2
Evade	DEX x2
First Aid	INT+DEX
Influence	CHA x2
Insight	INT+POW
Locale	INT x2
Native Tongue	INT+CHA
Perception	INT+POW
Ride	DEX+POW
Sing	CHA+POW
Stealth	DEX+INT
Swim	STR+CON
Unarmed	STR+DEX
Willpower	POW x2

defined separately, under names suitable to the genre of the game setting.

*For example, a campaign centred on a heroic Bronze Age civilization might offer several different combat styles depending on the role of the warrior. Soldiers who are expected to engage in large scale battle might be taught a combat style concerning how to fight with spears, short swords and hoplite shields whilst keeping in formation; whereas a gladiator combat style would be more focussed on unusual weapon combinations such as a trident and net, with an emphasis on throwing either one to entertain spectators.*

Characters learn Combat Styles as part of their culture and profession, as described in the following chapter.

## COMBAT STYLES

A Combat Style is the skill relating to fighting and the use of weapons. It is a diverse skill with many specialisations related to the culture or profession which teaches it. Most fighting traditions encompass training in multiple weapons, along with the techniques required to use them all effectively, whether singly or in combination. In addition they often assume a situational element, such as fighting as close order infantry or whilst mounted. Therefore a Combat Style is an umbrella skill that melds together many related aspects of fighting under a single ability, removing the need to purchase multiple sub skills.

All Combat Styles have a Basic Percentage equal to STR+DEX. Since most people can pick up a weapon and instinctively either swing, throw or fire it, Combat Styles are considered Standard Skills. Yet due to their potentially diverse nature, they are categorised and





# BASIC CHARACTER CREATION ELEMENTS

Summarised here are the key elements of basic character creation on one page, using an excerpt from the RUNEQUEST character sheet found on pages 192 and 193. Work through each element to establish your beginning character and then work through the next two chapters to complete the process.

## 1

### CHARACTERISTICS

3d6 for STR, CON, DEX, POW and CHA. 2d6+6 for INT and SIZ. Allocate results to fit the concept. Results may be allocated in the order rolled, or distributed as the Games Master and players agree.

Alternatively distribute 80 points amongst the characteristics. Minimum 3 (8 for INT and SIZ), maximum 18. Use all the points.

## 2

### ACTION POINTS

INT + DEX	Action Points
12 or Less	1
13-24	2
25-36	3
For every additional 12 points	+1

## 3

### DAMAGE MODIFIER

STR + SIZ	Damage Modifier
5 or Less	-1D8
6-10	-1D6
11-15	-1D4
16-20	-1D2
21-25	+0
26-30	+1D2
31-35	+1D4
36-40	+1D6

## 4

### EXPERIENCE MODIFIER

CHA	Exp. Modifier
6 or Less	-1
7-12	0
13-18	+1
Each 6 points	+1

## 5

### HEALING RATE

CON	Healing Rate
6 or Less	1
7-12	2
13-18	3
Each 6 points	+1

MOVEMENT = 6m for Humans **6**

**7** STRIKE RANK = Average of INT & DEX

## 8

### LUCK POINTS

POW	Luck Points
6 or Less	1
7-12	2
13-18	3
Each 6 points	+1

(Not shown on sheet)

## 9

MAGIC POINTS = POW characteristic

STR

CON

SIZ

DEX

INT

POW

CHA

## CHARACTERISTICS & ATTRIBUTES

### HIT LOCATIONS

1d20	Right Leg	Left Leg	Abdomen	Chest	R. Arm	L. Arm	Head
1-3	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4-6	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7-9	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10-12	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
13-15	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
16-18	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
19-20	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Strike Rank Penalty:

Shield (Type & Location Covered):

Action Points	Damage Modifier	Exp. Modifier	Healing Rate	Movement Rate	Strike Rank
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

COMBAT STYLES (STR+DEX)	Style Name	%	Weapons Included
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

STANDARD SKILLS	Skill	Characteristics	%
<input type="checkbox"/>	Athletics	STR+DEX	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Boating	STR+CON	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brawn	STR+SIZ	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conceal	DEX+POW	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Customs	INT x2	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dance	DEX+CHA	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deceit	INT+CHA	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drive	DEX+POW	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Endurance	CON x2	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evade	DEX x2	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	First Aid	INT+DEX	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Influence	CHA x2	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Insight	INT+POW	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Locale	INT x2	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perception	INT+POW	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ride	DEX+POW	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sing	POW+CHA	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stealth	INT+DEX	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swim	STR+CON	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unarmed	STR+DEX	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	Willpower	POW x2	___

## 10

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

## 11

**SKILLS & COMBAT STYLES**  
 These are calculated using the characteristics listed for each skill. At this stage you generate only the beginning values; skills will increase as you progress through Cultures and Community, and Careers and Development.



## CHAPTER 2: CULTURE & CAREERS



**C**ulture plays an important part in RENEQUEST character creation. Culture determines the kind of society in which the character was raised, and so prescribes certain outlooks and philosophies he or she might have. More practically, culture helps define the values of the various skills that shape your character's overall capabilities. Whereas social class represents the resources and status a character possesses within that culture.

### CULTURE

There are four basic human cultures: Barbarian, Civilised, Nomadic and Primitive.

A description of each cultural background follows and includes a list of skill bonuses and new skills appropriate to it. Players should apply the skill bonuses immediately to the Standard skills on their Character Sheet and add the additional new skills, known as Professional Skills (introduced in the next chapter), 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.

### CULTURAL SKILL POINTS

Each culture lists a variety of Standard Skills that the character learns as part of his formative development within that society. These are core abilities which all characters from the same specific culture improve to some degree. Characters also learn a number of more specialised or esoteric Professional Skills according to their personal interests and have the option of learning a cultural Combat Style.

Professional skills are further explained in the Skills chapter on page 25, but in brief they represent those skills which cannot be attempted without years of rigorous study and specialised training. Whereas a character has a basic ability in all Standard Skills, they have zero ability in any Professional Skill unless chosen as part of their cultural upbringing or career.

### CULTURE IN HISTORICAL AND FANTASY SETTINGS

*The four basic cultures presented in this chapter can be applied to almost any fantasy or historical setting.*

*In a world based upon stories written by R.E. Howard for example, the civilised cultures would be naturally headed by Aquilonia, whilst the Cimmerians would be considered barbarian, the Hyrkansians nomads and the Picts primitives.*



## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*The GM has decided that the campaign will be set in a Sword & Sorcery world of warring city-states loosely based upon the ancient world. So Emma decides that Zamothis will start as a barbaric tribesman from the untamed clans which lie beyond the northern winds.*

*Choosing the Barbarian culture she begins by adding the default 40% bonus to Customs and Native Tongue, then chooses the three Professional Skills Zamothis learned growing up in the wilds; deciding upon Musicianship (Wind) 24% (DEX+CHA), Survival 13% (CON+POW) and Track 24% (INT+CON).*

*Emma now has 100 points to assign to the listed Standard Skills and the three Professional Skills she selected. Imagining that Zamothis started life as a wiry goat herd she applies them thusly: Athletics +10, Brawn +5, Endurance +15, First Aid +5, Locale +5, Perception +15, Ride +5, Musicianship (Wind) +10, Survival +5 and Track +10. The remaining 15 points are reserved to learn a cultural Combat Style.*

When applying cultural skills perform the following steps:

- ⇒ Apply the static bonuses to Customs and Native Tongue: these are +40% to each, irrespective of the culture chosen.
- ⇒ Select three Professional Skills from the options offered
- ⇒ If desired, select a single Combat Style
- ⇒ Distribute 100 points amongst the listed Standard Skills, the chosen Professional Skills and the Combat Style (if selected), increasing that skill by 1% for every point spent on improving it. Players are free to choose how much each skill is improved by, but each skill must receive a minimum of 5% and cannot receive more than 15%.

Chosen Professional Skills start off at their base characteristic value as per Standard Skills. Some Professional Skills such as Crafts, Languages or Lore offer choice of a specialisation. In these cases the speciality chosen should be one which suits that culture.

Characters need not invest any points into a Combat Style if they are disinclined to do so, as some cultures have non-combatant members whether due to gender, caste or philosophy. Cultural Combat Styles usually reflect the informal training received by the community for hunting, personal protection or civil defence.

Each culture comes with a range of evocative names for Combat Styles. However, no weapons are defined, because Combat Styles are intended to be flexible tools for the Games Master to tailor the weapons to the particular culture or setting. Refer to the Combat Style section in the Combat chapter for further guidance.

## BARBARIAN

Tribal in nature, barbarians tend to shun civilisation, viewing those who live in large towns and cities as weak and corrupt. Although their own settlements are also sedentary, they tend to be far smaller and closer to nature. Barbarian tribes occupy distinct territories, often half tamed wilderness, which

they regard as their own for hunting, grazing and farming purposes. Most are adept in the use of weaponry as they must overcome many dangers throughout their lives – facing creatures of the wilds or mustering to defend their lands against rival tribes. Since they live in small communities the ties of kinship and clan are strong elements of their society.

### STANDARD SKILLS

Athletics, Brawn, Endurance, First Aid, Locale, Perception; and either Boating or Ride.

### EXAMPLE COMBAT STYLES

Barbarian Fyrdman, Berserker, Horse Eater, Seaborne Reiver, Weapon Thegn, Wolf Hunter.

### PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Craft (any), Healing, Lore (any), Musicianship, Navigate, Seamanship, Survival, Track.

## CIVILISED

The Civilised culture is epitomised by a semblance of law and order, underpinned by complex social codes and supported by a bureaucracy. Civilised people believe themselves superior to all other cultures because their achievements tend towards permanence: sprawling cities, imposing temples, celebratory monuments, and the recording of history and events in books, tomes and scrolls. Of course, this is a thin veneer. The most civilised of cities can be more lawless than any barbarian frontier settlement; and the social codes may be cruder than the hospitality rituals of nomads. But the Civilised culture prides itself on its achievements, its infrastructure, its professional artisans and its ability to easily extend its reach to wherever it wishes to go.

### STANDARD SKILLS

Conceal, Deceit, Drive, Influence, Insight, Locale, Willpower.

### EXAMPLE COMBAT STYLES

Citizen Legionary, City-state Phalangite, Levied Archer, Light Skirmisher, Street Thug, Town Militia.

## PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Art (any), Commerce, Craft (any), Courtesy, Language (any), Lore (any), Musicianship, Streetwise.

## NOMADIC

Nomadic people are constantly on the move, with no home and hearth to call their own. They may wander aimlessly about, or might have several camps they move to and from throughout the year. They raise few crops and instead follow the migrations of animals or fish, perhaps even herding their own domesticated beasts. Nomads are adept at subsisting on what they can quickly and easily scavenge from their surroundings, letting nothing go to waste. The skills of the nomad culture should be tailored to their environment. Some journey vast distances on foot, others live in caravans or ride strange creatures, and some drift across the oceans on great floating rafts.

### STANDARD SKILLS

Endurance, First Aid, Locale, Perception, Stealth; and two of the following: Athletics, Boating, Swim, Drive or Ride depending on the primary mode of travel.

### EXAMPLE COMBAT STYLES

Camel Cavalry, Feathered Death Flinger, Horse Lord, Whale Hunter, Wheeled Warrior, Wolf Runner.

### PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Craft (any), Culture (any), Language (any), Lore (any), Musicianship, Navigate, Survival, Track.

## PRIMITIVE

Of all peoples primitives are those that live closest with the land, in tune with its hidden secrets. Other cultures commonly dismiss them as little more than animals, yet they merely eschew the technology that so many others take for granted; relying instead on flint spears and arrows, and their skill for survival in the wild. Living in extended family groups, primitive cultures gather around very simple dwellings that can range from caves and areas of natural shelter through

to lean-tos or very basic huts. Primitives are typically hunter-gatherers with either few, or poorly developed, systems for farming and husbandry. However, certain cultural beliefs, often based on superstitions, can be very well defined. Few primitive cultures have developed anything approaching a written language although paintings and other pictorial symbols serve as a means of communication.

### STANDARD SKILLS

Brawn, Endurance, Evade, Locale, Perception, Stealth; and one of either Athletics, Boating or Swim.

### EXAMPLE COMBAT STYLES

Flint Death Dealer, Ghost Warrior, Head Hunter, Jaguar Brother, Jungle Savage, Savannah Hunter.

### PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Craft (any), Healing, Lore (any), Musicianship, Navigate, Survival, Track.



*The GM says that, as a barbarian of the mountain tribes Zamothis can take the Wolf Hunter style, learning as a child the use of the long spear augmented with the tribal training in bow and sling. The style starts with a base score of 22% (STR+DEX) and Emma adds her remaining 15 points to it.*







### THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*After applying his cultural modifiers*

*Zamothis' skills are:*

*Athletics 32%, Boating*

*19%, Brawn 31%,*

*Conceal 16%, Customs*

*72%, Dance 24%,*

*Deceit 29%, Drive 16%,*

*Endurance 31%, Evade*

*22%, First Aid 32%,*

*Influence 26%, Insight*

*21%, Locale 37%, Native*

*Tongue 69%, Perception*

*36%, Ride 21%, Sing*

*18%, Stealth 27%,*

*Swim 19%, Unarmed*

*22%, Willpower*

*10%; Musicianship*

*(Wind) 34%, Survival*

*18% and Track 34%;*

*Combat Style (Wolf*

*Hunter) 37%.*

*Emma now has to choose which career*

*Zamothis takes during his adolescence*

*and early adulthood.*

*Looking at the options*

*available to barbarians,*

*she decides to follow-*

*on from his cultural*

*combat style, and*

*make him a hunter.*

*Leaving his tribe behind,*

*he journeys south*

*killing large predators*

*and harvesting furs.*

*From the Hunter career*

*Emma selects the fol-*

*lowing three professional*

*skills: Craft - Skinning*

*27% (DEX+INT), and*

*takes the Professional*

*Skills of Survival*

*and Track again.*

## CAREERS

Every RENEQUEST character starts the game having been trained in a career. The occupation chosen may not necessarily be the one they continue to follow as an adventurer, but it further defines their skills.

The careers available to a character are dependent on their cultural background; in some cultures the range of available occupations is quite narrow because the needs of the community are simple. In others, the list is more diverse, reflecting a more complex society with wider diversification of roles.

Players are nominally free to choose which career they wish their character to learn, provided the Games Master deems it suitable. The table below gives some guidance as to the common vocations available to each cultural type. It is not definitive and may differ significantly in more exotic game settings. For example a campaign based in a land where magicians are slain at birth could prohibit the selection of magic using professions.

### EXAMPLE CAREERS BY CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Civilised	Barbarian	Nomad	Primitive
Agent	Beast Handler	Beast Handler	Beast Handler
Beast Handler	Entertainer	Hunter	Hunter
Entertainer	Hunter	Merchant	Physician
Hunter	Merchant	Official	Sailor
Merchant	Official	Physician	Scholar
Official	Physician	Priest	Thief
Physician	Priest	Sailor	Warrior
Priest	Sailor	Scholar	
Sailor	Scholar	Thief	
Scholar	Thief	Warrior	
Thief	Warrior		
Warrior			

Similar to cultural backgrounds, each career offers the chance to improve a range of Standard and Professional Skills utilised by that occupation. Some grant access to Magical Skills or extra Combat Styles. Unlike cultural backgrounds, characters need not invest their points in every available skill, but may tailor which ones are taken as those fitting for their specific role or culture.

Characters develop their career skills in the following way:

- ⇒ Select up to three skills from the Professional Skills available to that career.
- ⇒ Distribute 100 points amongst the career's listed Standard Skills and whatever Professional Skills were chosen, increasing each skill by 1% for every point spent on improving it. Not all of the available skills need to be improved, but no individual skill can receive more than 15%.

Newly chosen Combat Styles and Professional Skills start at their base characteristic value. Choosing a Style or Professional Skill previously gained via cultural background simply allows the character to further apply some of their career skill points at this stage. Some of these skills such as Craft, Language or Lore offer choice of a specialisation. In these cases the speciality selected should be one which suits the character's culture.

There are no restrictions on what careers are available to what social class but it is something players and Games Masters may wish to consider. Some social classes will look down on members who practice certain vocations, risking censure or perhaps even expulsion from their rank.

## AGENT

**Agitator, Assassin, Detective, Informer, Spy...**

The work of an agent is to report upon and operate covertly against those his employer wishes to keep an eye on. They watch, discover and act secretly. Anyone might be an agent – servants, beggars, noblemen, even children. Likewise those that employ agents might be anybody from a jilted lover or struggling merchant to the ruler of a nation. Agents mostly deal with passing of information or minor acts of sabotage, although a few sometimes perform assassination if the cause, or payment, is right.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Conceal, Deceit, Evade, Insight, Perception, Stealth; Combat Style (Concealable Weapons Style)
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Culture (any), Disguise, Language (any), Sleight, Streetwise, Survival, Track

## BEAST HANDLER

**Animal Breeder, Beast Tamer, Menagerie Keeper...**

Beast handlers make their living by capturing, trading, breeding, caring for, or domesticating creatures for a variety of different roles in the community. Examples include horse-whisperers, falconers, hound masters, dinosaur wranglers and the like. Some raise ostensibly wild animals for domesticated use, whilst others tend the beasts on display in private menageries. A few even take captured beasts and turn them into guardians, battlefield weapons, or competitors for pit fights and gladiatorial events.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Drive, Endurance, First Aid, Influence, Locale, Ride, Willpower
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Commerce, Craft (Animal Husbandry), Healing (Specific Species), Lore (Specific Species), Survival, Teach (Specific Species), Track

Assume creatures can be taught one trick or behaviour per point of INT they possess.

## ENTERTAINER

**Acrobat, Bard, Dancer, Player, Poet...**

Professional entertainers, have a range of skills in which they can specialise. Acrobats perform feats of balance and gymnastics. Actors present plays or ribald pantomimes. Dancers entertain with diverse dances ranging from the erotic to ceremonial. Musicians perform private concerts or provide background music. Poets recite great works of literature and lyric poetry, whereas singers perform choral works, often as choirs. Storytellers recount apocryphal tales, and so on. Entertainers sometimes learn several complimentary arts to increase their repertoire and create unique acts.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Athletics, Brawn, Dance, Deceit, Influence, Insight, Sing
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Acrobatics, Disguise, Oratory, Musicianship, Seduction, Sleight, Streetwise

## HUNTER

**Forester, Poacher, Scavenger, Stalker, Trapper...**

Responsible for finding, tracking and killing creatures, the hunter, like the herder, is knowledgeable about the land and the behaviour of animals. A hunter may hunt in a variety of ways: simple stalking, trap laying or driving creatures into pens. Most gather food, but some hunters specialise in the extermination of deadly predators or the culling of animals for valuable body parts: furs, horns or teeth for instance. Hunters often learn a supplemental craft for preserving or skinning the creatures they kill.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Athletics, Endurance, Locale, Perception, Ride, Stealth; Combat Style (Specific Hunting or Cultural Style)
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Commerce, Craft (Hunting Related), Lore (Regional or Specific Species), Mechanisms, Navigation, Survival, Track



*She then spends an additional 100 points, dividing it amongst the available career skills thusly: Athletics +10, Endurance +10, Locale +10, Perception +10, Stealth +15, Survival +15, Track +15, Combat Style (Wolf Hunter) +15.*

*After applying career modifiers Zamothis now has the following skill values: Athletics 42%, Boating 19%, Brawn 31%, Conceal 16%, Customs 72%, Dance 24%, Deceit 29%, Drive 16%, Endurance 41%, Evade 22%, First Aid 32%, Influence 26%, Insight 21%, Locale 47%, Native Tongue 69%, Perception 46%, Ride 21%, Sing 18%, Stealth 42%, Swim 19%, Unarmed 22%, Willpower 10%; Craft - Skinning 27%, Musicianship (Wind) 34%, Survival 33% and Track 49%; Combat Style (Wolf Hunter) 52%.*

## MERCHANT

**Broker, Hawker, Money Lender, Smugler, Trader...**

Merchants come in many forms: the street vendor, small shopkeeper, wily caravanse-  
rai, intrepid venturer, merchant-prince and  
many, many more. Although their methods  
or merchandise are different, all have one  
thing in common: to trade commodities (be  
it goods, food, livestock, people, property or  
even money) for the highest profit. Merchants  
know a bargain and how to drive a good one;  
and not all trade in legal merchandise. Due  
to their dealings as middle men, many mer-  
chants pick up some knowledge of foreign  
cultures and languages.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Boating, Drive, Deceit, Insight, Influence, Locale, Ride
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Commerce, Courtesy, Culture (any), Language (any), Navigation, Seamanship, Streetwise

## OFFICIAL

**Minister, Overseer, Steward, Tax Collector...**

Officials are those appointed or elected to an office, charged with performing certain administrative duties and granted a degree of authority to ensure their commands are followed. Examples include slave managers of large estates, guild masters, bureaucratic scribes, legal advocates or tax collectors. Depending on the size and complexity of the organisation or government, most officials control a body of men to help perform their duties. Indeed, they can gather to themselves a level of power and influence far superior to that of a lone warrior or sorcerer, no matter their prowess.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Customs, Deceit, Influence, Insight, Locale, Perception, Willpower
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Bureaucracy, Commerce, Courtesy, Language (any), Literacy, Lore (any), Oratory

## PHYSICIAN

**Doctor, Healer, Medicine Man, Torturer, Vivisectionist...**

Physicians have detailed knowledge of how the body works, although they do not necessarily use that learning to heal. Some instead offer their skills to extract information by coercion, or further the depth of their education by questionable practices. A physician can take many guises, some examples being the medicine man of a tribe with his totems and fetishes; or a court physician who can cure fevers and agues with complex chemical remedies. Depending on the sophistication of the culture, many doctors embellish their treatments with ceremonial theatrics, bogus medications and manipulative psychology.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Dance, First Aid, Influence, Insight, Locale, Sing, Willpower
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Commerce, Craft (any), Healing, Language (any), Literacy, Lore (any), Streetwise

## PRIEST

**Arbiter, Cultist, Druid, Mendicant, Prophet...**

Priests can take a variety of different roles in society; an official leading worship of the gods, an illuminated seer leading followers on an exodus to find their god, an official in a theocracy and so on. Priests do not necessarily need to be religious or even believe in the faith they serve, instead acting as administrators who wield a great deal of political power and influence, despite any lack of personal prowess or access to magic. Whilst others might be granted miracles from their deity to reward suitable propitiation.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Customs, Dance, Deceit, Influence, Insight, Locale, Willpower
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Bureaucracy, Devotion (Pantheon, Cult or God), Exhort, Folk Magic, Literacy, Lore (any), Oratory

## SAILOR

**Captain, Galley Slave, Marine, Pirate, Raft man...**

Sailors and boatmen have a myriad of roles upon the lakes, rivers and seas, from the simple crew of a trading ship to hardened convict rowers. Some learn strange knowledge from new lands they visit. Those sailors employed as professional raiders or marines are often given shipboard combat training. Wise to the ways of the waves, but superstitious with it, sailors are used to long dangerous travels and the hardships that go with it.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Athletics, Boating, Brawn, Endurance, Locale, Swim; Combat Style (Specific Shipboard or Cultural Style)
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Craft (Specific Shipboard Speciality), Culture (any), Language (any), Lore (any), Navigate, Seamanship, Survival

## SCHOLAR

**Annalist, Librarian, Philosopher, Skald, Scribe...**

The keepers and seekers of knowledge and learning, scholars and scribes are people who are fascinated by knowledge and the powers contained within it. Scholars are not necessarily confined to dusty libraries or suffocating scriptoriums; they may be active explorers and archivists, intent on advancing their learning or collections of tomes. Neither are they dependent on literacy to learn; some scholars memorise and hand down their knowledge orally. Some scholars are specialists in particular areas of knowledge, such as a lawspeaker who is employed to memorise and quote legal codes during law cases.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Customs, Influence, Insight, Locale, Native Tongue, Perception, Willpower
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Culture (any), Language (any), Literacy, Lore (Primary), Lore (Secondary), Oratory, Teach

## THIEF

**Burglar, Conman, Fence, Mugger, Tomb Robber...**

Thieves are those who delight in stealing, or are forced to steal from others to support themselves. They range from petty criminals who mug or pickpocket folk on the streets, to gang leaders and golden-tongued swindlers. Whilst thieves thrive in urban environments they also exist in less civilised cultures too, operating as outlawed brigands and raiders of neighbouring tribes. Some thieves specialise in tomb robbing, stealing the grave goods of the dead. A few independently wealthy cut-purses and burglars are simply bored individuals who thief for adventurous excitement.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Athletics, Deceit, Evade, Insight, Perception, Stealth; Combat Style (Concealable Weapons Style)
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Acrobatics, Commerce, Disguise, Lockpicking, Mechanisms, Sleight, Streetwise

## WARRIOR

**Bodyguard, Champion, Mercenary, Pit Fighter, Soldier...**

Professional soldiers are the warrior class of a community; this is the career of the dedicated fighting man. Most of their time is spent patrolling, guarding and training; patiently awaiting, or perhaps dreading, the call to arms. The warrior may or may not follow a particular martial code and similarly he might focus on finesse or simple brute-force.

### SKILLS

- ⇒ Standard Skills: Athletics, Brawn, Endurance, Evade, Unarmed; Combat Style (Starting Cultural Style), Combat Style (Specific Military or Martial School Style)
- ⇒ Professional Skills: Craft (any), Engineering, Gambling, Lore (Military History), Lore (Strategy and Tactics), Oratory, Survival





## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*Emma now has the chance to round-out Zamothis with a final set of skill points. Starting as an adult Zamothis has another 150 points to assign between the Standard and Professional skills he has learned thus far.*

*Emma also has the choice of selecting another skill for Zamothis as a hobby or interest. Thinking about her backstory for the young barbarian, she decides that during his wanderings he becomes entangled in the southern city states, attracted by the heady pleasures of civilisation.*

*A dissolute life of wine, woman and song are beyond his meagre purse however, so he turns first to burglary to feed his desire for gold, then hires himself out as a warrior, picking up the Bronze Mercenary combat style (Axe, Shortsword, Hoplite Shield and Great Axe).*

*The final points are associated thus: Athletics +15, Endurance +15, Influence +5, Insight +5, Locale +5, Musicianship (Wind) +5, Perception +15, Sing +10, Stealth +15, Survival +15, Track +15, Combat Style (Bronze Mercenary)*

## BONUS SKILL POINTS

At this stage every character gains an additional pool of 'free' skill points based on age, which can be distributed amongst their *existing skills*. These are provided so that the character can be rounded out and given particular interests or areas of expertise. The default for adult characters is a pool of 150 points, with a limit of assigning no more than 15 points per skill. Bonus Skill Points are used in the following way:

- ⇒ Allow the character the option of choosing one final new Combat Style or Professional Skill, reflecting a personal hobby or interest.
- ⇒ Distribute points amongst whatever skills the character currently has; increasing each skill by 1% for every point spent on improving it. No individual skill can receive more points than indicated by their Age Category.
- ⇒ Save for the optional hobby skill, no points may be assigned to those Combat Styles or Professional Skills not learned as part of their Culture or Career.

## AGE

Characters begin the game as adults who have come of age in their community (for example, have passed the tribal Coming of Age rites, reached the Age of Majority, or have reached the age where it is permitted for them to marry, bear arms, and so forth). This can vary from culture to culture and setting to setting, so it is recommended that characters are between 17 and 21 years old (or, 16+1d4+1, if a random result is preferred).

## MAGIC

RUNEQUEST offers several different types of magic. Whether characters begin play with access to these arts depends on their cultural background, starting career and the accessibility of magic in the setting. More information on the other kinds of magic available, such as *Animism*, *Mysticism* and *Sorcery* can be found in the full RENEQUEST 6th Edition rulebook.

For now, only Folk Magic and Theism are included in the Quickstart Rules. Detailed knowledge of the mechanics, spells and abilities are presented later in their own chapters.

## FOLK MAGIC

Usually only learned by petty magicians or common folk in lands where magic is ubiquitous, folk magic has minor effects upon the world, outshone in comparison to the higher arts, but can be potent for all that. Folk magic originates and is connected to the natural world and the emotions of those within it. The ability to use folk magic is controlled by the skill of the same name.

## THEISM

Theists are those who are rewarded with power from the gods in exchange for loyalty and service. Their miracles are potent as they merely channel their gods' own divine power, and can be utterly devastating. Yet maintaining the bond requires continual dedication and constant sacrifices to ensure the deity remains appeased, or at least aware of their worshipper. Theism requires the skills of Devotion and Exhort.



# CHARACTER CREATION SUMMARY

## 1 CHARACTER CONCEPT

- ⇒ Decide on the kind of character to play. Keep it simple for now. More will come.

## 2 CHARACTERISTICS

- ⇒ If playing a human, 3d6 for STR, CON, DEX, POW and CHA. 2d6+6 for INT and SIZ. Allocate results to fit the concept.
- ⇒ Alternatively distribute 75 points amongst the characteristics. Minimum 3 (6 for INT and SIZ), maximum 18. Use all the points.

## 3 CALCULATE ATTRIBUTES

- ⇒ Use the characteristics to determine Action Points, Damage Modifier, Experience Modifier, Healing Rate, Hit Points, Luck Points, Movement and Strike Rank as described in pages 8 to 11.

## 4 STANDARD SKILLS

- ⇒ Calculate base values for Standard Skills by adding together the appropriate characteristics.

## 5 CULTURE

- ⇒ Decide on a Cultural Background: Barbarian, Civilised, Nomadic or Primitive. Allocate 100 points amongst the listed Standard Skills, the chosen Professional Skills and the Combat Style for the chosen culture. Skills must have a minimum of 5% and cannot receive more than 15%. Customs and Native Tongue gain +40% each.

## 6 CAREER

- ⇒ Choose a Career from those available to your character's culture.
- ⇒ Distribute 100 points amongst the career's listed Standard Skills and whatever Professional Skills were chosen. Not all of the available skills need to be improved, but no individual skill can receive more than 15%.
- ⇒ Identify if the career uses magic and consult the appropriate Magic chapter for information on spells and so forth.

## 7 BONUS SKILL POINTS

- ⇒ Depends on age, but default characters have 150 points, with a limit of assigning no more than 15 points per skill. Players may choose one additional Professional skill as a hobby speciality.

## 8 EQUIPMENT

- ⇒ Refer to the Money and Equipment chapter starting on page 47, to buy any equipment needed.

## 9 FINALLY...

- ⇒ Don't forget to give your character a name.



+15, *Combat Style*  
(*Wolf Hunter*) +15.

*After applying career modifiers Zamothis now has the following skill values: Athletics 57%, Boating 19%, Brawn 31%, Conceal 16%, Customs 72%, Dance 24%, Deceit 29%, Drive 16%, Endurance 56%, Evade 22%, First Aid 32%, Influence 31%, Insight 26%, Locale 52%, Native Tongue 69%, Perception 61%, Ride 21%, Sing 28%, Stealth 57%, Swim 19%, Unarmed 22%, Willpower 10%; Craft - Skinning 27%, Musicianship (Wind) 39%, Survival 48% and Track 64%; Combat Style (Bronze Mercenary) 37%, Combat Style (Wolf Hunter) 67%.*

*At the conclusion of Character Generation, Zamothis has turned out to be a reasonably rugged and competent hunter. However, as a barbarian hillman his water and animal based skills are poor, his social abilities are barely mediocre due to years in the wilderness, and his dreadful Willpower make him an easy mark for anyone who wishes to influence or trick him.*

*Still a youthful 19 years old, the naive - but dangerous - hunter is ready to start play.*



## CHAPTER 3: SKILLS



If characteristics and attributes define what a character is like, skills define what he can do. As explored in the previous chapters, all characters have a diverse set of skills drawn from their vocation and cultural backgrounds. This chapter explains how skills work, and provides greater definition for each skill used in RUNEQUEST.

Skills are divided into two categories: Standard and Professional. Every character has the same set of Standard Skills. Professional Skills differ between individual characters and reflect expertise developed within a career and, to a certain extent, their culture. Despite these distinctions, Standard and Professional Skills work in the same way.

This chapter looks, first of all, at the basics of how skills work. Then the skills, Standard and Professional, are described. The chapter then concludes with some additional rules for how to handle skills in different ways and under different circumstances.

### HOW SKILLS WORK

A skill has a base value based on two characteristics; or one characteristic multiplied by two. There is no upper limit to a skill's value; it can exceed 100 and, in the course of play, characters can expect to see their skills reach such heights.

Whenever a character is called upon to resolve some form of test, challenge or professional ability 1d100 is rolled and compared with the skill's value:

- ⇒ Equal to, or less than, the skill indicates a success
- ⇒ Greater than the skill's value indicates a failure

There are certain special cases concerning success and failure that should be noted.

- ⇒ Any roll of 01-05 is always a success
- ⇒ Any roll of 96-00 is always a failure, irrespective of how high the skill's value

## CRITICALS AND FUMBLES

Criticals and Fumbles represent spectacular successes and failures; those cases where a character has either excelled in his attempt or failed miserably and utterly.

- ⇒ A Critical success is equal to one-tenth of the skill's value (and this includes skills that receive a modifier – so modified skills may have a greater or lesser chance of a Critical outcome). Round fractions up when calculating a Critical success's range. For example, if a skill is modified to twice its normal value – from 40% to 80% say, then its critical range would be a roll of 08 or less.
- ⇒ A Fumble is roll of 99 or 00. Skills with a value of more than 100% fumble only on a roll of 00.

The precise nature of a Critical or Fumble result is left to the Games Master to determine. The consequences could be wondrous or dire, depending on the circumstances. However, some examples of Critical and Fumble outcomes for each skill RENEQUEST uses are given in the skill descriptions later in this chapter.

## AUTOMATIC SUCCESSES

There will be some occasions where a roll against a particular skill just isn't necessary – either because the task at hand is easily accomplished, or because, with enough time and concentration, success is guaranteed. Riding a horse at a gentle canter across an open meadow is an example of an Automatic Success where simply being skilled in the activity means that straightforward actions do not require any skill roll to resolve them. A crafter carving a piece of wood into a chair leg is another example where a skill roll is not necessary; it takes time to accomplish, but the craftsman knows how to do the work and, if he is not rushing, success is assured. A thief, undisturbed, with a set of lockpicks, can successfully pick the simple lock of a treasure chest given enough time to do so.

## WHEN TO ROLL?

Part of the fun and drama of RENEQUEST comes in making a roll against a skill to see if success or failure is the outcome. It can be tempting to call for skill rolls for each and every challenge but, as outlined above, there are some cases where rolls are not needed. A list of likely scenarios where skill rolls are redundant is as follows:

- ⇒ The activity or task is very routine to the character
- ⇒ The character has enough time and all the tools necessary
- ⇒ The circumstances and environment do not impose any stress
- ⇒ There are no significant consequences to failure

Skill rolls should be used when they have a dramatic purpose. For example, although riding a horse at a gentle canter requires no skill roll, fleeing at a gallop from pursuing bandits does. Carving a chair leg may be a routine task for a carpenter, but carving an exquisite chair leg, with blunt tools and in only a few hours, for a demanding sultan who executes those who do not please him, would need a skill roll.

It is usually obvious when a dramatic purpose arises and rolling is necessary, but if in doubt, consider the consequences of failure: are they crucial to the plot? Does the chance of failure heighten tension and make for an exciting possibility? Will a failure – or even superb success – add fun to the game?

If the answer is Yes to any of these, then have the character make a skill roll.

## MODIFYING SKILLS

There are some occasions where a skill roll is required but the chances of success need to be adjusted to reflect particular conditions. Fleeing bandits, for instance, might require an Athletics roll. But what if the character is fleeing through darkness or through treacherous undergrowth? In such a case the Games Master can insist on modifying the skill of the character to reflect the circumstances.



RUNEQUEST uses a series of grades to determine how a skill is modified. These are as follows:

**DIFFICULTY GRADE TABLE**

Grade	Skill Modifier
Automatic	No need to roll
Very Easy	Double the skill value
Easy	Add half again to the skill value
Standard	No adjustment.
Hard	Reduce the skill value by one third
Formidable	Reduce the skill value by half
Herculean	Reduce the skill value to one tenth
Hopeless	No attempt can be made

Where a character is already suffering a penalty from other circumstances the hardest difficulty grade takes precedence.

RUNEQUEST does not provide a definitive list of situations and challenges which can incur skill modifications. What sort of modification is required for any particular skill or context is ultimately up to the Games Master to decide; according to the capabilities of the characters, his perception of the difficulty of the situation and the dramatic tension at that particular moment.

### SIMPLIFIED DIFFICULTY GRADES

Whilst difficulty grades are designed to scale with character skill, some Games Masters may find applying penalties results in the slowing down of their game. As an alternative the following option is provided:

**SIMPLIFIED DIFFICULTY GRADE TABLE**

Grade	Skill Modifier
Very Easy	+40%
Easy	+20%
Standard	None
Hard	-20%
Formidable	-40%
Herculean	-80%

## STANDARD SKILLS

Standard skills are common to everyone. They represent innate abilities and skills that most people employ on a regular basis from any walk of life.

### ATHLETICS (STR+DEX)

Athletics covers a range of physical activities, 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 Movement section on page 60 describes these effects.

#### CLIMBING

With the right surface (hand and footholds), the right equipment (ladders, ropes, pitons) and enough time, characters can climb any surface without the need for a roll. Under normal circumstances, use the following guidelines:

- ⇒ Climbing a rough or rugged surface (branching trees, scaffolds, piles of rubble and so on): Half the Armour Penalty (rounded up) is subtracted from the character's base Movement (6 metres per Combat Action for human Adventurers). If the result is zero or less, they are too encumbered by armour to climb.
- ⇒ Climbing a steep surface (pitched roofs, steep hills, and so on): The Armour Penalty is subtracted directly from the base Movement. If the result is zero or less, they are too burdened by armour to climb.
- ⇒ Climbing a sheer surface (walls, cliff faces, and so on): Double the Armour Penalty is subtracted from the base Movement. As with previous situations, if the result is zero or less, the character cannot climb.
- ⇒ Tests should be made for treacherous surfaces (such as sheer cliffs or wet surfaces) and if a character is distracted, or even attacked, during his ascent or descent.





A critical success permits the climber to scale the surface extremely quickly or avoid any hidden danger involved with the attempt.

A failure merely indicates that the climb was aborted.

A fumbled Climbing roll results in a fall; furthermore the character cannot attempt an Acrobatics roll (if he has that skill) to reduce falling damage.

## JUMPING

A successful Athletics roll allows one to jump up to twice one's own height horizontally or up to half one's own height vertically (if the character has at least a five metres run-up available). If the jumper is jumping from a standing position then these distances are halved. Any jump of over half a character's maximum distance results in him falling prone on landing.

- ⇒ If wearing armour reduce the jump distance in metres by half the Armour Penalty to a minimum of one normal step.
- ⇒ For every full 20% a character has in Athletics, he can add an extra metre to a horizontal jump, or 20cm to a vertical one, if he has space to perform a run up.

On a critical success the character adds a further metre to his total distance, and remains upright on landing.

A fumbled roll indicates the character has landed awkwardly. He must immediately make an Endurance roll. If the Endurance roll is a success 1 point of damage is sustained to one leg. If the Endurance test fails, then 1d4 points of damage is inflicted instead.

## RUNNING

A higher Athletics skill allows a character to run at a higher speed over short or long distances.

- ⇒ For every full 25% a character has in Athletics, he can add an extra metre to his base Movement when sprinting, or half that when running over longer distances. In certain situations where space may be limited, such as Charging within a melee, the character can decide not to apply this bonus and remain at his base racial or species movement.

On a critical success the character adds a further metre to his Movement rate.

A failure causes the runner to increase a level of fatigue.

A fumbled roll indicates the character has pulled a muscle or torn a ligament and must cease running. He must immediately make an Endurance roll. If the Endurance roll is a success 1 point of damage is sustained to one leg. If the Endurance test fails, then 1d4 points of damage is inflicted instead.

## THROWING

Athletics can also be used for hurling large, unwieldy objects over distance or tossing smaller items with accuracy. Throwing is restricted for sports or improvised missile weapons - everything from small stones to bar stools. Weapons which are thrown using a specific technique to ensure it strikes point or blade first (rather than just achieving distance), such as javelins, axes or knives, use their Combat Style instead.

- ⇒ A thrown object has a maximum range of one metre for every point the character's STR exceeds the object's SIZ.

## BOATING (STR+CON)

The Boating skill covers the operation of small floating craft on rivers, lakes and close inshore. Appropriate vessels are generally boats, canoes or rafts which travel short distances and are unsuited to the rigours of the open sea. Most are propelled using oars, paddles, punts or simple sails; or can even be towed by animals. Ships with large crews or designed for long, overseas journeys are covered under the Seamanship professional skill.

The skill measures a character's competence in propelling a boat in the right direction and dealing with adverse conditions. With no distractions and optimal conditions a Boating roll is unnecessary, although lesser skilled characters may take longer to get where they need to as they manage the boat's handling.

A critical Boating success increases the vessel's Movement rate by one tenth.

A failed Boating roll implies the boat's movement rate is halved or it failed to reach



its intended destination; for instance navigating to an isolated rock positioned above a waterfall.

A fumbled Boating roll indicates losing an oar, taking on water or some other serious inconvenience. If the weather is bad or the water violent, then a fumble causes the boat to capsizе.

## BRAWN (STR+SIZ)

Brawn is the efficient application of technique when applying raw physical force. The skill covers acts of applied might, including lifting, breaking and contests of strength.

### LIFTING

A character can lift and carry up to their STR in SIZ up off the ground, or drag double this amount, without needing a Brawn roll. As a mass equivalent, 1 point of SIZ equals, roughly, 5 kilograms. For every full 10% he possesses in the skill the character may add an extra point of SIZ or 5kg to his total.

For SIZ or mass above this the character needs to succeed in a Brawn roll. The maximum weight a character can briefly lift is equal to twice their STR, plus whatever bonus they gain from their skill.

Failing the Brawn roll may result in injury; the character must make a successful Endurance roll or suffer 1d3 points of damage to a random location below the head.

Fumbling the Brawn roll automatically results in injury.

Note that the size and shape of an object might make it impossible to lift, even if it is within the character's weight capacity.

### BREAKING

A character can use Brawn to break objects with their bare hands – such as shoulder barging a wooden door. Take the character's maximum lifting capacity in SIZ and apply that value to the Damage Modifier table on page 9 to determine how much damage can be inflicted with each Brawn attempt, remembering that failed rolls may result in injury.

### CONTESTS OF STRENGTH

Brawn rolls can also be used in opposed tests for breaking free from the grip of others,

arm wrestling and tugs of war. Such events are handled as a simple opposed roll. However, there comes a point where technique cannot overcome superior size and strength. In a contest, if a character's Damage Modifier is smaller than his opponents, his Brawn roll suffers a penalty; a difference of one step raises the difficulty to Hard, whilst two steps increases it to Formidable, and so on. Naturally the penalty is suffered by his opponent if the character is the stronger.

## CONCEAL (DEX+POW)

Conceal is the counterpoint to Stealth, being the concealment of large objects rather than the character themselves. For instance conceal could be used to hide a chariot behind some rocks, or sweep away the wheel ruts of the chariot so its path cannot be tracked. The skill is versatile in application, anything from hiding a scroll in a library to disguising the presence of a trap or secret passage.

A critical success using Conceal indicates that the object has been hidden so cunningly that rolls attempting to discover it are one difficulty grade harder.

A failed Conceal roll means that the object will automatically be found if actively searched for.

A fumbled Conceal roll indicates that the attempt backfires spectacularly with the object falling, rolling, blowing out of its hiding place so blatantly (or otherwise revealed in an appropriate manner) that it draws the attention of everyone nearby.

## CUSTOMS (INT x2)

Customs represents the character's knowledge of his own community; its social codes, rites, rituals, taboos and so on. The skill is used when it is essential to accurately interpret or perform any socially important custom or to behave in a particular way.

A critical success with Customs indicates that the character has acted in an exemplary fashion or perceived a very subtle social nuance that will be of immediate or later value.

A failed Customs roll results in wry humour or minor irritation. A fumbled Customs roll



indicates that the character has badly failed to observe his community's customs and may have even given offence – whether intentional or not.

The ramifications of a fumbled roll depend very much on the nature of the culture or community and may thus have very different outcomes, ranging from harsh rebuke, through ostracism, exile or even violent punishment.

## DANCE (DEX+CHA)

Just about every culture uses dance in some way – either as recreation or as part of important rituals. It might be a court dance, a war dance, or a simple set of movements accompanying a prayer or ceremonial chant. The Dance skill measures a character's ability to move rhythmically and accurately (to a reasonable degree) when called upon to do so.

A critical success results in a dance that is expressive, fluid and perhaps deeply affecting for those who witness it. The dance is as persuasive as any Influence roll and can be used as such in situations resting on communication and personal credibility. Alternatively any subsequent Influence test is given a bonus equal to the critical score of the Dance skill. Of course, a critical Dance roll may very well result in tumultuous applause and tokens of admiration and appreciation.

A failed Dance roll signifies a lacklustre performance.

A fumbled Dance is clumsy to both the dancer and those who watch it. The dancer trips or stumbles. Passion is lost, the execution is weak and the dance fails to convey what it is meant to. Any skills resting on communication and personal credibility will suffer a penalty at the discretion of the Games Master.

## DECEIT (INT+CHA)

Deceit covers all instances where a character attempts to mask the truth and offer a deceit of some kind; barefaced lying, misleading a guard or even bluffing (or cheating) during a card game. The skill also covers instances where hiding true emotions or motives is necessary (feigning pleasure when one is bitterly disappointed perhaps, or attempting to

seem welcoming and open when the opposite is true). Deceit forms a counterpart to the Insight skill and can be used to oppose Insight rolls when others are attempting to discern either truth or motive.

On a critical success the character has pulled off the deceit convincingly to the point where the truth will not be questioned in the future by those who are subject to the deception – unless something happens to expose the truth.

A failed Deceit roll indicates that the character lacked conviction or believability, prompting further investigation.

A fumbled Deceit roll represents a miserable failure to deceive – one so transparent that others may have difficulty believing the character at a future time.

## DRIVE (DEX+POW)

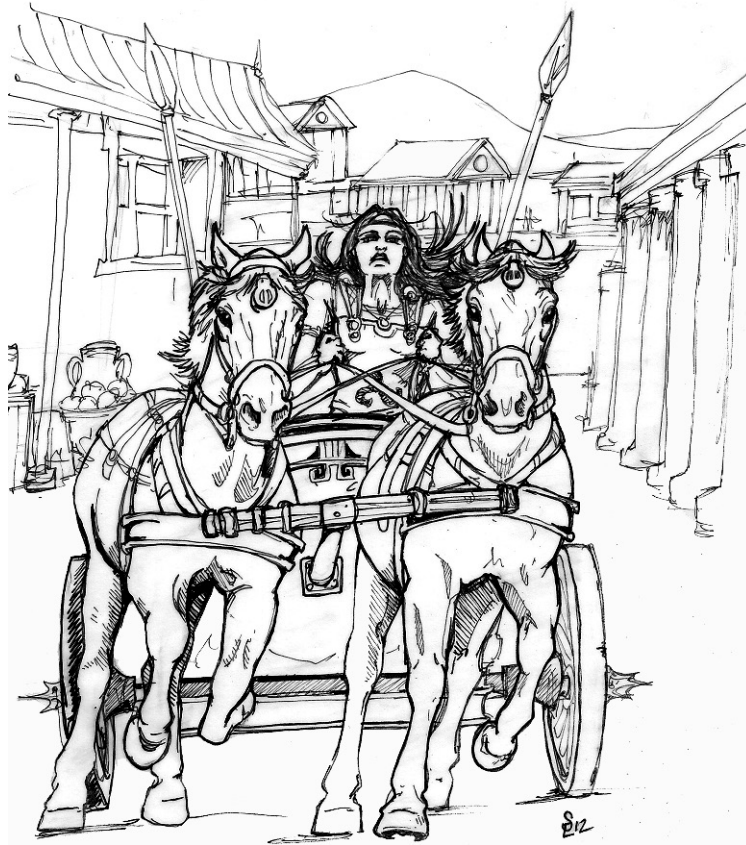
Drive covers the control of wheeled or drawn vehicles, whether by one or more beasts of burden or more esoteric means: such as carts, carriages, chariots or sleds. Drive rolls are needed when a character wants to do something out of the ordinary with a vehicle – traverse treacherous terrain, jump obstacles and so on. A roll is also necessary if the vehicle being driven is drawn by different beasts than the driver is used to (horses instead of oxen, for example) or there are more or fewer beasts teamed together to pull the vehicle (a four-horse wagon when the character is used to a two-horse team). In cases where either the beasts or their number are radically unfamiliar, a tiger drawn chariot for example, then the roll should be made more difficult.

Where two or more vehicles are contesting with each other, perhaps to overtake or force another off the road, the drivers should determine the result with an opposed Drive test.

A critical Drive roll either increases the vehicle's Movement rate by one tenth or permits the driver to perform some feat of skilful or flamboyant driving.

A failed Drive roll halves the vehicle's Movement.

A fumbled Drive roll indicates either that the vehicle has broken down in some manner (wheel comes off or the harness breaks for



*Meerish Warriors are famed charioteers. Chariot races are a popular fixture across Meeros. However, many drivers' enthusiasm does not, unfortunately, match their skill*

example), or if the vehicle is engaged in a high speed or dangerous manoeuvre, it becomes unstable and overturns. An overturning vehicle requires all occupants to make a successful Acrobatics or Evade roll to leap clear of the wreckage, or sustain an amount of falling damage commensurate with its speed (see page 70).

## ENDURANCE (CON x2)

Endurance is a character's capacity to endure physical stress, pain and fatigue. It measures the body's ability to deal with potentially damaging or debilitating conditions and is a general gauge of resilience, stamina and metabolism. Endurance, like its counterpart Willpower, is used in any number of ways, but most specifically to resist the possible effects of injuries, including harmful poisons and disease.

In most cases Endurance is used in Opposed Tests but there are some circumstances where it is used as a standard skill roll.

A critical Endurance roll usually indicates that the character has managed to shrug off

the worst possible assault on his body. In the case of injury he is often able to act when ordinarily he might be incapacitated.

A failed Endurance roll results in the character succumbing to whatever stress or injury it has been put under. A Fumbled roll means that the character is overwhelmed by the circumstances and becomes incapacitated. In the case of disease or poison he automatically fails any further resistance rolls against it.

### OPTIONAL RULE – LIMITS TO ENDURANCE AND WILLPOWER

There are limits to mental and physical endurance; barriers beyond which the mind and body cannot be pushed and surrender becomes inevitable. Games Masters may wish to rule in their campaign that Endurance cannot exceed CONx5, and Willpower cannot exceed POWx5. The starting values for each skill are both calculated as normal, but have a defined limit.





## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*After several years serving as a Bronze Mercenary, Zamothis succumbs to his wanderlust and ventures into the lands of the Badoshi Warlords. Unfortunately, while carousing, he upsets a local pasha and is sentenced to be 'hunted' - a favourite pastime amongst the Badoshi.*

*Given ten minutes head start, Zamothis must try to reach the boundary of the pasha's lands. Despite his Athletics skill, Zamothis is at a disadvantage in the unfamiliar territory. He flees along a minor trail down a ravine, little realising that it is trapped with a deadfall.*

*The log trap is set with a skill of 75%, which must be opposed by Zamothis using his Evade skill of 57%. The GM rolls a 22, whereas Emma rolls a 51. Since both rolls are a success, the highest result wins. Thus, as Zamothis triggers the deadfall, he manages to dive under the falling log, ending up prone on the other side. (see Traps page 75)*

## EVADE (DEX x2)

Evade is used to escape from observed, impending danger and can be used against ranged weapons (by diving for cover, for example), avoiding traps, changing the engagement distance in combat, and generally getting out of the way of a potential physical hazard. It can also be used as a resistance roll for certain types of magic.

Usually Evade will be opposed by another roll, but it may also be a standard roll in its own right. Trying to negate damage by leaping clear of a crashing vehicle, as mentioned in the Drive skill, is an example of a standard Evade roll. The typical circumstances for opposed rolls are as follows:

### AVOIDING MISSILES

Evade is opposed by the Combat Style of the attacker.

### THWARTING A TRAP

Evade is opposed either by the trap's Potency or its original designer's skill rating at the time the trap was made or set.

### EVADING A HARMFUL SPELL

Opposed by the spell caster's score in the casting skill.

### MANOEUVERING IN COMBAT

Opposed by the attacker's Evade skill.

Again, like Endurance, Evade is most often used in Opposed Tests. When used as a standard test, a critical Evade roll ensures that the evader retains some form of advantage or composure afterwards, such as avoiding all damage or slipping completely clear of further danger.

A failed roll usually means the character suffers whatever misfortune they were attempting to avoid.

If the Evade roll is fumbled, then the character has left himself wide open to the hazard, for instance sustaining maximum damage from a trap or ending up prone and vulnerable to a follow up event.

The effects of criticals and fumbles during combat is a special case (see the rules for Evading in the Combat chapter, page 95).

## FIRST AID (DEX+INT)

The skill of First Aid measures a character's ability to treat minor injuries and stabilise more severe ones. First Aid may be applied only once per specific injury. Thus a character that is slashed twice in the leg may have each wound treated separately. If suffering some form of bodily harm which simultaneously affected several body areas at once, such as being burned by Dragon Breath, then a First Aid attempt is permitted for each individual location.

A character can self-administer First Aid, although depending on the circumstances (such as the location of the wound, its degree of severity and so forth) the roll may be subject to a greater degree of difficulty.

Applying First Aid takes 1d3 minutes. Neither party can do anything else during the treatment. When tending life threatening trauma, the patient is temporarily stabilised until the result of the application is known. An injury that has had a previous form of First Aid applied cannot benefit from First Aid again, whether successful or not, until it has fully healed.

First Aid relies on having appropriate equipment – bandages, at the very least – available for the treatment. These can be improvised (a torn cloak to make a bandage or sling, for example) if necessary.

A critical First Aid improves the result of the treatment. On a Minor Injury it recovers 1d6 Hit Points, on a Serious Injury it recovers 1d3 Hit Points and on a Major Injury it restores partial functionality (if possible) and permits it to heal naturally.

A fumbled First Aid attempt causes more harm than good: the injured location suffers a further 1 point of damage, potentially increasing the severity of the injury.

## INFLUENCE (CHA x2)

This is a measurement of a character's ability to persuade others, through personal charisma, into a desired way of behaving. It is used in a wide variety of situations; from changing someone's mind, through to bribing an official or guard.





## FIRST AID ACTIONS

Injury	Successful Treatment
Asphyxiated	The victim begins breathing again.
Bleeding	The blood flow is staunched.
Impaled	The impaling item is removed without causing further damage to the victim.
Unconsciousness	As long as the unconsciousness is not the result of poisons or narcotics then the injured party is restored to awareness.
Minor Injury	Treatment restores 1d3 hit points to the injury.
Serious Injury	Treatment restores the location to partial functionality.
Major Injury	A successful First Aid roll on a location suffering from a Major Injury does not return any Hit Points, nor restore functionality; but it does stabilize the area and prevent immediate death resulting from the damage. More skilled healing is required to treat Major Injuries.

Influence rolls are typically opposed by the Perception, Willpower or another Influence skill, depending on the circumstances and are modified by how much a character is trying to influence behaviour. Attempting to persuade a close friend to loan you their horse may be relatively easy. Getting a usually incorruptible bureaucrat to accept a bribe is more difficult.

An Influence critical success indicates that the character has been incredibly persuasive, so much so that not only is the character successful in what he is trying to attain but his next Influence test with the same person, no matter when it takes place, is one grade easier than the circumstances would normally dictate (A Standard roll becomes an Easy roll, for example, or a Hard roll becomes a Standard one).

A failure merely means that the persuasion was refused, with no subsequent issues.

On a fumble not only does the Influence roll fail; it also insults or offends the person being influenced. The specific reaction depends on the individual and the situation. It also means that further Influence attempts with this individual become one difficulty grade harder.

## INSIGHT (INT+POW)

Insight is the ability to read or intuitively define another's verbal and non-verbal behaviour (such as body language or the manner of speech) to establish their motives and state of mind. Insight is used to determine if someone

is telling a lie (and it can be opposed by the other person's Deceit skill), or to predict how someone feels about a particular situation. Insight can equally be applied to particular situations as well as other people: is that tavern a haven for trouble? Could the bandits be planning an ambush in the nearby hills?

On a critical success the Insightful character gains an in-depth understanding of the other person's current motives, thoughts and feelings. Using either Deceit or Influence against that person in a subsequent roll is one grade easier than circumstances would dictate (Easy rather than Standard; Standard rather than Hard, for example).

A failure simply means the character cannot discern anything specific at that time. On a fumble, the character completely misjudges the person's motives and actions. The Games Master should offer the character a series of private, deliberately misleading hints regarding the person's motivations and likely actions. It also makes consequent Deceit and Influence rolls one difficulty grade harder.

## LOCALE (INT x2)

Locale measures a character's understanding of local flora, fauna, terrain and weather in the area where he has spent the majority of his life, usually within his community. The character knows the common plants, trees and animals, their properties and behaviour: where the best fish can be found; the movements of game creatures; where to find



shelter; the likely weather for the season and the most common regional dangers. In neighbouring, yet unfamiliar locations Locale should be made one or more grades harder.

A critical success guarantees the character finds what he is looking for in abundance or knows precisely what something is. Subsequent skill rolls related to the subject of that Locale roll (Survival, for instance, or Track) become one grade easier.

A failure implies too little evidence to unambiguously identify or predict, or that whatever is being searched for cannot be found.

A fumble means the information needed is not just unobtainable but utterly misunderstood. Subsequent skill rolls dependent on that use of Locale become one grade harder.

## NATIVE TONGUE (INT+CHA)

Native Tongue is the ability to speak one's own language, the one learned whilst growing up in one's home culture. It measures articulation, eloquence and the depth of the speaker's vocabulary.

Unlike other skills, Native Tongue is not rolled against directly. Instead it is treated as a static representation of overall fluency, limiting the level of conversational interaction. This is described in more detail under the Language skill on page 40.

The skill can be used in two ways. Firstly it can help to understand dialects of neighbouring peoples which share a common linguistic basis or origin. In such cases the skill is treated at least one grade harder, potentially affecting the character's fluency. Secondly, it can be used as a cap on verbal skills which require a good grasp of language. See Capping Skills on page 44.

## PERCEPTION (INT+POW)

Perception is used for both passive observation and focussed detection; whether hunting for something specific, a general scan of an area or simple awareness of their

surroundings. Specific conditions – darkness, for example – may affect the difficulty grade of the skill roll depending on the primary senses being utilised. Strong scents might make an olfactory Perception roll Easy rather than Standard, whereas trying to eavesdrop on a conversation in a crowded and noisy tavern would make the roll Hard.

A critical Perception roll reveals things that otherwise would not have been detected in addition to that which the roll was being used for.

Failure indicates nothing in particular was discerned.

Fumbling a Perception roll means that even the most blatantly obvious things are overlooked or misconstrued, potentially increasing the difficulty of subsequent skill checks. For instance, a fumbled Perception roll when trying to spot a trap might make an Evade roll Hard or even Formidable rather than Standard.

## RIDE (DEX+POW)

Ride covers the ability to control and remain mounted on those creatures that are trained to be ridden. The skill can be applied to a diverse range of beasts, everything from mules to elephants; even flying or swimming creatures such as giant eagles or dolphins.

Riding an unfamiliar species is always one difficulty grade harder; whilst riding a species of a different medium (a horseman riding an airborne dragon, for example) is two grades harder. Wild, untamed creatures cannot be ridden in a constructive manner until they have been broken and trained to be riding beasts.

A critical Ride result allows the rider to perform a feat of flamboyant riding (such as a jump or wingover) or temporarily increase his mount's Movement by one tenth.

A failure causes the mount to drop a level of fatigue.

A fumbled roll means that an accident occurs; either to the rider (who might fall off) or the mount whom suffers some form of injury, going lame or breaking one of its limbs for example.



## SING (POW+CHA)

Carrying a tune is covered by Sing, anything from monotonous chants through to complex arias. Singing is an inherent part of most cultures, a prime source of entertainment and perhaps used in its rituals. Important songs might be used for courting, inspiring soldiers before battle, or simply recounting a historical deed. The skill reflects the user's ability to maintain rhythm, keep in key and remember the correct words.

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, a follow-up Influence or similar skill become one difficulty grade easier to make.

A failed Sing roll signifies a bland performance. If fumbled, then the song was off-key, out of tune, and poorly received. Halve the earnings and any attempts to influence or deceive afterwards become one grade harder.

## STEALTH (DEX+INT)

Hiding out of plain sight, or moving with minimal sound are covered by the Stealth skill. Cover and conditions, such as darkness or loud background noise, improve the grade of the skill according to specifics of the environment. Similarly adverse conditions, such as a lack of cover or a quiet night will decrease the skill's grade. Circumstances also affect the difficulty of the attempt. For instance, a warrior wearing heavy armour can easily conceal themselves behind a wall providing they stand still or move very slowly, whereas moving quickly might cause their armour to jingle.

A critical roll means that any subsequent attempts to use skills to locate the character; follow him, observe him and so forth are one grade harder.

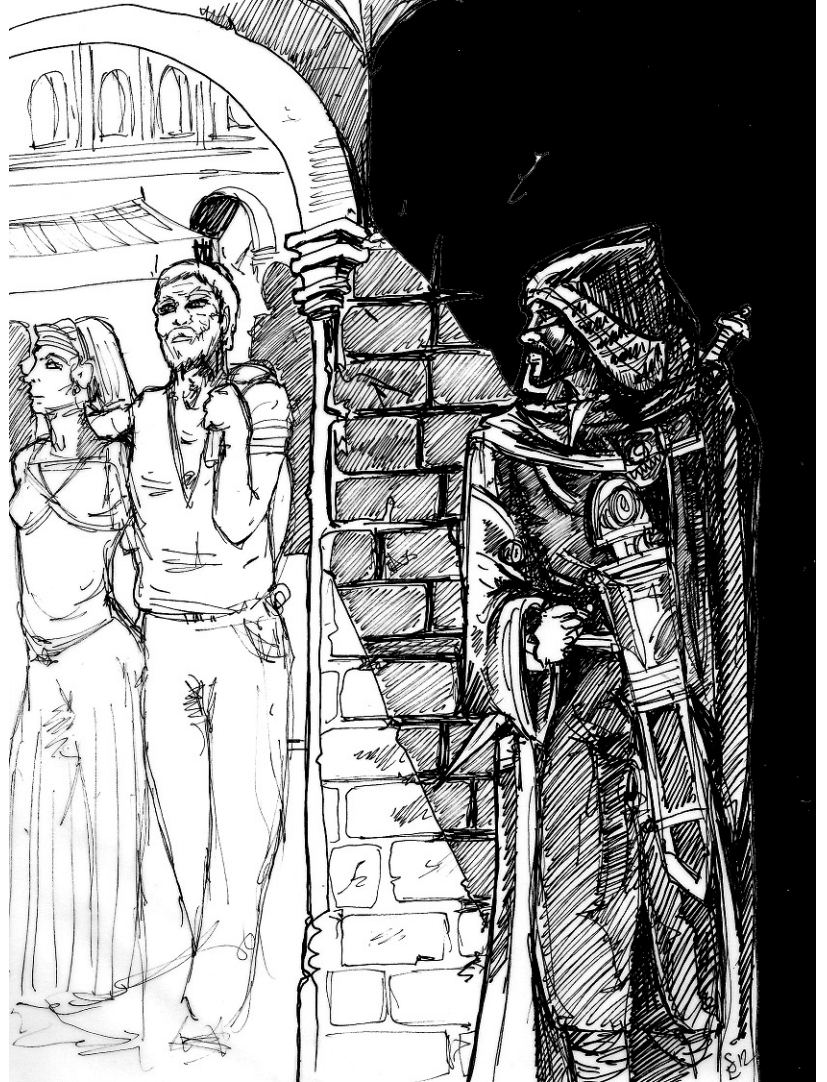
A failure indicates that they are blatantly obvious, providing someone is bothering to locate them.

On a fumble the Stealth attempt has backfired and signals the character's presence rather than disguises it, or causes them to suffer some accident or misfortune.

## SWIM (STR+CON)

Without development the ability to swim is limited to being able to thrash around and keep one's head above the water for a short time. Higher Swim percentages indicate being able to negotiate deeper and stronger waters, with less risk of drowning. Making a Swim roll therefore depends entirely on the conditions. Rough seas, strong currents, white water and rip-tides all reduce the grade of the skill no

*Two failed Perception rolls, plus one Critical Stealth roll = Trouble.*



matter what the character's affinity for water might be. Under normal conditions a character's maximum swimming speed per round is equal to their base Movement rate, plus an extra metre for every full 20% they possess in Swim.

A critical Swim roll allows the character to add a further metre to his Movement rate.



Failing a Swim roll has no immediate consequences, save that the character gains a level of Fatigue.

If a Swim roll is fumbled then controlled movement ceases as the swimmer begins suffering cramps or is overwhelmed by turbulent conditions; future Swim rolls become one grade more difficult. From that moment on, all the swimmer can do is try to keep their head above water until help arrives or they become exhausted, at which point they'll likely start to drown (see Asphyxiation on page 62).

## UNARMED (STR+DEX)

Unarmed is a universal Combat Style common to all characters, measuring the ability to defend oneself without the aid of weapons. The Unarmed skill covers the brawling and wrestling techniques known by that culture. However there are, of course, specific styles that enhance the ability to fight without weapons, offering advantages to those who learn them as a separate Combat Style.

As Unarmed is a Combat Style its critical and fumble effects are covered by the rules for combat, as detailed in the Combat chapter.

## WILLPOWER (POW x2)

Willpower is a measure of a character's ability to concentrate, channel his force of will in a particular direction, or harden his psyche to possible mental shock. It is also a measure of personal resolve. The skill is used in all manner of situations where mental resilience is required, and this includes resisting magic. Although not a measure of sanity it can be used to endure traumatic events that would shake even the sanest, stable mind. Willpower is the mental counterpart to Endurance.

Again, like Endurance and Evade, Willpower is most often used in Opposed Tests. When used as a standard test, a critical Willpower roll indicates that the character has hardened his mind and spirit to the extent that no further attempts to influence him, or shake his resolve, will work. In the case of resisting magic, a critical success means that no further mentally afflicting spells cast by the opponent have any effect on the character for the remainder of that encounter.

The effects of failing a Willpower roll depend on the situation and circumstances – usually temporary capitulation to whatever is being done to him. A fumbled Willpower roll means that the character is utterly overwhelmed. His will is broken and he has no means of resisting whatever it is that assails him mentally or spiritually. In the case of resisting shock or spells a fumbled Willpower roll means that the psychological effect of the spell becomes permanent until healed.

## PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Professional Skills differ between characters and represent more specialised forms of training and experience. They are gained via cultural backgrounds or a character's career. Although they differ between characters they work in the same way as Standard Skills.

Certain magical skills are also classed as Professional Skills: Invocation and Shaping are the two skills associated with Sorcery for example. These are only briefly described here. For more details see the relevant magical chapter.

## ACROBATICS (STR+DEX)

Acrobatics covers acts of balance, gymnastics, juggling and tumbling. The skill can be used in its own right as a way to impress an audience, but also to help mitigate damage from falls. With a successful roll a character can move at full speed and sure-footedly across an unstable or narrow surface. If trying to mitigate damage from an unexpected fall, a successful Acrobatics reduces the distance as explained on page 70, *Falling*.

Acrobatics can be substituted for Evade if the situation warrants it. The benefit of this is that if the roll is a success, the character automatically avoids ending up prone.

A critical success doubles the movement rate when balancing or negotiating an unstable surface.





Failing an Acrobatics roll results in an unimpressed audience, or the premature aborting of whatever trick or tumble was attempted.

A fumbled Acrobatics roll means that balance and agility has been completely lost, causing the character to either fall off whatever he was balancing upon, spectacularly drop a juggled object, or injure themselves performing an acrobatic tumble – suffering 1d4 points of damage to a random location.

## ART (POW+CHA)

There are many specific art forms. Painting to Poetry; Literature to Sculpture. A character chooses an Art specialisation when taking this skill. Subsequent Art forms are advanced separately. A roll is made whenever a character must impress or convince through his artistic medium.

A critical success indicates a work of stunning quality, elegance or beauty – worth half the standard value again of like products. Any subsequent skill rolls made to influence whomever commissioned the work, or those that simply admire it, become temporarily one grade easier.

Failing the roll creates something insipid, which neither impresses or sells for more than the materials used to create it.

A fumbled Art roll renders an artistic disaster. The effects of such a terrible situation need to be determined by the Games Master but, at the very least, represent a complete waste of time, materials and talent that, if viewed publicly, could influence reputation.

## BUREAUCRACY (INT x2)

Understanding administrative procedures, records and unspoken conventions are covered by the Bureaucracy skill. It is used to interact with officials or discover pertinent civic information. Depending on the sophistication of their culture, bureaucrats need not necessarily be literate. However their Bureaucracy skill cannot exceed the score of the Language or Literacy skill in which they work. Whenever cutting through red-tape, navigating administrative run-arounds, or

comprehending their labyrinthine rules, a Bureaucracy roll is necessary.

Critically succeeding in Bureaucracy lends a deep insight into the procedures and formalities of whatever it is the character is attempting to accomplish, achieving it in half the usual time. It also means any subsequent skills relying on the Bureaucracy roll are one grade easier (Influence, for example, or Deceit).

A failure results in becoming stonewalled or relevant documents misplaced, the user's inability to follow customary procedure resulting in subsequent skills relevant to the situation becoming one grade harder.

If the roll is fumbled then access is forbidden or the character alienates a key personage – so that their enquiry or request will never be satisfied.

## COMMERCE (INT+CHA)

Commerce is used to evaluate the worth of goods and commodities and to trade them for the best possible price. It is also used to understand the intricacies of business transactions in addition to securing a profit. A further use is in finding the best way to dispose of stolen and illicit goods – again for the best possible price. Commerce is obviously used when trading and it can be opposed by either an opponent's Commerce skill or Willpower, reflecting the opposing side's attempts to further the deal in their favour. It is also used to judge the market value of goods, gaining an idea of price and where it will be best traded.

In transactions where rolls are not opposed, a critical success allows the character to secure the commodity or service at half its usual price, or sell it for double.

Failing the roll indicates that the commodity or service is secured at twice the price, or sold for only half the value.

A fumble means the character has insulted the purchaser or seller to such a degree that the transaction is lost. Alternatively it may indicate that they are cheated instead, ending up paying for something worthless or unwittingly selling something of potentially great value at a fraction of its cost.



## COURTESY (INT+CHA)

This skill covers understanding how to act appropriately in a social or formal situation: modes of address, rituals and conventions of behaviour and so forth. It includes everything from who to bow to and when, to what particular title to use.

Critically succeeding in a Courtesy roll makes any subsequent skill roll relevant to that situation one difficulty grade easier.

Failing a Courtesy roll means the user has not impressed the company with his attitude or manners; making any subsequent skill rolls a grade harder.

A fumbled Courtesy roll creates severe embarrassment and, at worst, gives insult that results in a dire outcome. No further social intercourse is possible after a fumble.

## CRAFT (DEX+INT)

Each Craft is a specialised form and there are as many crafts as there are professions for them. Like Art, Craft is used to create the subject item. How long it takes depends entirely on the nature of the product: weaving a rug takes longer than throwing a pot, for instance, plus the skill of the crafter, the quality of the resources and attention to detail.

A critical success creates an item of superior quality, in terms of durability, utility or beauty.

A failed Craft roll indicates a sub-standard result undermining its robustness, function or aesthetics.

A fumbled roll creates an item that is functionally useless and valueless, or an accident occurs during the crafting process, causing damage to property, stock or the crafter themselves; a pottery kiln collapsing or a smith striking his hand with a hammer for example.

## CULTURE (INT x2)

Culture is the more specific form of the Standard Skill of Customs, relating instead to societies foreign to the character's own. Each Culture skill must be given a particular nation or society to which it applies. Mechanically it works in the same way as the Customs skill, as described on page 29..

## DEVOTION (POW+CHA)

Devotion is a magical skill which reflects the commitment of priests and their ilk to the service of a deity or pantheon of gods. It not only measures the depth of devotion to a deity, but also governs the magnitude of any theistic miracles called upon by the theist and the recovery of these blessings at an appropriate holy place.

Additionally the skill can indicate the standing of a theist within a religious cult. For further details see page 130 of the Theism chapter.

In some settings Devotion is not limited to professional priests. It may be adopted by those who simply wish to show respect to the gods even if they do not actively practice Theism, or indeed if the gods exist at all!

## DISGUISE (INT+CHA)

Effecting a convincing disguise, using appropriate materials (costumes, cosmetics, or hairpieces), is covered by the Disguise skill. Creating the disguise requires time and attention to detail, as well as access to the right materials. If some, or all, of these elements are not present then the Disguise roll's difficulty grade is made one or more steps harder.

A critical Disguise roll results in a completely convincing masquerade so potent that even their own mother or a lifelong enemy probably wouldn't recognise them.

Failing a disguise roll results in such a meagre attempt it permits passive onlookers the chance to see through it.

A fumbled Disguise roll either produces a disguise so crass that it instantly penetrated; or one which fails at a spectacularly inopportune moment. No amount of great acting can salvage the illusion when a false nose peels away or a poorly fitted costume rips off.

## ENGINEERING (INT x2)

The design and building of large-scale structures, from houses to bridges, gates to siege engines, is in the remit of the Engineering skill. Rolls are necessary when planning large scale projects to ensure correct construction, but are also made when an





engineer wants to assess a structure's integrity for whatever reason (state of repair or weak spots, for example).

A critical success allows a tougher, more resilient construction to be built (a tenth more Hit Points or Armour Points).

Failing an Engineering roll results in a construction which is sub-standard (a tenth fewer Hit Points or Armour Points) or an inability to determine any structural information.

A fumble actively introduces a major flaw into a project or disastrously assesses the condition of an item, providing incorrect and misleading information. Subsequent rolls dependent on the Engineering check are made one grade harder.

## EXHORT (INT+CHA)

Exhort is the magical skill used to call upon and channel the power of the gods. It includes knowledge of the history, myths, rituals, practices, prayers and powers of the god or pantheon and is essential to Theistic magic, being used to manifest divine miracles. For further details see page 130 of the Theism chapter.

## FOLK MAGIC (POW+CHA)

Minor, petty magics are cast using this skill. It represents the character's knowledge of charms, cantrips or blessings and how competent the user is when casting them. For further details see page 118 of the Folk Magic chapter.

## GAMBLING (INT+POW)

The Gambling skill measures a character's competence in games of chance and especially where money is staked on the outcome. The skill can be used in an opposed or unopposed manner, depending on the situation. Spending the night in a faceless gambling den might only require a straight test, whereas a high stakes dice game involving notable personages may instead require several rounds of opposed rolls.

A critical Gambling success usually permits the character to win a game outright or clean out one of the participants.

Failure simply results in the character losing that hand or stake.

On a fumble, the character has completely misread the odds or has tragic bad luck. He loses everything gambled and is thrown out of the game.

Cheating allows a character to roll twice and take the best result. However each time this is attempted the cheater must roll an opposed test of their Sleight skill against the Perception or Gambling skill of everyone else playing. Failing to beat all the observers means that the cheater has been detected, with suitable results.

## HEALING (INT+POW)

Healing is the in-depth knowledge of medical procedures, based on cultural practices. In a primitive or barbarian culture, for instance, healing will be based on the knowledge of herbs and natural cures. In a civilised culture, drugs and more advanced treatments will be more common. In all cultures Healing includes the ability to set bones, suture wounds and so forth. Obviously applying healing requires appropriate resources to hand (needles, gut or thread for sutures, herbs for poultices, and so forth). There are three main areas of Healing:

### TREATING SERIOUS WOUNDS

A successful Healing roll restores 1d3 Hit Points to a Seriously Injured location. On a critical success this is raised to 1d3+1. If fumbled, damage is increased by 1 Hit Point.

Note that Minor Injuries are treated with the First Aid skill.

### TREATING DISEASES AND POISONS

If Healing is performed prior to the onset time, it counteracts the disease or toxin entirely, providing it overcomes the Potency of the malady in an opposed roll. If performed on a character who has already succumbed to the disease or toxin, a successful Healing roll permits the victim a new chance to resist, making it one grade easier. A critical success increases it by two grades. A fumble however, makes the resistance roll one grade harder.



**GENERAL VERSUS SPECIFIC HEALING**

*Healing is generally learned as a method of treating a specific species - such as humans or a type of animal one cares-for. Although there is no problem in having an omni-purpose Healing skill, making it specific may better reflect the cultures and traditions of certain communities.*

**SURGERY**

Surgery is the only way, other than magical healing, that a character can recover from Major Wounds. A successful First Aid roll is needed to stabilise a Major Wound (see the First Aid skill on page 32), and then a Healing roll can be made to set a shattered bone, stitch together the flesh of a stump or excise foreign objects lodged in tissue, so that the location can begin the road to recovery.

As long as the roll is a success, the injured location begins to heal as normal for a location suffering a Major Wound (see Healing on page 72). On a critical success the location regains 1 Hit Point immediately; whereas on a fumbled Healing roll the patient must succeed in an Endurance roll or die from the procedure. Surgery cannot re-attach a severed limb.

**LANGUAGE (INT+CHA)**

This skill covers the speaking and comprehension of languages other than the character's own. Akin to Native Tongue (see page 34), the Language skill is not rolled against directly, but is treated as a static representation of overall fluency. Its value is used by the Games Master to limit the level of spoken interaction when the players converse with personalities in the game.

**LINGUISTIC FLUENCY**

Language %	Conversational Fluency
01-25%	Knows only a few simple words, cannot phrase sentences
26-50%	Can understand and communicate in fragmentary, simple sentences, such as "Where temple?" or "How much food?"
51-75%	Fluent enough for general conversation
76% +	Able to express yourself with eloquence

Each Language skill is specific to a particular national or regional language which must be chosen at the time of learning. It can help to understand similar dialects which share a

common linguistic basis or origin. Depending on the divergence, the skill roll should be treated at least one grade harder, possibly reducing the character's fluency.

Language is also used as a cap on verbal skills which require a good grasp of language. See Capping Skills on page 44.

**LITERACY (INT x2)**

Speaking a language fluently does not mean one can read and write it. Literacy is a specific skill and different cultures and societies display different levels and approaches towards it. In some, literacy is reserved for the nobility, bureaucratic or religious classes. In others it is unknown with oral traditions prevailing instead.

Naturally Literacy is specialised according to its associated language, including Native Tongue. Before one can be literate in a Language one must be able to speak it. Literacy cannot exceed the character's related Language skill. The skill works similarly to Language in terms of how much of a document can be comprehended.

Literacy does not necessarily imply writing, as there are an infinite number of ways to record information. Some cultures might carve symbols into trees or lengths of bone, whereas others record history in complex patterns of knots in a tapestry.

**LOCKPICKING (DEX x2)**

Lockpicking is the ability to open a mechanical locking system without the aid of a key or other device made specifically for the lock. The difficulty of the lock usually depends on the ability of the locksmith who created it, requiring an opposed test of Lockpicking versus Mechanisms skill of the crafter.

Where no skill value is provided for the lock a Games Master may adjust the difficulty grade of the Lockpicking skill instead, according to the lock's complexity. A thief attempting to pick an expensive and expertly crafted mechanical doorlock might have to make his Lockpick roll one or two grades harder for example. And some locks – invisible, recessed bolts and deadlocks – might be impossible to pick.



On a critical success the Lockpicker not only opens the lock silently and efficiently, but subsequent attempt to pick the same kind of lock becomes, for a short while, one grade easier.

A failure simply means the lock could not be picked.

On a fumble the lock becomes jammed: lockpicks break in the mechanism, or the mechanism is damaged internally. Whatever the cause, the jammed lock will ultimately attract attention.

## LORE (INT x2)

Lore covers a specific body of knowledge which must be chosen when the skill is first learned. Astrology, Astronomy, Geography, History, Monsters, Mythology, Politics, Strategy and Tactics: these are all typical examples of Lore skills. Skill in a Lore means the character understands its fundamentals, how it can be applied to problems, and can use the Lore to recall useful information.

A critical Lore success grants a high degree of insight into what is being studied. It also means that a subsequent skill roll relevant to that Lore becomes one grade easier.

Failing a Lore roll results in no useful information being gained.

A fumbled Lore roll indicates a complete misunderstanding of the subject. Facts are wrong and subsequent skill rolls dependent on the Lore skill's accuracy become one grade more difficult.

## MECHANISMS (DEX+INT)

Mechanisms represents the knowledge and skill to assemble and disassemble mechanical devices, such as traps, clocks or toys. The skill of Mechanisms generally involves the creation of delicate contraptions with small working parts, as opposed to Engineering, which deals with massive constructions. It is a distinct discipline from Lockpicking and cannot be interchanged with that skill.

When deciding on how long a Mechanism skill attempt should take, Games Masters need to consider the size, intricacy, tools

needed and any specific conditions. As a rule of thumb, Mechanisms rolls take a minimum of 1d3x10 minutes but this is for simplest and most straightforward of mechanical challenges, such as identifying or jamming an existing device. If building contraptions the timeframe may very well extend to months.

On a critical success the character achieves their objective in half the usual time and with flawless results. Any future rolls attempting to disable or circumvent the Mechanisms are one grade harder.

A failure results in a device which is temperamental and prone to breaking down; attempts to bypass or render it inoperative are one grade easier.

On a fumble the mechanism is utterly broken and has to be thrown away and started again from scratch.

## MUSICIANSHIP (DEX+CHA)

Musicianship covers the playing of musical instruments; from a simple reed pipe to a complex stringed instrument such as a harp. Each iteration of Musicianship is applied to a group of similar instruments. A musician who can play a reed pipe can also play a flute, pan-pipes or a recorder because the fundamentals are the same. He could not, however, play a harp or lute. Example groups include:

- ⇒ Bow Strings (violin, cello, jinghu, etc)
- ⇒ Percussion (drums, bells, gongs, etc)
- ⇒ Plucked Strings (harp, lyre, zither, etc)
- ⇒ Strummed Strings (lute, guitar, etc)
- ⇒ Wind (pipe, flute, trumpet, etc)

A critical success indicates the musician creates music of stunning quality, elegance or beauty. Any subsequent skill rolls, such as Influence, become one grade easier.

Failing a Musicianship roll renders in a lacklustre performance. A fumbled Musicianship roll results in a musical disaster. Perhaps the instrument breaks or the piece of music performed is taken as a gross insult, as determined by the Games Master but, at the very least, represent embarrassment that could influence reputation.



## NAVIGATION (INT+POW)

Whether using prominent landmarks, the stars or the varying taste of seawater, the ability to accurately direct travel is covered by the Navigation skill. Each Navigation skill covers a specific region or environment, such as Open Seas or Underground for example. It should be made during unusual journeys or when in completely unfamiliar territory.

A critical success in Navigation allows the user to locate a shortcut, such as a fast current or hidden pass.

Failing the roll results in delays due to uncertainty or temporarily losing the path. However nothing more serious occurs on a failed roll

A fumbled Navigation ends up with the user becoming utterly lost, unable to even backtrack.

## ORATORY (POW+CHA)

Oratory is the art of delivering a speech to large group of people with the aim of conveying or swaying a point of view. It is a skill frequently used by politicians to drive home a policy, but is also used by commanders to inspire troops before battle, advocates to manipulate the jury at a court of law, or even concerned citizens seeking to prevent a riot from breaking out amongst angry citizens. Wherever mass persuasion is needed, Oratory, rather than Influence, is used.

On a critical Oratory roll the orator sways the group completely to his argument, even winning over the most ardent of detractors. Subsequent rolls related to the Oratory are one difficulty grade easier.

A failed Oratory roll goes nowhere; people are as dispassionate or hostile as before.

On a fumble, the orator has made himself look foolish, or perhaps even managing to compel the audience to believe the opposite of what he wanted to convey. In a worst case scenario, the orator so alienates his audience that they become directly hostile to him. Subsequent rolls dependent on the Oratory become one grade harder.

## SEAMANSHIP (INT+CON)

This skill is used in exactly the same way as Boating (see page 28) but is instead applied to large waterborne vessels powered by sail or banks of oars. It also covers the maintenance and upkeep of a ship: assessing when repairs are needed, where it is safe to anchor, the dangers of violent weather, and so forth.

## SEDUCTION (INT+CHA)

Seduction is the romantic or sexual persuasion of another person, a skill very different to Influence. It uses explicit signals – verbal and non-verbal – to elicit a sexually positive response. It also takes a significant amount of time: successful Seduction may take hours, days or weeks to achieve depending on the morals of the target, who always has the opportunity to resist a Seduction attempt with Willpower.

A critical Seduction roll yields a potent result, entrancing the victim or causing them to fall passionately in love (or lust). Subsequent skill rolls taking advantage of this relationship become one grade easier.

A failed Seduction leads to the seducer being rebuffed to some degree.

A fumble ends up causing emotional hurt or insulting the target. This completely ruins any further chances of seduction for the time being; it also makes subsequent skill rolls one grade harder. A disastrous Seduction attempt can lead to intensely grave consequences.

## SLEIGHT (DEX+CHA)

Sleight covers attempts to palm or conceal small objects (legerdemain and prestidigitation) and includes attempts to pick pockets, cut purses or cause a visual distraction. Naturally it is an essential thieves' skill.

Characters can attempt to manipulate any item as long as it is no larger than their hand. Some objects, due to their size and mass cannot be manipulated with Sleight at all but require Conceal instead. Observers can pit their Perception skill against Sleight attempts to become aware of the deception.



On a critical Sleight success the character has manipulated the object so successfully that any subsequent attempts to locate it are one grade harder.

Failure means that the object is not concealed and will be automatically detected if any effort is made to locate it.

If fumbled, not only is the item unconcealed, but it is dropped or otherwise fully exposed at a most inopportune moment.

## STREETWISE (POW+CHA)

Streetwise represents knowledge of places and social contacts within a settlement. It covers everything from identifying potentially dangerous neighbourhoods, to finding local services – legal or illegal. How long a Streetwise attempt takes depends on what is sought. Finding a good inn will take less time than locating a fence for stolen goods or a fake trading permit.

A critical Streetwise success locates the precise person or place necessary to gain what he is seeking for, without unnecessary bribes or intermediary steps, which can result in the formation of a new contact.

Failing a Streetwise attempt merely results in wasting the time spent looking.

A fumbled Streetwise means the character not only fails to find what is being sought, but also comes under unwanted, potentially dangerous attention: from local thugs or muggers to the resident militia, depending on circumstances.

## SURVIVAL (CON+POW)

This skill covers surviving in a rural or wilderness environment where the benefits of civilisation are absent: foraging, building a fire, finding shelter or a safe place to sleep. When properly equipped rolls are usually unnecessary since the character may be carrying a tent, food supplies and so on. Only when separated from their equipment or when environmental conditions turn bad does it become essential to utilise this skill. A roll is usually made once per day in such conditions.

A critical success indicates that the character locates a good source of food or shelter and does not need to make a further Survival roll for a number of days equal to the critical range of his skill (one-tenth).

Failure results in the character gaining an automatic level of fatigue that does not lift until conditions change or the next Survival roll is made. A fumbled Survival roll ends up with a disastrous accident of some kind; encountering a fierce creature, suffering exposure or consuming poisonous food for example.

## TEACH (INT+CHA)

Teach allows the user to pass on their knowledge and techniques in an easy to understand and constructive manner. Without this skill even the most capable of masters will suffer problems instructing others. Normally the Teach skill applies to educating people, but specialisations can be taken to train creatures instead. Similarly to certain other skills, Teach is not rolled against directly, but acts as a limit to what actually can be taught to more advanced students. For further details see Training on page 65.

## TRACK (INT+CON)

The Track skill is used for tracking any form of game or quarry. It uses both obvious and ambiguous signs of passing to remain on the quarry's trail, including footprints, bruised leaves, displaced rocks and so on. Track rolls need to be made periodically, especially if conditions change. How often depends on how cunning the quarry has been. Conceal rolls can be used to oppose a Track roll.

With a critical success the tracker remains on the trail of someone or something not attempting to hide their spoor, irrespective of conditions, and does not need to make any subsequent Track rolls to locate the quarry.

Failing causes the tracker to lose the trail, forcing them to backtrack in order to pick it up again.

Fumbling a Track roll loses the trail utterly, forcing the user to abandon the pursuit or wander blithely into a prepared trap laid by the stalked victim.



### GENERAL VERSUS SPECIFIC TEACHING

*Depending on the amount of complexity Games Masters wish to introduce, teachers may specialise in a particular area or range of subjects.*

*For example, seeking to expand his knowledge, Zamothis hires a scholar who specialises in Teach (City-states Culture). This expertise covers the wisdom of the great philosophers, history of military conquests and the struggle of its chief cults.*

*If treated in this way Teach can function almost as a Combat Style, encompassing several different skills or areas of study. A thieves' cult might employ teachers who instruct in the related arts of Disguise, Stealth and Sleight, under the Teach (The Hidden Path) skill.*

*Seeing the respect paid to scholars, philosophers and other tutors, Zamothis plans to pick up the Teach skill, in the hopes of becoming a renowned teacher of various Combat Styles he has himself learned.*

# SKILL RULES FOR DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND SITUATIONS

Although the basic rules for using skills in RUNEQUEST are very straightforward, there are a multitude of different circumstances that arise during play that require skills to be handled in a slightly different way. The following sections look at these circumstances and situations and show how to handle them.

## REATTEMPTING SKILLS

In some situations a character will fail a skill attempt but be left in a situation where he could potentially try again. Example cases might be picking a lock or attempting to climb a sheer wall. Instead of simply denying any further attempts, kindly Games Masters may permit a follow-up, last-ditch attempt. However, the character will suffer some trepidation or lack of confidence which increases the difficulty of the skill roll by one grade.

If this second effort also ends in failure, the character is assumed to have given it his 'best shot' and cannot make any further attempts for the foreseeable future.

## CAPPING SKILLS

To 'cap' a skill with another means that for a particular roll, the primary skill is restricted to the value of a secondary skill, providing the latter is lower. This is normally done in situations where a character's full knowledge or ability is limited by unusual circumstances.

Capping is a useful alternative to applying a difficulty modifier, especially in circumstances where the character is limited by their own capability.

## CONTESTED ROLLS

Contested Rolls are used whenever a skill is actively resisted by an opponent. This can be anything from a character influencing a reticent guard to a sorcerer casting a spell

against a monster. There are two types of contest: Opposed Rolls and Differential Rolls.

## OPPOSED ROLLS

RUNEQUEST frequently pits one skill against another – Stealth versus Perception, or Deceit versus Insight – are good examples of times where skills are matched against each other. These are known as Opposed Rolls and are used where a challenge will result in either win or lose, pass or fail.

An Opposed Roll is determined thus: both participants roll their respective skills. The winner is the one who gains the better level of success. If the participants score the same level of success (a standard success each, or a critical each), then the winner is the one who has the highest dice roll still within the success range of the skill.

*For example, Lodz, a thief, attempts to cut the purse of Zamothis. This calls for a Sleight roll by Lodz which, the Games Master says, will be opposed by Zamothis' Perception. The dice are rolled: Lodz scores 45 on his Sleight skill of 70% and Zamothis scores 63 on his Perception of 66%. Both have succeeded in their rolls but, because Odas has rolled higher than Zamothis and is still within his skill range, he is judged the winner. Lodz has successfully cut the purse, but Zamothis has quite clearly seen him do it.*

If both participants fail in an Opposed Roll then either:

- ⇒ Describe the situation, leaving both sides hanging in dramatic tension, then re-roll the contest to establish a winner
- ⇒ The Games Master should produce some explanation or circumstances that suit the nature of the failure

In the Lodz and Odas example, both of them failing in the initial rolls would mean that Lodz failed to cut the purse and Odas failed to notice him trying: it is easy to re-roll the contest. In the case of Lodz trying to lie his way out of trouble, if both fail in their rolls then the Games Master informs the players that both of them are suddenly distracted by the sounds of a skirmish across the





marketplace as a brawl breaks-out between rival merchants. Lodz can make a swift exit and Odas has his attention absorbed by the merchants' squabble.

Opposed rolls are frequently used in certain battle situations to overcome the effects of wounds or oppose a combat special effect. They are also used to resist poisons and disease, or shrug off the effects of baleful magic.

### DIFFERENTIAL ROLLS

Differential rolls are similar to Opposed rolls except that instead of a simple win or lose result, the difference in levels of success are calculated. Primarily used for the resolution of combat (see page 77), Differential Rolls can also be utilised in other situations where the Games Master wishes to increase the detailed results of a contest.

A Differential Roll is determined in the following manner: Both participants roll against their respective skills and suffer the results of their roll as if tested in isolation. There is no outright 'winner' per se, but whoever gained the higher level of success gains an advantage equal to the difference in the success levels between them (assuming one participant gains at least a standard success or better). If both participants score the same level of success (a standard success each, or a critical each), then there is no additional effect.

### OPPOSED SKILLS OVER 100%

If the highest skilled participant in an Opposed or Differential Roll has a skill in excess of 100%, that participant subtracts the difference between 100 and his skill value from the skill of everyone in the contest, including himself. This reduces the skill value of the opponents but leaves him retaining the advantage.

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

### GROUP ROLLS

Group Rolls are a time-saving way for Games Masters to determine the success of a group of individuals involved in the same task. There are two separate forms of Group Roll: Team Rolls and Sorting Rolls.

### TEAM ROLL

In a team test, success is co-operative; everyone reaps the benefit from a single success. If the group of fanatical worshippers hunting Zamothis are all trying to search for his hiding place in the temple's catacombs, then any successful Perception roll will reveal him to all the cultists. The Games Master rolls once for the highest skill in the team (the highest Perception skill among the cult members, for example) and if the roll is a success, everybody in the team succeeds. If the roll is a failure, everybody fails.

A 'reverse' team test can be used in a situation where one failure can spell disaster. For example, if a group of hunters are attempting to stalk a sabre-toothed tiger, 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 ROLL

In a sorting test, success is individual. For example, the same group of cultists are being chased by Zamothis, which calls for opposed Ride tests. Some of the fanatical worshippers have a Ride skill of 40%, some of 50% and some of 60%. The Games Master makes a group roll for the cultists, which results in a 49. Those with skills of 50% or more succeed, while the slower cultists - those on a skill of 49 or lower - begin to fall behind (unless the remainder of them slow their progress to allow their fellows to keep up).

Games Masters need to judge when to use multiple rolls to a group roll. Multiple rolls - one roll for each individual in a group - is more realistic, but is time consuming. If it is important to keep a game flowing, and individual skill successes are not so important, a Group Roll is more effective.

### PROPORTIONAL SKILL SUCCESS

Occasionally it may be necessary to determine the success of a large group of people performing the same task, in a situation in which there is no margin for error. In this case, simply take the skill being used and



apply that as the percentage of success for the whole group.

For example: a group of 100 troops are attempting to wade across a fast-flowing river a short distance from a high and treacherous waterfall. This calls for an Athletics skill test. A failed skill test for an individual would result in their being swept away by the current. Rather than rolling 100 skill tests, or

using a Group Roll to determine whether all 100 soldiers make it across, the Games Master can simply rule that the Athletics skill for the group represents what proportion of that group successfully completes the task. If the troops have an Athletics skill of 75, then 75 of them will make it to the other side of the river and the remaining 25 will be swept away.

## SKILLS SUMMARIES

### STANDARD SKILLS

Skill	Basic Percentage
Athletics	STR+DEX
Boating	STR+CON
Brawn	STR+SIZ
Conceal	DEX+POW
Customs	INTx2
Dance	DEX+CHA
Deceit	INT+CHA
Drive	DEX+POW
Endurance	CON x2
Evade	DEX x2
First Aid	INT+DEX

Skill	Basic Percentage
Influence	CHA x2
Insight	INT+POW
Locale	INT x2
Native Tongue	INT+CHA
Perception	INT+POW
Ride	DEX+POW
Sing	CHA+POW
Stealth	DEX+INT
Swim	STR+CON
Unarmed	STR+DEX
Willpower	POW x2

*All Combat Styles are STR+DEX*

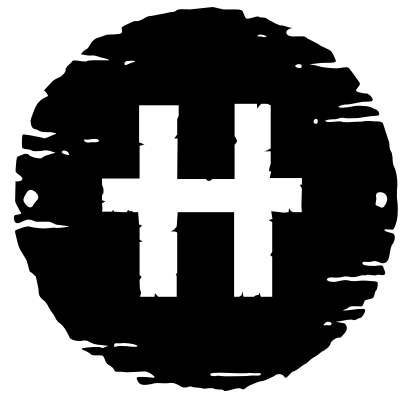
### PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Skill	Basic Percentage
Acrobatics	STR+DEX
Art	POW+CHA
Bureaucracy	INT x2
Commerce	INT+CHA
Courtesy	INT+CHA
Craft	DEX+INT
Culture	INT x2
<i>Devotion</i>	<i>POW+CHA</i>
Disguise	INT+CHA
Engineering	INT x2
<i>Exhort</i>	<i>INT+CHA</i>
<i>Folk Magic</i>	<i>POW+CHA</i>
Gambling	INT+POW
Healing	INT+POW
Language	INT+CHA

Skill	Basic Percentage
Literacy	INT x2
Lockpicking	DEX x2
Lore	INT x2
Mechanisms	DEX+INT
Musicianship	DEX+CHA
Navigation	INT+POW
Oratory	POW+CHA
Seamanship	INT+CON
Seduction	INT+CHA
Sleight	DEX+CHA
Streetwise	POW+CHA
Survival	CON+POW
Teach	INT+CHA
Track	INT+CON

*Skills in italics are used in Magic.*

# CHAPTER 4: MONEY & EQUIPMENT



This chapter is concerned with money: how much characters have and what it buys. RUNEQUEST uses the Silver Piece (SP) as the standard unit of currency in the game, with the cost of most equipment, goods and services being measured in SP. One Silver Piece is the standard price for one day's food, drink and accommodation of stark quality for one person; that is to say, breakfast and an evening meal, with some form of cheap beverage and a place to sleep for the night.

Other coins are available as well. The standard currency for RUNEQUEST consists of the Copper Piece, Silver Piece and Gold Piece. The exchange rate is:

- ⇒ 10 Coppers = 1 Silver
- ⇒ 100 Silvers = 1 Gold

Thus a single Gold Piece would provide a RUNEQUEST character with reasonable food for 100 days. Three or four Gold Pieces would see a character roughly all the way through the year, if he or she is frugal.

Some cultures, typically farming, nomad and barbarian communities, measure wealth in terms of livestock, whereas primitives may value useful equipment instead.

Beyond a set of clothes and tools suitable to their culture and career, all characters begin the game with additional commodities or currency worth:

- ⇒ Barbarians: 4d6 x50 silver pieces
- ⇒ Civilised: 4d6 x75 silver pieces
- ⇒ Nomadic: 4d6 x50 silver pieces
- ⇒ Primitive: 4d6 x25 silver pieces

Characters are free to purchase anything they wish from the following tables, subject of course to what is available in the campaign setting and the Games Master's final decision.



*As RUNEQUEST is not setting-specific the names of coins are very generic, but Games Masters should create something evocative for their coinage.*

*Silvers could, for example, be shillings, royals, drachma, pazoors and so on. Coppers could be obols, pennies, bits or farthings. Gold could be wheels, Imperials, zarig or something equally grandiloquent.*





The remainder of this chapter is given over to equipment: armour, weapons, clothing, tools and other sundries characters rely on when adventuring. Most articles of equipment are described in terms of one or more elements. These are:

- ⇒ Cost (in SP or CP)
- ⇒ Armour Points: the natural resilience of the item to damage
- ⇒ Hit Points: how much damage the item can sustain before being destroyed or rendered useless
- ⇒ Encumbrance: how much the item contributes to Encumbrance (see page 69) limits; a combined measure of weight, mass and restriction

Some items, typically clothing and very small, light things, have only cost listed: it can be assumed that such things do not contribute towards Encumbrance limits and can be damaged relatively easily. Others, such as weapons, armour and tools, display all four elements.

### CULTURE AND MILIEU

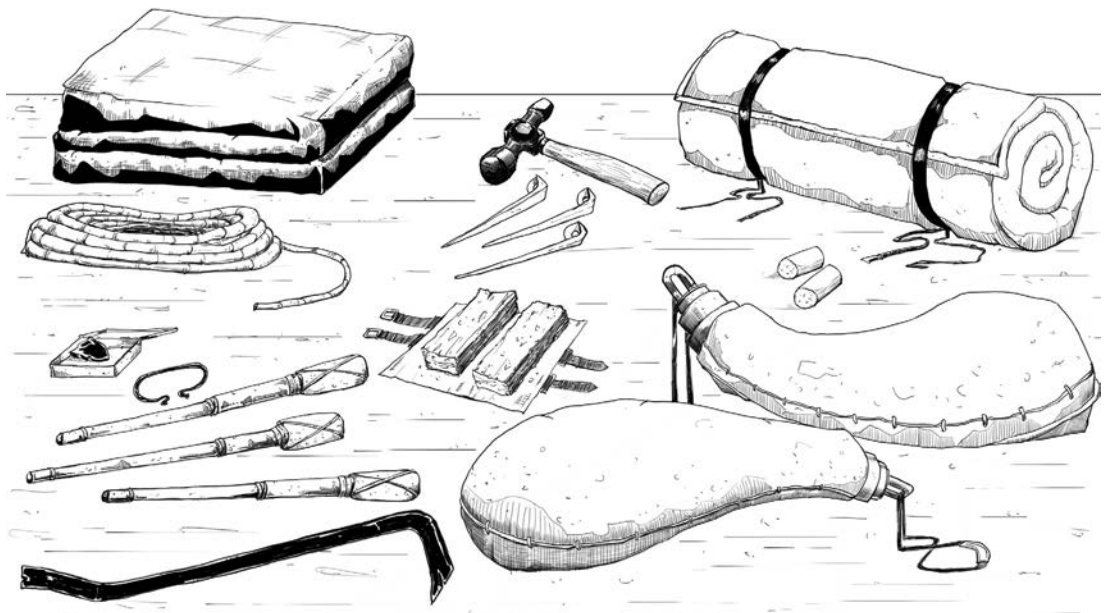
Depending on the setting for your RUNEQUEST game, not all items will be available. One would not expect clockwork mechanisms or wheeled vehicles to be available in

a RUNEQUEST setting modelled on Ancient Mesoamerica, for example. Equipment is therefore provided with a Culture/Milieu classification to help Games Masters identify what is and isn't available in a particular setting. This is a rough guide only, but one that helps recreate an authentic atmosphere (if one is needed; your RUNEQUEST setting may be deliberately anachronistic).

The Culture/Milieu classifications are:

- ⇒ Prehistoric (P): Items likely to be found in settings and cultures that have not progressed much beyond the Stone Age.
- ⇒ Ancient (A): Items likely to be available in settings and cultures equating to the Bronze and Iron Ages.
- ⇒ Medieval (M): Items likely to be available in settings and culture equating to the European Middle Ages.
- ⇒ Renaissance (R): Items likely to be available to settings and cultures equating to the European Renaissance.
- ⇒ Enlightenment (E): Items likely to be available in settings and cultures equating to the European Age of Enlightenment (17th and 18th Centuries).
- ⇒ Industrial (I): Items found in settings and cultures that have embarked on an Industrial Revolution.

*Typical adventuring gear. Sacks, rope, flint and steel, pitons, hammer, nails, bedroll, waterskins and a crowbar. Depending on the situation the prepared adventurer might also include snares, fishing line and hooks, and other survival items.*





# ARMOUR

Worn for protection against physical harm, armour reduces the amount of damage a Hit Location sustains by its Armour Point value. Armour of any kind therefore offers a significant advantage in combat and helps improve the chances of survival. The downside to armour is that it can be heavy and restrictive to movement; fighting for a sustained period in armour takes its toll in terms of fatigue and also slows down the ability to react.

The following armours are rough abstractions, ranked according to the manner in which it is constructed and overall coverage, not the actual material it was made from. For example it is perfectly permissible to manufacture a scaled helm made from sewing boar tusks to a leather cap, or a suit of half-plate from cuir bouillie dinosaur leather or carved jade. Of course some materials are stronger than others; a bronze breastplate will be thinner and lighter than an equivalent made from rhino hide. Thus the material used to manufacture the armour affects its Encumbrance (ENC).

Armour is assumed to come with whatever lining or padding would normally be expected as part of the complete panoply. Thus it cannot be stacked to provide extra protection.

Each type of armour is defined by the following qualities:

- ⇒ AP: The number of armour points 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 although the ENC incurred is cumulative.
- ⇒ ENC: The typical weight and bulk of the armour. .
- ⇒ Cost: The cost, in Silver Pieces, per location covered.
- ⇒ Milieu: Typical milieus where this type of armour occurs.

The Armour Table lists each of the characteristics by armour type and also summarises the total encumbrance, monetary cost and Armour Penalty for an entire suit (covering all seven Hit Locations), for the armour in question assuming construction from standard materials.

## ARMOUR AND SIZ

Flexible armour will generally fit one point of SIZ more or less than the SIZ it was designed for. More rigid armour is crafted to fit a wearer of specific proportions, so it will only fit the same SIZ and frame for which it has been designed.

### THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*As a member of the Bronze Mercenaries Zamothis was issued with a complete suit of Hoplite Half Plate armour: helm, greaves, vambraces, breastplate and kilt.*

*Retiring from the unit he sadly has to return this very expensive panoply, but as a departing gift his companions scrape together captured pieces of armour they have taken as booty.*

*Zamothis ends-up with a mix of Hoplite helmet (AP 5), linothorax covering his Chest and Abdomen (AP 3) and quilted vambraces and greaves (AP 2).*

*The ENC for the individual pieces is 4 for the helmet, 4 for the linothorax, and 1 each for the paired vambraces and greaves. In total the entire panoply is 10 ENC; which when divided by 5 gives a Strike Rank Penalty of -2.*

ARMOUR TABLE

Type	Example	AP	ENC	Cost per Location	Suit ENC/ Cost/ Armour Penalty	Milieu
Natural/Cured	Furs, Hides	1	2	20	14/140/3	Any
Padded/ Quilted	Aketon, Gambeson	2	1	80	7/560/2	Any
Laminated	Linothorax, Bezainted	3	2	180	14/1260/3	A-M
Scaled	Brigandine, Lamellar	4	3	320	21/2240/5	A-R
Half Plate	Hoplite Plate	5	4	500	28/3500/6	A-R
Mail	Mail Hauberk, Laminar	6	5	900	30/6300/7	A-R
Plated Mail	Splinted Chainmail	7	6	1400	42/9800/9	M-E
Articulated Plate	Gothic Plate	8	7	2400	49/16800/10	M-E



## ARMOUR PENALTY TO STRIKE RANK

Armour can be heavy and impede movement to some degree. The vast bulk of those who train in weapons also train in armour and so become accustomed to armour's rigours, but this does not mean they are free from its more restrictive effects.

RUNEQUEST simulates this through the Strike Rank Penalty. The more armour one wears, and the heavier or more encumbering it is, the greater the Strike Rank Penalty. This penalty is applied to a character's Strike Rank. Its calculation is simple enough; add together the ENC for all the armour worn and then divide by 5, rounding up. A full suit of plated mail, having an ENC of 6 per location and covering seven locations has an Armour Penalty of  $(6 \times 7) / 5 = 9$ . Thus a character wearing a full set would reduce his Strike Rank by 9 points.

## ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation can be permanent or temporary, fixed or transportable. Prices for rented temporary accommodation, such as a room at an inn, are per night. Food is extra.

As always, accommodation costs will vary with seasons and demand. In busy periods – markets, festivals and so on – prices will climb

with demand, and larger towns and cities will charge more, in general, than smaller ones.

## CLOTHING

All characters begin the game with a set of clothes appropriate to their culture and social class, but through wear and tear it will become necessary to replace existing garments as well as buy new ones appropriate to the local conditions or to celebrate unusual occasions. Those of high Social Class may even be required to continually purchase new sets of clothes simply to keep up with fashion.

The following prices are merely guidelines. There is technically no upper limit as to how much an item of garb can cost once you take into consideration exotic fabrics, embroidery, dyed colours and decorations of precious furs or jewels.

Assuming more or less continual wear, cheap clothing can be worn for a year before it is rendered to rags. Reasonable clothing lasts for twice that before being reduced to cheap status. Superior clothing lasts for three years of wear, and then is downgraded to reasonable status.

Repairing clothing is a normal part of everyday life. In most cultures it is commonplace to provide garments, footwear or the fabric to make such things as part of an employee's annual wages.

*All prices in these tables, and those that follow, are in Silver Pieces, unless otherwise specified, and are suggestions rather than hard and fast tariffs. Adjust prices according to season, availability, and other economic considerations according to the campaign.*

ACCOMMODATION TABLE

Accommodation Type	Cheap	Reasonable	Superior
Common room floor/stables	0.5	-	-
Shared room/dormitory	1	1.5	-
Private room	2	5	10
Rented hovel or shack (week)	10	-	-
Rented cabin or cottage (week) – sleeps small family	15	25	50
Rented house or apartment (week) – sleeps large family	30	50	75
Rented villa or mansion(week) – sleeps small entourage	100	250	1000
Hovel or shack to buy	100	-	-
Cabin or Cottage to buy (per bedroom)	750	1,250	2,500
House or Apartment to buy (per 2 bedrooms)	3,000	5,000	7,500
Villa or Mansion to buy (per 4 bedrooms)	20,000	50,000	200,000
Tent (per person capacity)	1	3	5



CLOTHING TABLE

Garment	Cheap	Reasonable	Superior
Boots	25	50	100
Cap or Hat	3	6	18
Gloves, Socks or Underwear	5	10	20
General Coat or Cloak	20	45	90
Vest or Tabard	10	20	50
Tunic or Dress	15	30	75
Sandals	4	8	20
Shoes	20	45	90
Trousers, Skirt or Kilt	12	25	60
Shirt, Smock or Shift	8	16	35
Winter Coat or Cloak	30	75	150

## FOOD

Food is not specified by any particular type in RENEQUEST as it can vary dramatically according to culture: assume that food bought is a meal which, for a very basic, cheap meal typically includes some kind of broth, pastry or bread and some brewed or dairy beverage. More expensive meals include larger portions of meat or fish, a wider range of seasonal

fruits and vegetables and a better grade of beverage. A superior meal consists of several varied courses and luxuries of some sort such as rare meats, spices or imported fruits.

Trail rations consist of food preserved for long life, such as dried and cured meats, cheese, bread (usually unleavened flatbread for ease of transport) and cereals, either nuts or grains.

FOOD TABLE

Type	Cheap	Reasonable	Superior
Meal at a tavern or inn	1	3	8
Ale or Beer for an evening	1	1.5	3
Wine or Spirits for an evening	2	4	6
Trail rations (7 days)	7	9	12

## LIVESTOCK

In many communities livestock represents wealth, food, labour or even a mount. Livestock needs to be fed and tendered. The cost to maintain livestock in bought food

(grazing will usually be free during appropriate seasons, but stockpiled food is essential in inclement seasons) for a week is usually a twentieth of the animal's price, to a maximum of its SIZ in silver pieces.

LIVESTOCK TABLE

Item	Poor Quality	Reasonable	Superior
Bull	500	1000	3000
Camel	1100	2200	6000
Cow	100	200	600
Goat	25	50	100
Horse (cavalry/war-trained)	3000	6000	10,000
Horse (heavy draught)	1400	2800	8000
Horse (riding)	1200	2500	7000
Pig	25	50	150
Sheep	25	50	150



# TOOLS

Item	ENC	Cost
Abacus	1	8 SP
Astrolabe (Ancient onwards)	1	200 SP
Backpack/Satchel (holds up to 20 ENC)	1	5 SP
Bedroll	1	1 SP
Bit & Bridle	1	15 SP
Block & tackle	1	15 SP
Bottle, glass/earthenware	—	2 SP
Candle, 6 hour	1	1 SP
Chain, 2m	2	40 SP
Chest, Large (holds up to 100 ENC)	5	80 SP
Chest, Small (holds up to 50 ENC)	3	40 SP
Cooking Pot (for travel)	2	3 SP
Craft tools (basic tools to match a handicraft)	2	75 SP
Crop (riding)	—	15 SP
Crowbar	1	25 SP
Doorjamb	2	5 SP
Driver's whip	—	25 SP
Falconer's Kit	1	30 SP
Feed/mount rations (per day)	1	5 CP
Fine wine goblet (glass – double for silver)	—	8 SP
First aid kit (useful for 10 applications of First Aid skill)	—	25 SP
Fish hooks (20)	—	1 SP
Fishing kit	1	15 SP
Fishing Net	4	10 SP
Flint & tinder	—	1 SP
Game Snares and Traps	1	1 SP
Goad	1	25 SP
Grappling hook	—	5 SP
Hammer/Saw/Mallet/Chisel	1	1 SP
Healer's kit (useful for 10 applications of Healing skill)	1	150 SP
Hourglass (Ancient onwards)	1	20 SP
Knife (tool, not weapon)	—	5 SP
Ladder, rope 3m	4	2 SP
Lantern, basic	1	10 SP
Lock picks	—	75 SP
Lockbox	1-4 depending on size	75 - 250 SP
Lodestone	—	5 SP
Milling Stone	2	8 SP
Mirror (hand glass)	1	12 SP
Mug/Beaker/Dish/Plate (wood – double price for metal)	—	5 CP each
Musical instrument	2	70 SP
Nails or tacks (50)	—	2 CP



## TOOLS (CONTINUED)



Item	ENC	Cost
Oil flask	1	1 SP
Papyrus or paper sheet (double the cost for vellum)	—	5 CP
Pickaxe	1	35 SP
Pole, 3m	1	1 SP
Quills and ink for writing	1	30 SP
Quiver	—	2 SP
Razor, folding	—	3 SP
Rope (hemp), 10m	2	10 SP
Sack, large (holds up to 60 ENC)	1	5 CP
Sack, small (holds up to 30 ENC)	—	2 CP
Saddle, riding	3	60 SP
Saddle, war	4	90 SP
Saddlebag (holds up to 2x20 ENC)	2	20 SP
Saw, hand	1	1 SP
Scythe/Sickle	2	30 SP
Sextant (Renaissance cultures and later)	1	25 SP
Ship's Compass (Medieval cultures and later)	1	70 SP
Shoes, horse	1	10 SP
Spade/Hoe/Pitchfork	1	25 SP
Torch, 1 hour	—	4 CP
Torch, 6 hour	1	8 CP
Waterskin or Canteen (holds 2 litres of liquid)	1	5 CP
Wax, block	1	2 CP



## MELEE WEAPONS

The weapons listed here cover a wide gamut of societies and periods. Some weapons, such as swords, axes and spears, are ubiquitous, whereas others have firm cultural and period groundings. In many societies it is deemed both necessary and desirable to carry some means of defending oneself. Customs always vary though, and the type of weapon carried depends very much on circumstances. Having a sword and dagger anchored to one's belt may not be thought unusual, for instance, whereas carrying a halberd or great sword would be deemed unthinkable unless one is actively preparing for war.

All weapons are governed by a series of characteristics which are as follows:

- ⇒ **Damage:** The amount of damage the weapon delivers if an attack is successful.
- ⇒ **Size:** Every weapon is rated for its mass, leverage and stability. The Size is used to determine the weapon's ability to inflict and parry damage (see page 84). The size categories are Small (S), Medium (M), Large (L), Huge (H), and Enormous (E).
- ⇒ **Reach:** Every weapon is also rated for its Reach – its length and ability to hold a foe at bay due to its length. The longer the weapon the greater its ability to prevent an opponent getting close enough to inflict damage with their own weapon. The Reach categories are Touch (T), Short (S), Medium (M), Long (L), and Very Long (VL).
- ⇒ **Combat Effects:** The design of the weapon allows it access to weapon specific Special Effects. Swords, for instance, slice and stab and so are permitted access to the Impale and Bleed effects, whereas a mace is unable to produce those effects but could inflict Stun Location instead (see Special Effects page 86).
- ⇒ **ENC:** The weapon's combined encumbrance and weight.
- ⇒ **AP/HP:** All weapons are rated for their Armour Points and Hit Points; their ability to withstand direct damage and how much damage they can tolerate before breaking. Those weapons that rely on metal for their damage capability are assumed to be either bronze or iron.
- ⇒ **Traits:** Some weapons, due to their specialised nature, have certain qualities, or traits, that differentiate them from weapons of a similar style. The common traits are:
  - ⇒ *Barbed* – If impaled it will cause full rather than half damage on being yanked free.
  - ⇒ *Defensive* – If used to parry an attacking weapon, that weapon is considered one size smaller than it actually is. So a Large sword is considered Medium and a Medium sword is considered Small. Weapons already Small in size are unaffected.
  - ⇒ *Double Ended* – If broken in combat, the length remaining in the hand can be reversed and used as a shorter version of the original weapon.
  - ⇒ *Entrapping* – As per the Defensive trait, but also allows use of the Pin Weapon special effect without needing to roll a Critical.
  - ⇒ *Flexible* – If the opponent is using a shield to parry, the shield is considered one size smaller than it actually is. So a Huge shield is considered Large, a Large shield is considered Medium, and so on.
  - ⇒ *Mount* – The weapon must be used from the back of a moving mount.
  - ⇒ *Passive Block* – The weapon can passively block multiple Hit Locations, which must be contiguous to one another.
  - ⇒ *Ranged Parry* – The weapon can parry ranged weapons.
  - ⇒ *Set* – The weapon can be set to receive a foot or mounted charge.
  - ⇒ *Stealth* – The weapon must be used from ambush.
  - ⇒ *Thrown* – The weapon can be used as a ranged weapon as well as a hand-to-hand weapon.
- ⇒ **Cost:** The weapon's cost in Silver Pieces.

### WEAPON STR AND DEX REQUIREMENTS

*Astute readers familiar with earlier editions of RUNEQUEST will notice that weapons do not have minimum STR and DEX requirements. There are a number of reasons why these have been removed:*

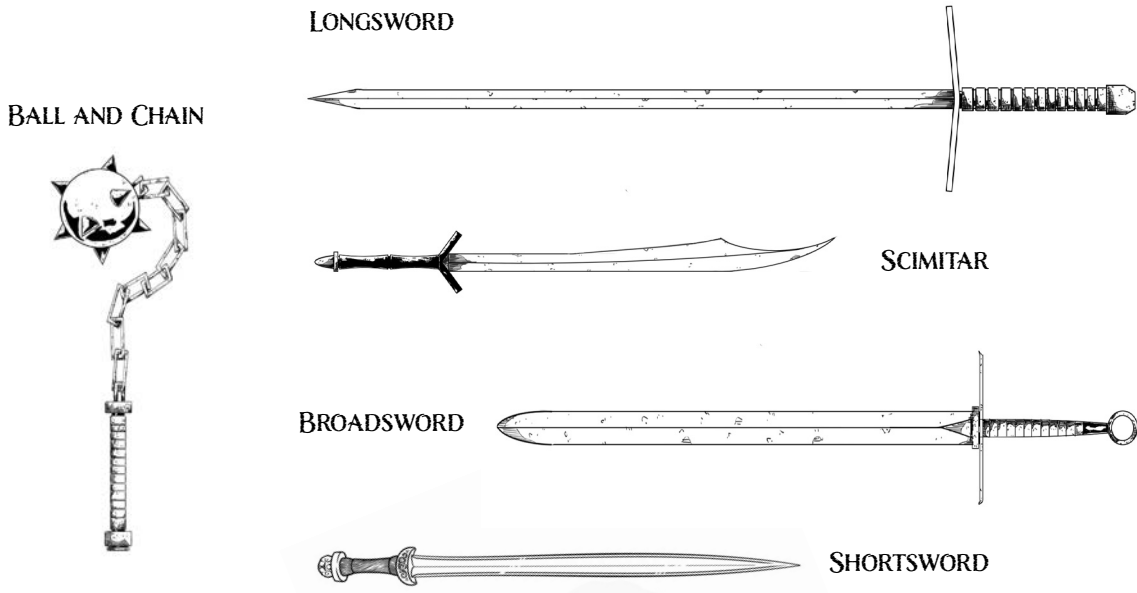
*First, most weapons, even large ones, are crafted to be as easy to use as possible with attention being given to materials, balance and so forth. Unless preternaturally weak and exceedingly lacking in manual dexterity, characters will be able to pick up and use most weapons without significant difficulty.*

*Secondly a Combat Style trains and conditions the character in the use of the weapons used in that style: learning to deal with weight, heft, length, balance and so on.*



# ONE HANDED WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Size	Reach	Combat Effects	ENC	AP/HP	Traits	Milieu	Cost
Ball & chain	1d6+1	M	M	Bash, Entangle, Stun Location	2	6/8	Flexible	M	250 SP
Battleaxe	1d6+1	M	M	Bleed	1	4/8		A-R	100 SP
Broadsword	1d8	M	M	Bleed, Impale	2	6/10		A-E	175 SP
Chain	1d4	M	M	Entangle	1	8/6	Flexible	A-I	10 SP
Club	1d6	M	S	Bash, Stun Location	1	4/4		All	5 SP
Dagger	1d4+1	S	S	Bleed, Impale	—	6/8	Thrown	All	30 SP
Hatchet	1d6	S	S	Bleed	1	3/6	Thrown	All	25 SP
Falchion	1d6+2	M	M	Bleed	1	6/10		A-M	200 SP
Flail	1d6	M	M	Bash	1	3/6	Flexible	A-M	25 SP
Knife	1d3	S	S	Bleed, Impale	—	5/4		All	10 SP
Lance	1d10+2	H	VL	Impale, Sunder	3	4/10	Mount	A-M	150 SP
Longsword	1d8	M	L	Bleed, Impale	2	6/12		M-R	250 SP
Mace	1d8	M	S	Bash, Stun Location	1	6/6		A-R	100 SP
Main Gauche	1d4	S	S	Bleed	—	6/10	Entrapping	M-E	180 SP
Military pick	1d6+1	M	M	Stun Location, Sunder	3	6/10		M-E	180 SP
Net	1d4	S	L	Entangle	3	2/20	Entrapping, Thrown	All	20 SP
Rapier	1d8	M	L	Impale	1	5/8		E	100 SP
Sabre	1d6+1	M	M	Bleed, Impale	1	6/8		E-I	225 SP
Scimitar	1d8	M	M	Bleed	2	6/10		M-E	200 SP
Shortspear	1d8+1	M	L	Impale	2	4/5	Set, Thrown	All	20 SP
Shortsword	1d6	M	S	Bleed, Impale	1	6/8		All	100 SP
Trident	1d8	M	L	Impale	2	4/10	Barbed, Thrown	A-M	155 SP





## SHIELDS

Shield	Damage	Size	Reach	Combat Effects	ENC	AP/HP	Traits	Milieu	Cost
Buckler	1d3	M	S	Bash, Stun Location	1	6/9	Ranged Parry; Passive Blocks 2 locations	M-E	50 SP
Heater	1d4	L	S	Bash, Stun Location	2	6/12	Ranged Parry; Passive Blocks 3 locations	M	150 SP
Hoplite	1d4	H	S	Bash, Stun Location	3	6/15	Ranged Parry; Passive Blocks 4 locations	A-M	300 SP
Kite	1d4	H	S	Bash, Stun Location	3	4/15	Ranged Parry; Passive Blocks 4 locations	M	300 SP
Peltast	1d4	L	S	Bash, Stun Location	2	4/12	Ranged Parry; Passive Blocks 3 locations	A-M	150 SP
Scutum	1d4	H	S	Bash, Stun Location	4	4/18	Ranged Parry; Passive Blocks 5 locations	A-M	450 SP
Target	1d3+1	L	S	Bash, Impale	2	4/9	Ranged Parry; Passive Blocks 3 locations	A-E	150 SP
Viking	1d4	L	S	Bash, Stun Location	3	4/12	Ranged Parry; Passive Blocks 4 locations	M	300 SP

## TWO HANDED WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Size	Reach	Combat Effects	ENC	AP/HP	Traits	Milieu	Cost
Battleaxe	1d8+1	M	M	Bleed, Sunder	1	4/8		A-M	100 SP
Garrote	1d2	S	T	-	—	1/2	Stealth	A-I	15 SP
Glaive/ Rhomphaia	1d10+2	L	L	Bleed, Sunder	2	4/10		A-M	250 SP
Great axe	2d6+2	H	L	Bleed, Sunder	2	4/10		A-M	125 SP
Great club	2d6	H	L	Bash, Stun Location	3	4/10		All	50 SP
Great hammer	1d10+3	H	L	Bash, Stun Location, Sunder	3	4/10		M-E	250 SP
Great sword	2d8	H	L	Bleed, Impale, Sunder	4	6/12		M-E	300 SP
Halberd/ Poleaxe	1d8+2	L	VL	Entangle, Impale, Sunder	4	4/10	Set	A-E	200 SP
Longspear	1d10+1	L	VL	Impale	2	4/10	Set	All	30 SP
Longsword	1d10	L	L	Bleed, Impale, Sunder	2	6/12		M-E	250 SP
Military flail	1d10	L	L	Bash, Stun Location	3	4/10	Flexible	A-M	250 SP
Pike/Sarissa	1d10+2	L	VL	Impale	4	4/12	Set	A-M	90 SP
Quarterstaff	1d8	M	L	Stun Location	2	4/8	Defensive	All	20 SP



# RANGED WEAPONS

Ranged weapons deal damage at a distance and do not require physical contact between combatants; such as a thrown rock, a bullet from sling or an arrow from a bow. Being able to harm an opponent from range has clear advantages: one can take advantage of cover and greater protection and, unless the opponent has a ranged weapon himself, the chances of you being injured are lessened.

Since dealing damage at range inevitably means imparting velocity to some form of projectile, ranged weapons are difficult to defend against. Without a shield or other form of solid cover that can disperse the energy of a projectile, ranged weapons cannot be parried; meaning that the best defence, if one is aware of an incoming missile, is evasion. However evasion often puts the defendant into a situation where returning an attack, even a ranged one, is difficult.

Ranged weapons have very similar characteristics to Melee Weapons, although there are some differences as noted below:

- ⇒ **Damage:** The amount of damage the weapon delivers if an attack is successful.
- ⇒ **Damage Modifier:** Not all ranged weapons can take advantage of a character's damage modifier. A Yes or No entry dictates whether or not the user's damage modifier can be applied.
- ⇒ **Force:** Each ranged weapon possesses a force rating equivalent to the 'Size' of close combat weapons. In the case of projectiles, this does not relate to the firing weapon itself, but rather to how much 'impact' its ammunition has. 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).
- ⇒ **Range:** This is a measure of the weapon's effectiveness at three distances separated by slashes, representing the maximum Close, Effective and Long ranges of the weapon or its ammunition. Ranges are expressed in metres. Note that distance penalties to the user's skill are independent from the weapon, see page 103.
  - ⇒ **Close Range** – The distance over which Choose Location may be used as a non-critical special effect, provided the target is stationary or unaware of the impending attack.
  - ⇒ **Effective Range** – The distance over which there are no significant modifiers on the weapon's accuracy or power.
  - ⇒ **Long Range** – The distance over which the weapon can still inflict harm, but the amount of damage is halved and its Force is reduced by one step.
- ⇒ **Load:** This shows how many turns are required to load or reload a weapon which fires ammunition.
- ⇒ **Combat Effects:** As per Close Combat weapons.
- ⇒ **Impaling Size:** The effective size of the weapon or its ammunition if it succeeds in an impaling attack.
- ⇒ **ENC:** The weapon's combined encumbrance and weight.
- ⇒ **AP/HP:** All weapons are rated for their Armour Points and Hit Points; their ability to withstand direct damage and how much damage they can tolerate before breaking. Those weapons that rely on metal for their damage capability are assumed to be either bronze or iron.
- ⇒ **Cost:** The weapon's cost in Silver Pieces.





## RANGED WEAPONS

Ranged Weapon	Dam. Damage	Mod	Force	Range	Load	Combat Effects	Impale Size	ENC	AP/HP	Milieu	Cost
Atlatl	—	—	+1 Step	+0/+25/+75	1	—	—	1	1/4	P	10 SP
Blowgun	—	N	—	10/20/30	2	—	—	—	1/4	P	30 SP
Bolas	1d4	N	—	10/25/50	—	Entangle	—	—	2/2	P-A	10 SP
Dagger	1d4	Y	S	5/10/20	—	Impale	S	—	4/6	All	30 SP
Dart	1d4	Y	S	5/10/20	—	Impale	S	—	2/1	P-A	10 SP
Discus	1d4+1	Y	L	5/20/40	—	Stun Location	—	—	2/3	A	30 SP
Hatchet	1d6	Y	S	10/20/30	—	Bleed	—	1	4/6	All	25 SP
Heavy crossbow	1d10	N	H	20/150/300	4	Impale, Sunder	S	2	4/8	M-E	350 SP
Javelin	1d8+1	Y	H	10/20/50	—	Impale, Pin Weapon (Shield) <sup>1</sup>	M	1	3/8	A-M	20 SP
Light crossbow	1d8	N	L	20/100/200	3	Impale	S	1	4/5	M-E	150 SP
Long bow	1d8	Y	H	15/125/250	2	Impale	S	1	4/7	M	200 SP
Net	—	N	—	3/5/10	—	Entangle	—	3	2/20	All	20 SP
Recurve bow	1d8	Y	H	15/125/250	2	Impale	S	1	4/8	A-M	225 SP
Short bow	1d6	Y	L	15/100/200	2	Impale	S	1	4/4	P-M	75 SP
Shortspear	1d8	Y	L	10/15/30	—	Impale	M	1	4/5	All	20 SP
Sling	1d8	N	L	10/150/300	3	Stun Location	—	—	1/2	P-M	5 SP
Staff sling	2d6	N	E	5/25/50	4	Stun Location	—	2	3/6	A-M	20 SP
Stone/Rock	1d3	Y	S	5/10/20	—	Stun Location	—	—	—	All	—
Trident	1d8	Y	L	10/15/30	—	Barbed, Impale	M	2	4/10	A-M	155 SP

<sup>1</sup> Thrown javelins may use the Pin Weapon special effect against shields, without needing to roll a Critical.

### RANGED WEAPON AMMUNITION

Weapons such as bows and crossbows use ammunition to deliver damage. Arrows, quarrels, darts and bullets can be made by anyone with the appropriate craft skill, for example Craft (Fletcher) for arrows, as long as the appropriate raw materials and a suitable work area or workshop are available for the task. If bought from a craftsman then the costs are as follows:

- ⇒ Arrows (per sheaf of a dozen) 4 SP
- ⇒ Quarrels (per sheaf of a dozen) 3 SP
- ⇒ Lead sling bullets (per bag of twenty) 1 SP
- ⇒ Blowgun darts (per half dozen) 2 SP
- ⇒ Thrown darts (per sheaf of a dozen) 2 SP

## CHAPTER 5: GAME MECHANICS



**M**any different things can occur during a RUNEQUEST game. Some are resolved through skill use or one of the major game mechanics such as combat or magic; others require their own rules for adjudication. This chapter provides rules and guidance for a variety of different scenarios that Games Masters and players will encounter whilst playing the game.

The list is not exhaustive but should represent most common situations. If Games Masters find there are other situations that require some form of game-system adjudication, and that these situations seem to occur frequently, then they are encouraged to develop their own rules to cover these special circumstances, using those given in this chapter as a basis for replication or development.

Briefly this chapter includes rules for:

- ⇒ Action, Time and Movement
- ⇒ Asphyxiation, Drowning and Suffocation
- ⇒ Blood Loss
- ⇒ Character Improvement
- ⇒ Disease and Poison
- ⇒ Encumbrance
- ⇒ Falling
- ⇒ Fatigue
- ⇒ Fires
- ⇒ Healing
- ⇒ Inanimate Objects
- ⇒ Luck Points
- ⇒ Traps



## SCENES

*Scenes are an abstract time measurement based on definable events or interactions. They can last for Combat Rounds, Local or Strategic Time and duration is based on activities being engaged in by one or more characters. Some spells, for instance, last for a Scene, which means that duration is variable but based on that Scene's need. For example, if a Folk Magic spell, such as Bladesharp, is cast successfully, it will last for one active scene. This will be either as short as the duration of an entire combat, or as long as a Local Time event where Bladesharp might be required.*

*Scenes always have active player participation. For instance an evening spent in a tavern gaining information is a Scene, because it requires the characters to participate. However a long-distance trip by sea, where the Games Master stipulates that several days pass without incident, is not a Scene.*

*The Games Master always determines when a Scene starts and ends. For the most part it will be obvious and important only where magical effects need to be measured.*

# ACTION, TIME AND MOVEMENT

How quickly time passes in RENEQUEST depends on circumstances. Activities in role-playing games rarely elapse in real time. For the most part, timescales for different forms of activity are inflated or condensed depending on what is being done.

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

## COMBAT ROUNDS

A Combat Round, dealt with more fully in the Combat chapter, represents five seconds of real time. They can be useful for measuring very detailed activities that require a blow-by-blow resolution. For example, a chase between hunter and prey can be measured in Combat Rounds, representing the twists and turns that happen very quickly during any tense pursuit.

## LOCAL TIME

Local Time represents a few minutes to a few hours and is used to measure activities 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. Manage Local Time in the following way:

1. The character states his intention (Local Time starts)
2. The Games Master decides 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 taken in step 2 passes (Local Time ends)

Local Time may then continue, move into Combat Rounds or become Strategic Time

## STRATEGIC TIME

Strategic Time is measured in days, months or even years. Use Strategic Time for those occasions where it is not necessary to know the detail, simply the outcome – 'You ride for ten days and reach the city by dawn on the eleventh day.' 'After a whole day of watching the guard patrols you now understand their movements and patterns.' 'It takes a week to craft the sword.'

Strategic Time is mostly concerned with how far characters 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 to 12 hours with regular stops for rest, water and food.

If characters need to increase the distances given in the Strategic Time Travel Table, then they can effectively add half again to the distance travelled in the Strategic Time period but gain an enduring level of Fatigue as a result. Naturally an appropriate skill roll (Drive, Ride, Athletics, and so on) also needs to be made to successfully increase the distance covered, along with dealing with any hazards that might need to be resolved in Combat Rounds or Local Time.

## MOVEMENT

Movement is broken down into three 'gaits' which are Walking, Running and Sprinting.

Walking is the average speed a member of a particular species ambles along at when in no particular hurry. This is normally referred to as a creature's base Movement Rate.

Running is a trot or jog, at a speed which can be maintained over long periods. Basically, anything faster than a walk. Maximum running speed is triple Movement Rate, which may vary according to the bonus granted by Athletics skill.

Sprinting is flat out movement at top speed, which can only be maintained for brief periods. Peak sprinting speed is five times Movement Rate, which again may be increased according to whatever bonus is granted from Athletics skill.



The Comparative Movement table summarises the typical walking distances covered by creatures of differing base movement rates, for a variety of time periods. Tactical movement during combat is explained in more detail on page 93 (Engagement).

### MOVING IN ARMOUR

Worn armour acts against character Movement Rates and certain kinds of actions such as swimming or climbing. The armour's Strike Rank Penalty is applied to Movement of different kinds in the following ways:

- ⇒ Walking: Armour does not interfere with walking movement, although it can increase the Fatigue level (see page 70)
- ⇒ Running or Sprinting: Subtract the Armour Penalty from the running and sprinting speed. The result is how fast the character can move during chases or when charging. For example, a character wearing a full panoply of Hoplite Plate armour would reduce both gaits by 6m.
- ⇒ Swimming: Take the character's swimming speed (see the Swim skill page 35) divide by two (rounding up) and subtract the Armour Penalty. If the result is zero, the character cannot move and

barely keeps himself afloat. If the result is negative, then the character sinks.

- ⇒ Climbing rough surface (branching trees, ladders, scaffolds and so on): Half the Armour Penalty (rounded up) is subtracted from the base Movement Rate. If the result is zero or less, they are too burdened by their armour to climb. Thus, our hero in his Hoplite Plate armour can still scale easily climbable objects, as his Climbing movement is  $6 - 3 = 3$ .
- ⇒ Climbing a steep surface (pitched roofs, steep hills, and so on): The Armour Penalty is subtracted from the base Movement Rate. If the result is zero or less, they are too burdened by their armour to climb. Thus, our hero in his Hoplite Plate cannot climb as his Climbing movement is  $6 - 6 = 0$ .
- ⇒ Climbing a sheer surface (walls, cliff faces, etc): Double the Armour Penalty is subtracted from the base Movement Rate. As with climbing a rough surface, if the result is zero or less, the character cannot climb.
- ⇒ Jumping: Reduce the distance in metres the character can jump (see the Athletics skill, page 27) by half the Armour Penalty (rounded up). For standing jumps this impairment is halved.

### THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*Zamothis, like all humans, has a base Movement Rate of 6. Years of trekking across the world and climbing its mountains have raised his Athletics skill to 81%. Thus his maximum movement rates are calculated as:*

*Walking 6m – base Movement Rate of a human.*

*Running 24m – Base Movement Rate plus two from his Athletics skill, multiplied by three.*

*Sprinting 45m – Base Movement Rate plus three for his Athletics skill, multiplied by five.*

*If wearing his mismatched panoply his running and sprinting speeds are reduced by its Armour Penalty - in this case 2. So Zamothis would have a Running speed of 22m and Sprinting speed of 43m per round.*

*In addition, Zamothis can still climb sheer surfaces, swim slowly and jump reasonably far, even whilst wearing his armour.*

### STRATEGIC TIME TRAVEL TABLE

Travel Example	Distance Covered (kilometres) per Day (10-12 hours)
Walking	30 per Day
Horseback at casual speed	60 per Day
Wagon at casual speed	15 per Day
Open Sea, favourable conditions	150-300 (in a 24 hour period)
Open Sea, unfavourable conditions	0-60 (in a 24 hour period)
Coast or River, favourable conditions	30-60 per Day
Coast or River, unfavourable conditions	0-30 per Day

### COMPARATIVE MOVEMENT TABLE

Time Period	Move 4m	Move 6m	Move 8m	Move 10m	Move 12m
Combat Round	4m	6m	8m	10m	12m
Minute	48m	72m	96m	120m	144m
Hour	2.9km	4.3km	5.8km	7.2km	8.6km



ARMOUR EFFECTS ON MOVEMENT

Travel Example	Modified Movement
Walking	No Change to Movement
Running/Sprinting	Running/Sprinting Speed - Strike Rank Penalty from Armour
Swimming	(Swimming Speed/2) - Strike Rank Penalty from Armour
Climbing Rough Surfaces	Movement - (Strike Rank Penalty from Armour/2)
Climbing Steep Surfaces	Movement - Strike Rank Penalty from Armour
Climbing Sheer Surfaces	Movement - (Strike Rank Penalty from Armour x2)
Jumping	Jumping Distance - (Strike Rank Penalty from Armour/2)

## ASPHYXIATION, DROWNING AND SUFFOCATION

Characters can hold their breath for a number of seconds equal to their Endurance skill. However the character must be prepared (filling the lungs with as much air as possible); if not, then the period is halved if the character was in a passive situation, or reduced to one fifth if the character was engaged in strenuous activity.

Once the period of held breath is over, characters must make an Endurance roll every Combat Round:

- ⇒ If the roll is a critical success, no further deterioration occurs.
- ⇒ If the roll is successful, the character accrues an extra level of Fatigue.
- ⇒ If the roll fails, the character sustains 1d2 extra levels of Fatigue that round.
- ⇒ If the roll is fumbled, the character sustains 1d3 extra levels of Fatigue that round.

Without aid, death from asphyxiation is usually swift. If the asphyxiation ends before the character dies, they recover Fatigue levels lost to suffocation relatively quickly; regaining one level per minute.

Depending on the method of asphyxiation, the Games Master may wish to prevent full recovery, imposing an enduring level or two of Fatigue to represent damage to the lungs caused by smoke or water inhalation. These recover at the character's Healing Rate per week.

## BLOOD LOSS

Blood loss due to external and internal wounds, usually sustained in combat, can wear a character down very quickly. Its effects are measured by the accumulation of Fatigue levels, in a manner similar to asphyxiation since blood is needed to oxygenate the body's muscles and vital organs. Significant blood loss is suffered in the following circumstances:

- ⇒ The Bleed Special Effect (see page 89)
- ⇒ Injury resulting in a Major Wound (see page 40)
- ⇒ Diseases and Poisons that result in Bleeding (see page 66)

Unrestrained blood loss typically results in death unless some form of medical attention or healing magic can be applied to control the bleeding.

Unlike asphyxiation, the effects of serious blood loss on Fatigue are always enduring. A character recovers Fatigue lost to bleeding at a rate of one level per day, starting the day after his exsanguinations cease.

## CHARACTER IMPROVEMENT

Every RENEQUEST character has the opportunity to improve with time. Improvement can be undertaken in several areas:

- ⇒ Increasing existing skills
- ⇒ Increasing characteristics
- ⇒ Learning new skills
- ⇒ Learning new spells



## EXPERIENCE ROLLS

The mechanism for most character improvement is the Experience Roll. Games Masters dispense Experience Rolls at an appropriate juncture in the campaign: at the end of every successful scenario or storyline; or after perhaps two or three sessions of play if the story is a long one which will take time to complete. The frequency is at the Games Master's discretion. A high frequency of Experience Rolls will lead to the characters developing at a faster rate.

There is no right or wrong time to give Experience Rolls, but natural breaks in the story may suggest suitable times. The Games Master is, however, always the decision maker here. Whilst players cannot demand Experience Rolls, they have a right to expect them at certain times – as their characters will not be able to develop without them.

### HOW MANY?

The number of Experience Rolls given in any one sitting should be between two and four, but it can be lower or higher depending on how long it has been since the last set of rolls and how well the characters performed or have been played.

It is recommended that all characters be given the same number of Experience Rolls, which helps maintain fairness and parity in character progression – although even with the same number of rolls characters may progress at different rates, as the mechanics for Experience Rolls illustrate.

The only exception to this guideline is where a character gains an additional roll (or suffers a reduction in rolls) for their Experience Modifier as described on page 64. This modifier should only be permitted in situations where the character can put their influence to good use or suffer its consequences, such as returning home at the conclusion of a scenario. Thus it is not intended that the bonus should be applied at the end of each and every session, especially when the characters are isolated or exploring off in the wilderness.

Experience Rolls do not need to be used there and then. They can be reserved for future use at the player's discretion.

## INCREASING EXISTING SKILLS

Any skill on the character sheet, Standard or Professional, can be increased by spending one Experience Roll.

- ⇒ The player rolls 1d100 and compares it to the skill being increased. The character's INT is added to the roll.
- ⇒ If the number rolled is equal to or greater than the skill being improved it increases by 1d4+1%.
- ⇒ If the number rolled is less than the skill selected, the skill still increases but only by 1%.
- ⇒ If a character fumbled any skill during the course of the preceding session(s) – i.e., between the last set of Experience Rolls and the present one – the fumbled skill gains a free increase of 1%. It is a truism that we learn more from our mistakes than our successes and this represents the reflection a character undergoes following a disastrous failure. Multiple fumbles of the same skill do not stack.

Games Masters can, if they wish, increase the dice step if they want to have skill progression move at a faster rate without giving Experience Rolls on a frequent basis: so, instead of increasing by 1d4+1 skills increase by 1d6+1. If adjusting the default dice roll in this way, Games Masters should set the expectation at the start of the campaign and not veer from it.

## INCREASING CHARACTERISTICS

A creature's rolled characteristics are regarded as its peak natural development, a combination of its birth and environment as it was growing. Thus just as some horses are bigger, stronger and tougher than others, humans and other sapient species can grow up to exhibit fairly diverse physical and mental characteristics.

Characteristics can, like skills, be improved through Experience Rolls, which represent training regimes. However, such increases are



### FREELY IMPROVING SKILLS

*Normally players have full discretion over which skills to improve, no matter their location or circumstances. Sometimes, however, it may be unrealistic for a character to practice Lockpicking when he is currently on a ship and has done nothing but fight sea monsters for the last few game sessions.*

*In such cases it is reasonable for the Games Masters to request that characters only attempt to improve skills which they have recently used, or for which the situation exists to practice them. For example, if the ship-bound character arrives at a civilised port it is quite likely he can find a local thieves' guild or locksmith with whom he can practice.*

*Some caution is required that the Games Master is not too restrictive, as this can lead to a bias in a subset of those skills which are most often used in his campaign, leading to disproportionate character development. Instead, if a character wishes to improve unusual skills, the Games Master should use this to create a roleplaying opportunity or an eventual subplot for his campaign.*



## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*During his ventures Zamothis hears of an ancient temple devoted to Bel, in which an annual challenge is held. The test involves snatching a fist sized emerald called the Heart of Omar, from an alcove guarded by two deadly vipers. Any who succeed are permitted entry into the dark, mysterious cult. Those that fail die an agonising death from the guardian's venom.*

*Zamothis, however, has no intention of joining the Cult of Bel; rather he desires the gem as a means of building a fortune with which he can retire. So he plans to appropriate the stone one night in secret. Since the shrine is reputed to be warded against the presence of weapons, he knows he shall have to use swiftness, not his blade, to gain the jewel.*

*Thus Zamothis dedicates himself to a training regime to improve his reflexes; his player deciding that she'll use all three of Zamothis' regularly assigned Experience Rolls to increase his DEX. She boosts the characteristic by +6 but at the expense of consuming all his free time (preventing any other skill improvements to be made). The*

artificial boosts which naturally atrophy after the training exercises cease, characteristics dropping back to their original levels whether the workouts were daily calisthenics sessions to increase CON or memory tests to enhance INT.

To achieve and maintain characteristic increases requires that a character reduce his regular allotment of Experience Rolls by one or more points. This represents the continual and intensive effort spent to push his body beyond its normal capability.

Each Experience Roll sacrificed in this manner boosts the trained characteristic by one tenth of its rolled species maximum. Thus a human who engaged in regular weightlifting to build up his STR could, at the cost of reducing his normal allotment of Experience Rolls by one, gain +2 points to his Strength. A minotaur on the other hand would gain +3 points to Strength as his species maximum is 24.

When a characteristic increases, all attributes and skills derived from it increase too (if the characteristic increase is enough to create an attribute change). Thus, increasing STR by one point will also increase each skill that uses it as a component by one point too. In addition Damage Modifier may also increase if the

new STR value moves the character into the next Damage Modifier band.

No matter how much training is undertaken, no characteristic can exceed its species maximum – which is simply the highest possible result from the characteristic roll. Once the character decides to cease his exercise regime, his trained characteristic drops by one improvement step the next time he receives Experience Rolls and again the following time, the atrophying continuing until the characteristic has returned to its natural value.

SIZ is the exception to the above rules. It cannot be increased through mundane means.

## LEARNING NEW SKILLS

Some characters may wish to study new Professional skills which they never had the chance to learn from their culture or career. Before they can start investing Experience Rolls they must first find a source of knowledge from which to learn. This could be as prosaic as a professional tutor such those provided by cults or brotherhoods. Alternately it might be a more exotic source of education, an ancient and crumbling training scroll or an ancestor spirit bound to a sacred stone tiki.

### PERMANENT CHARACTERISTIC IMPROVEMENT

Some players may bemoan the significant and continual costs of characteristic improvement. In these cases the Games Master can ignore a certain level of realism and instead focus on fun, allowing permanent characteristic boosts for a one-off Experience Roll cost.

This method must be treated with a degree of caution however, since not all Games Masters reward players with the same frequency or number of Experience Rolls; thus the default costs may be too cheap or expensive. Additionally games where characteristic improvement is too prevalent can quickly lead to many characters with identical attributes, each tweaked to take advantage of natural break points within the system.

The following method utilises the current and minimum characteristic values so that it scales for all creatures. Although it sometimes throws up an oddity between characteristics rolled on different dice, this should be considered a feature of that particular species. Since most creatures are generated using no more than three or four dice, this method remains both simple and comparatively fair.

*Cost to increase a characteristic by one point = 1+creature's current characteristic value, minus the species minimum for that characteristic*

Thus a human with DEX 12 would need to invest 10 Experience Rolls (13 – 3) to raise DEX to 13.



Once a source of education is found, the character must spend an entire month of study and practice to garner a basic grounding in that skill. This costs 3 Experience Rolls plus whatever in-game costs are required to pay the teacher (if one exists) and purchase (or rent) whatever equipment and tools may be needed.

## TRAINING

Skills can be improved without expending Experience Rolls, through help of a mentor; either a trainer or a teacher.

Characters must spend one full week in training to benefit from a training increase. At the end of the training period the skill being trained improves by the die roll indicated on the Training Improvement Table, with any modifiers due to the Teaching skill.

How much a mentor charges for his services depends very much on the nature of the campaign and the setting. They might accept manual labour or favours in return for training, or insist on hard coin. In the case of abstract promises the Games Master must set the terms and the character should meet them, or else face some form of consequence if they are not met.

In terms of hard coin, a week's training costs 1 Silver Piece for every 5% the mentor has in the skill he is training. If he also knows how to teach, this amount increases by 1 silver piece for each 10% he has in the Teach skill. So, a mentor with 70% in Lore (History) could charge 14 SP; or 19 SP if he also had Teach 50%.

## TRAINERS

A trainer is someone who works with the character, helping them to practice a particular skill hoping, through coaching and mentoring, to improve the character's skill. Characters can act as trainers for other characters but it is usual to seek out someone who, through years of specialized study and greater experience, has more benefits and insight to offer.

A trainer must have at least 20% more than the character in the skill being trained,

### TRAINING IMPROVEMENT TABLE

Degree of Difference	Skill Improves By
21-30%	1d2
31-40%	1d3
41-50%	1d4
51-60%	1d6
61-70%	1d6+1
71-80%	1d6+2
81-90%	1d6+3
91-100%	1d6+4
Each 10%	+1

and the degree of improvement rests on the difference:

## TEACHERS

A teacher is a professional trainer who possesses the Teach skill, using it to improve the quality of his tuition. They utilise the same Training Chart above, but modify the amount increased according to the result of a Teach roll:

- ⇒ Critical Success: Skill improvement increases by two Training steps
- ⇒ Success: Skill improvement increases by one Training step
- ⇒ Failure: No effect on improvement
- ⇒ Fumble: Skill improvement decreases by one Training step, which may result in the character gaining no improvement through the training

## LIMITS TO TRAINING

Training comes with some limitations:

- ⇒ Only one skill at a time can be trained.
- ⇒ A trained skill must be next improved using an Experience Roll; it cannot benefit from the training procedure again until it has been increased in this way.
- ⇒ Trainers can only tutor a single student at a time, whereas teachers may educate multiple students at once. As a guide, divide the trainer's Teaching skill by 10 to determine how many students that teacher is prepared to train at one time.

*Games Master also rules that it takes three months of campaign time for Zamothis to achieve this new speed.*

*Penetrating the temple using his Stealth skill (which is also boosted by +6%), Zamothis finds his way to the inner shrine. The huge emerald is there, as are the death-dealing vipers, which awaken and rise up as he approaches. The GM rules that to snatch the jewel, Zamothis must both win Initiative and successfully roll against his Evade skill. With his INT of 16 and DEX now 17 (11+6), he has a Strike Rank Bonus of +17, which added to a roll of 9 makes his Strike Rank 26, which barely beats the snakes SR of 25. He then passes his Evade check (itself boosted by +6%).*

*Lightning quick, Zamothis snatches the gem and rolls clear, then slips out of the temple. Sadly he is cheated by the jewellers of the neighbouring city and forced to flee to Meeros to escape the wrathful priests of Bel. With no money to support himself, Zamothis abandons his training and takes up work as a sell sword again - gradually losing all the points of DEX gained and the temporary skill boosts.*



# DISEASE AND POISON

Some of the most feared things which can affect characters are the myriad diseases and poisons which infest the dark and grim places of the world. There's nothing quite as unsettling than a plague which strikes the character's home city, especially when they are still within its gates. Likewise finding a venomous

serpent in the bed or being attacked by giant scorpions can be moments of high drama.

Diseases and poisons are near infinite in their varieties but, for game purposes, are handled in the same way.

## DISEASE AND POISON TRAITS

All diseases and poisons manifest a number of traits important to their effects.

### DISEASE AND POISON CONDITIONS

Condition	Effects
Agony	Victim is hindered by intense pain. Whether in a location or the entire body, any skill roll involving use of the affected area must also be less or equal to the character's Willpower, otherwise the attempt fails and they moan or scream in pain.
Asphyxiation	Victim suffers asphyxiation – he collapses incapacitated, unable to breathe. The rules for Asphyxiation, found on page 62, are used.
Bleeding	Victim suffers from either internal bleeding or surface haemorrhaging which leads to the effects described in the Blood Loss section on page 62.
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 collapses incapacitated and dies after a number of rounds equal to his CON characteristic.
Dumbness	Victim's vocal chords are paralysed, preventing verbal communication.
Exhaustion	Victim gains an extra level of Fatigue, on top of any they are currently suffering from.
Fever	Victim's body temperature fluctuates wildly – from hot to cold – and muscles ache. All skills suffer a difficulty grade of Hard.
Hallucinations	Victim experiences delusions and cannot differentiate between real and imaginary experiences. His skill and abilities are unaffected but his ability to relate to the real world is seriously impaired. Under its effects the sufferer tends to experience visions related to his strongest Passions and any skeletons kept in the cupboard, often leading to irrational acts.
Maiming	Victim suffers a permanent loss of 1 Hit Point in the location(s) affected, due to necrosis of the injured tissue.
Mania	Victim is driven to follow some compulsion; such as avoiding water, paranoia, self mutilation, 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 Endurance every time he performs a stressful physical action to avoid being physically sick. Vomiting lasts for 1d3 rounds during which he cannot act. Long durations of Nausea may cause starvation.
Paralysis	Victim is unable physically to move. The affected area, if a location, cannot be used for the duration. If it affects the whole body, the character cannot move at all.
Sapping	Victim has their Magic Points (either the Attribute or current number) reduced. Apply the Potency of the disease or poison on the Damage Modifier table (page 8) to calculate the dice roll used. Lost Magic Points do not recover until the duration ends.
Unconscious	Victim loses consciousness for a period specified in the description. When consciousness is regained the victim suffers a level of Fatigue.





*Application:* The method of how the disease or poison is introduced into the victim.

- ⇒ Ingestion - Effects take place through either eating or drinking.
- ⇒ Inhaled – Effects take place through breathing or snorting.
- ⇒ Contact – Effects take place through absorption through the skin.
- ⇒ Injected – Effects take place when the substance is injected into the body through piercing.

*Potency:* The virulence of the disease or poison. This value is set against an appropriate resisting skill (usually Endurance or Willpower) in an opposed roll. If character wins the roll they shrug off its effects. If however they lose the roll, then they suffer all of the disease or poison Conditions, each at the appropriate time.

*Resistance:* How the disease or poison is resisted – either Endurance or Willpower, but may have more exotic resistance requirements. Resistance can be rolled at the time of exposure, or deferred until the Onset Time

to conceal the fact the character might have been infected or poisoned.

*Onset Time:* Many diseases and poisons do not take immediate effect. The delay is called the Onset Time and this can be a matter of seconds, minutes, hours, or even longer. Poisons or diseases possessing multiple effects may have different onset times for each one as described under Conditions.

*Duration:* How long a disease or poison's Conditions last.

*Conditions:* Every toxin has one or more Conditions. These have specific effects as described in the Conditions table, below, and if a victim fails to resist he suffers all the Conditions described.

*Antidote/Cure:* If the toxin can be treated it will be noted here. Otherwise all non-magical diseases and poisons can be alleviated by specific healing magic, such as the Cure Malady spell. Successful treatment prevents any further conditions from occurring, yet in some circumstances may leave the victim suffering enduring effects that have already been inflicted.

## SAMPLE DISEASES & POISONS

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

### PYROHOXIA

A rather strange disease, pyrohoxia is carried by feral animals such as rodents and transferred by a successful bite. The infection gradually spreads to the brain, where it begins to twist the perceptions and aggression of the victim. No obvious signs exist of pyrohoxia infection, although the behaviour of the creature which bit them may offer clues. Within several weeks of the bite the victim starts to suffer increasingly painful headaches and the eyes turn blood-shot. At this point the hallucinations begin, strengthening over the course of a week into violent waking nightmares.

The victim then passes into the terminal stage of the disease, which induces constant shivering accompanied with a mania to get warm by whatever means possible. Eventually this climaxes with a suicidal desire to jump into fires, lava or even set themselves alight; usually resulting in a paroxysm of violent destruction as they burn to death. Even if restrained from self-immolation, the victim dies from brain swelling.

*Application:* Injected

*Potency:* 80

*Resistance:* Endurance

*Onset time:* 1d6+6 days

*Duration:* 1 week + 1d3 days

*Conditions:* Disease manifests with the start of Hallucinations. After one week they also start to suffer from Mania (Fire). If the victim somehow survives to the conclusion of the disease, they then suffer Death.

*Antidote/Cure:* Can be cured by the Healing skill up until the onset of Mania, at which point the disease must be treated magically.



**SOUL LEECH**

Dreaded by priests, shamans and sorcerers alike, soul leech drains their magical vitality, rendering them powerless. Although the disease starts with an innocuous enough cough the only extraneous sign of this weakening is that the victim's veins begin to glow a faint purple when examined in pitch darkness, a by-product of the disease consuming their Magic Points. Magicians suffering this malady often try to bluff through their lack of power hoping that the disease will end before a rival can take advantage.

*Application: Inhaled*

*Potency: 65*

*Resistance: Endurance*

*Onset time: 1d6 days*

*Duration: 1d3+3 weeks*

*Conditions: Sapping. Each week the victim reduces his Magic Points attribute by 1d6 points. Since these do not recover until the disease ends, a magician can eventually be reduced to a level of utter powerlessness. After the disease concludes, the Magic Points attribute recovers at a rate of 1 point per day.*

*Antidote/Cure: Can be cured by the Healing skill if rare, mystical ingredients (the precise nature of which depends on the setting) are used.*

**COBRA VENOM**

Perhaps the quintessential venomous snake, a cobra's venom has several effects depending on its application. If injected via bite, the venom will inflict a burning pain shortly followed by respiratory difficulty which can lead to death. Even surviving a cobra bite comes at a horrible cost, the bitten area suffering permanent necrotic damage. If the venom is spat at the eyes instead of respiratory paralysis the venom can often inflict permanent blindness.

*Application: Contact (eyes) or Injected*

*Potency: 75*

*Resistance: Endurance*

*Onset time: Instant if spat in eyes, 1d6+4 minutes if bitten*

*Duration: 1d3+3 days*

*Conditions: If spat into the eyes both Agony and Blindness are instant, lasting the entire duration. Bitten victims also begin with Agony but can struggle along until 1d6+6 hours after the bite when Asphyxiation strikes, usually resulting in death, unless First Aid is successfully applied to keep the victim breathing. Survivors will then suffer Necrosis, losing 1 Hit Point per day from the location bitten, until the venom is somehow purged or it naturally ends.*

*Antidote/Cure: Can be ameliorated with the Healing skill. However each day of Necrosis suffered before successful treatment inflicts permanent damage.*

**LOTUS DUST**

Lotus dust is the natural pollen produced by the blossom of the rare and deadly ebony lotus flower, which grows in the depths of remote jungles. It takes the form of a fine yellowish powder with a sweet, cloying scent; although to smell it is death since the pollen in its natural state is lethal when inhaled or tasted, causing the heart of the victim to burst. Whether from fear or ecstasy is unknown, for few beings ever survive long enough to tell.

Despite its dangers many sorcerers breathe the fumes of burning lotus dust, which instead of bringing near instant death, infuses the mind of the imbiber with fantastical visions of other worlds. It is said that they learn dark secrets from the euphoric dreams, though few have the strength of will to extract themselves from such visions.

*Application: Inhaled*

*Potency: 90*

*Resistance: Willpower*

*Onset time: 1d3 rounds*

*Duration: Instantaneous in its natural state, 2d6 hours if smoked*

*Conditions: Death if natural pollen. Paralysis and Hallucinations if smoked. At the end of a narcotic dream, the smoker must make another resistance roll otherwise subside into an endless coma, still trapped within his lucid visions.*

*Antidote/Cure: Can be treated by an infusion of the rare Golden Lotus which brings complete recovery.*



## ENCUMBRANCE

Encumbrance represents both the mass and bulk of an item. The greater the encumbrance value the more difficult it is to carry it.

Correlating ENC with SIZ can be a challenge: light but bulky items often impose just as much of a burden as small but heavy ones. As a rule of thumb 3 ENC is equivalent to 1 SIZ, but, depending on the item, Games Masters may want to adjust the ratio down to 2:1 or even 1:1. A head-sized lump of lead, for instance, is far heavier than a similar sized lump of rock. Conversely a large sack loosely filled with goose-down might have a ratio of 5:1. As always, common sense should prevail in such circumstances.

Items that have a zero ENC value are, on their own, inconsequential; however consider that 20 zero ENC items equal 1 ENC.

## ENCUMBRANCE CAPACITY

Characters can carry a total ENC equal to their STR x2 with relative ease. Everyday clothing does not contribute to this capacity, but armour does – see the notes on Armour ENC below.

If the total ENC borne exceeds STR x2 then the character is considered to be Burdened. This has the following effects:

- ⇒ Skills using STR or DEX as part of their base (including combat skills) become one grade harder
- ⇒ Base Movement Rate drops by 2 metres and the character can no longer sprint
- ⇒ Carrying the load counts as Medium activity for Fatigue purposes

If the borne ENC exceeds STR x3 then the character is considered to be Overloaded. The effects are thus:

- ⇒ Skills using STR or DEX as part of their base (including combat skills) become two grades harder
- ⇒ Base Movement Rate drops to half normal and the character cannot move faster than a walk
- ⇒ Carrying the load counts as Strenuous activity for Fatigue purposes

Characters cannot carry a total ENC more than their STR x4, either the mass or unwieldy bulk of the objects proving to be too much to bear for more than a short distance.

## ARMOUR ENC

When considering its encumbering nature, armour has a number of different effects: it not only hinders Strike Rank (see Armour Penalty) and slows gaits faster than a walk (see Moving in Armour page 61), but also burdens its bearer with its bulky weight.

The amount armour counts towards Encumbrance Capacity depends on whether it is worn or carried.

- ⇒ When worn, only half the total ENC of the armour is counted towards Encumbrance
- ⇒ When carried, the full ENC value of the armour is counted towards Encumbrance

## NON HUMAN ENCUMBRANCE

Whilst the encumbrance rules work fine for human scaled characters, they can begin to break down for creatures of larger or smaller dimensions. The best way to avoid scaling issues is to assume that arms and equipment for each species scale in proportion with their user's size. Thus a great axe used by a minotaur would be slightly larger than one used by a (human) royal guard, as would its armour.

To calculate the encumbrance of proportionally sized equipment, add together all the ENC values of everything carried by the creature, then multiply the final result by the ratio of the *average* SIZ of a member of that race divided by the *average* SIZ of a human, which is of course 13.

*Final Encumbrance = Total ENC x (Average SIZ of species/13)*

Although this sum may require a few seconds to work out, it simplifies the entire process to a single calculation and avoids time consuming book keeping.



## FALLING

The amount of damage suffered in a fall depends on the distance of the drop. Armour points do not reduce falling damage.

FALLING DISTANCE TABLE

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.
11m to 15m	3d6 points of damage to three random locations.
16m to 20m	4d6 points of damage to four random locations.
Each +5m	+1d6 damage.

- ⇒ Creatures of smaller size suffer less from a fall. Those of SIZ 8 to 9 treat 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 ten metres less.
- ⇒ Creatures of larger size suffer more from a fall, adding their Damage Modifier to the falling damage.
- ⇒ Acrobatics can be used to mitigate falling damage – a successful roll allows the character to treat the fall as if it were two metres shorter than it actually is. In addition, as long as the roll is successful and the character does not suffer a Serious or Major wound due to the fall, the character lands relatively safely and is not prone.
- ⇒ Characters falling onto soft surfaces may treat the distance they fall as halved for the purposes of damage. This is always at the Games Master's discretion.
- ⇒ Characters falling onto damaging surfaces (such as a pit of spikes) will suffer the effects of the surface to all locations that are damaged in the fall.

## FALLING OBJECTS

A falling inanimate 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 - including any reductions for objects of smaller size.

## FALLING FROM A MOVING VEHICLE

Damage sustained from a fall from a moving vehicle, such as a chariot, depends on the vehicle's speed and the distance fallen. Assume that the speed, in metres per Combat Round, is equal to half the height shown on the Falling Distance table. A chariot moving at 20m per Combat Round would inflict 2d6 damage to two random locations if a character should fall from it.

## FATIGUE

Fatigue measures tiredness and its incremental effects. It is an important aspect in RUNEQUEST as it is used to track many different things from strenuous activity to the debilitating effects of disease or magic.

## PHYSICAL EFFORT

The primary way of accruing Fatigue is by engaging in some form of physical activity. The more arduous the exercise or work, the more quickly it tires the character. There are three classes of effort: Light, Medium and Strenuous. The length of time a character can engage in an activity without becoming fatigued is determined by his CON, as detailed under each category. Once this time has elapsed characters must make an appropriate skill roll – either Athletics, Brawn or Endurance – to resist gaining a level of Fatigue.

Unless the recipient of some form of magic that naturally extends wakefulness, all characters need sleep. A character can remain awake for a number of hours equal to twice CON before needing to make an Endurance roll. If successful, the character can continue



to function normally for a number of hours equal to half CON before needing to make a further Endurance roll, although this roll will be one grade harder than the last. Each failed roll accrues one level of fatigue.

## EFFECTS OF FATIGUE

Every failed roll accrues a level of Fatigue. Each level of Fatigue carries penalties for skill use, movement, Strike Rank and Action Points. Asphyxiation, Blood Loss and some types of magic also contribute to Fatigue accrual.

For most characters, activities of any kind become near impossible when the level of Incapacitated is reached. At this stage the character is still conscious but incapable of anything but the most desperate of activities.

Beyond Incapacitated, characters cannot act at all. The Fatigue levels – Semi-Conscious, Comatose and Dead – are generally reserved for measuring the most extreme effects of suffocation, disease, blood loss, starvation, exposure and so forth.

It is perfectly possible to accrue Fatigue from several sources, potentially making some situations more dangerous.

*An assassin of Katar chases Zamothis through the lush jungles of the far south. Over the course of many hours her Fatigue level drops several levels, but driven on by fanatical duty she continues to pursue the fleeing mercenary. When she stumbles into a pool of quicksand Zamothis cunningly leads her into,*

*she fails her Brawn roll and is drawn under the surface. Fatigue accrual from drowning starts from her current level of Wearied and she swiftly dies, lacking the energy to escape.*

## RECOVERING FROM FATIGUE

Characters recover from Fatigue depending on their Healing Rate. The amount of complete rest needed to recover from each level of accrued Fatigue is equal to the Recovery Period divided by the character's Healing Rate.

Note that the table represents fatigue recovery for physical exertion. Fatigue recovery can be much faster when recovering from asphyxiation or slower if recuperating from blood loss.

## MANAGING FATIGUE

Tracking Fatigue and its effects makes for additional book-keeping. To simplify things, Games Masters can decide that only certain types of activity contribute towards Fatigue. But common sense should apply. A character dressed in full plate armour, in a tropical jungle, on a hot summer's day, could not spend three hours hacking his way through the foliage without suffering fatigue in some way. Similarly carrying heavy loads, trekking uphill, foot chases, long swims or digging out an ancient necropolis are all going to take their toll on a character, potentially tiring him at a crucial moment.

### FATIGUE LEVELS

	Skill Grade	Movement	Strike Rank	Action Points	Recovery Period
<b>Fresh</b>			No Penalties		
<b>Winded</b>	Hard	No Penalty	No Penalty	No Penalty	15 minutes
<b>Tired</b>	Hard	-1 metre	No Penalty	No Penalty	3 hours
<b>Wearied</b>	Formidable	-2 metres	-2	No Penalty	6 hours
<b>Exhausted</b>	Formidable	Halved	-4	-1	12 hours
<b>Debilitated</b>	Herculean	Halved	-6	-2	18 hours
<b>Incapacitated</b>	Herculean	Immobile	-8	-3	24 hours
<b>Semi-Conscious</b>	Hopeless	No Activities Possible	No Activities Possible	No Activities Possible	36 hours
<b>Comatose</b>	No Activities Possible	No Activities Possible	No Activities Possible	No Activities Possible	48 hours
<b>Dead</b>	Dead				Never



PHYSICAL EFFORT TABLE

	How Long?	Example	Skill Roll
Light	CON in hours	Activity that places no strain on the body. All reasonable activities at a steady pace.	Very Easy grade roll vs either Athletics, Brawn or Endurance according to the task (Athletics for exercise; Brawn for heavy lifting; Endurance for general activities).
Medium	CON in minutes	Manual labour; sustained physical exercise.	As above, but at Easy grade.
Strenuous	CON in seconds (rounded up to the next Combat Round)	Combat; struggling against the elements; physical activity in extremely adverse circumstances.	Standard grade roll vs either Athletics, Brawn or Endurance according to the task (Athletics for exercise; Brawn for heavy lifting; Endurance for Combat).

## FIRES

Fires are always a source of danger when used as a weapon or rage out of control. They damage both people and objects; how much is dependent on the intensity of the source. The Fire table below gives five different intensities for heat damage, with some examples.

The damage inflicted per round is given in the Damage column. Being relatively small, Intensity 1 and 2 sources apply their damage to a single Hit Location, usually that touching the source. Intensity 3 and 4 sources are larger, applying damage to nearest 1d4+1 Hit Locations, indicating the degree of radiant heat. Intensity 5 sources affect all Hit Locations simultaneously.

Fire clearly has the ability to ignite flammable materials. If not extinguished immediately such materials combust within a number of rounds as indicated by the fire's Intensity. Once ignited, flammable materials burn until physically extinguished. Damage is applied directly to the Hit Points of the material, ignoring Armour Points, and to any flesh beneath. If left uncontrolled it spreads to a number of Hit Locations, per round, equal to its Intensity.

FIRE TABLE

Intensity	Examples	Time to	
		Ignite	Damage
1	Candle	1d4	1d2
2	Torch	1d3	1d4
3	Campfire	1d2	1d6
4	Room filling conflagration	1d2	2d6
5	Volcanic lava	Instant	3d6

## HEALING

Natural healing from wounds and injuries is based on the character's Healing Rate. The Healing Rate dictates how many Hit Points are recovered in a location depending on the injury's nature:

- ⇒ Minor Wounds: Days
- ⇒ Serious Wounds: Weeks
- ⇒ Major Wounds: Months

Thus a character with a Healing Rate of 3 who suffers damage taking him to a Serious Wound, will heal naturally at a rate of 3 Hit Points per week until his wound goes above zero, and then heal 3 Hit Points per day until fully recovered.





There are certain restrictions on natural healing:

- ⇒ The healing character cannot engage in strenuous activity: otherwise the Healing Rate is reduced by 1d3. Thus, a character recovering from even a Minor Wound could find his progress halted if he decides to engage any physical tasks that might exacerbate his injuries.
- ⇒ Natural healing will not begin to heal a Major Wound until that location has been treated with a successful Healing roll (see page 39). Non-dismembering Major Wounds which are not treated within a number of days equal to one twentieth of the Healing skill become maimed, permanently reducing the Hit Points of the location.

Games Masters should take into account these lengthy healing times when Pacing Combat Encounters. Too many or too hard and characters will soon die. Similarly, players must accept responsibility to restrict their character's activities according to any lingering wounds or injuries they might be suffering from.

## MAGICAL HEALING

Some magic can heal the wounds suffered by a victim. Yet there are specific restrictions as to what level of wound can be treated by each spell. For example the Common Magic spell Heal cures only Minor Wounds.

No matter how petty the healing spell or miracle, its application is always enough to stabilise any type of wound, preventing bleeding and immediate death even if it doesn't actually cure the underlying injury. Note that this only applies to gross physical trauma, not to conditions brought about by suffocation, poison and the like.

## PERMANENT INJURIES

Some Major Wounds and certain poisons or diseases inflict maiming injuries; for example horribly crushed and severed limbs, or the necrotic effects of venoms. The result of this damage permanently reduces the Hit Points on that location, forever weakening it. A location maimed in this way uses the diminished Hit Point value to calculate its new Serious and Major Wound thresholds.

For permanent injuries caused by accident or battle injury, roll 1d3 and consult the following table to see the extent of the maiming:

In those cases where the maiming involved the loss of a limb, reduce the d20 numbers for that Hit Location by an appropriate amount. For example the Right Arm of a humanoid is normally struck on a roll of 13-15 on a d20. If however the arm was severed at the elbow then locations 13-14 no longer exist and being struck there means the attack actually misses! Characters vindictive enough to target such a maimed limb using Choose Location must roll a 1d3 to see if they actually hit the remaining parts.

PERMANENT INJURY TABLE

1d3	Hit Point Reduction	Maiming Result
1	Character permanently loses one third of the Hit Points in that location	If a limb, this represents the maiming of a hand or foot. If the head, the character loses one of his sensory organs, eye, ear, nose or tongue. Anywhere else it denotes a disfiguring scar.
2	Character permanently loses two thirds of the Hit Points in that location	A limb is maimed from the elbow or knee down. The head loses two sensory organs. Torso exhibits a gruesomely horrible scar.
3	Location is reduced to a single Hit Point	Limbs are maimed from the shoulder or hip down. The head either loses three sensory organs, half the face or the entire jaw. Chest or abdomen shows such a horrific scar or deformation nobody seeing the healed wound can comprehend how the victim survived.



## INANIMATE OBJECTS

All inanimate objects possess Armour Points and Hit Points which are used to determine resistance to damage and destruction. Armour Points reduce damage before Hit Points are affected. Once an object's Hit Points have been reduced to zero, it is useless.

Usually inanimate objects offer no resistance to damage, save for their Armour Points. However in the case of items that can restrict or offer a significant resistance to breakage attempts (such as a barred door, or ropes used to restrain hands and feet), the character must succeed with either a Brawn, Unarmed or Combat Style attack roll, as appropriate, to inflict damage.

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. Refer to the description of the Brawn skill to determine what damage it inflicts.

The Inanimate Objects table gives some example objects, along with their Armour Points and Hit Points. Use these as a guideline for assigning values for other objects as the Games Master requires.

## USING WEAPONS AGAINST INANIMATE OBJECTS

Using a weapon against an inanimate object with Armour Points equal to or greater than those of the weapon deals damage to both the object and the weapon. For instance, using an axe on an anvil may damage the anvil, but the axe itself will be destroyed long before the anvil is.

The Games Master should exercise discretion on which weapons or tools can affect which objects. A chisel, for example, is explicitly designed to carve wood or stone whilst a sword, although sharp, is not. The chisel would therefore not take damage from something it is attempting to carve whereas a sword most likely would.

### INANIMATE OBJECTS ARMOUR AND HIT POINTS

Object	Armour Points	Hit Points
Boulder	10	40
Castle gate	8	120
Castle wall (section)	10	250
Chain/shackle	8	8
Club	4	4
Dagger	6	4
Hut wall (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 (section)	4	5

## LUCK POINTS

Luck Points help differentiate heroes from the rank and file. They represent a character's ability to potentially turn failure into success and even cheat death,

Every character starts with a number of Luck Points as described in the Attributes section of the Basic Character Creation chapter. Luck Points can be used during play and, at the beginning of the next session, replenish to their usual value.

*For example, Emma and her friends meet every Friday for their weekly RUNEQUEST game. One Friday night Emma, playing Anathaym, is given cause to use all her character's Luck Points for a variety of reasons. Out of Luck Points, Anathaym manages to survive with no catastrophic consequences till the end of the game session. However, when the players reconvene on the following Friday, Anathaym's Luck Points will have replenished back to their normal value.*

Luck Points only increase if the POW characteristic increases, or some form of magic provides a temporary increase in some fashion.



## USING LUCK POINTS

Luck points can be used in a variety of ways. Only one Luck Point can be used in support of a particular action. Each of the following options costs a single Luck Point.

### CHEAT FATE

Characters can use a Luck Point to re-roll any dice roll that affects them. This can be a skill roll, damage roll or anything else that has some effect. Characters can even force an opponent to re-roll an attack or damage roll made against them.

### DESPERATE EFFORT

If a character has exhausted his Action Points during a fight and needs to find that last burst of desperate energy to perhaps avoid a messy demise, he may spend a Luck Point to gain an additional Action Point.

### MITIGATE DAMAGE

A character who suffers a Major Injury may spend a Luck Point to downgrade the wound to a Serious Injury. This reduces the damage taken to one Hit Point less than what would be required to inflict a Major Wound.

## TRAPS

Traps are ubiquitous devices used by every culture from the digging of pitfalls to capture animals to death-traps guarding tombs for all eternity. These devices are built for a range of purposes, each specifically tailored to raising an alarm, capturing interlopers, or maiming and killing thieves outright.

Constructing traps requires that the builder knows either the Mechanisms or Engineering skill. Small traps such as bear traps or trapped locks require Mechanisms, whereas large scale constructions like spiked pits or rolling boulders need Engineering.

Beyond hiring the constructing craftsman, traps often have very expensive component or manual labour costs. As a general guideline alarms cost the skill of the creator in copper pieces, ensnaring traps the same in silver, and death-traps require payment in gold.

All traps have a Difficulty rating which represents how difficult it is to perceive, disarm

or avoid. This value is treated as its skill when resisted in an opposed roll.

Despite the many entertaining tales told by storytellers, traps – especially those intended to kill – rarely have a method of cleverly avoiding or reversing their effects once set in motion. Without magic or good fortune, those caught in a death-trap usually succumb to its highly efficient purpose. In short, they are not intended to be survivable. Unless the trap has some cunning design or is some sort of enduring magical enchantment, once it has been sprung it must be manually reset.

## TRAP TRAITS

Traps are described using the following traits.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the trap.

- ⇒ Alarm – Trap sends a silent or audible signal that it has been triggered.
- ⇒ Ensnaring – Trap is designed to capture anyone who triggers or enters it.
- ⇒ Maiming – Trap is intended to critically injure whoever triggers it.
- ⇒ Death – Trap is intended to kill those who activate its lethal devices.

### TRIGGER

The way the trap is set off.

### DIFFICULTY

The challenge rating of the trap, which is equal to the value of the Mechanisms or Engineering skill which created it. For instance a scything blade trap built into the base of a treasure chest by a craftsman with Mechanisms 70% grants the trap a Difficulty of 70%. The trap would thereafter use this value in opposed rolls to see if the blade can be spotted, evaded or disarmed.

### RESISTANCE

How the trap is resisted – typically using Brawn, Evade or parrying with a Combat Style which uses a shield. Resistance is rolled when the trap is triggered.

### EFFECT

What happens when the trap is sprung and the victim(s) fail to resist. Usually this results



in the alerting of antagonists if an alarm or the capture of victims if designed to ensnare. Maiming and death-traps obviously injure the victim, although some death-traps utilise other means than direct damage to inflict harm, such as drowning or poison. To restrict overly deadly traps, the damage inflicted by these devices is limited by the skill of its creator. Force is noted for those traps which fire projectiles which can be parried.

**DEATH TRAP DAMAGE LIMITS**

Maker's Skill	Damage	Size/Force
1-10%	1d2	Small
11-20%	1d4	Small
21-30%	1d6	Medium
31-40%	1d8	Medium
41-50%	1d10	Large
51-60%	2d6	Large
61-70%	1d8+1d6	Huge
71-80%	2d8	Huge
81-90%	1d10+1d8	Enormous
91-100%	2d10	Enormous
Each additional 10%	Continue Damage Progression	Continue Force Progression

**SAMPLE TRAPS**

These are example traps which Games Masters can use as templates to create their own devious devices.

**PITFALL**

A pitfall is an archetypal trap used by every culture. It can take the form a simple dug pit, covered by branches and leaves or reach the sophistication of stone walled sumps beneath hinged false floors which are counterbalanced to swing back up into place after a victim drops in.

Pitfalls need not be particularly deep. If designed for capture, a simple amphora or lobster pot shape will prevent escape by climbing, as will walls which are chiselled smooth or made from crumbling material which gives way under a character's weight.

Pits which are instead intended to kill usually line the floor with dozens of stakes, closely packed so that a falling character will inevitably become impaled. Other options could include filling the bottom with a weak acid, water deep enough to drown in, or starving rats.

*Purpose: Ensnaring or Death*

*Trigger: Walking across the false surface covering the pit*

*Difficulty: 60%*

*Resistance: Either Evade to jump clear or a Hard Athletics roll to catch the edge as they drop.*

*Effect: The drop into the pit inflicts 2d6 damage to a random Hit Location, armour does not protect. Secondary effects are left to the Games Master's imagination.*

**SPEAR TRAP**

Spear traps are complex devices which require hidden niches or a separate chamber in which their mechanical launchers must be set. Their primary mode of operating is to drive a spear through a wall or floor, powered by a counterweighted lever or compressed spring.

The manner of their placement can be quite inventive. Instead of the traditional spear hidden behind plaster or bas-reliefs, some versions have the spear in plain sight, held in the raised hand of an innocuous looking statue for instance, whose arm might pivot down to stab a victim from above.

*Purpose: Maiming*

*Trigger: Stepping on a pressure plate or moving an object*

*Difficulty: 75%*

*Resistance: Either Evade to dive aside or a Hard parry roll if wielding a shield.*

*Effect: The spear inflicts 2d8 damage to a random Hit Location, but can be (partially) parried by a shield if its size is sufficient to counteract the spear's size of Huge. If the trap gains one or more levels of success over the victim it can apply Special Effects, such as Impale.*

## CHAPTER 7: COMBAT



**C**ombat is an important feature of RENEQUEST. Violent confrontation has ever been a way of settling problems, from vengeance driven fights between nemeses, to the clash of armies in times of war. Combat need not be a savage battle to the death. Some combat encounters can be swashbuckling duels which end without injury, or perhaps light-hearted bar room brawls.

There are a number of central concepts which are an inherent part of RENEQUEST combat:

- ⇒ Combat can be a very deadly business: Even the greatest hero can be hacked down if seriously outnumbered, receive grievous wounds if abjuring armour, or suffer 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' if luck turns her back.
- ⇒ Combat need not end in death: Although commonplace in some genres, battles do not have to conclude with the demise of opponents. It is as easy to end a fight with the submission or capture of a foe without necessarily killing them.

- ⇒ Combat is both abstract and tactical: Though not specifically designed for tabletop miniatures, tactical manoeuvres and special techniques are a vital part of surviving and how to gain the upper hand over opponents.
- ⇒ Combat is exciting: Since combat is inherently dangerous, a well orchestrated duel or melee will exhilarate players; the advantage swinging to and fro with innovative use of tactical choices and techniques.

RENEQUEST combat can be either gritty or cinematic: The rules allow for the emulation of any genre, from the grim realism as recounted from Viking Sagas to the highly visceral encounters in works of fantasy – such as written by Howard, Leiber or Gemmell – and mythological epics like the Iliad or Mahabharata. Whatever the setting, RENEQUEST is designed to handle all such confrontations.

Whatever the intent of participants, their armaments or the situation they find themselves in, all forms of physical combat are handled using these rules in this chapter.





## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*As part of his cultural upbringing and experience as a trapper, Zamothis learned the Wolf Hunter Style; combining use of the long-spear in close combat with the ranged weapons of bow and sling. During the long winters of his youth he sat upon frozen hillsides slinging stones at wolves and eagles, whilst sometimes driving off mountain cats with his two handed spear.*

*When he enlisted with a warrior company in more civilised lands, his Wolf Hunter Style was considered insufficient for a professional soldier. Thus Zamothis was trained in the Bronze Mercenary Style, which taught him how to wield axe, shortsword, hoplite shield and great axe - not only as single weapons, but in combination with one another.*

*Using this style Zamothis is capable of fighting with just an axe or shortsword, or both together. Likewise he can use axe and shield together, or shortsword and shield. He can even use the shield by itself. Of course the great axe cannot be used in combination with another weapon since it uses both hands to wield.*

# COMPONENTS OF COMBAT

RUNEQUEST uses a number of terms and concepts to explain the core elements of Combat. These are explained in the following sections, but in overview, these are:

## COMBAT STYLES

The skill of wielding a group of weapons learned as part of a culture or profession.

## COMBAT ROUNDS

Book keeping time segments of five seconds each.

## COMBAT ACTIONS

Possible acts a character can perform during a round by the expenditure of an Action Point.

## WEAPON SIZE AND REACH

How difficult it is to parry a particular weapon and the distance it can engage at.

## ENGAGEMENT

Combatants can hit or be hit by a direct opponent, depending on circumstances.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

Special combat manoeuvres which can be performed if one combatant gains the upper hand.

# COMBAT STYLES

Fighting skills are purchased as styles. Each style is a 'package' of multiple weapons, related by culture, career or even schools of combat, which avoids the necessity of learning each individual weapon separately. Deciding how many weapons should be included into a single style is ultimately a choice determined by the Games Master. However, some guidance is provided here to help tailor Combat Styles to match a particular campaign theme.

The most important aspect of Combat Styles is that the character learns how to use each weapon in the style, both singly and in combination so that they might be interchanged as necessary. Combat training does

not focus merely on using a specific weapon or weapons under best conditions, but also covers what to do when placed at a severe disadvantage. Such cross-training is a primary part of preparing a combatant for the unpredictable events of the battlefield, where weapon breakage or becoming disarmed is always a potential possibility.

Almost all characters begin with the chance to learn a cultural combat style. This is supposed to reflect a basic education in those weapons available for a member of that society and social rank, reflecting the training given for community (or perhaps personal) defence. Thus a barbarian karl may be expected to know how to use a spear, hand axe and bow – the fundamental weapons and tools of a commoner; whereas a thane from the same community, growing up with access to better weapons, may be trained in swords, spears and shields instead.

Some careers such as hunter or warrior offer the option to learn further styles. These should reflect more unusual weapons, or weapons normally restricted from someone not of their profession. So continuing the previous example, if the karl decided to become a mercenary he might learn a new style, diversifying his competence to include glaives, great axes and thrown axes.

Games Masters should avoid, if possible, replicating the same weapon within additional Combat Styles. If unavoidable, common sense should be applied, such as limiting the character to use the relevant Combat Style skill if the weapon is used in combination with a second weapon available only to that specific style, or permitting them to use the style with the highest value when wielding that particular weapon singly. Duplication of weapons simply reflects superfluous, repetitive training.

Choosing how many weapons should be part of a Combat Style depends ultimately on how important combat will be within a campaign. Some suggestions are:

- ⇒ Combat Styles are very exclusive: Each style pertains to one particular two-handed weapon or a specific paired

weapon combination. Best used for combat heavy campaigns such as a game focused on gladiators, where each gladiatorial type has its own precise weapon combination (net and trident for example). Exclusive styles necessitate a greater investment of skill points during character generation and subsequent investment of Experience Rolls to achieve diversification, which may slow down the development rate of combative characters.

- ⇒ Combat Styles are cult or school specific: Each style specialises in a few weapons of noted significance to a particular cult or school of combat. An evil brotherhood of assassins may, for example, train in unusual signature weapons like blowpipes and garrottes. Schools of combat might reflect the battlefield armaments of a mercenary company, or an ascetic martial arts school. The suggested number of weapons should range from two to three per style.
- ⇒ Combat Styles are career specific: Each style is limited to the core weapons used by a professional combatant of that career, for example a legionary soldier should demonstrate competence in shortsword, dagger, scutum and javelin. The number and type of weapons should roughly match those of a similar historical context, between three or four per style.
- ⇒ Combat Styles are weapon class based: Each style incorporates every weapon of a particular design or damage type. An example may be 'All Swords', incorporating everything from shortswords to great swords; or 'Bludgeoning Weapons' covering clubs, hammers, maces and anything else which relies on bashing to inflict damage. As can be surmised, these categories can potentially include dozens of weapons.
- ⇒ Combat Styles are all-encompassing: These styles are inclusive of any and all melee weapons, ranged weapons or both. This option is only recommended for campaigns where combat is

infrequent, secondary to other forms of interaction.

It should be obvious that not all Combat Styles will be equal, or necessarily need to balance with one another. Such considerations are intended to be based on culture, social class and career – not be limited by game mechanics.

## WEAPON CHOICES

When deciding on which particular weapons are included within a Combat Style the following should be considered:

- ⇒ Two handed weapons generally have an advantage in both terms of weapon reach (see page 85) and how much damage they inflict, but leave the wielder vulnerable if the weapon is lost.
- ⇒ Shields are the best defensive weapons, able to block fairly large weapons in addition to protecting against ranged attacks - which other weapons cannot normally parry.
- ⇒ Using two offensive weapons simultaneously offers the wielder a greater range of engagement distances and grants some security if one weapon is broken, dropped or disarmed during combat. Secondary off-hand weapons must be at least one size category smaller than the main weapon, unless both are small.
- ⇒ Ranged weapons grant the ability to strike from beyond the immediate reach of an enemy, typically at the cost of a lower rate of attack unless using anachronistic firearms or sorcerous devices. A Combat Style could potentially include unusual weapons such as siege engines.
- ⇒ Unarmed combat styles allow the user the opportunity to fight and defend themselves without the need of weapons. They are also useful in situations where an opponent has closed inside the reach of a wielded weapon. 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.



## SAMPLE COMBAT STYLES

*The following are example Combat Styles based upon specific careers or cultures, to help act as inspiration for developing your own Combat Styles.*

*City-state Infantry  
(Spear, Hoplite  
Shield, Javelin)*

*Skirmishing Slinger  
(Sling, Shortsword,  
Peltast Shield)*

*Centaur Warrior (Spear,  
Shield, Shortbow)*

*Lizardman Savage  
(Axe, ShortSpear,  
Target Shield)*

*Minotaur Warrior  
(Great Axe, Longspear  
used one handed,  
Hoplite Shield, Gore)*

*Striped Death - Tiger  
(Teeth and Claws)*

*Crushing Doom - Giant  
Snake (Constrict,  
Bite and Writhe)*



## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*Zamothis is trained in two separate Combat Styles, Wolf Hunter and Bronze Mercenary. After considering the options available, the Games Master decides to grant the Wolf Hunter style the Daredevil trait and the Bronze Mercenary style the Shield Wall trait. Thus his cultural and career styles now look like this:*

*Wolf Hunter:  
(Daredevil) long-spear, bow and sling*

*Bronze Mercenary:  
(Shield Wall) axe, shortsword, hoplite shield and great axe*

*Note that Zamothis is limited to using Daredevil whilst wielding his long spear or ranged weapons, and Shield Wall whilst using the hoplite shield.*

*During years of training in combat, he only ever practiced rolling aside and coming back to his feet when unencumbered with a large shield. Similarly he learned the tactics of fighting shoulder-to-shoulder only whilst using shorter weapons and a large hoplite shield: Zamothis wouldn't feel comfortable trying to fight in a shield wall with a long weapon or smaller shield.*

## COMBAT STYLE BENEFITS

Combat styles possess another function beyond simply learning a group of weapon skills. Since each style is taught by a particular culture or career, they are inherently optimised for the environment or military tactics that group normally fights with; for instance a horse nomad learns to fight from the saddle, or an infantryman trains to fight in close order formation. Therefore, as an additional bonus, every Combat Style gains a single trait which grants it an advantage under certain circumstances. This can be thought of as an inbuilt technical advantage the style offers for those particular situations. However, a trait is only intended to be used with the weapons and situations of that particular style.

There are limitless diverse and potential benefits a Combat Style can enjoy. The following list merely suggests a few possibilities and

is intended to offer flavour rather than overwhelming tactical advantage. Games Masters are encouraged to create further ones to match their campaign setting.

Note that some of these benefits can potentially be applied, by extension, to the Unarmed skill – either learned via culture or added later as part of a profession.

## USE OF WEAPONS NOT COVERED BY A COMBAT STYLE

Occasionally characters may be forced to pick up an unfamiliar weapon, using it either independently or in conjunction with a trained weapon. A character with a Sword and Shield style might, for example, be forced to use a mace, or mace and shield together.

By rights, using an untrained weapon forces the user to fight at his base Combat Style percentage. However, much depends on

### EXAMPLE COMBAT STYLE TRAITS

Trait	Description
Assassination	Allows the user access to the normally restricted 'Kill Silently' special effect.
Batter Aside	If the fighter's Damage Modifier is two or more steps greater than his opponent's, his weapon is considered one size larger for the purposes of bypassing parries.
Beast-back Lancer	Performing a mounted charge with this combat style does not incur the one step difficulty penalty to hit.
Cautious Fighter	Can use the Change Range action to automatically withdraw from engagement with no need to roll
Daredevil	May use Evade to dodge blows in hand to hand combat without ending up prone.
Defensive Minded	Increases the Size of your weapon when parrying by one step, provided no offensive action is taken that round.
Do or Die	Allows dual weapon combinations to use the Flurry special effect, provided that each subsequent attack utilises the alternating weapon.
Hidden Weapons	Allows the user to utilise seemingly innocuous objects noted as part of the style as deadly weapons, with no chance of accidental breakage despite apparent delicacy (fans or musical instruments for example).
Knockout Blow	When attacking with surprise treat any Stun Location as lasting minutes instead of turns.
Mounted Combat	Style allows rider to ignore the skill cap placed upon combat rolls by the Ride skill.
Ranged Marksman	When using a ranged weapon, shift a random Hit Location roll to an adjoining body location.
Shield Splitter	Permits clubs and axes to roll the weapon's damage twice and pick the best result, but only when using the Damage Weapon special effect against shields.
Shield Wall*	Allows a group of three or more shield users (all with this trait) to overlap their protection, adding one to the number of locations which can be protected with passive blocking, and resisting Knockback, Leaping attacks and Bash as if using the Brace action.
Skirmishing	The style permits launching ranged attacks whilst at a run (but not whilst sprinting).
Throw Weapons	Any nominal melee weapon in the style can also be thrown at no penalty to skill, but when used in this way a weapon's damage roll is halved.

the weapon and how similar it is to something the user is experienced with. Some guidelines on using unfamiliar weapons are as follows:

- ⇒ If a weapon is *substantially* different from a trained weapon – in weight, size, length and method of use – then offensive and defensive actions are made at the base Combat Style skill (ie, STR+DEX).
- ⇒ If a weapon is *reasonably* different from a trained weapon – say a great sword when the combatant is trained with a broadsword – then offensive and defensive actions are based on the existing Combat Style but are two grades more difficult.
- ⇒ If a weapon is *broadly similar* to a trained weapon – say a shortsword when the combatant is trained with a broadsword – then offensive and defensive actions are one grade more difficult.
- ⇒ If a weapon is *similar* to a trained weapon – a scimitar say, as opposed to a broadsword – then the character uses his existing Combat Style with no penalty.
- ⇒ If a combatant is using an *unfamiliar* weapon in conjunction with a trained weapon, such as a shield, then the trained Combat Style is used, but is one grade harder. This simulates the compensation in the overall style the combatant must make (adjusting balance, accounting for heft and so on) necessary to use a combination of trained and untrained weapons.
- ⇒ The penalty imposed by use of an unfamiliar weapon cannot reduce the user's skill below the default level of STR+DEX.

## COMBAT ROUNDS

To emphasise its visceral nature, RUNEQUEST combat is tracked on a blow by blow basis. In order to ease bookkeeping but still reflect the differences in speed or numbers of attacks, fights are broken down into Combat

Rounds of five seconds each. During this period combatants may make hand-to-hand attacks or defend against them, manoeuvre into and out of combat, fire or throw a ranged weapon and so on.

Similarly to real life, most combat engagements – once joined – are concluded in a matter of seconds rather than minutes. In game terms this means several Combat Rounds (usually three or less) unless participants withdraw to perhaps reset initiative, reassess their tactical situation or simply to grab a momentary rest before re-engaging. Only fights between well matched foes or sequences of opponents tend to last longer.

Combat Rounds use several important terms:

- ⇒ Initiative: The order of who acts when during a Cycle of a Combat Round.
- ⇒ Cycle: The countdown through Initiative values from the highest Strike Rank to the lowest, so that each participant has a chance to take their Turn when their Strike Rank is reached. There can be several cycles per Combat Round.
- ⇒ Turn: Upon each turn, participants perform a Combat Action, which comprises of a declaration, any necessary dice rolls (including reactions) and the resolution of the action.

Each term is described in more detail, below.

## INITIATIVE

Initiative determines participants' order of actions during the cycles of a Combat Round. It is rolled at the start of a fight and measured in Strike Ranks. Unless something occurs to change the situation, such as certain Combat Actions or Special Effects, initiative remains in play until it is forced to be re-rolled.

## CALCULATING INITIATIVE

Initiative is calculated by each participant rolling 1d10 and adding their Strike Rank. Whoever gained the highest result acts first, followed by the second highest and so on. When two or more participants tie scores they act concurrently.



## DISPARATE NUMBERS OF ACTION POINTS

*Some Games Masters may find their players irritated at having less Action Points per Round than the other player characters or their opponents, since at face value, they are placed at a dangerous disadvantage in combat.*

*However, each and every one of the derived Attributes have significant value which players must decide between at Character Generation. Possessing a large Damage Modifier or high Hit Points are as much an advantage in combat, as are extra Luck Points.*

*Characters with only two Action Points per round may feel inferior, but RUNEQUEST is a system in which skill trumps all, and even a slow warrior can still be lethal if they focus upon Passive Blocking, Ranged Weapons or a more cunning selection of Special Effects.*

*Remember that it is the Games Master's responsibility to balance foes against their players. If problems continue the GM is free to simply rule that all player characters possess two Action Points apiece, which should solve the issue.*





## KEEPING TRACK OF ACTION POINTS

*It can be tricky to keep track of Action Points during a round, especially if characters make a habit of using Combat Actions such as Delay or casting spells which require more than one turn to complete. As an aide to simplify book keeping, the use of tokens (coins or poker chips are ideal) is recommended.*

*Give each player a number of tokens equal to their Action Points, then each time they act or react, remove one of the tokens – tossing them into a used pile in the centre of the table. In the case of the Delay action, the token can be moved half way, indicating a held action which can be triggered at a later point. For spell casting a separate pile could be formed which keeps track of how many turns have been invested thus far.*

*When each round concludes the players can reclaim a requisite number of tokens from the discard pile. Of course other methods can be used, such as using dice as trackers or even tallying Action Points on scrap paper.*

## STRIKE RANK PENALTY

Characters who wear armour are hindered by the encumbrance of their protection, slowed by its inherent mass and bulk. As described on page 50, a penalty is applied to Strike Rank equal to the total ENC for all the armour worn, divided by 5 and rounded up. For example, a full suit of Hoplite Plate armour, covering all seven hit locations, with an ENC value of 4 per location, imposes a Strike Rank penalty of  $(7 \times 4) / 5 = 6$ .

## CYCLES AND TURNS

Once initiative has been determined, the participants have the potential to perform several Combat Actions during each Combat Round. The number of times they can act is equal to their Action Points, but when they can act is limited to whether the action is proactive or reactive.

Proactive actions can only be attempted on the character's own Turn; that is to say, on his initiative Strike Rank. Proactive actions are those in which the character is the instigator, such as making an attack with a weapon. Only one proactive action may be attempted per cycle. If no proactive action is selected, the character is assumed to have used Dither by default.

Reactive actions are those taken by a character to counter or resist an act made against them. Only one reaction attempt is permitted for each threat, an example would be trying to parry an attack. However, any number of reactions may be made per cycle, provided that the character has Action Points to spend.

The end of the cycle is reached once every participant has taken their turn. If anyone still has Action Points remaining then a new cycle is begun for those characters with Action Points available. This continues until all available Action Points have been expended, at which point the round is over and a new one begins.

## COMBAT ACTIONS

Combat Actions are those acts which can be performed during battle. Drawing a weapon, casting a spell, or diving clear from an attack are all examples of Combat Actions.

Most are concerned with elements of combat itself, but some relate to activities outside the to and fro of spells and weapons.

As previously mentioned, how often a character can act per round is limited by their available Action Points. These are spent over the course of each Combat Round to perform various Combat Actions. Once a combatant's Action Points are expended, they may no longer act for the remainder of that round and must wait until their points reset at the beginning of the next.

Unless otherwise specified any Combat Action (save for 'free' actions) costs one Action Point. Thus combatants need to carefully consider how and when they use their points. They may act as aggressively or defensively as they wish, dynamically reacting to the evolving circumstance of the combat.

## PROACTIVE ACTIONS

The following are activities a character can attempt on his Turn by spending an Action Point. Note that some actions such as spell casting or reloading may take several turns to complete; each turn costing its own Action Point.

### ATTACK

The character can attempt to strike with a hand-to-hand weapon or use a ranged weapon.

### BRACE

The character braces himself by taking a firm stance and leaning into the direction of a forthcoming attack. For the purposes of resisting Knockback or Leaping Attacks the character's SIZ is treated as 50% bigger. Against the Bash special effect SIZ is doubled. The benefits of bracing are lost once the character moves away from the place they planted themselves.

### CAST MAGIC

The character can attempt to cast a spell, call for a miracle, invoke a talent or summon a spirit. Complex magics may require several turns in order to complete the casting. Once concluded, the magic can be released at any moment up until the caster's next turn; at which point it can be held for later effect;



but this requires the Hold Magic action (see below) to maintain it in preparation for later release.

#### CHANGE RANGE

The character can attempt to close on, or retreat from, an opponent; changing the range at which he is fighting to take best advantage of his weapon's reach or disengage from engagement entirely. See Weapon Reach - Closing and Opening Range on page 100.

#### DELAY

The character conserves his action so that he can instead perform a Reactive Action at a later time, such as an Interrupt or Parry. The Action Point cost of delaying is covered by whatever act is finally performed. If the delayed action is not taken before the character's next turn (on the following cycle), then the character is considered to have Dithered and the Action Point is lost.

#### DITHER

A character can decide to simply waste his turn doing nothing useful.

#### HOLD MAGIC

Once casting is complete, the character may hold a spell, miracle or spirit in temporary check, awaiting the best moment to release it. The magic may be held back for as long as the character continues to take this action on his subsequent turns, but allows free use of the Counter Spell reaction if pertinent to his spell.

#### MOUNT

The character can mount or dismount a riding beast. Particularly large mounts may require several turns to complete.

#### MOVE

Provided he is not engaged with an opponent, the character can move any distance the Games Master deems suitable for the situation. Move is not necessary to initiate engagement. See the sidebar on page 83.

#### OUTMANOEUVRE

The character can engage multiple opponents in a group opposed roll of Evade skills. Those who fail to beat his roll cannot attack

him that Combat Round. See the section on Outmanoeuvring on page 97.

#### READY WEAPON

The character may draw, sheath, withdraw or reload a weapon. Retrieving a nearby dropped weapon requires two turns: one to move and reach down for the weapon and a second to return to a readied stance. Some missile weapons require several turns to reload.

#### REGAIN FOOTING

If unengaged with an opponent, the character can regain his footing from being tripped or knocked down. If the foe remains in close combat, the character cannot stand without using a relevant Special Effect, or receiving aid from a compatriot.

#### STRUGGLE

If the character is the victim of a certain types of attack or Special Effect, he may attempt to extract himself from the situation. For example breaking free from a Grapple or Pin Weapon.

#### REACTIVE ACTIONS

This list specifies reactions which can be used at any time during the Combat Round as a response to an imminent threat. As in the previous list, a reaction costs an Action Point to perform.

#### COUNTER SPELL

The character can attempt to dismiss or counter an incoming spell, miracle or spirit. This assumes the countering magic has a casting time of one Turn, or was prepared in advance and temporarily withheld using the Hold Magic action. Successfully intercepting magic in this manner is assumed to negate the entire spell or miracle, even those with multiple targets or areas of effect.

#### EVADE

The character can attempt to dive or roll clear of threats such as incoming missiles or a charging attack. Using Evade leaves the character prone, unless mitigated by some special consequence. Thus the character's next turn is usually spent taking the Regain Footing action to stand again. See Evading on page 95.



#### MOVEMENT

*The Move Combat action is not required for every instance of movement during combat.*

*One does not need to spend an Action Point on Move to engage an opponent. For instance, a character crossing an open field to engage a group of archers would spend 1 Action Point to cover the distance. He would not, though, need to spend a further Action Point to initiate combat with one of the archers when he reaches their vantage point. He may use his next turn solely for his attack roll.*

*To summarise, use the Move Combat Action for:*

- ⇒ *Moving up towards a combat*
- ⇒ *Perform a dramatic action within combat (swinging from a handy chandelier, for example)*
- ⇒ *Move is not necessary to engage an opponent*



**DELAY AND INTERRUPT**

*Delay is intended to be a way of allowing a character to conserve all of their Action Points in a Round for reactive actions; for example parrying.*

*Interrupt, on the other hand, is intended to permit pre-emptive actions which could, but do not necessarily, involve combat, such as slamming a door shut, knocking a siege engine off target, waiting for the clear shot, and so on. It is also worded to allow characters to intercept those that try to dodge or pass close by them.*

*Neither Delay nor Interrupt are intended to be used as a way of gaining an Action Point advantage over a closing opponent: it is not in the spirit of the rules to permit the withholding of actions until engagement has been initiated.*

**INTERRUPT**

*(Delaying characters only)* Halts an opponent's turn after his declaration in order to take your own delayed turn. Assuming no change in the tactical situation, the opponent continues his turn after yours is completed. If unable to still achieve his original declaration, the opponent's Action Point is wasted. An interrupt can also be used against anyone passing by within weapon reach.

**PARRY**

The character can attempt to defend against an incoming attack using a combination of parrying, blocking, leaning, ducking or side-stepping footwork to minimise the blow.

**FREE ACTIONS**

Free actions can be performed at any time during the Combat Round and cost no Action Points to perform.

**ASSESS SITUATION**

If unengaged, a character can make a Perception roll at no Action Point cost. Success in the roll alerts them to any relevant changes in the tactical situation (such as spotting a foe beginning a charge).

**DROP WEAPON**

Dropping a weapon is a Free Action.

**SIGNAL**

If unengaged, gesturing or signalling to one or more participants (as long as they can perceive the sign) is a Free Action.

**SPEAK**

A character can speak at any time during combat, but what is said should be limited to short phrases which can be uttered in five

seconds or less; for example 'Time to die!', 'Look out behind you!' or 'Damn you to hell!'

**USE LUCK POINT**

Using a Luck Point – to re-roll a particular result for example – is a Free Action.

**WARD LOCATION**

The character guards a particular Hit Location from being hit by dedicating one of his weapons to statically cover the area. Any blow which lands on that location has its damage automatically downgraded as per normal for a parrying weapon of its Size. The ward continues until the dedicated weapon is used to attack or actively parry. Establishing a ward or changing the Hit Location covered must be performed prior to an opponent rolling to attack the character. Due to their design, shields can cover multiple areas. For further explanation see Passive Blocking, page 97.

**HOW COMBAT WORKS**

Fighting in RUNEQUEST is resolved in a blow by blow progression, each attack or parry representing a single swing, cast or shot of a weapon. Any offensive action is permitted the chance to be resisted by a reaction. Thus even if a character manages to strike an opponent, the foe is permitted its own roll to see if it can parry the blow before it lands. The same philosophy is used whether the attacks are missile weapons against targets diving for cover, or trying to break free from the iron grasp of a giant octopus.

**WEAPON SIZE CATEGORIES**

Size	Description
Small	Human unarmed combat and light single handed weapons less than a kilo in weight, such as a dagger
Medium	Single handed weapons over a kilo in weight, a mace for instance
Large	Long hafted thrusting weapons, two handed spears being a case in point
Huge	Two handed slashing, chopping or bashing weapons, like great swords
Enormous	Weapons used by very large creatures, for example a tree trunk used by a giant

### KEEPING TRACK OF ATTACK ROLLS

As will be further explained in the rules, some Special Effects, certain types of injury and offensive magic require an opposed roll of some sort against the attacker's original attack roll. For this reason it is a useful habit for players to leave the percentage dice lying untouched on the table until the attack and consequences have been fully resolved. In this way the dice provide a record of what number was actually rolled, thus helping to avoid unnecessary dispute.

### ATTACKS AND PARRIES

Close combat is handled in the following step by step manner:

1. On his turn the attacker spends an Action Point, rolls against his Combat Style and notes the result.
2. If desired, the defender spends an Action Point, rolls against his Combat Style and notes the result.
3. The success level of the results are compared as per a Differential Roll.
4. Any difference grants the combatant with the superior roll one or more Special Effects (see overleaf).
5. If the attacker achieved a success or critical, he may roll weapon damage and apply their Damage Modifier (if any). If applicable, a Hit Location is determined for the blow.
6. If the defender achieved a success or critical, reduce any damage inflicted according to the comparative sizes of the weapons involved.

#### WEAPON REACH CATEGORIES

Reach	Description
Touch	Human reach in unarmed combat, knuckledusters, spiked kneepads and so on
Short	Weapons less than half a metre long; such as a dagger or 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, a great axe for instance
Very Long	Two handed or mounted thrusting weapons, polearms or lances

It should be noted that any Special Effects generated by the exchange are independent of whether or not damage is inflicted. It is quite possible for a defender to gain the higher success level, yet still suffer injury.

### WEAPON SIZE AND REACH

Every weapon in RUNEQUEST possesses a number of different attributes from the damage it deals to how many hands are required to wield it. Two of these ratings, Size and Reach are important due to their mechanical effect. Size is used to determine the weapon's ability to impose and parry damage (see Damage Reduction page 86), whilst Reach can affect whether an opponent lies within range of being struck (see Weapon Reach - Closing and Opening Range on page 89).

Size categories are *Small, Medium, Large, Huge, and Enormous*. Reach categories are *Touch, Short, Medium, Long and Very Long*. Some monsters and weapons further extend these categories beyond the scope of human characters, as illustrated in the Creatures chapter.

Both of these ratings are largely abstract in nature, simplified to help speed play. Size is a combination of a weapon's mass, leverage and stability. Reach is more a measure of its length and ability to hold a foe at bay due to how far it extends beyond the hilt or grip.

The Equipment chapter provides default Size and Reach values for common weapons. The unarmed attacks of creatures are assigned similar categories according to their physical characteristics.



### THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*Whilst travelling with the nomad clans of the high desert plateau, Zamothis is thrown from his riding llama when it is assaulted by a giant scorpion (page 180).*

*Both Zamothis and the scorpion have 3 Action Points each, but the scorpion rolls a better initiative. Going first it attacks with its right pincer (Proactive, 1 Action Point) which Zamothis effortlessly deflects with his shield (Reactive, 1 Action Point). Thus far they have each used one Action Point.*

*Then it is his turn and Zamothis replies by swinging his axe (Proactive, 1 Action Point), forcing the scorpion to block with its left pincer (Reactive, 1 Action Point). Now they have both used two Action Points.*

*Each still has a Combat Action remaining; so the Games Master cycles back to the highest initiative again; allowing the scorpion to attack a second time that round, this time with its sting. Zamothis again parries the blow and the round ends, since neither has any Action Points remaining.*



DAMAGE REDUCTION TABLE

DEFENDING WEAPON	ATTACKING WEAPON				
	Small	Medium	Large	Huge	Enormous
Small	All	Half	None	None	None
Medium	All	All	Half	None	None
Large	All	All	All	Half	None
Huge	All	All	All	All	Half
Enormous	All	All	All	All	All

## DAMAGE REDUCTION

If a defender succeeds in parrying, then he can reduce an attacker's damage, if any, according to the comparative Size of the weapons used.

- ⇒ 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 (Huge) with a hoplite shield (also Huge) would block all damage; parrying it with a pike (Large) would halve the damage, and parrying it with a shortsword (Medium) would stop no damage at all.

## PARRYING A MISSED ATTACK

If the attacker misses his initial attack roll, the defender has the option of whether or not to spend an Action Point to parry. Although it may seem disingenuous to parry an attack which will miss anyway, a skilled defender can use this to his advantage to gain one or more Special Effects, potentially weakening or incapacitating a foe and preserving their next turn for some other action.

## UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO PARRY

In a situation where a defender is unable to parry due to having no Action Points remaining, or, confident in his ability to weather the blow, elects not to parry, he is treated

as having automatically rolled a failure. This has the consequence of granting a successful attacker one or more Special Effects.

## UNSUCCESSFUL ROLLS AND FUMBLES

If both combatants fail their rolls, or the defender decides not to take advantage of a missed attack, then the attack-parry sequence ends and combat continues on to the participant with the next highest Strike Rank.

Fumbling a Combat Style roll has no additional effect other than the chance it provides his opponent to inflict multiple (and more dire) Special Effects against him. If a combatant fails when his opponent fumbles, then he misses the opportunity to take advantage of his foe's clumsiness.

In the rare circumstance that both opponents fumble, Games Masters are encouraged to describe some hilarious or amazingly improbable event occurring which temporarily takes both out of the fight.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

Fighting is far more than simply injuring or killing an opponent. Combative arts teach many methods of defeating a foe, perhaps rendering them helpless or forcing them into situations where they must capitulate, without necessarily needing to actually cause them harm. Special Effects represent these techniques and control how they occur in play.

Whenever opponents engage in a Differential Roll of their respective fighting skills (Combat Styles or Evade for example), any resulting difference in success levels indicates





### RETROACTIVE PARRYING WITH A SKILL OVER 100%

Allowing a character to parry only those attacks which will hit is an essential part of maintaining the unpredictable flow of combat. However it does start to cause problems when the defender has a combat skill exceeding 100%, since what was originally a successful roll by the attacker may become downgraded to a miss if the penalty provided by the defender's superior skill is retroactively applied.

To avoid messy calculations or causality issues, the best way to handle this situation is to only permit the defender to impose his over 100% skill penalty if he pro-actively defends, declaring his parry before the attacker rolls. This has the added benefit of preventing super-humanly skilled opponents from being near-immune to attacks without the need to expend Action Points to defend themselves.

*For example; despite his best efforts to outmanoeuvre them, Master Zamothis is surrounded by centaur opponents. The grizzled warrior is worthy of his title, possessing (amongst others) a Combat Style (Meerish Infantry) skill of 120%. However he is surrounded and faces the tough choice of whether or not to use his remaining two Action Points to defend himself. Since his skill is so high that it would provide a penalty to his attackers, the Games Master asks his player if he wishes to declare his parry in advance (thus reducing the centaurs impending attack skill by 20%) or withhold parrying until it is seen whether the centaurs hit or miss at their normal skill.*

an opportunity for Special Effects to occur. This reflects one combatant manoeuvring his opponent into a disadvantageous situation which can be exploited using a cunning trick or tactic.

The number of Special Effects received depends on the difference between the levels of success, as illustrated on the Differential Levels of Success table.

If any Special Effects are won during an exchange, they must be selected before Damage and Hit Location, if any, are rolled. In cases where the recipient is badly wounded in addition to receiving a Special Effect, Endurance rolls are resolved after the application of the effect.

Special Effects cover a diverse range of situations and techniques. Some are designed

specifically for attacks, whilst others are intended for defence and a few are adaptable for either circumstance. Certain Special Effects can also be limited to particular weapon types or specific dice rolls, requiring a Critical or Fumble result on their skill check for instance.

When two or more Special Effects are gained, the combatant may freely mix and match which ones are selected, providing he meets the prerequisite conditions for each one. Some effects can be stacked. For example, an attacker who rolls a critical success and wins two Special Effects could choose Maximise Damage twice rather than choosing two separate offensive manoeuvres.

#### DIFFERENTIAL LEVELS OF SUCCESS

		ATTACKER'S ROLL			
		Critical	Success	Failure	Fumble
DEFENDERS 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	-	-





## SPECIAL EFFECTS TABLE

Special Effect			Specific Weapon		Stackable
	Offensive	Defensive	Type	Specific Roll	
Accidental Injury		X		Attacker Fumbles	
Arise		X			
Bash	X		Shields or Bludgeoning		
Bleed	X		Cutting Weapons		
Blind Opponent		X		Defender Criticals	
Bypass Armour	X			Attacker Criticals	X
Choose Location	X			See Description	
Circumvent Parry	X			Attacker Criticals	
Close Range	X	X			
Compel Surrender	X	X			
Damage Weapon	X	X			
Disarm Opponent	X	X			
Enhance Parry		X		Defender Criticals	
Entangle	X	X	Entangling Weapons		
Flurry	X		Unarmed		X
Force Failure	X	X		Opponent Fumbles	
Grip	X		Unarmed		
Impale	X		Impaling Weapons		
Kill Silently	X		Small Weapons	See Description	
Maximise Damage	X			Attacker Criticals	X
Open Range		X			
Overextend Opponent		X			X
Pin Weapon	X	X		Critical Only	
Press Advantage	X				
Rapid Reload	X				X
Select Target		X		Attacker Fumbles	
Slip Free		X		Defender Criticals	
Stand Fast		X			
Stun Location	X		Bludgeoning Weapons		
Sunder	X		Two Handed Weapons		
Take Weapon	X	X	Unarmed		
Trip Opponent	X	X			
Withdraw		X			

# SPECIAL EFFECT DESCRIPTIONS

## ACCIDENTAL INJURY

The defender deflects or twists an opponent's attack in such a way that he fumbles, injuring himself. The attacker must roll damage against himself in a random hit location using the weapon used to strike. If unarmed he tears or breaks something internal, the damage roll ignoring any armour.

## ARISE

Allows the defender to use a momentary opening to roll back up to their feet.

## BASH

The attacker deliberately bashes the opponent backwards off balance. How far depends on the weapon being used. Shields knock opponent back one metre per for every two points of damage rolled (prior to any subtractions due to armour, parries, and so forth), whereas bludgeoning weapons knock back one metre per for every three points. Bashing works only on creatures up to twice the attacker's SIZ. If the recipient is forced backwards into an obstacle, then they must make a Hard Athletics or Acrobatics skill roll to avoid falling or tripping over.

## BLEED

The attacker can attempt to cut open a major blood vessel. If the blow overcomes Armour Points and injures the target, the defender must make an opposed roll of Endurance against the original attack roll. If the defender fails, then they begin to bleed profusely. At the start of each Combat Round the recipient loses one level of Fatigue, until they collapse and possibly die. Bleeding wounds can be staunched by passing a First Aid skill roll, but the recipient can no longer perform any strenuous or violent action without reopening the wound. See Blood Loss page 62.

## BLIND OPPONENT

On a critical the defender briefly blinds his opponent by throwing sand, reflecting sunlight off his shield, or some other tactic which briefly interferes with the attacker's vision.

The attacker must make an opposed roll of his Evade skill (or Weapon style if using a shield) against the defender's original parry roll. If the attacker fails he suffers the Blindness situational modifier for the next 1d3 turns.

## BYPASS ARMOUR

On a critical the attacker finds a gap in the defender's natural or worn armour. If the defender is wearing armour above natural protection, then the attacker must decide which of the two is bypassed. This effect can be stacked to bypass both. For the purposes of this effect, physical protection gained from magic is considered as being worn armour.

## CHOOSE LOCATION

When using hand-to-hand melee weapons the attacker may freely select the location where the blow lands, as long as that location is normally within reach. If using ranged weapons Choose Location is a Critical Success only, unless the target is within close range and is either stationary or unaware of the attacker.

## CIRCUMVENT PARRY

On a critical the attacker may completely bypass an otherwise successful parry.

## CLOSE RANGE

Permits the character to automatically change the engagement range between himself and his opponent, so that they end up at the Range favoured by the shorter weapon (see Weapon Reach - Closing and Opening Range page 85).

## COMPEL SURRENDER

Allows the character a chance to force the surrender of a helpless or disadvantaged opponent; for example someone who has been disarmed, is lying prone unable to regain his footing, has suffered a serious (or worse) wound, and so on. Damage is not inflicted on the target, they are only threatened. Assuming the target is sapient and able to understand the demand, the target must make an opposed roll of Willpower against the original attack or parry roll. If the target fails, they capitulate. Games Masters may wish to reserve Compel Surrender for use against non-player characters only.



## THE HEAD? AGAIN?

*Some Games Masters may find the Choose Location special effect a rather sour annoyance, especially if their players continue to take down foe after foe with exactly the same blow. What might surprise many people to know is that this behaviour is exactly matched by real life combat. Not only is the head is the closest part of the body to strike, but shields tend to be held beneath the level of the eyes, exposing the head and part of the face so that you can see your opponent.*

*There are several techniques which can help prevent foes being chopped down with the same blow. First and most obvious is to wear a helmet, which after shields was the most prevalent type of protection used throughout history. Secondly is to use the Ward Location action. This is a perfectly natural thing to do, since once an opponent has suffered a wound he will tend to try to keep that weakened area covered so that it cannot be struck again.*

*Last but by no means least the Games Master should himself use a range of diverse and interesting Special Effects, showing that Choose Location can be eclipsed by manoeuvres such as Bleed, Stun Location or even Bash in the right circumstances!*



## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*As the combat against the giant scorpion continues, the monstrous insect rolls 01 – a critical success – whilst Zamothis only manages a successful parry. The scorpion has scored a level of success better than Zamothis (even though he succeeded in parrying) and so gains a Special Effect.*

*Since Zamothis' parry was enough to block all the damage from the pincer (Huge pincer vs. Huge shield), the scorpion uses its Special Effect in an attempt to knock the shield out of his grasp with Disarm Opponent. Zamothis must roll against his combat style skill and beat the scorpion's 01. Fortunately he gets 04 – both a critical and the higher roll – somehow managing to retain his shield.*

*The combat continues with blows raining back and forth, until the scorpion rolls another critical, which Zamothis barely manages to parry. This time the scorpion uses the Pin Weapon Special Effect to drive its stinger into the hoplite shield. Now Zamothis can no longer use the shield to parry unless he tries to wrestle it free – which in this case is next to impossible due to the insect's far greater Damage Modifier. Instead Zamothis hacks*

### DAMAGE WEAPON

Permits the character to damage his opponent's weapon as part of an attack or parry. If attacking, the character aims specifically at the defender's parrying weapon and applies his damage roll to it, rather than the wielder. The targeted weapon uses its own Armour Points for resisting the damage. If reduced to zero Hit Points the weapon breaks.

### DISARM OPPONENT

The character knocks, yanks or twists the opponent's weapon out of his hand. The opponent must make an opposed roll of his Combat Style against the character's original roll. If the recipient of the disarm loses, his weapon is flung a distance equal to the roll of the disarmer's Damage Modifier in metres. If there is no Damage Modifier then the weapon drops at the disarmed person's feet. The comparative size of the weapons affects the roll. Each step that the disarming character's weapon is larger increases the difficulty of the opponent's roll by one grade. Conversely each step the disarming character's weapon is smaller, makes the difficulty one grade easier. Disarming works only on creatures of up to twice the attacker's STR.

### ENHANCE PARRY

On a critical the defender manages to deflect the entire force of an attack, no matter the Size of his weapon.

### ENTANGLE

Allows a character wielding an entangling weapon, such as a whip or net, to immobilise the location struck. An entangled arm cannot use whatever it is holding; a snared leg prevents the target from moving; whilst an enmeshed head, chest or abdomen makes all skill rolls one grade harder. On his following turn the wielder may spend an Action Point to make an automatic Trip Opponent attempt. An entangled victim can attempt to free himself on his turn by either attempting an opposed roll using Brawn to yank free; or win a Special Effect and select Damage Weapon, Disarm Opponent or Slip Free.

### FLURRY

An unarmed creature or attacker can make an immediate follow-up attack using a different limb or body part, without needing to wait for its next turn. A human attacker might follow up a punch to the abdomen with a knee to the face for example. The additional attack still costs an Action Point, but potentially allows several attacks in sequence before the defender can respond offensively.

### FORCE FAILURE

Used when an opponent fumbles, the character can combine Force Failure with any other Special Effect which requires an opposed roll to work. Force Failure causes the opponent to fail his resistance roll by default – thereby automatically be disarmed, tripped, etc.

### GRIP

Provided the opponent is within the attacker's Unarmed Combat reach, he may use an empty hand (or similar limb capable of gripping such as claws, tails or tentacles) to hold onto the opponent, preventing them from being able to change weapon range or disengage from combat. The opponent may attempt to break free on his turn, requiring an opposed roll of either Brawn or Unarmed against whichever of the two skills the gripper prefers. If the gripped victim wins, they manage to break free. Note that some attackers using Brawn may be so strong that no amount of brute force or cunning technique can overcome their grip (see Brawn page 29).

### IMPALE

The attacker can attempt to drive an impaling weapon deep into the defender. Roll weapon damage twice, with the attacker choosing which of the two results to use for the attack. If armour is penetrated and causes a wound, then the attacker has the option of leaving the weapon in the wound, or yanking it free on their next turn. Leaving the weapon in the wound inflicts a difficulty grade on the victim's future skill attempts. The severity of the penalty depends on the size of both the creature and the weapon impaling it, as listed on the Impale Effects Table above. For simplicity's sake, further impalements with the



**IMPALE EFFECTS TABLE**

Creature SIZ	Small Weapons	Medium Weapons	Large Weapons	Huge Weapons	Enormous Weapons
1-10	Formidable	Herculean	Incapacitated	Incapacitated	Incapacitated
11-20	Hard	Formidable	Herculean	Incapacitated	Incapacitated
21-30	No Effect	Hard	Formidable	Herculean	Incapacitated
31-40	No Effect	No Effect	Hard	Formidable	Herculean
41-50	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	Hard	Formidable
Each +10	Follow table progression				

same sized weapon inflict no additional penalties. To withdraw an impaled weapon during melee requires use of the Ready Weapon combat action. The wielder must pass an unopposed Brawn roll (or win an opposed Brawn roll if the opponent resists). Success pulls the weapon free, causing further injury to the same location equal to half the normal damage roll for that weapon, but without any damage modifier. Failure implies that the weapon remained stuck in the wound with no further effect, although the wielder may try again on their next turn. Specifically barbed weapons (such as harpoons) inflict normal damage. Armour does not reduce withdrawal damage. Whilst it remains impaled, the attacker cannot use his impaling weapon for parrying.

**KILL SILENTLY**

Restricted to those trained in a Combat Style with the Assassination benefit. It allows the attacker to neutralise a victim in complete silence, covering their mouth or grasping them about the neck whilst simultaneously stabbing, cutting or garrotting them. This prevents the victim from crying out or otherwise raising an alarm for the entire round. In addition, if during this time the attacks inflict a Serious or Major Wound, the victim will automatically fail its Endurance roll. Kill Silently can only be used on a surprised opponent and only on the first attack against them.

**MAXIMISE DAMAGE:**

On a critical the character may substitute one of his weapon's damage dice for its full value. For example a Hatchet which normally does 1d6 damage would instead be treated as a 6, whereas a great club with 2d6 damage would instead inflict 1d6+6 damage. This special effect may be stacked. Although it can

also be used for natural weapons, Maximise Damage does not affect the Damage Modifier of the attacker, which must be rolled normally.

**OPEN RANGE**

Permits the character to automatically change the engagement range between himself and his opponent, so that they end up at the Range favoured by the longer weapon (see Weapon Reach - Closing and Opening Range page 89).

**OVEREXTEND OPPONENT**

The defender sidesteps or retreats at an inconvenient moment, causing the attacker to overreach himself. Opponent cannot attack on his next turn. This special effect can be stacked.

**PIN WEAPON**

On a critical the character can pin one of his opponent's weapons or shield, using his body or positioning to hold it in place. On his turn the opponent may attempt to wrestle or manoeuvre the pinned item free. This costs an Action Point and works as per the Grip special effect. Failure means that the pinned item remains unusable. In the meantime, an opponent lacking a weapon or shield in the other hand may only avoid an attack by evading, using his Unarmed skill or disengaging completely.

**PRESS ADVANTAGE**

The attacker pressures his opponent, so that his foe is forced to remain on the defensive and cannot attack on their next turn. This allows the attacker to potentially establish an unbroken sequence of attacks whilst the defender desperately blocks. It is only effective against foes concerned with defending themselves.

*and the scorpion fails to parry the blow. He takes the Choose Location Special Effect to target the stinger in an attempt to cut it free, but barely scratches it.*

*The scorpion replies with a pincer attack, which Zamothis desperately tries to parry with his axe, even though being two sizes smaller it will not block any damage. However, the scorpion fails and Zamothis succeeds, so he uses the Special Effect to Withdraw; taking the opportunity to run back to the dying llama and recover his long spear.*

*Flicking the shield from its stinger, the scorpion menacingly clicks its pincers then rushes at Zamothis, who sets his spear to receive the charge (see page 93). Since he has the longer reach Zamothis gets to strike first and rolls a success. The charging scorpion has no option of avoiding the blow, so suffers 1d10+1 plus 1d8 for the scorpion's Damage Bonus.*

*In addition, Zamothis gains another special effect and this time selects Impale, driving the spear deep into its thorax. Due to its chitin it is only a Serious Wound but now suffers a Formidable penalty for the impaled spear!*





### OVERLY PRESSED

*Games Masters can find use of Press Advantage to be very frustrating, especially if players gang-up on a powerful foe which is rendered impotent, having no way to attack. There are several ways to handle this.*

*For example, berserk characters or creatures with the Frenzy ability should be naturally immune to the effect as they have no sense of self preservation, but the concept can be taken a step further with characters driven by an overwhelming passion, or perhaps starving animals overcome with hunger or an instinct to defend their young.*

*Another method of restricting its apparent effectiveness is to only allow it if the target is actually harmed by the associated attack. In this case context is still important and the Games Master has last say on whether a foe actually feels threatened by a wound.*

*It should also be noted that intelligent foes can still defeat assailants, despite being unable to attack. Special Effects are won by parrying too, and fights can quickly end if the pressed foe disarms or trips his attackers!*

### RAPID RELOAD

When using a ranged weapon, the attacker reduces the reload time for the next shot by one. This effect can be stacked.

### SELECT TARGET

When an attacker fumbles, the defender may manoeuvre or deflect the blow in such a way that it hits an adjacent bystander instead. This requires that the new target is within reach of the attacker's close combat weapon, or in the case of a ranged attack, is standing along the line of fire. The new victim is taken completely by surprise by the unexpected accident and has no chance to avoid the attack which automatically hits. In compensation however, they suffer no special effect.

### SLIP FREE

On a critical the defender can automatically escape being Entangled, Grippled, or Pinned.

### STAND FAST

The defender braces himself against the force of an attack, allowing them to avoid the Knockback effects of any damage received.

### STUN LOCATION

The attacker can use a bludgeoning weapon to temporarily stun the body part struck. If the blow overcomes Armour Points and injures the target, the defender must make an opposed roll of Endurance vs. the original attack roll. If the defender fails, then the Hit Location is incapacitated for a number of turns equal to the damage inflicted. A blow to the torso causes the defender to stagger winded, only able to defend. A head shot renders the foe briefly insensible.

### SUNDER

The attacker may use a suitable two handed weapon to damage the armour or natural protection of an opponent. Any weapon damage, after reductions for parrying or magic, is applied against the Armour Point value of the protection. Surplus damage in excess of its Armour Points is then used to reduce the AP value of that armour(ed) location – ripping straps, bursting rings, creasing plates or

tearing away the hide, scales or chitin of monsters. If any damage remains after the protection has been reduced to zero AP, it carries over onto the Hit Points of the location struck.

### TAKE WEAPON

Allows an unarmed character to yank or twist an opponent's weapon out of his hand. The opponent must make an opposed roll of his Combat Style against the character's original Unarmed roll. If the target loses, his weapon is taken and from that moment on, may be used by the character instead. Take Weapon differs from Disarm Opponent in that the size of the weapon is largely irrelevant. However, the technique only works on creatures of up to twice the attacker's STR

### TRIP OPPONENT

The character attempts to overbalance or throw his opponent to the ground. The opponent must make an opposed roll of his Brawn, Evade or Acrobatics against the character's original roll. If the target fails, he falls prone. Quadruped opponents (or creatures with even more legs) may substitute their Athletics skill for Evade and treat the roll as one difficulty grade easier.

### WITHDRAW

The defender may automatically withdraw out of reach, breaking off engagement with that particular opponent.

## CLOSE COMBAT

Close combat is hand to hand fighting in its classic sense, when combatants strike each other with wielded or natural weapons. Although the basic combat rules have been described previously, this section further details a number of tactical and environmental situations which may affect those in close combat.

The following guidelines offer ways to make close combat more interesting and help to further explain some concepts hinted at earlier in this chapter.





## SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS

The Situational Modifiers table (see facing page) provides some common modifiers that may be applied when fighting in particular situations, or as the result of a Special Effect.

Unless stated otherwise, these modifiers are applied to attacking, parrying and evading equally. The difficulty grade column suggests a suitable skill penalty for that situation. Where two or more situations are pertinent to the character, use the most severe. See Modifying Skills page 26.

## ENGAGEMENT

An important concept of close combat is that of Engagement. A character is considered Engaged if he is within melee weapon range of his opponent. This does not necessarily require that both combatants can reach each other; only that one of them can be potentially struck by the other.

Once a character has engaged with an opponent he can no longer freely depart that fight (Charging is a special exception). It requires some form of deliberate act to break contact with the foe, who might not wish to allow him to depart. This is normally performed via a combat action such as Change Range or Outmanoeuvre, but sometimes an unexpected chance to disengage occurs by

use of a Special Effect. Fleeing from a battle requires that engagement is broken first.

Certain circumstances will allow a character to engage with multiple foes simultaneously, provided the enemy are in close proximity with each other. This can occur in many ways, for instance closing with a line of soldiers blocking a bridge. In such situations not only does the character have the option of which foe he strikes, but the reverse is also true.

Withdrawing from Engagement in this circumstance depends on the distribution of foes. Obviously retreating from the middle of a pack will be near impossible, whilst withdrawing from an organised formation might be automatic, providing the enemy doesn't wish to break ranks.

## CLOSE COMBAT MECHANICS

The remainder of this section provides further guidelines concerning combat under different tactical circumstances.

### CHARGING

Charging is the act of moving quickly to increase the force and impact of an attack. There are two main types of charging, depending on whether the attacker wishes to stop in engagement range with the target or continue

### CLOSE COMBAT SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS

Situation	Difficulty Grade
Attacking a helpless target	Automatic
Attacking in a confined situation	Hard
Defending while on lower ground or against mounted foe	Hard
Fighting while on unstable ground	Hard
Fighting whilst crouching or from one knee	Hard
Fighting in poor visibility (thick fog, snowstorm)	Hard
Defending against an attack from behind	Formidable
Fighting while prone	Formidable
Fighting in partial darkness (dim illumination)	Formidable
Fighting in pitch black conditions (no illumination at all)	Herculean
Blinded or loss of primary perceptive sense	Herculean



sweeping past, through or over the target. The common principles of a charge are as follows:

- ⇒ A charge requires at least one full Combat Round of movement at running or sprinting speed prior to contact
- ⇒ A charge imposes a penalty to the attack roll, increasing it by one difficulty grade
- ⇒ A charge increases a bipedal attacker's Damage Modifier by one step; or the Damage Modifier of four (or more) legged creatures by two steps. In addition, the Size of the attacking weapon is improved by one step

The recipient of a charge has three options; attempt to parry, evade or simultaneously counterattack the charging attacker.

Parrying a charge attack holds some significant risks, depending on the size and strength of the attacker. The primary danger is suffering knockback. Use of the Brace combat action in advance of the charge attack can help mitigate the effects of knockback. The secondary threat comes from the bonus to the charger's weapon size, which may permit a blow to penetrate or overcome the defender's parrying weapon.

Evading a charge attack is more of a gamble, but in some circumstances may be the only option. The defender must make an opposed roll of his Evade skill versus the charging opponent's combat skill. If the defender wins he throws himself completely clear of the charge, otherwise he is hit. Any difference in Level of Success results in Special Effects as normal.

Counterattacking sacrifices the defender's opportunity to actively defend against the charge in exchange for a chance to injure the attacker. In such cases both sides are treated as having failed to parry, although they can still benefit from Passive Blocking. The wielder of the weapon with the longest Reach strikes first, potentially hindering his foe from launching the subsequent blow. If using long-shafted impaling weapons which can be 'set' against a charge, the defender may substitute his own Damage Modifier for that of the charging opponent (or its mount if the attacker is riding).

### CHARGING INTO CONTACT

Some charges are intended as a method to crash into an opponent, then remain in place to take advantage of any chaos caused. An example of this would be a barbarian warrior, armed with a great-axe, throwing himself at a shield wall, hoping that the impetus of his charge will help him smash through the defender's shield or knock him over.

Once the charge strikes home, the attacker is considered engaged with his opponent. From that moment on combat proceeds normally. All benefits gained from the charge are lost after the first attack.

### CHARGING THROUGH CONTACT

The second type of charge is one which uses the momentum to carry the attacker through and clear of an engagement. It is normally limited to mounted combatants or creatures of significant size unlikely to be hindered by an impact with smaller foes. For instance an enraged aurochs could quite easily charge through a group of warriors, tossing or trampling over a victim as it passes, before continuing on out of close combat range.

The speed of such charges prevents the attacker and defender from exchanging more than a single action with each other, namely the charge attack and the defender's reaction to it (Parry, Evade or Counterattack). Since the charge attack occurs on the attacker's turn, they will have already been carried clear by the time the defender's turn arrives.

Note that charges are not limited to just running, but can be performed by flying or swimming creatures in the relevant environment.

### COVER

Cover is used by opponents to obstruct attacks against them, whether from ranged or close combat. This occurs by either physically blocking a blow due to the toughness of the interposing material, or by obscuring where precisely the foe is. For example a guard standing behind a crenellated wall may have his lower body shielded, whereas a thief hiding somewhere behind a curtain may be hidden from direct attack. The precise value of

cover depends on the thickness of its protection and the extent of its coverage.

In the case of partial cover, any attack against a target which lands on an obscured Hit Location will be blocked to the extent of the cover's inherent protection. Thus in the case of the guard covered by the crenellated wall, any attack which would normally hit his abdomen or legs would be stopped by the stone fortification.

The effects of cover can be partially negated either by use of the Choose Location special effect to aim at visible parts of the target; or striking through the cover if the weapon is capable of penetrating it. When using ranged weapons however, Choose Location normally requires a critical success, which makes taking cover against missiles extremely worthwhile.

In situations where cover is total but the attacker knows his attack will penetrate, he may strike blindly at the hidden target. In such cases the attack roll is one grade harder and Choose Location may not be taken if a special effect is won. This assumes the cover is not so extensive as to permit the target to move freely behind it. Thus, someone lurking behind a small bush could still be attacked, even though the attacker might not be able to see his quarry, but if he was behind a lengthy hedge his position could not be accurately predicted.

## EVADING

Protecting oneself from attacks such as volleys of ranged weapons, headlong charging beasts and even destructive magical spells can be exceptionally difficult, especially if the consequences will overwhelm or ignore a shield. In these situations often the best thing for a character to do is fling themselves to the side or dive behind cover to escape. This is known as evading.

Evasion attempts require an opposed roll of the attacker's pertinent skill versus the Evade skill of the defender. This could be anything from the Drive roll of a charioteer to the spell casting roll of a magician. If the attacker wins then they inflict damage as per normal. If the defender wins damage is completely avoided. Whatever the result, the evasive gambit leaves

the defender prone, usually requiring him to regain his footing on his following turn.

If the winner of the opposed roll achieves one or more levels of success over his opponent, they may select suitable Special Effects as per normal combat. Evading may be made more difficult or rendered impossible depending on the circumstances:

- ⇒ The character is helpless or entangled
- ⇒ There is nowhere to evade to (balancing on a ledge whilst scaling a cliff, for example)
- ⇒ A mounted character may only evade by flinging themselves clear of the saddle

Evading is not normally performed in close combat due to its inherent disadvantages. However, a character facing a hand-to-hand attack against which he has no applicable defence due to the lack of a weapon (or an inferior sized one which won't block the damage) may have no other choice.

In such cases evading provides only a temporary respite from a determined opponent who decides to follow up, preventing the prone character from regaining their feet. Nothing prevents a prone character from attempting to evade subsequent attacks, with the proviso that they suffer a 'Fighting while prone' situational penalty as they continue to roll aside or scabble backwards away from their attacker.

## FLYING COMBAT

Fighting against flying creatures and full scale aerial battles provide a rather interesting dynamic to close combat, since most airborne creatures require constant movement to remain aloft.

## ATTACKING GROUND-BASED TARGETS

It can be difficult for ground-based characters to defeat airborne foes. Of course in some encounters the flying creature will hover or land on the combatant, allowing combat to proceed normally. In others the flying creature may fly back and forth, sweeping down to make attacks before continuing back out of range. In the latter situation it is recommended that each 'strafing' run is treated as Charging through Contact, see Charging page



## EVADING CREATURES

*Creatures that lack thick natural armour to bull through attacks, or the intellect or skill to actively parry them, are often forced to evade in close combat in order to defend themselves.*

*In these circumstances, most creatures lacking humanoid form, quadrupeds or serpents for example, have an inherent advantage over bipedal characters; in that they rarely go prone when evading, due to their shape or multiple limbs.*

*As a rule of thumb, whenever such a creature attempts to evade an attack, they only end up prone if they fail their Evade roll (the skill check, not the opposed test).*



93. This can make airborne creatures deadly opponents unless ground based defenders have some sort of ranged weaponry or cover.

#### AERIAL COMBAT ALOFT

Combat between aerial creatures or characters mounted on flying beasts should be handled slightly differently. Unlike ground based fighting it often takes a significant period of time to jockey into a position where one airborne opponent can assault the other. Each brief engagement only allows one of them to attack before the flying creatures travel apart, requiring them to manoeuvre again to see which gets the upper hand in the next pass.

Thus at the start of each round combatants must make an opposed roll of their Fly skills (or Ride if a mount). The winner is the one who can attack that round. If facing multiple opponents use a group opposed roll and all those who beat the lone participant may attack it that round. Attacks are resolved in a similar manner to charges, the recipient allowed to parry, evade or counterattack.

In the case of particularly large creatures or those travelling at high speed, the Games Master may wish to increase the manoeuvring time between passes, for example perhaps 1d3 rounds for a griffon or 1d6 rounds for a dragon. In these cases it is wise to limit mounted archers or spell casters to acting on each pass, since most of the intervening time the rider will be thrown about in aerial acrobatics or the enemy target will be out of range.

#### KNOCKBACK

An attack which imparts more damage than the SIZ of the recipient will, by default, result in him being knocked back. The damage in this circumstance is before any reduction due to parrying or armour. On receiving such a blow, the recipient must pass an easy Acrobatics or standard Athletics roll to avoid falling prone. They are also thrust backwards one metre for each five points of damage (or fraction thereof) in excess of their SIZ. Proactively using the Brace combat action can reduce or even negate the effects of knockback.

Knockback differs from the Bash special effect in that Knockback is the automatic and accidental side effect of tremendously powerful blows, whilst a Bash is a deliberate technique which relies on timing and leverage.

#### LEAPING ATTACKS

There are some animals, monsters and even people who leap upon their victims in order to knock them prone. Leaping attacks can be launched from a variety of situations, but most are triggered as part of an ambush or at the conclusion of a charge. A few creatures have the ability to leap atop an opponent without the need for a run-up or superior height.

A leaping attack is resolved with an opposed roll of the leaper's Athletics skill versus the defender's Brawn or Evade skill. If the leaper wins then the defender is automatically knocked prone, with the attacker astride them. If the attack fails, the defender has weathered or sidestepped the impact. If the winner of the opposed roll achieves one or more levels of success over his opponent, they may select suitable Special Effects as per normal combat.

No damage is inflicted as part of the leap; however a subsequently prone victim cannot recover his footing until either his attacker leaves him, or he eventually wins a Special Effect permitting him to Arise.

If the target is a quadruped, then it may substitute Athletics for Evade, and makes the attacker's initial Athletics roll one difficulty grade harder. In addition, leaping attacks only work against opponents of up to twice the attacker's SIZ. A target can make themselves more difficult to knock down by proactive use of the Brace combat action, provided they are aware of the impending leap attack.

#### MOUNTED COMBAT

Unless learned as part of specifically mounted combat styles (see Combat Style Benefits page 80), the combat skills of a rider may not exceed their Ride skill. The advantages of being mounted are considerable however:

- ⇒ A mounted warrior can withdraw freely from engagement on his turn provided his mount moves faster (i.e. has a higher



Movement value) than the opponent and the mount itself is not engaged in attacking.

- ⇒ A mounted warrior may, at the cost of an Action Point, substitute either his own Combat Style or Ride skill instead of his mount's, to defend it against attacks.
- ⇒ A mounted warrior may combine his SIZ with his mount's for the purposes of avoiding Knockback, provided he passes an unopposed Ride roll.
- ⇒ A mounted warrior may, when charging with a braced weapon, substitute his own Damage Modifier for that of his mount. A weapon braced for a charging attack cannot be used to parry. If the weapon impales it must be left in the body of the target, or else break.

## MULTIPLE OPPONENTS

Facing multiple opponents in RUNEQUEST is often exceptionally dangerous. Whilst a character suffers no specific penalties to his combat skills, he can soon become swamped by his opponents and rapidly run out of Action Points with which to defend himself. Once all his actions have been expended the character is treated as having failed his parry roll against any subsequent attacks, which in addition to any damage inflicted also leaves him vulnerable to Special Effects.

The best tactics to use against being outnumbered are:

- ⇒ Constrain the avenue of attack so that fewer opponents can engage simultaneously
- ⇒ Fight as a formation to place disordered opponents at a disadvantage
- ⇒ Outmanoeuvre around multiple opponents so that they interfere with one another
- ⇒ Withdraw then flee the combat as quickly as possible

## OUTMANOEUVRING

A character facing multiple opponents can use movement to limit the number which can attack him at any one moment in time. This

works by constantly shifting position, forcing some foes to start running around the flanks of their companions to re-establish reach or lines of attack, generally causing them to interfere with one another. Outmanoeuvring requires that the character has room to move about and is not pinned in a confining area. It also assumes that the character is engaged with the entire group of foes.

An example of outmanoeuvring in action would be a group of guards trying to arrest a drunken barbarian in a tavern. The warrior could manoeuvre around the tables, chairs and roof supports to block the majority of his foes whilst he whittles them down one by one.

Outmanoeuvring requires that the character engages his opponents in a group opposed roll of Evade skills. Every participant, both the manoeuvring character and those foes who wish to corner him, must spend an Action Point. Then they each roll once and those who fail to beat the manoeuvring character's roll cannot attack him for the remainder of that Combat Round, being blocked by their allies or terrain features.

If the manoeuvring character beats all of his opponents he has the choice of safely engaging a single foe for the rest of the round or Withdrawing from the fight completely.

## PASSIVE BLOCKING

Passive Blocking is the placement of weapons and shields in such a manner so that they effectively act as cover. Characters armed with a weapon may hold it in such a way that it covers a chosen location (or locations when using a shield), but at the cost of being unable to actively parry with it (see Ward Location page 84). Any attack which hits those locations automatically receives the benefit of the weapon or shield, reducing damage as normal. The technique is commonly used when a warrior wishes to guard a weak spot or wounded location.

It may seem paradoxical to sacrifice the ability to parry, potentially opening up a passively blocking character to an unopposed attack. However there are many situations it is a valid tactic: for example when used by inexperienced troops or those lacking full sets





of armour. In addition there is nothing which prevents a two weapons or weapon and shield combatant from using his other weapon to actively parry.

Since passive blocking works in the same way as cover, the Choose Location special effect cannot be used to bypass the block in close combat, though opponents can still use the effect to strike other unblocked areas. Assuming a shield, passive blocking against missiles becomes even better, since for ranged weapons Choose Location is a critical only.

Crouching down behind a shield allows a character to double the number of locations covered whilst passive blocking.

### PULLED BLOWS

Occasionally a character may wish to avoid maiming or killing an opponent. This is achieved by 'pulling' a blow, limiting the force placed behind it or striking with a less lethal part of the weapon. A pulled blow halves the damage inflicted on a successful hit. However, the intent to pull a blow must be stated before the attack is made, since it is near impossible to withhold a fully committed strike once it has been launched.

### SURPRISE

Surprise occurs when an unexpected attack is launched against opponents unaware of the attacker's presence or intention. An ambush would be an example of the former, whilst treacherously turning on an unsuspecting ally during amiable conversation illustrates the latter. The effects of surprise on a target are potent:

- ⇒ The target suffers a -10 penalty to initiative
- ⇒ Until their Strike Rank arrives they are considered flat footed and cannot defend themselves
- ⇒ The first attack, strikes whatever location wished by for by the attacker
- ⇒ For the remainder of the round they may not perform any offensive action

As surprise can be so devastating, targets of such an attack should be permitted a chance to detect the impending conflict. For

instance, an ambush might allow an opposed roll of Perception versus Stealth; or Insight versus Deceit for a betrayal. Difficulty modifiers should be applied in situations where the target is hindered, such as being inebriated or dozing lightly. Conversely a bonus should be applied if the target is suspicious or forewarned. If the target wins the opposed roll then the effects of surprise are negated.

### SWEEP ATTACKS

Sweep attacks occur when weapons or creatures of unusual size attack a closely clumped group of opponents – the scything tail of a huge dragon for example – striking several foes simultaneously. A sweep attack is made by applying a single attack roll of the weapon or creature to all targets in its path. Each defender must resolve the effects of the attack separately and any special effects imposed on the attacker are treated as having occurred concurrently.

Sweep attacks can also be used for other 'area affect' assaults, such as the overhead smash of a giant's tree trunk club or the unstoppable charge of a giant triceratops. The games master decides how many foes are caught in the attack based upon the length or trajectory of weapon and his visualisation of the conflict.

### UNARMED COMBAT

Unarmed combat is the default Combat Style available to any person or creature, which covers the skill of fighting using only the limbs and natural armaments of their own body. Some beasts have a variety of natural weapons, each with a different reach and size, which can make larger creatures particularly dangerous – able to stand off at longer range and still launch blows capable of smashing through the stoutest shields. The unarmed combat techniques used by animals and monsters are examined in more detail in the Creatures chapter.

Although unarmed combat seems superfluous for warriors who utilise weapons, it still provides a number of advantages:

- ⇒ Unarmed combat can be used interchangeably with any other weapon



style, provided the target is within reach of the attacker's natural weapons.

- ⇒ Unarmed combat can be used offensively for either striking or grappling an opponent. It is important for the user to declare which he intends in advance, since the resolution of each is handled slightly differently.
- ⇒ Unarmed combat can be used defensively to parry a weapon attack. Damage is reduced as per normal, according to the comparative Sizes of the natural and wielded weapon. Even if no damage was stopped, the parry attempt might still prevent the defender from suffering one or more Special Effects.

Note that if an unarmed combatant can step within the reach of an armed opponent, he will reduce the effective Size of his opponent's weapon, making it quite possible to parry blows without suffering injury.

#### PARRYING WEAPONS WHILST UNARMED

As previously described a Parry is actually a combination of parrying, blocking, ducking, weaving and footwork to deflect the force of a blow. It is not simply interposing an object into the path of an attack to stop it dead – for example using a forearm to block the sweep of a sword – since such an action would likely result in a mangled arm.

Instead most unarmed and armed combat styles use more subtle techniques to gain maximum deflection for the minimum risk. Examples include, but are not limited to: Pressing against the hand or hilt of a weapon to change its line of attack, stepping very close to cut down angular momentum of swung weapons, deflecting thrusts by knocking aside the point or haft, or even grabbing a weapon on the haft or blade near its grip.

Such methods rely on several points however; firstly that the parrying creature is intelligent enough to understand and utilise said techniques, and secondly that they are within unarmed range. The latter point is perhaps the most crucial and demonstrates the dangers of facing an armed opponent with a longer reach.

#### STRIKING

Using unarmed combat to throw simple damage-inflicting strikes is resolved in the same way as normal weapon attacks. Some Special Effects are specifically reserved for unarmed combat, namely Flurry, Grip and Take Weapon.

Calculating the damage, size and reach of natural weapons depend on the creature Human unarmed attacks, for instance, have a size of Small, reach of Touch, and inflict 1d3 damage.

Some creature's natural weapons and unarmed combat styles may add other effects or impart inherent Special Effects on a successful strike. For example the gripping jaws of a crocodile or the poisoned stinger of a giant scorpion.

#### GRAPPLING

Grappling attacks are resolved using an *opposed roll* of the attacker's Unarmed skill versus the combat skill used by the defender. If the attacker wins then they establish the grapple, but if the defender wins the grapple fails. As with Evade, if one of the combatants achieves one or more levels of success over his opponent, they may select an equal number of Special Effects.

The effects of grappling depend on the location struck. A grappled limb is rendered inoperable whilst grappling the head or torso imposes a difficulty penalty of Hard against any skill the opponent attempts. In addition, on his following turns the grappler may make unarmed attacks to inflict damage (equal to his Damage Modifier) on the body part by crushing, twisting or strangulating it. The defender may oppose with his own Unarmed or Brawn skill in order to reduce or block the damage.

A grapple continues until the victim manages to break free. Escape attempts are performed on the victim's turn using the Struggle combat action. This requires an opposed roll of either Brawn or Unarmed against whichever of the two skills the grappler prefers. If the grappled victim wins, they manage to break free. Note that some attackers using Brawn may be so strong that no amount of



brute force or cunning technique can overcome their grip.

Grappling requires that the limb or appendage is empty and is capable of hooking, sticking or gripping.

### UNUSUAL COMBAT CONDITIONS

There are certain circumstances and environments which may prevent a character from fighting at his full ability. Several are specifically noted below, but other situations may occur which aren't covered by the rules. In such cases the Games Master should apply similar rules as appropriate to the fight. For example, a battle upon a treacherously slippery ice floe may require that combat skills be capped by Acrobatics.

#### CLIMBING

A climbing character has all of his combat skills capped by the value of his Athletics skill. Bipedal characters are limited to fighting with a single limb, requiring the other three to remain clinging to the vertiginous surface they are scaling.

#### SWIMMING

A swimming character has all of his combat skills capped by the value of his Swim skill. Since water (and other fluids) impose significant drag, only thrusting weapons are effective whilst submerged and even those are reduced to half damage. Other weapons are slowed to the point of impotence. Unarmed combat attacks which involve biting, strangulation or ramming are unaffected.

### WEAPON REACH

Weapon Reach and its associated mechanics for Closing and Opening Range are optional rules for those desiring more realistic combat.

In general terms when two combatants face one another armed with weapons of greatly disproportionate reach, the wielder of the longer weapon can keep his opponent at bay, preventing him from attacking. If however, the wielder of the shorter weapon can step inside the effective reach of the longer, then the tables turn and the combatant with the longer weapon will find himself unable to parry with that weapon.

The following rules assume a Reach difference of two or more steps between the longer and shorter weapon. Thus a dagger (Short) against a falchion (Medium) would suffer no penalties in combat, whereas the same dagger against a great axe (Long) would.

#### FIGHTING AT THE LONGER REACH

If fighting at the Reach of the longer weapon, then the user of the shorter weapon cannot directly attack the wielder of the longer, yet are still considered to be engaged.

In this situation the user of the shorter weapon can attack the longer weapon of his opponent, try to close the range between them, or hope to win an applicable Special Effect. If the longer weapon is in fact the natural armament of a creature with superior reach, such as the tentacle of a colossal squid, the user of the shorter weapon can directly attack the limb assaulting them.

The intimidating threat of longer reach is an inherent advantage of two handed weapons, which offsets the disadvantage of not using a shield.

#### FIGHTING AT THE SHORTER REACH

In the converse situation where the fighters are engaged at the Reach of the shorter weapon, the user of the longer weapon will find he cannot parry the attacks of the shorter.

The user of the longer weapon can still attack with the haft or hilt of his now encroached weapon, but its efficacy is significantly reduced. In this circumstance the weapon's Size is reduced as many steps as the difference between the two weapons' Reach, and only inflicts 1d3+1 damage due to the necessity of striking with the haft, pommel, guard from an awkwardly cramped position.

At this point the best option for the user of the longer weapon is to reopen the range between them, draw a shorter backup weapon, defend themselves with their Unarmed skill, or hope to win a useful Special Effect. In a last ditch situation the encroached fighter can attempt to Evade instead.

#### CLOSING RANGE

A character that is being held at range by a longer weapon must close on his opponent



before being able to attack him. Two methods are available to do this.

- ⇒ Close Range Special Effect – automatically closes, but cannot be used unless a character has generated an opportunity for a Special Effect.
- ⇒ Change Range Combat Action – costs an Action Point and is used on a character's Turn.

In the latter case of attempting to Change Range, the character's opponent has two options, described below. In both cases if the opponent has no Action Points left – or chooses not to spend an Action Point – then the attempt to close is automatically successful.

- ⇒ The combatants match Evade skills in an opposed test. If the character initiating the Change Range action wins then he can close the range to a desired distance. If the opponent wins then the existing range is maintained.
- ⇒ However, if the opponent decides to attack the closing character instead, then he must make an opposed roll of his combat skill versus the closing character's Evade skill. If the opponent wins, he strikes the character and any difference in Level of Success results in Special Effects as per normal combat. Whether or not the blow lands, the closing character bridges the distance and gains the advantage of having the shorter weapon.

#### OPENING RANGE

Opening Range works in the same way as Closing Range – but obviously in reverse. The character can use Change Range to completely withdraw from engagement. See Withdrawing below.

#### WITHDRAWING

Withdrawing from a fight means that the character extricates himself from close combat weapon range. This can be done in a myriad of ways, from physically pushing an opponent away, side-stepping a committed attack or unexpectedly taking several large steps

backward. At this point they have not fled the battle entirely, but have briefly opened up enough space to have disengaged that opponent and consider new tactical options.

Withdrawing is automatic when using the Withdraw special effect. Otherwise a character must attempt to break free by use of the Change Range or Outmanoeuvre combat actions, in which case the opponent(s) may resist.

Once he has disengaged himself, the withdrawing character may on his next turn (for the cost of an Action Point):

- ⇒ Reroll his initiative
- ⇒ Flee the battle entirely
- ⇒ Seek out a new opponent to engage
- ⇒ Perform some other suitable act not covered here

## RANGED COMBAT

Ranged combat incorporates all forms of weaponry which require to be shot, thrown or slung to strike their target. The ranged weapons a character can use are listed as part of their combat styles - anything from throwing stones to firing a huge trebuchet.

Ranged attacks are resolved in an identical way to close combat. However, ranged weapons can normally only be parried with shields; those without must rely on natural cover or use Evade to dive out of the line of fire. Thus against lightly armoured foes, ranged weapons can be formidable deterrents.

#### RANGED WEAPON ATTRIBUTES

Each ranged weapon has a number of specific attributes which determine its effectiveness. The ones which have a key bearing on combat are as follows:

##### FORCE

The ranged weapon equivalent of Size. It measures the penetrative power of that weapon or its ammunition to determine whether the blow overcomes a (shield) parry.

##### DAMAGE MODIFIER

This attribute shows whether or not the Damage Modifier of the attacker can be used



RANGED COMBAT SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS

Situation	Difficulty Grade
Light Wind*	Hard
Moderate Wind*	Formidable
Strong Wind*	Herculean
Gale, Storm or Worse*	Hopeless
Target is Running	Hard
Target is Sprinting	Formidable
Target obscured by mist or is in partial darkness	Hard
Target obscured by thick smoke, fog or is in darkness	Formidable
Target is completely obscured	Herculean
Blinded or loss of primary perceptive sense	Hopeless
Target prone	Formidable
Attacker is prone**	Herculean

*\*Assumes the thrown weapon or ammunition is vulnerable to cross-winds; and supersedes the normal penalty imposed by winds on physical skills.*

*\*\*Penalty can be negated if using a crossbow from a prepared position.*

to boost the ranged weapon's damage roll. In general only bows and thrown weapons allow the user to apply their Damage Bonus.

**RANGE**

Three numbers separated by slashes, representing the maximum Close, Effective and Long ranges of the weapon or its ammunition. Close range is the distance over which the Choose Location special effect may be used, provided the target is stationary or unaware of the impending attack. Effective range has no significant modifiers. At long range the weapon can still inflict harm, but the amount of damage is halved and Force is reduced by one step.

**RELOAD**

The time taken to reload or re-cock a weapon which fires ammunition. The Rapid Reload special effect can help reduce this time.

**SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS**

The table above provides some situational modifiers specific to ranged weapons. Where two or more situations are pertinent to the character, use the most severe.

**RANGED COMBAT MECHANICS**

Whilst ranged weapons appear to be extraordinarily potent they do suffer a number of restrictions and have special rules

covering their use. Specific notes concerning ranged attacks are as follows:

**AIMING**

By spending additional time aiming a ranged weapon, a character can potentially increase his chance to hit. Aiming requires an entire Combat Round steadying the weapon and waiting for the best opportunity to release, for example withholding a bowshot for a momentary lull in the wind or until a target moves between two obstructions. By aiming, the character may reduce the difficulty of a Situational Modifier by one grade. Additional rounds spend aiming grant no further advantage.

**DISTANCE PENALTIES**

The difficulty of hitting a target increases rapidly with the distance which separates it from the marksman. Distance is considered independent of a weapon's Range, the latter being the performance characteristics of the weapon over set distances.

Distance penalties can be offset by the size of the target being aimed at. Hitting a mammoth at fifty metres is far easier than hitting a human at the same range. The facing table indicates the difficulty grade adjustment of hitting various sized objects over incremental distances. These stack on top of other ranged combat situational modifiers.

These values assume an active target in the open field. If shooting a static object at a known range, for example a straw butt during





a competition, the Games Master may reduce the difficulty by a step or two.

Whilst there are few creatures which achieve such gargantuan scales, there are other objects which can reach sizes in the hundreds; such as buildings, fortifications and troop formations. On the battlefield the near impossibility of striking a single man is replaced by the use of volley fire, saturating an area densely packed with men; in the hope that a small proportion of projectiles will strike home.

For characters with a more destructive bent, statistics for siege engines are included in the Economics and Equipment chapter.

### FIRING INTO A CROWD

Firing into the swirling ebb and flow of a melee can be a risky business, even for the most proficient marksman. The unpredictable movement of crowds and engaged opponents can easily result in an ally straying into the line of fire, during the time it takes for a ranged weapon to travel the intervening distance to its intended target. Thus there is always a risk of accidentally striking someone other than the original target being aimed at.

When firing at a specific target at the edge of a crowd or melee, the attack suffers a difficulty grade of at least Hard. If trying to fire through a group to hit a target in its midst, or on the other side, the penalty should be raised to Formidable.

The result of the dice roll is very important. A marksman who passes his attack roll despite the difficulty penalty has aimed true and will hit his intended target. If however the marksman fails the roll, but would have succeeded if not for the firing into a crowd

penalty, then an adjacent victim is struck instead. If more than one target is in the line of fire, the Games Master should determine the victim randomly.

No matter who eventually becomes the target – intended or not – if they are aware of the impending attack, they are free to Evade or Parry as normal. Any special effects won as part of the attack only apply to the original target, not any accidentally struck bystander.

### FIRING ON THE MOVE

A character is still permitted to use ranged weapons even whilst mounted on an animal or vehicle. However in these circumstances their combat skill is capped by the Ride or Drive skill of the person controlling the conveyance, which may or may not be the attacker himself. For example an archer riding in a two man chariot would have his attack skill capped by the Drive skill of his driver.

Ranged attacks cannot usually be performed if the attacker himself is moving at a gait faster than a walk, since their aim is constantly thrown off by the physical movement. One exception to this are warriors trained in a Combat Style specialising in Skirmishing, see page 80. However in this case the attacker's attack percentage cannot exceed his Athletics skill.

### IMPALING RANGED ATTACKS

Ranged weapon projectiles which result in an impale, such as an arrow or thrown javelin, clearly cannot be yanked free of the wound on the next turn by the marksman who threw or fired the weapon. However nothing stops a character in close combat with the transfixed victim from subsequently attempting to grab the impaling weapon to tear it free.

TARGET SIZE AND DISTANCE DIFFICULTY ADJUSTMENT TABLE

Distance	SIZ 10 or less	SIZ 11-20	SIZ 21-40	SIZ 41-80	SIZ 81-150	SIZ 151-300
1-20m	1 Step Harder	No Effect	1 Step Easier	1 Step Easier	2 Steps Easier	2 Steps Easier
21-40m	1 Step Harder	1 Step Harder	No Effect	1 Step Easier	1 Step Easier	2 Steps Easier
41-60m	2 Steps Harder	1 Step Harder	1 Step Harder	No Effect	1 Step Easier	1 Step Easier
61-80m	2 Steps Harder	2 Steps Harder	1 Step Harder	1 Step Harder	No Effect	1 Step Easier
81-100m	3 Steps Harder	2 Steps Harder	2 Steps Harder	1 Step Harder	1 Step Harder	No Effect
101-120m	3 Steps Harder	3 Steps Harder	2 Steps Harder	2 Steps Harder	1 Step Harder	1 Step Harder
121-140m	4 Steps Harder	3 Steps Harder	3 Steps Harder	2 Steps Harder	2 Steps Harder	1 Step Harder
Each 20m	Follow table progression					



Note that the Size of an impaled weapon is different from the Force it struck with. Ranged impaling weapons have a special column denoting their actual size when considering the hindrances caused by the Impale special effect.

### LOADING RANGED WEAPONS

Before a ranged weapon can be used it must either be readied or loaded. This can often take significant time, slowing down a ranged combatant's rate of fire.

Throwing weapons, for example javelins, necessitate the weapon be drawn or plucked up in preparation. This normally only requires one turn to complete, as per the Ready Weapon action providing it is within reach. If a second throwing weapon is held in preparation in the off-hand, the caster can swap it over to his throwing hand as a Free Action.

Projectile weapons, such as slings or bows must be loaded. The number of turns it takes to load a ranged weapon is listed in its Reload column on the Ranged Weapons table, page 58.

## HIT LOCATIONS

Most successful unarmed or weapon attacks land on a specific hit location. This can be determined randomly or in some circumstances be selected by Special Effects such as Choose Location. To randomly calculate which location is been hit, roll 1d20 and compare the number rolled with the relevant humanoid or creature Hit Location table.

Animals and monsters usually have slightly different hit location tables than humanoids to reflect their own unique physiology. These are listed as part of each being's description in the Creature chapter. The humanoid Hit Location table is repeated here for ease of reference.

### 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

Note than some attacks, especially magical ones or those produced by particular monsters (a dragon's fiery breath for example) may strike several Hit Locations simultaneously. Individual Hit Locations may be armoured, either from worn protection or the natural toughness of the creature's outer surface. This is important when considering Damage and Wound Levels below.

## DAMAGE AND WOUND LEVELS

If an attack strikes successfully (bypassing or overwhelming a parry), it causes damage according to the damage rating for the weapon (see the statistical entries for close combat and ranged weapons in the Money & Equipment chapter, pages 47 to 58). A shortsword, for instance, inflicts 1d6 damage., whereas a javelin does 1d8+1 damage.

The rolled damage for the weapon or attack is modified by the certain conditions in the specific following order:

- ⇒ Apply the Damage Modifier for the character making the attack
- ⇒ Modify the damage from any weapon enhancing (or reducing) magic
- ⇒ If parried, reduce the damage appropriately as per the comparative weapon sizes
- ⇒ If the hit location is armoured, reduce damage by the Armour Points value

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.

- ⇒ Minor Wound: Hit Location still has positive Hit Points
- ⇒ Serious Wound: Hit Location is reduced to zero Hit Points or below
- ⇒ Major Wound: Hit Location is reduced to a negative score equal or greater than its starting Hit Points

Use the following rules if a location receives a Serious or Major wound. Note that wounds requiring Endurance checks test them in an opposed roll against the value of the original attack roll. This reflects the ability of highly skilled warriors to make more deadly strikes. Endurance rolls are not repeated unless the location is wounded again.

### MINOR WOUND

Minor wounds are cuts, scratches, bruises and sprains. They hurt, may bleed, but are not significant enough to slow down or hamper the victim.

### SERIOUS WOUND

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 or start to cast spells (but can still parry or evade) for the next 1d3 turns 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 Endurance 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 Endurance 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.

At the Games Master's discretion, even if the character remains functional, all tasks requiring use of that body location will suffer an ongoing penalty of one difficulty grade, until the injury is reduced to a Minor Wound.

### MAJOR WOUND

If a location is reduced to a negative score equal or greater than its starting Hit Points, the character receives a Major Wound. 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 Endurance 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 five times his Healing Rate, the character dies from blood loss and shock.

The victim of a Major Wound to the Abdomen, Chest or Head drops unconscious,

### WOUNDING OPPONENTS WITH AN ENDURANCE OVER 100%

When a serious or major wound is inflicted against an opponent that possesses an Endurance over 100%, the opposed test should take into account the penalty applied by the higher skill in the contest.

In those rare cases where Endurance is the higher skill, it is recommended that the penalty is imposed retroactively to attacker's skill – potentially downgrading the success level of the original attack roll.

This does not mean that the attacker missed his attack, merely that the deadliness of the wound is reduced and it becomes far easier for the exceptionally tough victim to win the opposed test; as one would expect if attacking magically augmented heroes or creatures of legendary size and scale, such as dragons.

Although this may seem unfair to the original attacker, remember it will only realistically occur in very few cases where the initial attack roll was very high

totally incapacitated, and must immediately make an opposed test of Endurance 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 Combat Rounds equal to twice his Healing Rate, 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. Depending on the available treatment the wounded location will be potentially maimed (see Healing page 72).



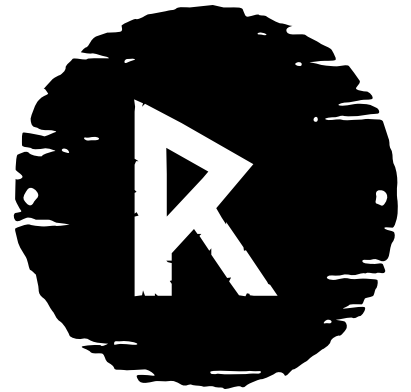
## HEROIC LAST ACTIONS

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 Luck Point. They get a single opportunity to attempt their action, and then immediately collapse into unconsciousness and probable death.

unprepared. Similar to rabble, Underlings use the following guidelines:

- ⇒ Underlings wear moderate amounts of armour
- ⇒ Underlings are freely able to use Special Effects
- ⇒ Underlings have Hit Points equal to one fifth of the CON+SIZ of an average member of that race
- ⇒ Once they receive two injuries, they cease fighting and if possible, withdraw cursing or yelling in fear
- ⇒ If the damage equals or surpasses their Hit Points, they automatically fail the Endurance roll, suffering the effects of a Serious Wound in the location struck
- ⇒ If the damage is double their Hit Points, they die in a gruesomely violent manner
- ⇒ Once half their number are dead or wounded, the rest of the underlings withdraw from the fight

## CHAPTER 8: MAGIC



**M**agic comes in many forms and derives from numerous sources, but all forms of magic have one thing in common: the ability for the user to overcome or manipulate the natural order of the world to achieve specific, supernatural effects. The theist's magic derives from the relationship with his god; the sorcerer's magic derives from the rituals and formulae he has mastered; the animist's magic comes from his relationship with the spirits; and the mystic's magic comes from within himself. Despite their sources and the relationships that drive them, all these magicians are able to perform remarkable feats that are beyond the capabilities of non-practitioners.

### TAILORING MAGIC

Magic is one of the most variable aspects of any roleplaying game. Whilst elements such as how character generation or combat works are ubiquitous no matter what the setting, almost every historical and fantasy genre has its own idiosyncratic style of magic – how

it is prepared, cast and the scale of effect it can produce.

To ensure flexible adaptability, magic in RUNEQUEST has been given a range of options so that it can support a wide array of settings and styles. The following sections describe different alternatives with which magic can be tweaked. These suggestions are intended to inspire Games Masters to create unique magical ecologies, helping to overcome issues where a default system may appear at odds with the setting concept the Games Master wishes to model.

Although at first glance the range of options may seem somewhat overwhelming, there are in fact only a few core considerations required:

- ⇒ What magical disciplines are available?
- ⇒ What magical traditions control magic?
- ⇒ How many magical abilities do traditions provide?
- ⇒ How long does magic take to cast?
- ⇒ How is magical energy generated and recovered?
- ⇒ Can characters start with magic?



## R

**THE GM'S SAGA**

*Further detailing his campaign world, Steve the Games Master develops the traditions which will teach and control magic. He constrains the practice of each discipline thusly:*

*Folk Magic is taught as both an adjunct to religious cults and via individual teachers, such as hedge wizards or witches.*

*Theism is jealously guarded by the innumerable cults which propitiate the gods. Each of the city states has its own unique patron deity, the temple to which acts as the cult centre for that god. The Badoshi on the other hand have a pantheon of seven demons which is universally worshipped by all the tribes.*

*Steve decides that he'd like his setting's religious cults to grant a wide range of powers. Selecting the Magic Rich category allows each to provide between 7-9 miracles; tweaking the actual number dependent on the importance and central role of the tradition.*

*Since Theism is the dominant form of magic in the campaign world, Steve also grants each divine cult an*

**MAGICAL DISCIPLINES**

Although R<sup>U</sup>N<sup>E</sup>Q<sup>U</sup>E<sup>S</sup>T provides comprehensive coverage of five distinct magical types (which for ease of reference are called disciplines), the Essentials rules only cover the magical disciplines of Folk Magic and Theism.

These disciplines provide a unique and interesting style of magic, yet a campaign does not have to include any of them. Games Masters should consider whether each discipline is suitable for his game setting.

For example a campaign based on pseudo-Medieval Europe might only include Folk Magic as a type of witchcraft; whereas a more fantastical game world could be based upon warring city-states, each ruled by a patron god and its theist priests. Indeed, a historical campaign might lack magic altogether!

Note that every discipline of magic has its own strengths and weaknesses, and are not necessarily balanced with one another.

**FOLK MAGIC**

Folk Magic is the most basic form of magic available and is usually associated with hedge wizards, witches, wise women, and so forth. These are simple spells and cantrips that offer limited magical effects and can, where permissible, be used by anyone. Folk Magic is frequently taught by communities from an early age with the types of spells reflecting community necessities. This means that the Folk Magic taught by a Barbarian culture will differ to that taught by a Civilised one. Folk Magic is also taught by some professions or cults to aid their members in their jobs and duties. Folk Magic can therefore be accessible and available to all – in theory. In practice, Folk Magic might be heavily restricted depending on the campaign setting.

**THEISM**

Theists draw their magic from their gods. As the gods are manifestations of the runes they are able to work powers based on those runes that form part of their make-up: theists, through worship and devotion, channel these runic powers in the form of miracles and thus gain the ability to work similar powers in the

mundane world – albeit in a much diluted form. A worshipper of the Storm God might be able to summon lightning; a worshipper of the sun god might be able to create brilliant daylight even in the midst of the blackest night. The magic theists can call upon is always based on the nature of the god or pantheon being worshipped and, more specifically, on the rune (or runes) those entities command. The strength of devotion to a god has a direct impact on the power of the magic worked; assuming that the deity retains some awareness of his worshippers, maintaining a cordial relationship with the god is necessary to receive its power.

**MAGICAL TRADITIONS**

Although people may be born with the capacity to work magic to greater or lesser degrees, the actual skill of using it is normally taught and cultivated via some kind of social organisation; such as a cult, order or a mentor. These are known collectively as traditions. For example, the Cult of Myceras and the Cult of the Seven Badoshi Devils are both traditions based upon religious organisations, but worship different gods and teach their priest-hoods different miracles.

Some traditions are not limited to providing a single discipline of magic, but can combine two or more. A theist order could offer both Folk Magic and Theism to its members; the former providing petty cantrips to lower ranking initiates, whilst acolytes and above are taught more potent spells of the higher art.

It should also be noted that membership of a tradition need not necessarily grant access to magic. One could be a faithful worshipper of Myceras and hold the rank of lay member in his cult, yet still have no ability to cast theistic magic.

As part of setting up the magical traditions in a campaign Games Masters should give some thought to what type of organisation or social groups will provide it. For example, cults, guilds, social castes, individual teachers or even members of specific race or species.

## SPELLS BY ORGANISATION

	Low Magic	Medium Magic	Magic Rich
Number of spells, spirits, miracles, talents etc an organisation possesses:	1d3	1d3+3	1d3+6

## HOW MANY ABILITIES?

Abilities are the spells, talents, miracles or spirits provided by magical traditions. The number of abilities a tradition offers is completely setting-specific. A world in which cult theocracies rule entire nations may offer more miracles to its priesthood than a setting where grimoires of sorcery are exceptionally rare, each containing but a single spell. Several elements can adjust the amount and proclivity of abilities available to a tradition.

Firstly, traditions normally structure the learning path of the magical abilities they provide. Members only gain access to more potent magics at higher levels of achievement and rank. For example; if a theist order knows the particularly deadly spell Sever Spirit, it is highly unlikely that it will be taught to students until they have attained a certain degree of knowledge, maturity and seniority to be entrusted with its power and secrets.

Secondly, traditions may teach more than one type of magic. A cult might combine Folk Magic with Theism for instance, granting a broader range of abilities. In this case the Games Master can grant a similar number of abilities per discipline, or limit the number given to the more powerful one.

A Games Master should consider how versatile he wishes magic to be in his setting and adjust the number and availability of abilities to suit. But, as a rule of thumb, use the Spells by Organisation table (above) as a guide:

In selecting what magical abilities are available, balance is key. Just because a spell, miracle, talent or spirit is listed in RUNEQUEST does not mean that everyone should have access to it. Create spell lists; choose wisely. Don't feel compelled to use every ability found in these rules. Indeed, some can be exceptionally powerful. If Games Masters feel these would destabilise his game then they should be either be omitted completely, or reserved for potent non-player characters.

Thus it is probably unwise to allow players to devise their own traditions and spell lists – at least not without Games Master guidance and approval.

## CASTING TIMES

By default each type of magic in RUNEQUEST has a casting time of mere seconds. Whilst this permits magicians to utilise their powers more freely, especially in combat situations, it can pose some problems when trying to replicate the feeling of extreme effort it often takes for magic to be cast in some genres.

There are several methods of handling this issue:

- ⇒ Grant casters the ability to roll an Easy skill check if spending one minute in preparation, or Very Easy if spending an hour, but only for the purposes of casting the spell (and any subsequent resistance checks)
- ⇒ Increase the default base casting time from Turns to Rounds, Minutes, Hours or even Days instead
- ⇒ As above, but in duress allow a magician to speed up casting at a skill penalty of one difficulty grade per time frame advanced

Of course ritualistic casting times need not be universally applied to all magical disciplines, which can grant one type of magic a significant speed advantage over others. This will have a significant on a campaign setting, but can create some rather unusual, yet entertaining, twists in how magic is utilised.

Games Masters should take care when applying ritualistic casting times. Although it can add ambience to a setting, players with magic-using characters may feel hampered by increased preparation times and some magical abilities may lose a degree of applicability if they cannot be cast near instantaneously.



*additional 7-9 Folk Magic charms in addition to their full range of 7-9 miracles. This substantially augments the potency of theistic cults in comparison to traditions based on other types of magic, but Steve thinks it will give his setting a uniquely distinct flavour.*

*Although Steve likes the idea of making all magic long and difficult to cast, he finally chooses to go with the default casting times but keeping the option to boost the casting chance if spending additional time in preparation; since he wants magic to be an active part of the to-and-fro of combat.*



### THE GM'S SAGA

*Since Steve is seeking a Sword and Sorcery vibe for his game, he selects the following options as the source of Magic Points in his world.*

*Sacrifice: Any magician may gather Magic Points from the ritual sacrifice of a living creature. The sacrifice of sapient beings is permitted, even in the city states, provided the victim is a criminal, war captive or willing volunteer.*

*Veneration: In the campaign it is not merely limited to theistic deities, but can also be used during totemic veneration or even ceremonial propitiation of otherworld demonic entities too.*

*Magical Location: Any spot considered sacred is also a source of magical energy. This mainly applies to major temples or other totemic sites of worship which are built on places of mythological significance. The amount of Magic Points provided depends on the scale of the temple.*

*Steve specifically does not choose 'Self' as an option, since he wishes to restrict the flow of magical energy – making every spell and miracle a significant expenditure. This in*

In general, increasing the length of casting times will turn magic into a more thoughtfully applied tool – rather than a method of applying greater firepower – and encourages careful planning. It can generate a huge amount of atmosphere, especially if the magician must augment this preparation time with the inscription of magical sigils, tossing of powders, use of ritualised objects or even singing and dancing.

## MAGICAL ENERGY

Although knowledge of magical powers may be prevalent in a setting, it does not automatically follow that the magical energy required to invoke them is as widespread, or even available. Having the skill to transform a man into a leopard is useless if you don't have the energy to cast the spell or request the miracle from the gods.

Whilst every character has an attribute known as Magic Points, derived from their characteristic POW, this merely represents the capacity to hold or store magical energy, not necessarily the ability to generate their own.

Of all the considerations required to tailor RUNEQUEST magic to a campaign setting, where magical energy comes from (and how to recover it) is perhaps the most important.

### WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Magical energy should come from a particular source as defined by the campaign setting. The following options need not be generic; for example some types of magic might require particular sources different from each other. Also the setting might permit a few sources to be used in combination, so that there are several methods of gathering Magic Points.

Characters must have access to the source of their magical energy to be able to regain expended Magic Points. If they do not, then points used in the process of casting spells or using magical abilities cannot be regained until the source is obtained.

#### SELF

Here, the character attracts and stores magical energy from the world around him. Recovering Magic Points is simply a matter of

resting and letting his body absorb the natural magical emanations of the world or as part of his relationship with the runes, until his points are restored. He need do nothing else. This has been considered the default source of Magic Points in previous editions of RUNEQUEST, but Games Masters should not feel limited by it.

#### SACRIFICE

Sacrifice is a common trope of both the Sword & Sorcery genre and historical religious practices. It requires the ritualised death of a 'victim' to produce a number of Magic Points, which can then be sent to an otherworld entity such as a god, spirit or demon in order to propitiate them; or the magical energy can be absorbed by the person performing the sacrifice.

The amount of magical energy produced by such an act is an important consideration. Traditionally the most minimal sacrifices are livestock animals, whilst the most potent are sapient beings. With that in mind, RUNEQUEST assumes as a default that the amount of Magic Points harvested by a being's death is equal to their POW. This can be raised or lowered as deemed fitting for the setting.

Although at face value this may appear to provide a boundless source of Magic Points, there are several important limitations to keep in mind. Firstly very few cultures or societies have 'excess' livestock available for the purposes of ritual offerings. In places where animals are freely available for purchase, then the requirement becomes a question of finances, as a horse or cow is not a cheap commodity.

Secondly each cult is likely to have a specific type of creature it requires as the preferred sacrificial victim, meaning that killing the wrong beast may net the character no Magic Points at all. Even if the correct species of creature is located, it may be required to be in perfect health, possess an unblemished skin, be of a particular colour and so on. Once these factors are taken into consideration, it is doubtful that adventuring priests, sorcerers or shamans would travel about with a string of such animals in tow, which will require care, feeding, guarding and so on.



Note that those magicians seeking sapient victims for sacrifice had better belong to a culture which supports such activities. Needless killing of prisoners or slaves for the purposes of invoking magic has dark connotations, especially when that magic is used for personal gain rather than being intended for the care and protection of the community.

### HOW MANY MAGIC POINTS FOR SACRIFICING A...

Sacrificial Magic Points are a perfect way to represent the transference or generation of magical power in many historical or gritty Sword & Sorcery settings. Using this method however, will prompt the frequently asked question of 'How much magic is this creature worth?'

As a general rule of thumb, Games Masters should treat tiny animals, especially those which can be raised en-mass (such as doves) as capable of only producing a single Magic Point. Small animals (snakes, cats etc) as only generate 1d3 Magic Points, medium sized creatures (goats, pigs, and so on) produce 1d6 Magic Points, and large animals (cows, bulls, horses) 2d6 Magic Points. Only truly huge, magical or sapient creatures should provide 3d6 MPs or more.

### MAGICAL LOCATIONS

Here, a geographical place or physical structure acts as a conduit for natural magical energy which individuals can then absorb, replenishing diminished resources. The individual must spend a given period of time at this location, resting, praying, meditating and so on, for Magic Points to accrue. How much magic depends on the strength of the place and its environment. Some locations may only provide Magic Points to particular types of magical disciplines – e.g. sacred groves might only produce Magic Points for witches.

Give a location a Magical Strength of either 25%, 50%, 75% or 100%, depending on its size and importance. The Magical Strength is the percentage of a character's Magic Points that can be regained. For example, a character with a normal stock of 16 Magic Points spending

time at a shrine with Magical Strength of 25% would only be able to recover back to a level of four Magic Points.

The amount of time taken to replenish Magic Points should depend on the overall strength of magic in the campaign. See Recovering Magic Points below for guidance.

### DESTRUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

These work in similar ways to Magical Locations. The thing destroyed or consumed should be given a Magical Strength of 25%, 50%, 75% or 100%, depending on its quality, purity, and other crucial factors. When destroyed or imbibed, Magic Points are recharged back up to the level indicated by the percentage, at the rates suggested in the Recovering Magic Points section..

### VENERATION

Characters who orchestrate the ceremonial worship of supernatural beings are able to tap into magical energy produced by the worshippers. Others, who attain the status of heroes and demigods, may even use the veneration of themselves as a source of Magic Points. The amount of Magical Strength provided by each ritualised ceremony is dependent on the number of people who offer veneration, as follows:

Less than 100:	25%
100-999:	50%
1000-9,999:	75%
10,000 or more:	100%

### RECOVERING MAGIC POINTS

How quickly Magic Points return is vital to the feel of a campaign. Rapid return allows potent powers to be thrown about with impunity, whereas slow recovery makes each act of magic an important decision and rare occurrence.

Only some sources of Magic Points permit natural recovery: Self, Locations and Veneration. These assume complete rest, comfort and freedom from threat or stress. Camping in an occupied dungeon or resting in the wilderness during the depths of winter would prevent recovery; whereas returning

*turn forces professional magicians to rely to a greater degree on their mundane skills and wits*

*In counterbalance to his desire to grant each magical tradition a wide range of abilities, Steve settles on a slow rate of recovery. 1 Magic Point per day for resting at Magical Locations and incidental Magic Point recovery for Veneration (only on sacred holy days). This makes Sacrifice the obvious method for rapid Magic Point recovery, assuming a suitable victim can be found.*

*To round things off, Steve makes running out of Magic Points no worse than Fatigue Accrual. With magical energy so scant, he foresees that the player characters will be burning every single last point available to them*



to somewhere safe and sheltered like an inn would permit it.

- ⇒ 1 Magic Point per hour – Good for Magic Rich campaigns
- ⇒ 1 Magic Point per day – Good for Medium Magic campaigns
- ⇒ 1 Magic Point per week – Good for Low Magic campaigns
- ⇒ Magic Points return at particular conjunctions – This option is perfect for settings with strong celestial or religious overtones, the Magic Points of a source only being available at specific times, such as those tapped from Veneration occurring on holy days sacred to that god, or magic from a megalithic stone circle flowing when the moon is full.

Whilst Medium or Low Magic recovery rates appear to be crippling for player character magicians, they do emphasise the rarity of magic in some genres. On the other hand they offer a balanced game when characters have access to some of the most potent spells.

In fact the slow Magic Point recovery of a Low Magic campaign is perfect for campaigns involving antagonists armed with deadly magic, allowing characters to survive the wrathful persecution of say, an evil high priestess, if after casting a couple of powerful spells she has to recover for several months before trying her diabolical magic again.

#### THE RULE OF RECOVERY

As a general guideline, it is suggested that characters cannot recover more Magic Points than what is naturally produced by the local environment or their last 'recharge'. Thus a character who rests in a magical location which can produce 50% of his magical strength, cannot visit several of these places in succession in order to completely regenerate his Magic Points. Neither can a magician sacrifice several goats in sequence and add each offering together to fully top up.

The same principle applies to settings where several different forms of magical power generation exist in parallel. A character

who recuperates at a dolman, performs a sacrifice and is venerated by his army of worshippers may only recover as many Magic Points as provided by the most productive of those three sources.

Of course, games in which magicians recover Magic Points naturally should ignore this rule, at least where it applies to the number of Magic Points generated from self.

#### RUNNING OUT OF MAGIC POINTS

The consequences of running out of Magic Points are, again, a campaign decision and should be dependent on the setting. RUNEQUEST's default position is that, when Magic Points reach zero, no more spells or magical abilities can be used, but there are no further consequences for the character.

Additional options are offered below:

#### FATIGUE ACCRUAL

Characters can continue to cast magic or use magical abilities, but gain one level of Fatigue for each Magic Point expended in the spell or ability attempted. Note that in certain circumstances this could kill the caster if a fumble is rolled.

#### WILLPOWER

On reaching zero Magic Points the magician must make a successful Willpower roll to remain conscious. He is not prevented from trying to cast a new spell, but each subsequent attempt requires a new Willpower roll, at an additional difficulty penalty. Thus the second check is Hard, the third Formidable and so on. If the magician fails they collapse into unconsciousness for a random number of days up to the number of Willpower checks taken (so failing the third check would be 1d3 days of unconsciousness).

#### ENDURANCE OR DIE

Reaching zero Magic Points represents the exhaustion of life-force. The magician must make a successful Endurance roll or die, his psychic reserves having being spent completely. If the magician rolls a critical success he regains 1 Magic Point immediately.



# CHARACTERS AND MAGIC

RUNEQUEST does not automatically assume that everyone can use magic or, even if they can, have access to it. Magic is not a right and nor should it be. Achieving any skill in magic usually requires following a career that teaches it as a specific discipline. This is certainly very true of the higher magical paths such as Theism. It may be possible for characters to have a smattering of Folk Magic spells if this fits with the setting and level of magic within it. Generally magic should be something to be marvelled at, respected and feared.

## BECOMING A MAGICIAN

Unless magic is ubiquitous within a campaign, not all characters begin with the knowledge or capability to perform magic. As can be seen in the Careers and Development chapter, the specific skills required to learn magic are by default restricted to certain professions. Of course that need not be the case in all settings, but it works as a general guideline.

There are a number of deliberations a Game Master must work out prior to allowing magic using characters to be created.

*Is the ability to use magic restricted to a particular inborn gift? If so:*

- ⇒ Does the gift need to be nurtured during childhood to bring it to fruition, or can it be trained at any time of life?
- ⇒ How extraordinary is the gift, is it commonplace or ultra rare?
- ⇒ Does possession of the gift grant instant access to particular cults or brotherhoods?
- ⇒ If formal training is unavailable, can magicians teach themselves?

*If magic is available to anyone provided they have the knowledge then:*

- ⇒ Do cults, brotherhoods and so on restrict access to it to preserve their own power base?
- ⇒ Is membership of such an organisation restricted to a certain social class, career, culture and so on?
- ⇒ How far is magic taught by the culture the character belongs to?

## STARTING MAGIC

Characters permitted to learn magic start with knowing a number of abilities (spells, miracles, spirits or talents) based upon the value of the appropriate magical skill in that tradition (Binding, Devotion, Folk Magic, Invocation or Mysticism). Once the game begins they are restricted in what additional abilities they can learn and when they can learn them.

At character generation, a magician character knows one relevant spell or ability for each 20% (or part thereof) he has in his magical skill.

## LEARNING NEW ABILITIES

Once a character enters the game, learning further abilities must be paid for by the investment of Experience Rolls and a commensurate amount of study time. As previously mentioned, Games Masters may wish to limit the availability of certain abilities according to cult rank, ensuring that characters learn the secrets of their path in a particular order, withholding the most potent abilities until the cult deems them responsible enough to be trusted with such knowledge.

The values provided in the table are merely suggestions. These can be changed if necessary, since they are important advancements both to personal power and progression within a tradition, and costs should be significant. However, a character can break down



## THE GM'S SAGA

*Steve decides that magicians are rare and exalted, requiring specialised training from childhood. Access to higher magical powers is restricted to characters that pursue a specific magical profession, specifically those who take the mystic, priest, sorcerer or shaman careers. However, he likes the idea of Folk Magic being somewhat more commonplace, but restricted to those who those who devote themselves to a specific cult or possess a mentor willing to teach them.*

*As an illiterate barbarian from the far north and untrained in the magical arts, Zamothis is incapable of learning Theism. He even shuns Folk Magic since his low POW characteristic nets him few Magic Points with which to cast such petty spells.*

*On the other hand Khujaka, sworn enemy of Zamothis, serves the Cult of the Seven Badoshi Devils, having been initiated into the religion as a boy and raised among its priesthood. He now knows many of the cult's most secret miracles.*

## EXPERIENCE ROLL AND TIME COSTS

	Type	Experience Rolls	Time
Folk Magic	Cantrip/Charm	3	1 Week
Theism	Miracle	5	1 Month

the total investment of time and Experience Rolls into instalments over several sessions.

At some point magician characters are likely to have learned all the abilities provided by their cult, school or path. Depending upon the game world, this need not be the end of their magical development. A character might be able to join a new cult, find another cache of sequestered knowledge or even seek tuition by a more renowned master. Such efforts require the starting of another skill specific to the philosophy of the new tradition.

### LEARNING NEW TRADITIONS

Nothing prevents a character from joining a new tradition, provided that:

- ⇒ The new tradition uses the same magical discipline, for example a theist cult can only join other theistic traditions
- ⇒ There is no antipathy between the new tradition and any others the character may already be a member of
- ⇒ The Games Master is willing to permit the character to join a new tradition

This assumes that magic cannot simply be learned by anyone who decides to start studying it. In this case there may be no restriction to joining traditions which teach new styles of magic, save for the usual conflicts of interest. Games Masters should beware of characters learning multiple magical disciplines if this does not suit their campaign setting.

## USING MAGIC

RUNEQUEST uses a number of default assumptions concerning the casting of magic. Since the same fundamental concepts are utilised by each discipline, they have been collated here for easy reference and avoid unnecessary duplication.

The following rules are intended to be globally applied to all of the magical disciplines – namely Folk Magic, Animism, Mysticism, Sorcery and Theism. However, as with all of the guidelines offered in this chapter, the Games Master is free to tinker with these as desired so that they fit with his play style and campaign setting.

### CASTING REQUIREMENTS

Whether the passionate entreaties of a theist calling upon his god or the esoteric hand movements of a mystic, all magical disciplines are assumed to use ritual words and gestures to aid in the focussing of concentration required for their proper incantation.

By default the following freedoms are required:

- ⇒ Clear thought, unclouded by detrimental magic, narcotics or emotional stress
- ⇒ The ability to gesture or symbolise with at least one free hand
- ⇒ The ability to make appropriate vocal sounds to invoke the formulae or request
- ⇒ The ability to accurately perceive or sense a potential target, if the spell has to be targeted

Where one or more of these are denied to a magician, each missing element increases the difficulty grade of the appropriate magic skill. A hedge wizard who is bound and blindfolded could attempt to cast Folk Magic, but does so at a Formidable grade. With enough penalties it may become impossible to perform any form of magic.

### RESTRICTED ACTIONS DURING CASTING

Whilst performing magic, no matter what discipline, characters are only able to:

- ⇒ Move at a maximum of walking pace
- ⇒ Perform Free or Reactive Actions

Therefore characters cannot attack any foes whilst preparing a spell, or make any attempt to run or indeed perform any other skill. This reflects the deliberation needed to focus on the spell and channel the energy for it to have its desired effect.

At the Games Master's discretion, some reactive actions such as parrying or evading may make completing a spell more difficult due to disruptions incurred to the normally required somatic gestures or mental focus.



## INTERRUPTING CASTING

All types of magic have casting times measured in Turns. This means a magician performing more complex invocations can be slowed down in their casting by reacting to threats which eat up their available Action Points. However, unless the caster suffers some dramatic shock, all this does is delay the final completion of the magic.

To totally disrupt casting normally requires that the magician be injured or mentally suborned. The chance of this depends on the precise circumstances:

- ⇒ Minor Wounds force the caster to make a Willpower check, failure makes the casting one difficulty grade harder
- ⇒ Serious Wounds force the caster to make a Willpower check, passing makes the casting one grade harder, whilst failing makes it two grades harder
- ⇒ Major Wounds automatically causes the casting roll to fail
- ⇒ Succumbing to mental domination automatically causes the casting roll to fail

## DISMISSING ONE'S OWN MAGIC

Characters can dismiss any magic they have personally cast as a Free Action. No roll is needed for dismissing a spell; simply the decision needed to cease its effects.

## STACKING MAGIC

In all circumstances, magic of different disciplines cannot be stacked together to

produce greater effects. Thus a Folk Magic spell cannot add its effect to that produced by a theist Miracle for example. In addition, magic of the same discipline which has a similar purpose cannot be stacked. So two weapon enhancement magics such as Fireblade and Bladesharp cannot work together.

In situations where two incompatible spells are in simultaneous existence, the magic with the greater Intensity take precedence, suppressing or subsuming the lesser magic. Where both magics are of equal Intensity, the newer magic replaces the previous one

## MAGNITUDE AND INTENSITY

These two terms are methods of describing the potency of magic. Magnitude is used to see how difficult it is to dispel the magic whereas Intensity reflects its level of effect. More detail concerning these terms is described for each discipline.

Although Intensity (and sometimes Magnitude) are based upon the value of a magical skill, they are not modified by any difficulty grades applied to the casting roll. For example, the Intensity of a sorcery spell is one tenth of the sorcerer's Invocation skill, no matter whether the casting roll is Easy, Hard or even Herculean..

## ENDURING MAGIC COSTS

As a general rule, the Magic Points attribute (or pool) of a magician is temporarily reduced by the cost of all his ongoing active magic. He is unable to start recovering Magic Points used to cast a spell (or similar ability) until that magic is dismissed or expires.



## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

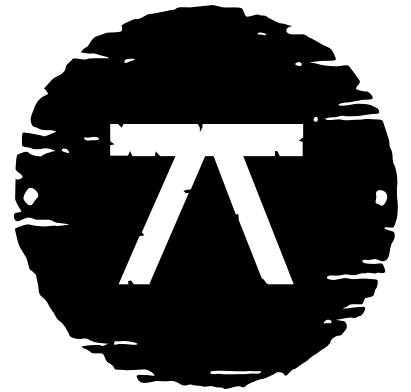
*Eventually tiring of his adventurous life, Zamothis decides to settle in the preeminent city-state of Meeros. As a famed warrior and weapon master, he is extended an invitation to join the Cult of Myceras. Along with granting Meerish citizenship, the cult also provides access to certain miracles to those lay members who have the funds to pay for the god's direct intervention.*

*Thus Zamothis presents himself dressed in his full bronze panoply at the Grand Temple of Myceras. Within its dark and mysterious inner sanctum he is initiated into the cult, as part of a sacred ritual. The blood of a bull, purchased with his own silver and drawn to the temple by his own hand, is spilled. Narcotic incense inhaled and frightful oaths are sworn. At its conclusion a mighty gong is struck and Myceras shows his acceptance of Zamothis, who is welcomed into the cult (and Meeros's) ranks.*





## CHAPTER 9: FOLK MAGIC



**F**olk Magic is the lowest level of magic available to R<sup>U</sup>N<sup>E</sup>Q<sup>U</sup>E<sup>S</sup>T characters. Depending on the setting Folk Magic represents:

- ⇒ Simple cantrips and spells taught within a community to aid daily chores and tasks
- ⇒ The magic of hedge wizards and witches who have not exposed themselves to the higher forms of magic
- ⇒ A magical tradition with wide accessibility but a relatively low level of power

Although Folk Magic might appear to be weak in comparison with magical approaches such as animism, theism and sorcery it can, if used wisely, be a very powerful tool. The balance comes in its relative ubiquity: Folk Magic may be more commonplace and easier to learn which leads to a wider range of use whilst not necessarily being confined to specialists.

### THE NATURE OF FOLK MAGIC

Folk Magic is an unseen force that permeates the world and is not derived from the gods but is an echo of the very earliest stages of creation. Maybe it comes from life force, geomancy or perhaps the cosmic runes, but, whatever its source, its power is ubiquitous to those who know how to tap it.

Folk Magicians have attuned their senses to this faint resonance, tapping into the background energy to work magic on mundane things around them. In worlds where magic is limited, these magicians are valued for the small charms and blessings they can provide to their community. In settings where it is more commonplace, people use petty magics to ease their lives, aiding them in daily chores.

Since the focus of Folk Magic is to reduce effort or augment comfort, few of its spells are overtly specialised in the ways of death and combat. Those arts are left to practitioners of higher magics.





## THE SAGA OF ZAMOTHIS

*As a hunter and warrior Zamothis has never learned any Folk Magic as its teaching has traditionally been restricted to the priesthood of multitudinous cults or the occasional wise man or woman in more remote, uncivilised regions.*

*Since Folk Magic is a relatively simple combination of minor charms and superstitions, Zamothis could technically learn the skill; unlike the more potent miracles of the gods which only those who dedicate their entire lives to the gods can master.*

*Zamothis however, has a very poor opinion of petty spells, deeming them impotent against a sharp sword backed by an iron will. Thus he shuns such knowledge and never tries to learn its occult secrets.*

*Of course his low POW of 5 might also have something to do with it...*

## ACCESS TO FOLK MAGIC

Given its nature Folk Magic can be accessed in a number of different ways:

- ⇒ Through a culture reflecting secrets known by a social group.
- ⇒ Through a career representing knowledge used by a vocation.
- ⇒ Through a cult or brotherhood that has, over time, mastered these magical forces.
- ⇒ Through an individual practitioner who may be willing to share their knowledge.

Games Masters need to decide how Folk Magic is made available. It might be very common, with every cultural group having access to certain spells that aid and support daily life. Or it might be restricted to specific groups or individuals, with the uninitiated aware of its existence but unable to use it. Depending on the campaign setting, not every character can or should have access to magic.

## STARTING FOLK MAGIC

As an exception to the general rule of thumb, characters from careers which specialise in Folk Magic may start with a number of spells equal to one tenth of their Folk Magic skill.

In campaigns where everyday people are permitted to pick up the skill as a hobby or as part of their cult or culture, non-magical career characters only start with the default number of spells as described in the previous chapter (see Starting Magic on page 113).

These default values may be changed as the Games Master desires.

## LEARNING FOLK MAGIC

Folk Magic is usually taught by someone skilled in its use. If available culturally or professionally then such teachers are likely to have taught Folk Magic during a character's formative years. If being learned during the course of a campaign, it costs three Experience Rolls and takes one week to learn a new Folk Magic spell.

Learning spells may also come with a monetary cost – depending on the teacher and perhaps the spell. Precise costs will be dependent on circumstances, but as a general rule it costs 100 Silver of goods or services per spell. Games Masters should adjust the base cost according to how common Folk Magic is generally, who is teaching it, and whether or not the student has the benefit of cult or brotherhood membership, special friendships and so on. Tuition in Folk Magic may also be free in certain circumstances: attaining a particular rank in a cult, say, or in recognition of services rendered.

For example a Healing cult might offer tuition in the Heal spell at a rate of 50 Silvers to its members; whereas a local witch might offer to teach the spell at a base rate of 150 Silvers to the same student. A mother might even offer to teach her child the spell for free when he or she leaves home for the wide world.

## USING FOLK MAGIC

Folk Magic takes only a single Turn to cast. Each spell costs one Magic Point which is deducted from the Magic Point total whenever it is successfully cast. Casting any spell successfully requires a Folk Magic roll. The Folk Magic skill covers every spell a character knows. Thus, a character with Folk Magic 70% would cast all their Folk Magic spells at this level: Folk Magic spells do not have discrete skill ratings.

If the Folk Magic roll is a...

- ⇒ Critical Success: the spell's Magic Point cost is zero.
- ⇒ Success: the caster loses 1 Magic Point, and the spell works successfully.
- ⇒ Failure: the caster loses 1 Magic Point, but the spell does not work.
- ⇒ Fumble: the caster loses 1d3 Magic Points for the spell and the spell fails to work.

Due to their minor or petty nature, all Folk Magic spells have a default Intensity and Magnitude of 1.



## LIMITS TO FOLK MAGIC CAPACITY

Characters have no actual limit to the number of Folk Magic spells they can learn, provided that the Games Master permits them to have access to new ones. Such knowledge might be restricted or unavailable in the game world.

## FOLK MAGIC SPELLS

Folk Magic spells are defined by various traits defining the effects of the spell and any particular limitations. Every spell is different with some having fewer traits than others.

### DURATION OF FOLK MAGIC SPELLS

Unless a spell has either the Concentration or Instant traits it has a natural duration which lasts the entire scene or action for which the spell was used. A few spells have custom durations noted in the spell's definition. For example, using Pathway to traverse a section of thorny and overgrown woodland would last until the terrain clears and the spell is no longer necessary.

### FOLK MAGIC TRAITS

Folk Magic Traits are as follows:

#### CONCENTRATION

The spell's effects remain in place as long as the caster continues to concentrate on maintaining it. Concentration requires the caster to be free of all physical and mental distractions: any such disturbance interrupts the concentration, resulting in the spell's immediate dismissal.

#### INSTANT

The spell's effects happen immediately. It has no duration.

#### RANGED

Spells with the Ranged trait can be cast at a distance of up to the character's Folk Magic score in metres. The caster must know the location of the target, such as 'hiding behind the door': if they are unable to directly see or sense the target of the spell, then the Folk Magic roll becomes one grade harder.

#### RESIST (ENDURANCE, EVADE, WILLPOWER)

Any spell that is not readily accepted by a target can be actively resisted using either Endurance, Evade or Willpower, as determined by this trait. To successfully resist a spell, the target must win an opposed roll of the relevant skill against the caster's Folk Magic casting result. If the target fails in the opposed roll then the spell takes effect as normal. Note that resisting is usually a passive action if Endurance or Willpower are the being used. If a spell requires the target to Evade then it costs an Action Point to make the Evade attempt. Targets without Action Points to spend in evading will therefore be powerless against the spell's effect.

#### TOUCH

The caster must be in physical contact with the target whilst the spell is cast. If a target is intent on resisting physical contact then the caster will most likely fail to complete his spell unless some specific circumstance prevents the target's withdrawal, such as surprise or the Grip special effect. A touch spell merely needs to contact the target or its carried accoutrements in order to work.

#### TRIGGER

Trigger spells can be cast successfully but have their effects delayed by the caster. If the spell is not triggered during the scene it dissipates naturally.

## SPELLS

### ALARM

#### *Special Duration*

Casting Alarm on a location such as a room or small clearing creates a temporary psychic bond between the area and the caster. If the area is accessed by a living creature with a SIZ greater than 1, the caster is automatically made aware that something has transgressed no matter how great the distance. The Alarm is usually a distinct tingling sensation or mental twinge which will awaken the caster. Alarm can also be used on an individual object, triggering when touched or moved.



The spell does not determine who or what has crossed the alarmed threshold and neither does it prevent ingress. It lasts until triggered, but the Magic Point used to cast it does not recover until the spell is dismissed or concludes naturally. Once activated Alarm must be cast again.

### APPRAISE

*Instant, Touch*

Appraise allows the immediate assessment of the quality of physical goods of combined ENC or SIZ equal to the caster's POW. The spell determines whether or not identical looking items are of the same or similar quality, or if one or more is either flawed or of a higher quality. The spell does not work on organic things, only on inanimate objects. Neither does it determine what flaws or enhancements are present; merely that they exist.

### AVERT

*Instant, Ranged*

Avert is used to dismiss another Folk Magic spell within range. Avert can be cast reactively to neutralise offensive spells, by using the Counter Magic Reactive Action.

### BABBLE

*Resist (Willpower), Touch*

Babble mangles anything spoken by its target. It does not affect what the target is thinking, only what is verbally issued. Thus Babble can seriously disrupt orders being issued by a commanding officer to his troops, but it cannot influence what the commander is thinking or his intentions. Depending on the necessity for verbal components, Babble may be able to adversely influence spell casting.

### BEASTCALL (X)

*Instant, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Beastcall is used to attract a single, specific animal, the type being specified in the spell, within range. The animal summoned cannot be sapient and it may also resist the spell using its Willpower. If it fails to resist, it is naturally drawn, in a passive fashion, to the caster, whereupon the spell dissipates and the creature acts as it normally would, finding itself in proximity to the caster. Physical obstacles

or adverse actions (such as a wall, river or line of spears, or a harsh yank on a set of reins or leash) also cause the spell to fail.

### BEFUDDLE

*Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Befuddle causes confusion within the mind of a corporeal target. The subject of the spell has difficulty thinking straight, forgetting where it is, what it is doing and why – often lapsing into disassociated lines of thought. Befuddled targets can still act in self defence, but cannot initiate any constructive activity until the spell ends. Any sort of attack or threatening action instantly breaks the spell, whether or not it was directed specifically at the befuddled target.

### BLADESHARP

*Touch*

Bladesharp is cast on edged and piercing melee weapons. It increases the damage of a weapon by one dice step and incidentally leaves the edge honed after the spell concludes. This spell is often used on tools such as logging axes, ploughs and razors. Thus casting this spell on a dagger increases it to 1d6+1 damage, whereas the same spell on a great axe would increase it to 2d8+2 damage. (1d4->1d6->1d8->1d10->2d6->2d8->2d10)

### BLUDGEON

*Touch*

Bludgeon is similar to Bladesharp but used on weapons and tools that deal blunt-force trauma rather than cutting or piercing damage. It is normally used to aid with threshing grain, fulling wool, or similar heavy duty work.

### BREATH

*Touch*

Breath permits the recipient to hold their breath for an extended period, so that they can temporarily venture into harmful environments, such as underwater; or atmospheres tainted by rock dust, gases, smoke or poisons. The spell lasts for a maximum of half the caster's POW in minutes, during which time the recipient cannot speak or the breath is lost and they immediately begin to asphyxiate (or become poisoned).

**BYPASS***Touch, Trigger*

Bypass is used to cross the threshold of an area under the effect of an Alarm spell without triggering the Alarm. When cast the spell is held in preparation, triggering on contact with an Alarm spell. Of course the caster must suspect that an Alarm spell exists in the first place. Bypass does not negate the Alarm and it must be cast for each crossing of the Alarm spell's threshold.

**CALCULATE***Instant, Ranged*

Calculate allows the immediate calculation of numbers, weight or size of a thing, be it soldiers amassed in battle formation, the length of a rope or weight of a sack of rice. The spell always yields a precise quantity, but not value or quality. Only items which are directly observable (seen, lifted, smelled and so on) and within range can be calculated.

**CALM***Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Calm attempts to dampen down the passions or the target, perhaps ensuring that a lovesick paramour doesn't press his suit, a frightened rival doesn't scream for help or that weapons are not drawn in anger. A calmed person is not otherwise mentally affected, thus any sort of assault or threatening action still permits the target to defend themselves and even attack, albeit they will do so in a calm and level headed manner.

**CLEANSE***Instant, Touch*

Cleanse is used to rid an object, person or small area of dirt, grease, grime, bad smells and so on. It does not organise or tidy the target or area; merely cleans them to a spick-and-span state. This spell is often used to launder clothes. The caster can cleanse an area equal to POW in square metres.

**CHILL***Instant, Touch*

Chill dramatically reduces the temperature of small objects (with an ENC no larger than a third of the caster's POW) down to the temperature of ice water. Useful for rapidly

cooling hot items, chilling drinks, and so forth. The spell does not freeze an object and neither does it cause any damage to its structure: it merely renders it very cold.

**COOL***Concentration, Touch*

Cool protects the recipient from the effects of muggy atmospheres and heat prostration, guarding them from any Fatigue caused by the natural environment. The spell does not stop the effects of heat related magic, but will make any resistance roll one difficulty grade easier. Someone under the effects of this spell wearing full hoplite armour could march through a tropical rain forest during the height of summer without harm. Cool affects a target of SIZ up to the caster's POW x2.



*An initiate of the Cult of Myceras practices Bladesharp for the first time on an old, chipped spear from the temple's armoury.*

*Such magics are often cast upon the ranks of Bull Warriors by regimental priests, granting the army of Meeros a significant advantage in battle.*







## COORDINATION

*Touch, Trigger*

Coordination enhances manual dexterity and agility when performing a single task. When cast in preparation it permits the recipient a chance to re-roll a single skill check where coordination is required, such as Acrobatics, Lockpicking and so on. The recipient may choose the better of the two rolls, but the spell is expended in the process.

## CURSE

*Special Duration*

Curse must be cast in combination with a second spell of a harmful nature. Its one and only effect is to increase the duration of the accompanying spell so that it is continuous. This comes at a cost however, since the Magic Point used to cast the curse does not return until the caster drops the curse willingly, the curse is dispelled, or the spell to which it is bound breaks naturally. Curse is commonly combined with spells such as Befuddle, Demoralise, Repugnance and so on.

## DARKNESS

*Concentration, Ranged*

Darkness creates an area of shadow, equal to POW in square metres, which suppresses all light within it. This is enough volume to fill a modest room, a length of corridor or form a small cloud if cast outside. All non-magical light, including sunlight, passing into or present within the boundary is reduced to the equivalent of a dim glow.

## DEMORALISE

*Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Demoralise temporarily fills the target with a sense of despondency towards a particular person, species, situation or object. When confronted with the subject of this despondency, any proactive skill attempts made by the afflicted character related to the source are one grade harder. However a direct assault from the subject instantly breaks the spell.

Thus a character could be given a demoralising dread of heights, ensuring that any Athletic skill used for climbing or Acrobatics skill for balancing would be one difficulty grade harder.

## DEFLECT

*Touch*

Deflect wards the recipient against tiny impacts of foreign material, such as rain drops, a cloud of midges or even flying grains of sand. The protection is limited to individual objects smaller than a child's fingernail and thus cannot prevent normal missile weapons from striking a character.

## DISHEVEL

*Instant, Touch*

Dishevel is the reverse of the Cleanse spell. Objects affected are immediately covered in grime, dust, cobwebs and so forth. The spell can be used to make brand new objects look old and weathered or help prevent normally well turned out people from being recognised. The caster can dishevel an area equal to POW in square metres.

## DISRUPTION

*Instant, Ranged, Resist (Endurance)*

Disruption is used for damaging or disassembling physical objects without the need for tools. It is commonly employed to drive off or kill living creatures, such as birds or vermin. When successfully cast, Disruption inflicts 1d3 damage to a single random Hit Location or the overall Hit Points of an object. In both cases the damage ignores any armour or natural protection.

## DRY

*Instant, Touch*

Dry removes all extraneous moisture from an object or person, either slicking off to form a puddle or evaporating in a cloud of vapour. It is normally used to dry off after heavy rain or help protect equipment from rotting, but has a number of other versatile uses. The caster can dry an object up to POW x2 in SIZ.

## DULLBLADE

*Ranged*

Dullblade is the reverse of Bladesharp reducing the keenness of edged weapons and tools. It lessens the damage inflicted by the weapon by one step and if extended by use of the Curse spell, ensures it can never keep a sharp edge.





## EXTINGUISH

*Instant, Ranged*

Extinguish immediately quenches flames and small fires of modest size and heat. It is useful for dousing candles, lanterns, torches or small cook fires, but it will not work on magical or larger, more ferocious conflagrations such as pyres, burning houses or dragon flames.

## FANATICISM

*Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Fanaticism is the reverse of Demoralise. It grants the target a wildly excessive or irrational devotion, dedication, or enthusiasm for a particular person, species, situation or object. Its effect is to grant the recipient a temporary Passion equal to the Folk Magic skill of the caster. Fanaticism can be used to counter Demoralise and vice versa.

## FIND (X)

*Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Special)*

Find has many variations; always specific and learned as separate spells. Some common examples are given below. It works by attuning to the natural emanations of a creature or thing, alerting the caster to its presence within the spell's range. Find can be blocked by dense or thick materials such as metal, or earth and stone at least one metre thick. The spell cannot discern emotions or thoughts.

*Find Arrows:* Locates ammunition shot by hunters, which miss their target.

*Find Flaw:* Identifies any flaws in an object, such as hidden imperfections or physical damage.

*Find Livestock:* Locates a particular type of animal. Can be resisted with Willpower.

*Find Loot:* Locates precious metals and gems.

*Find Object:* Locates a lost personal possession.

*Find Sickness:* Identifies the existence of disease and illness, whether magical or mundane.

## FIREARROW

*Touch*

Firearrow causes all missiles thrown or fired by the recipient to burst into flame when

released. Ostensibly created to act as a signal flare, it has since evolved into a combat magic. Missiles under its effect add an additional 1d3 damage, but are extinguished if they impale flesh. Those that strike flammable material have a chance equal to the caster's Folk Magic skill of setting alight whatever they lodge in, such as wooden shields, thatched roofs and so on. Wooden ammunition is consumed as part of the spell.

## FIREBLADE

*Touch*

Fireblade is similar to Firearrow but is instead cast on hand tools and melee weapons. The original purpose of the spell is to sterilise surgical equipment, aid in slash and burn agriculture or provide illumination during darkness without the need to carry an additional light source. If cast on a weapon it inflicts an additional 1d3 damage, and has the chance of setting flammable materials alight if held to them for several rounds (see Fire on page 72). Wooden hafted weapons under the effects of Fireblade will be consumed as part of the spell.

## FROSTBITE

*Ranged, Resist (Endurance)*

Frostbite works directly on living, organic tissue, inflicting numbness and pain in one of the recipient's extremities, for example fingers, toes, buttocks, nose & ears and so on. The caster must either touch a specific extremity or roll randomly if cast at range. If the spell is not resisted the area affected suffers sensory numbness followed by lingering pain for the duration, making skill tests utilising that location one difficulty grade harder. Frostbite does not deal direct damage but makes the affected area of limited use for a while. For instance, a victim suffering frostbite to the buttocks cannot sit without extreme discomfort.

## GLAMOUR

*Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Glamour makes the target alluring so that people are naturally attracted to them. The particular nature of the glamour must be chosen when cast and can be anything from increased natural beauty, a softer more sultry



voice or even a seductively perfumed body scent. Whilst the spell grants no mechanical benefits, it does ensure that the recipient will gain a chance to gather themselves an audience, engage the attention of someone they wish to make contact with, or provide a distraction enabling accomplices an opportunity to perform nefarious deeds.



## GLUE

*Touch*

Glue cements together two solid, inanimate objects for the duration of the spell, for example a cart wheel to its axle or a door to its frame. Whilst under the effects of the spell the items, no matter how disparate, cannot be parted unless something actively tries to wrench them apart. In this circumstance the spell has a Brawn skill equal to five times the caster's POW and fails when a superior Brawn is set against it, defeating it in an opposed roll. Once the spell concludes or fails the items part completely unharmed.

## HEAL

*Instant, Touch*

Heal has several different effects depending on the nature of the ailment it is being used on. If the subject is suffering from a minor complaint such as a headache, back pain, hangover, cold, warts and so on, then the symptoms are immediately lifted. Cast on a location suffering a Minor Wound it restores all lost Hit Points instantly. Against Serious or Major Wounds no Hit Points are recovered. However the spell will stabilise locations, stop all bleeding and prevent imminent death from inattention.

## HEAT

*Instant, Touch*

Heat dramatically increases the temperature of small objects (with an ENC no larger than a third of the caster's POW) up to the temperature of boiling water. This versatile spell is useful for mulling wine, cooking food without a fire, or warming a bed prior to sleep. It does not affect living tissue although it can affect clothing and armour, heating it to uncomfortable levels.

## IGNITE

*Instant, Ranged*

Ignite only works on flammable inorganic matter, causing a small object or hand-sized area to burst into flame. Depending on what was set alight, once burning, the flames may then spread unless quenched or countered in some way. This spell is normally used to light candles, torches or lanterns from afar. It can also be used to start a camp or cooking fire in adverse conditions, such as using damp kindling or in strong winds.

## INCOGNITO

*Resist (Endurance), Touch, Trigger*

Incognito alters the facial features of the recipient to a bland, unmemorable countenance. It does not affect the voice, mannerisms or physical size/presence of the recipient, but ensures that visually they do not stand out from the crowd. Anyone under the effects of Incognito is actively ignored by those who might otherwise be searching for him; he is simply overlooked and discounted.



## IRONHAND

*Touch*

Ironhand allows the recipient to hold anything that would otherwise cause damage (such as extremely hot or cold items, or those dripping acid) without causing themselves injury. Thus a user could grasp a brand from a fire, lift a bubbling cauldron from a spit or even reach through a steam vent to grab an object on the other side. It does not grant total immunity from damage, merely stops it from conducting through the skin of the recipient's hands. The spell does not protect anything worn on the hand, so rings, gloves and such like will suffer the effects of the source.

## KNOCK

*Instant, Touch*

Knock magically unfastens any device that is currently secured with a mechanical bar or lock. It does not work on magically locked objects, only mundane ones. The spell only affects a single fastening, so if there are several locks and bars securing the object, the spell will need to be recast for each one.

## LIGHT

*Concentration, Ranged*

Light must be cast on an inanimate object (this could be a branch, sword blade, spear point, torch and so on). It produces enough light to illuminate an area as though with a lantern. It can also be cast directly against a Darkness spell to counter it. In this case both spells are consumed, leaving the ambient light to illuminate the area.

## LOCK

*Special Duration, Touch*

Lock magically secures any device that already has a mechanical bar or lock present. A Locked device can be opened only by the caster and cannot be picked by mundane means (such as by a thief using lock-picks) since the magic renders the mechanism immobile; however it could still be forced open by breaking the object the lock is set into. The magic remains in place until opened by the caster, after which the device must be subject to a further casting of Lock to restore the enchantment. The Magic Point used to

cast Lock does not recover until the spell is dismissed or concludes naturally.

## MAGNIFY

*Concentration*

Magnify allows the caster to see something twice as close as it really is. Useful for close work as well as out in the field.

## MIGHT

*Touch*

Might permits the recipient to engage in impressive acts of physical brawn. It adds the caster's POW to the recipient's STR, but only for the purposes of lifting, breaking and contests of strength as defined under the Brawn skill. It does not increase the character's Damage Modifier when inflicting combat damage.

## MIMIC

*Touch, Trigger*

Mimic allows the recipient to perfectly mimic the voice and mannerisms of someone the caster has seen and heard personally. It does not affect their physical appearance.

## MINDSPEECH

*Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Mindspeech allows telepathy between the caster and a target, enabling verbal intercourse without needing to speak aloud. The caster and target must share the same language, or else the spell will merely transmit unintelligible gobbledegook. Attempting to cast Mindspeech on somebody beyond range automatically fails.

## MOBILITY

*Touch*

Mobility increases the Movement rate of the recipient by 1d3 metres for the spell's duration. It is often used by hunters, herders and those seeking to escape pursuit.

## PATHWAY

*Touch*

Pathway enables the recipient to more easily travel through heavy vegetation, safe from being scratched, snagged or otherwise hindered. Under its enchantment Movement rates are not reduced in woods, jungles, swamps and similar overgrown terrain.



## PERFUME

*Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Perfume either negates a noxious odour or imbibes an odourless substance with a pleasing fragrance. The spell does not affect the properties of the source of a stench (so a rotting carcass is still rotten) - it merely makes its presence tolerable.

## PET

*Concentration, Resist (Willpower), Touch*

Pet allows the caster to take mental control of a small creature, sending it off to scout, fetch or perform some other complex task. It can be cast on any creature neither of whose SIZ and INT characteristics may exceed half the caster's CHA. If the targeted creature is the already the loyal pet of the caster it does not need to resist the spell.

## PHANTASM

*Concentration, Ranged*

Phantasm allows the caster to weave together insubstantial or near weightless objects so that they take a shape or ghostly form. Thus a spectral figure could be woven from a naturally occurring mist, or a face formed in a pile of dead leaves. Beyond this the spell has little effect, save to frighten, intrigue or disconcert those that view it.

## PIERCE

*Touch*

Pierce can be cast on any item with a point, helping it to penetrate thick surfaces. It is normally used to help sew leather, punch holes in metal or hammer pitons into stone. Any weapon or tool enhanced with this spell ignores the first two Armour Points of the person, creature or object struck.

## POLISH

*Instant, Touch*

Polish instantly buffs an object of ENC or SIZ of up to the caster's POW to a high sheen making it glossy, shiny and highly desirable even if the quality of the article is sub-par.

## PRESERVE

*Instant, Touch*

Preserve prevents organic matter, both vegetable and animal, from bacterial decay and putrefaction for 1d3 months, by sterilising

it. If the material is later smoked, pickled or salted it is preserved indefinitely. The spell can halt decay that has begun, but not reverse it. The caster can affect an amount of organic matter with SIZ or ENC equal to their POW.

## PROTECTION

*Touch*

Protection is useful in a wide range of tasks where there is a risk of accidental injury such as working in a foundry or mine. The first time the character would normally take damage that penetrates protective clothing or armour, the Protection spell will trigger and reduce the damage taken by 1d3 points. The spell then dissipates. The spell only protects against physical damage so won't help against events such as fire, choking and so on.

## REPAIR

*Instant, Touch*

Repair fixes physical damage to an inanimate object. Each separate successful casting repairs 1d3 Hit Points of damage.

## REPUGNANCE

*Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Repugnance twists the appearance of the target so that they cause distaste in all those that see, hear or smell them. The particular effect must be chosen when cast and can be anything from a great wart on the end of a nose, a high pitched nasal voice or even pungent body odour. Whatever is chosen, it will cause people to turn away from the victim or make excuses so as to leave their presence as quickly as possible.

## SHOCK

*Instant, Ranged, Resist (Evade)*

Shock produces a mild electrical discharge which may be directed at living things. The caster must either touch a specific extremity or roll randomly if cast at range. If the spell is not resisted, the shocked location is stunned for 1d3 Turns; armour does not protect. The spell makes a loud crack when cast.

## SHOVE

*Instant, Ranged, Resist (Special)*

Shove allows the caster to telekinetically move an object by giving it a single crude push. The item is not moved with enough





force to inflict damage and is still subject to gravity. The spell affects an amount of ENC or SIZ equal to the caster's POW. Living targets can resist with either Endurance or Evade.

## SLEEP

*Resist (Endurance), Touch*

Sleep sends its recipient into a deep, peaceful sleep. It has no effect on creatures with a SIZ greater than the caster's POW. Unless the target resists, it slumbers for a number of hours equal to the half the caster's POW. However the spell takes 1d3 Rounds to take effect before the target falls unconscious. Any attempt to cast this spell in a combat situation automatically fails.

## SLOW

*Ranged, Resist (Endurance)*

Slow is the direct opposite of Mobility, slowing Movement Rate by 1d3+3 metres, if the target fails to resist.

## SPEEDART

*Instant, Touch, Trigger*

Speedart boosts the velocity of thrown or fired missiles so that they travel farther before losing efficacy. The spell increases the effective range by 1.5 times the weapon's normal distance.

## TIDY

*Instant, Ranged*

Tidy immediately restores a number of items (up to the caster's POW) within the spell's range to a neat, tidy and orderly fashion. Items larger than 3 ENC are shifted to a more orderly position but will require manual intervention to tidy properly.

## TIRE

*Ranged, Resist (Endurance)*

Tire inflicts one level of Fatigue on the subject unless resisted.

## TRANSLATE

*Concentration, Resist (Willpower), Touch*

Translate permits the caster to understand any language spoken to him, by setting up a psychic link with the target. The translation provided is often imperfect, as complex terms or concepts cannot be comprehended, but it does allow simple communication. The spell

works between sapient creatures with a definite, constructed language and still relies on being able to see, hear or otherwise perceive the target as in normal conversation. If cast upon a creature of animal awareness, communication is restricted to the simple reception of emotional state.

## TUNE

*Instant, Touch*

Tune ensures that the musical instrument touched is in perfect pitch no matter the dampness, temperature or its general condition, ensuring that the following performance is unaffected.

## VENTRILOQUISM

*Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Ventriloquism allows the caster to project their voice anywhere within range. The caster needs only to think the projected words, not actually to speak them physically, which can disconcert those unaware of what is going on. If cast upon a living creature, the caster can take control of their vocal cords and speak through them instead.

## VIGOUR

*Touch*

Vigour makes the recipient feel alive and energetic, being used to offset the effects of strenuous physical labour. For the spell's duration, all Fatigue effects gained from laborious activity are ignored (but return on the spell's dismissal). It negates the effects of a Tire spell.

## VOICE

*Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Voice amplifies the recipient's intonation and delivery so that it becomes compelling when issuing verbal commands. All who can hear the speaker are forced to listen. Their vocalisation also carries across and through even the loudest background noise (howling gales, the roar of a waterfall, the clash of arms on a battlefield) up to a range of ten times the recipient's CHA in metres.

## WARMTH

*Concentration, Touch*

Warmth protects the recipient from the effects of freezing atmospheres and exposure, and from Fatigue caused by the





natural environment. The spell does not stop the effects of cold-related magic cast at them, but will make any resistance roll one difficulty grade easier. Thus a person under the effects of this spell could walk about on a glacier during midwinter in their underclothes without harm. Warmth affects an object of SIZ up to the caster's POW x2.

**WITCHSIGHT**

*Ranged, Resist (Willpower)*

Witchsight allows the caster to see active magic, enchanted items and invisible entities (although such things are simply shadowy representations) that lie within range and line of sight. It can also penetrate illusions or discern the true guise of shapeshifted creatures. Beings which wish to remain hidden or disguised must win an opposed test of their Willpower versus the casting roll.

**UBIQUITOUS FOLK MAGIC**

The following table is included for those campaigns where Folk Magic is available to common folk, rather than being restricted to specialist hedge wizards and witches. Each of the standard careers has been presented with a list of generic spells useful to that particular profession.

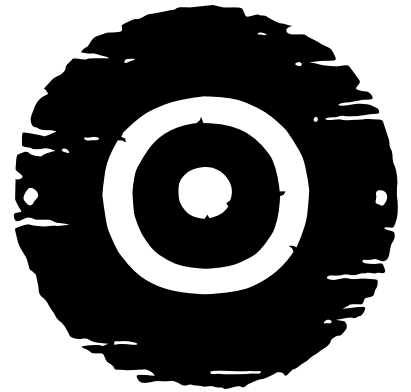
Some spells are more prevalent than others and Games Masters are encouraged to tweak the lists to fit their campaign. For example, ostensibly similar careers may differ by one or two spells depending on the background culture and environment. Some of the rarer spells may be available to members of particular cults or brotherhoods.

**CAREER-SPECIFIC FOLK MAGIC SPELLS**

Career	Suggested Folk Magic
Agent	Alarm, Befuddle, Bladesharp, Bypass, Find, Incognito, Knock, Mimic, Ventriloquism
Beast Handler	Beastcall, Find, Might, Mobility, Pathway, Pet, Slow, Speedart, Vigour
Entertainer	Babel, Calm, Find, Glamour, Light, Mimic, Tune, Ventriloquism, Voice
Hunter	Bladesharp, Find, Mobility, Pathway, Preserve, Slow, Speedart, Vigour, Warmth
Merchant	Alarm, Appraise, Calculate, Cleanse, Find, Glamour, Lock, Translate, Voice
Official	Alarm, Calculate, Find, Glamour, Lock, Mindspeech, Translate, Ventriloquism, Voice
Physician	Breath, Calm, Cleanse, Cool, Find, Heal, Preserve, Sleep, Warmth
Priest	Any
Sailor	Bladesharp, Deflect, Dry, Extinguish, Find, Pierce, Repair, Vigour, Warmth
Scholar	Appraise, Calculate, Calm, Extinguish, Find, Mindspeech, Tidy, Translate, Voice
Thief	Bypass, Coordination, Darkness, Demoralise, Find, Glue, Knock, Mobility, Ventriloquism
Warrior	Bladesharp, Bludgeon, Coordination, Fanaticism, Firearrow, Fireblade, Find, Protection, Vigour

*Note: In regions predisposed to great heat rather than winter cold, any career offering Warmth as a spell can substitute it for Cool instead (and vice-versa).*

## CHAPTER 10: THEISM



**T**heism is the belief in, and worship of, godlike beings; it calls upon them to create supernatural effects on behalf of their faithful adherents. The precise manner in which this magic is provided and how it manifests can vary dramatically according to the setting, but at its heart is the concept that worshippers appease deities with gifts and devotion, in exchange for which the entity lends certain mortals, who have been initiated into its cult, the right to call upon a part of its power.

Worshippers learn the myths and secrets of those they venerate, gaining insight into their nature, personalities and desires. With this knowledge a devoted worshipper knows how to phrase or frame a request to his gods, so that they feel compelled, or indeed inspired, to help him. Additionally a worshipper must show his dedication to his divine patrons by offering sacrifice, service and perhaps even selfless adoration in order to prove himself worthy of their attention. The depth of this piety influences the amount of effort to which deities will move themselves in order to aid a loyal devotee.

Since the status of a worshipped entity is often based upon the worship it receives, deities are motivated to watch over their supplicants. This is done in a myriad of ways, from commanding its most devoted priests to establish cults or temples – which in turn provide materialistic support to its worshippers within a community – to elevating zealots as figureheads of high political or military status, by providing them with potent powers.

Worship is the fundamental keystone of this divine (or perhaps infernal) magical ecology. The more worship, or propitiation, a deity receives, the more magical might it garners; which in turn must be given back or used to aid its supplicants or else risk losing their faithful attendance.

Not every being who receives worship is necessarily a god *per se*. One man's deity may be another man's demon. In fact nothing prevents the creation of a theistic culture which venerates monstrous, alien beings from other dimensions. Providing these beings - no matter their origin – are fed, entertained or placated in the correct manner they will channel their power through those who please them.



### KHUIJAKA'S SAGA

*As a young boy Khujaka, possessing a club foot and twisted lower leg, was given as a sacrificial offering to the Cult of the Seven Badoshi Devils. Fortunately for him the ranking priest sensed the power within the boy and, instead, inducted him into the cult.*

*At first his life seems to be an endless series of beatings and hard labour. This is but a method used by the cult to mentally toughen those who will eventually wield the cult magics. Seven times between dawn and dusk the initiates pray to each of the devils worshipped by the Badoshi, practicing rituals and learning the lesser mysteries.*

*Eventually Khujaka takes the final initiation rite, surviving its lethal challenges. It concludes with swearing a terrible oath whilst being branded by the seven sigils, one upon each part of his body. With a Devotion skill of 53% he has learned all three of the cult miracles that the Devils provide to Initiates (1 miracle for each 20% or thereof of his skill).*

## CALLING UPON THE GODS

Calling upon the gods for their power relies upon two core skills, Devotion and Exhort. Devotion reflects the strength and depth of the bond between the theist and his deity, or deities; whilst Exhort is the ability of the worshipper to correctly intonate or phrase his requests, so that his divine patron will respond.

### DEVOTION (POW+CHA)

The nature and strength of any miraculous powers a theist draws upon is based upon his Devotion. The 'skill' is more accurately a relationship the theist has with an individual god, a small faction or family of divine beings, or indeed an entire pantheon. The precise scope of the skill depends upon the campaign setting, but each incidence of Devotion must be assigned to a specific deity or group of deities.

It is the depth of the worshipper's Devotion to his gods which grants potency to any theistic miracles he calls for. Whenever a theist requests aid from a deity, the Magnitude and Intensity of the miracle is equal to one tenth of his Devotion score.

Devotion is often utilised to measure the progression of a worshipper within a cult, the upper echelons being restricted to those who demonstrate the proper dedication. This in turn can limit what miracles are available to a worshipper of particular cult rank; as few religions are likely to grant their most potent powers to mere initiates.

Last but by no means least, in the right circumstances Devotion can potentially be used to resist various psychological attacks, tests of faith or contests of competing passions.

### EXHORT (INT+CHA)

Exhort is the skill used to coerce the gods to send a worshipper the magical aid he requires. It can be portrayed in several ways, but combines a number of different aspects such as strength of passion, egocentric will, ritualistic knowledge and understanding of divine psychology, to put forth a request which the deity cannot ignore.

Mechanistically the skill works as a simple base chance to successfully channel power from the god. A theist with Exhort (Lord Dark Maggot) 70% has a 70% chance of performing the relevant miracle.

Exactly how a miracle manifests can vary dramatically according to the setting. A successful exhortation can impel the deity to either:

- ⇒ Channel his knowledge and power through the theist
- ⇒ Cast the miracle on the theist's behalf
- ⇒ Manifest before the theist (and all observers) to perform the deed personally

Taking the case of the Demon Lord Ningilin as an illustration, a worshipper who successfully called upon him to destroy a group of sacrilegious enemies with his power of wormy transformation, might find that the god grants the worshipper the words of invocation and magical strength to cast the magic himself; or that the miracle simply occurs without further effort on the worshipper's part; or most worryingly of all, that Ningilin himself steps down from the sky and personally transforms the interlopers with his own putrescent hands.

## CULTS AND MIRACLES

A theist's skills are indelibly linked to a specific religion, normally organised and known as a cult. Most cults are ancient faiths and usually accepted – or at least tolerated – by the local culture. Some are limited to a single city or tribe, whereas others can span nations. Even the number of deities incorporated within a cult can vary, with some cults tied to a single divine being, whereas others can consolidate an entire pantheon. In fact a single deity could have a dozen different, independent cults devoted to various aspects of its celestial magnificence!

It is a cult's deities which provide the miracles available to dedicated worshippers. Correspondingly there are no preset restrictions to the number of miracles each cult has, nor even that they should be balanced to one another. In general, the powers offered



by the cult reflect the nature of that deity or deities venerated. The only thing which is fairly certain is that the cult's own priesthood will limit the availability of what miracles to which it has access, to those of proven faith and trustworthiness.

Thus cults, like other magical organisations, are similar to Combat Styles: diverse combinations of deities and miracles amalgamated into a single faith. Since cults are often viewed as the patrons of particular careers or irrevocably bound to specific philosophies, it may be unusual for a worshipper to pay more than lip service to more than one faith.

Professional theists who serve the shrines and temples of a cult are often well regarded, if not feared, for their zealous beliefs; and take the trouble to dress, act and behave appropriately to properly revere their patron gods.

## STARTING THEISTS

A character that begins the game as a theist must choose a single cult to follow; either designed by the Games Master, agreed between the player and Games Master, or chosen from the examples given in the Cults and Brotherhoods chapter. Only one cult can be chosen at this stage but others can potentially be joined during the course of play.

Theist characters start with knowing those miracles available to someone of their cult rank, but not exceeding a number equal to one twentieth of their Devotion skill. Once the game begins they are restricted in what additional powers they can learn and when they can learn them.

## LEARNING MIRACLES

The costs of learning new miracles are based upon an investment of Experience Rolls as described in the Magic chapter on page 113. However, most priesthoods restrict the availability of certain miracles according to cult rank, ensuring that worshippers prove their devotion and loyalty before trusting them with such knowledge. Even the achievement of promotion within the cult does not

### ACTING LIKE YOUR GOD

In some settings, as his Devotion increases, so does the propensity of the worshipper to act in the ways the focus of that veneration acts. This may not be due to any supernatural link, merely the pressures of cult membership, voluntary geases or even social expectation. Whatever the source of the influence, a worshipper's behaviour or judgment can begin to reflect those of his god, potentially leading to gradual personality changes.

It is believed by many cults that their gods are more able, or at least more willing, to aid those who espouse their divine patron's virtues. Acting in a manner contrary to a god's desires can land that worshipper in deep trouble. Much depends on the nature of the bond between theist and deity; whether it can be an informal relationship, or if the strength of the tie demands a worshipper behave precisely like the god in order to maintain the flow of magical power between them.

necessarily grant a character automatic access to any new powers.

Learning miracles may require the theist to prove himself worthy in a number of different ways, depending on the nature of the cult. Some require the completion of a heroic quest to attest their faith or a pilgrimage to seek out a holy spot where their god mythically gained that particular power; whilst others might necessitate the slaying of a worthy sacrifice, or a superior to demonstrate their right to this secret knowledge, or going into seclusion for many weeks inhaling mind-expanding narcotics to seek oneness with their deity.

Thus learning how to call upon new miracles is rarely just a prosaic case of paying enough silver to convince the priesthood – as that is how lay members engage the services of priests to cast miracles on their behalf. To gain these potent powers for themselves, characters must undergo great challenges and moral dilemmas, binding themselves closer to the cult and the deities they revere.

### RANKS AND MIRACLES

*In order to save space cult ranks - Lay, Initiate, Acolyte and Priest - are explained in the full RUNEQUEST 6th Edition rules, in the chapter titled Cults and Brotherhoods. Yet for the purposes of the Quickstart Rules, these mechanical details are not actually needed. The Games Master can simply view cult ranks as a way of limiting the power and magical development of the characters.*

*Unlike other systems the availability of Cult Miracles are both limited and specific to a particular cult. Just because they are listed in the Miracles section it does not mean a cult member can pick and choose what they want.*

*For example the Cult of Myceras, war god of Meeros, grants access to the miracles Beast Form, Berserk, Clear Skies, Consecrate, Fortify, Sacred Band, Shield and Sunspear. Whilst the Cult of the Seven Badoshi Devils instead provide Bind Ghost, Chameleon, Consecrate, Earthquake, Madness, Perseverance and True Scimitar, each of the seven demigods providing one of the miracles.*





### KHUIJAKA'S SAGA

*The Cult of the Seven Badoshi Devils has seven sacred temples, each one located on a particular mountain, under which one of the devils is legendarily believed to be buried.*

*Khujaka, now an acolyte of the cult, has a Devotional Pool of 9 (half of his POW of 17). After irritating the wrong priest, he is sent to a minor shrine which edges Badoshi territory. Although leaving the temple well prepared, a savage battle against flesh eating minotaurs led Khujaka to cast many miracles; utterly draining his devotional pool, so that he has no Magic Points left with which to further call upon the Seven Devils.*

*Upon arrival Khujaka calls for a sacrificial animal to be brought forth. Grimacing at the expense, he sacrifices the mountain crocodile to his deities. The Games Master declares that the ceremony generates 6 Magic Points (the characteristic POW of the victim), which Khujaka uses to restore his devotional pool to two thirds full. If he had made a human sacrifice he might have regained more Magic Points, but such rituals are forbidden except for war captives.*

## USING THEISM

A theist may call upon some of the most potent magical effects available to mortal magicians. However, their exhortations require much preparation, primarily in the form of worshipping and making dedications to the gods. These religious acts are normally restricted to places deemed sacrosanct, so the reach of a cult is often limited to the locales close by shrines, temples or particular holy sites dedicated to the deity or deities in question.

## DEVOTIONAL POOLS

Cult members who advance beyond the cult rank of Lay Member may begin to draw upon the gods by use of the Exhort skill. Every miracle they call for must be paid for in advance of the request, by sacrifice or donation of Magic Points into something called a devotional pool. This pool represents the strength of the bond between worshipper and god, and must be regularly topped up.

While Magic Points remain in the pool, the theist can use them to request miracles, but once the pool is expended no more requests may be made. The source of these points need not necessarily be the theist himself (see Donating Magic Points below) but the maximum size of the pool is limited by the theist's cult rank.

- ⇒ Lay Member – None
- ⇒ Initiate – ¼ of the Theist's POW
- ⇒ Acolyte – ½ of the Theist's POW
- ⇒ Priest – ¾ of the Theist's POW
- ⇒ High Priest – All of the Theist's POW

The size of the devotional pool has no bearing on the theist's normal POW capacity for storing personal Magic Points. Assuming the theist is donating Magic Points from his own POW, after the transference is made he can regenerate or recoup Magic Points as normal.

The implication of this method of paying for their miracles is that a worshipper, with enough preparation time, can fully load up both his devotional pool and his own personal Magic Points in advance of performing some quest. On the downside, refilling his devotional pool requires him not only to return to

a place of cult significance, but also personally to donate or transfer the points from his own resources.

## JOINING MORE THAN ONE CULT

If the campaign setting permits, nothing prevents membership of multiple cults, providing they are not the antithesis of each other. For instance it may be reasonable for characters to be members of a state religion and a professional cult, and still worship a family deity. In such cases a separate devotional pool must be maintained for each individual cult.

However, there is a limit to how much magical energy can be amassed. No matter how many cults they are members of, the combined amount of Magic Points stored in the pools cannot exceed the POW of the character. Attempting to do so results in Magic Points dissipating from the other pools until the stored total once again equals the theist's POW.

## DONATING MAGIC POINTS

Dedicating Magic Points to their devotional pool requires that the theist be present at a shrine, temple or holy place with connection to the cult's god or pantheon. The ritual takes the form of ceremony, meditation or prayer, and often incorporates some type of offering above and beyond the pure Magic Points – perhaps an animal sacrifice, financial tribute to the priesthood or a gift pleasing to the deity.

The actual source of the Magic Points can be somewhat abstract (see Where Does It Come From? page 110). The important concept is that a worshipper must be physically present at the donation, else the Magic Points generated do not transfer to his devotional pool.

The current number of Magic Points in the pool cannot exceed the size of the most recent donation. Thus a theist with three Magic Points in his pool who sacrifices a white bull (worth seven Magic Points) would raise his pool to seven points, not ten. In this way a deity cannot be appeased with a series of petty offerings which slowly accumulate excessive devotional strength.





## SACROSANCT LOCATIONS

The concept of only being allowed to recharge their devotional pool at specific holy places may initially seem rather restrictive, but this need not be an overly prohibitive aspect of theism. A worshipper can call upon his god or gods for miracles at any time; they only need to return to a temple to reaffirm the bond with the deity.

This fundamental element of theism should instead be seen as an opportunity by Games Masters to provide challenges and plot hooks with which to entwine his characters, granting them reasons to return to the source of their power, search out lost places of divine significance or build new temples to spread the worship of their cult.

Whilst this works well in settings where cults are localised, it can pose a problem in campaigns where the characters are expected to travel extensively. Assuming the cult or gods are not omnipresent across the game world, Games Masters can aid theists on long or far-reaching quests in various ways. Some suggestions are:

- ⇒ The deity presenting the theist with a holy relic which acts as a portable shrine or temple
- ⇒ The ability to build temporary shrines which work a single time if sanctified with a suitable offering
- ⇒ Allowing theists to worship at foreign temples which enshrine a similar divine being as their own deity
- ⇒ Making certain natural locations by default, sacrosanct to their deity (all caves, mephitic hot springs or the sea for instance)

## REQUESTING A MIRACLE

Calling for a miracle is simply a matter of performing the correct exhortation to convince the god to channel its power through or on behalf of its worshipper. Such a request depends on a number of prerequisites.

First the theist must have mastered understanding of miracle being requested, as described earlier under Learning Miracles. Without knowing the correct prayer or exhortation, the worshipper cannot convince his deity to perform the miracle.

Secondly the theist must have the requisite number of Magic Points remaining in the devotional pool he maintains with that deity. If too few remain, or the pool has run dry, the god will no longer listen to any requests made to it. Thus a worshipper should, when possible, take care to perform regular donations to their god.

Thirdly, on the last turn of the exhortation the theist must pass an Exhort skill check. This reveals whether or not the worshipper has performed the ritual request in the correct manner. Failure to perform this correctly can result in the god turning a deaf ear to the supplicant, or worse still, punishing them in some manner.

### COST OF REQUESTING A MIRACLE

The cost of requesting a miracle depends on both its cult level and the success level of the Exhort skill roll:

- ⇒ Critical Success: the miracle occurs yet there is no Magic Point cost.
- ⇒ Success: the caster's devotional pool loses the full Magic Point cost, and the miracle occurs successfully.
- ⇒ Failure: the miracle does not occur, but no Magic Point is taken from the devotional pool.
- ⇒ Fumble: the miracle does not occur, and 1 Magic Point is taken from the devotional pool.

Initiate level miracles cost one Magic Point, Acolyte level miracles cost two, and Priest level miracles cost three.

### EXHORTATION TIME

Requesting a miracle takes an increasing amount of time depending on the cult level the miracle becomes available at:

- ⇒ Initiate level miracles take 1 Turn
- ⇒ Acolyte level miracles take 2 Turns
- ⇒ Priest level miracles take 3 Turns



If the theist wishes to cast multiple instances of the same miracle with a single exhortation roll, then each additional instance adds an extra turn to the time and adds its full Magic Point requirement to the final cost.

The Exhort skill check is made on the final turn of the exhortation; the result of the skill check occurring immediately.

### MAGNITUDE AND INTENSITY

The potency of miracles is based upon the strength of the relationship between a theist and his god. The more devoted the worshipper, the more power the deity can funnel through them. This not only increases the effect of the miracle, but also makes it more difficult for others to dispel.

Miracles have a default Magnitude and Intensity equal to one tenth of the worshipper's Devotion skill value.

A theist need not apply the entirety of a miracle's Intensity if they wish to limit the effect of the god's magic.

### DISPELLING A MIRACLE

Miracles may be dismissed by spells or spirits capable of negating magic. Due to the inherent strength of theist miracles, it usually requires a counterspell of great potency to affect them.

### LIMITATIONS TO MIRACLES

There are no overt limitations to the concurrent number or potency of miracles a theist can maintain, since in effect their god is doing all of the work for them. The only restrictions occur in the need to return to a cult sanctuary to recharge their devotional pool of Magic Points.

Some miracles may possess an extended duration which can last hours, days or even months. In these cases the size of the theist's devotional pool should be temporarily reduced by the number of Magic Points for each miracle which is still active.

### MIRACLE TRAITS

Every divine miracle is defined by a series of traits explaining how it is used in the game, followed by a description of the spell's precise effects. In most cases the physical and

temporal parameters of miracles can be hand waved unless the Games Master wishes to keep detailed track during tactical situations.

Theists need not call forth miracles at their maximum effects if they wish to be more selective.

### AREA (X)

The miracle affects all targets within a specified radius, described as Metres, Tens of Metres or Kilometres. The defined units are multiplied by the Intensity of the miracle to determine the actual radius. If the miracle lacks the Ranged trait, the effect is centred upon the casting theist or whatever he touches.

### DURATION (X)

The miracle's effects stay in place for an amount of time defined as either Instant, Minutes, Hours, Days or Months. The defined period is multiplied by the Intensity of the miracle to calculate the actual duration, except of course if the miracle is instantaneous. At the end of this period the miracle vanishes.

### RANGED (X)

Ranged miracles may be cast upon targets within a range defined as either Metres or Tens of Metres. The defined units are multiplied by the Intensity of the miracle to determine the actual distance. Miracles which lack the Ranged trait may only be cast on others if they can be touched for the entirety of the exhortation.

### RANK

The minimum cult rank the spell is available to. This is a guideline only. Cults of gods which specialise or control a particular rune or sphere of power may offer certain miracles to lower ranking cult members.

### RESIST (EVADE/ENDURANCE/WILLPOWER)

Offensive miracles do not necessarily take effect automatically. Resisting targets may make an Opposed Evade, Endurance or Willpower test (as specified) in order to avoid the effect of the miracle entirely. Note that Resist (Evade) spells require the target to have a Combat Action available in order to throw themselves clear.



# MIRACLES

Note that some of the following spells can be extremely potent. This is deliberate, and Games Masters who fear abuse should limit the availability of these miracles to antagonistic cults, for which they are primarily designed. No specific guidance is provided for whether certain miracles are restricted to the exhorting theist or can be cast on others; nor whether the recipient must be a member of that cult. Such things must be decided when the cult is designed.

## ABSORPTION

*Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate*

This miracle absorbs incoming magic aimed at the recipient or his equipment, converting its energy into Magic Points which then replenish his personal Magic Points attribute, assuming there is space for the additional points. Excess Magic Points garnered through Absorption simply vanish. Absorption does not affect spells already in existence, prior to the miracle's manifestation. The effects of Absorption depend on the relative Magnitude of both itself and the incoming spell. Any spell absorbed by this miracle is cancelled and has no effect.

### ABSORPTION RESULTS

Incoming Spell's Magnitude is . . .	Effect
Equal to or weaker than Absorption's Magnitude	The incoming spell is absorbed and Absorption remains.
1 or more points stronger than Absorption's Magnitude	Absorption eliminated and incoming spell takes effect.

## AEGIS

*Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate*

Creates or augments a shield which glows with the runic symbols of the deity. The magical shield takes the attributes of a Hoplite shield, although its parrying Size depends on the Intensity of the miracle. Intensity 1-2 is a Small shield, 3-4 Medium, 5-6 Large, 7-8 Huge, 9-10 Enormous and 11+ Colossal.

The Aegis is immune to all damage. If cast upon an existent shield, it is protected until the miracle ends.



## AWAKEN

*Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Priest*

Awaken brings part of the god's awareness into its consecrated shrine or temple, enabling the deity to animate its sanctified idol or take control of its sacred animal(s), depending on the nature of the cult. It is normally reserved for cult holy days, except in times of emergency. The embodied god cannot leave the consecrated area, but during that time it can awe its worshippers, express its displeasure or defend its own shrine.

The limits of the miracle depend on what is used for the embodiment. An awakened statue or cult idol can have a combined STR+SIZ of up to ten times the Intensity. This value is used to calculate both the idol's Damage Modifier and its Hit Points per location. Its Armour Points depend upon the material it is constructed from, usually 6 for wooden idols, 8 for hollow metal and 10 for stone. The idol performs all actions at the same value as the caster's Devotion skill, has a Strike Rank Bonus equal to the Intensity, and one Action Point per four levels of Intensity (or fraction thereof).



Awakened creatures are handled slightly differently. Like idols the deity may awaken a creature of up to a maximum STR+SIZ of ten times the Intensity of the miracle. However, if the shrine or temple lacks a giant example of the sacred animal, the deity can instead awaken multiple beasts provided their combined total does not exceed the limit set by the Intensity. Other than that the creature or creatures possess their normal Action Points, Damage Modifier, Hit Points, Strike Rank Bonus and Armour Points. They perform skills at either their base (or trained) value or at the value of the caster's Devotion skill, whichever is higher.

### BACKLASH

*Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate*

Backlash makes physical assault upon the recipient extremely dangerous, redirecting an inflicted injury back upon the attacker. The magic only affects wounds that inflict equal or less Hit Points than the Intensity of the miracle – translocating the damage so that it affects the attacker in precisely the same location they struck, ignoring any armour.

This miracle affects both hand to hand and ranged attacks, providing the assailant is within range. Even though the recipient may be near immune to injury, it does not provide immunity to any Special Effect they may have suffered as part of the attack.

### BEAST FORM

*Duration (Hours), Ranged (Metres), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Endurance)*

This miracle transforms the target and all his personal belongings into an animal that is sacred to the cult. The target retains his INT, CHA and POW scores, but exchanges his STR, DEX, CON and SIZ scores for average values for that of the animal type, and gains a bonus to each physical Characteristic of +1 per point of Intensity. 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 final say as to what manner of creature would fit a specific cult if it is not obvious.

### BEHOLD

*Area (Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)*

Behold summons a vision of what a fellow cult member of lesser rank is currently experiencing. The image requires some sort of cult related paraphernalia in which to manifest, such as a sacred mirror, pool of pure water or even narcotic smoke rising from a brazier.

The view provided is limited to the defined area, centred upon the target of the miracle, which may permit identification of their location if enough clues are visible. Behold conveys only a single primary sense, which for most cults is a visual image. Some however, depending on the deity in question, use sound or even scent instead; in which case the medium through which the information is transmitted is different.

If the target is either magically protected against scrying by a spell of greater Magnitude, held (or hiding) within the consecrated ground of a different cult, or dead, then the miracle fails. The target of Behold may attempt to resist the miracle if desired.

### BERSERK

*Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)*

The recipient of Berserk is overcome with bloodlust, causing him to disregard his own safety in exchange for being imbued with tremendous stamina and toughness. For the duration of the miracle the Damage Modifier of the recipient is increased by two steps, the Size of his weapon counts as one step larger for the purpose of penetrating parries and he is immune to all the detrimental effects of Serious Wounds and Fatigue. A Major wound will still incapacitate him.

In return the subject may not Parry, Evade or cast any magic while under the influence of Berserk. However the berserker automatically succeeds in resisting any Special Effect used against him.

Unwilling recipients 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 Willpower test. At the end of the spell, the recipient immediately suffers twice the deferred Fatigue levels they would have lost during the entire combat.

### BLESS CROPS

*Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Months), Rank Acolyte*

When cast on cultivated farmland this miracle protects the crops within its area against naturally occurring bad weather, blight and insect infestation, guaranteeing a nominal harvest if the magic is maintained from sowing to harvest. Bless Crops can also provide protection against magical disasters, provided the Magnitude of the adverse magic does not exceed that of the blessing.

### BREATHE WATER

*Duration (Hours), Rank Initiate*

Breathe Water permits the recipient to breathe water (the subject will still be able to breathe air as well) for the duration of the miracle. It also protects against pressure if diving deep below the surface of a lake or the sea. Under the influence of this miracle the recipient can speak and cast magic as normal.

### CHAMELEON

*Duration (Minutes), Rank Acolyte*

This miracle permits the recipient to fade into the background, becoming near invisible to normal observation. However Chameleon is only effective when present in an environment specific to the nature of the cult. The Chameleon miracle provided by a sylvan cult, for example, would only be effective in woods and forests.

Whilst the recipient remains motionless, crouched or flattened against the terrain, they cannot be spotted by normal Perception rolls relying on vision. If they move however, the constantly shifting patterns across their body may reveal them and attempts to interact with the recipient – whether observing where they go, attacking, parrying and so on – suffer a penalty against the observer of one difficulty grade per four points of Intensity. Creatures with other primary senses or observers with magical perceptions are immune to this miracle.

### CONSECRATE

*Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Months), Rank Acolyte*

Consecrate is vital to the creation of sanctified ground, upon which theists may communicate with their gods. It is usually as fundamental a part of a shrine or temple foundation as its cornerstone, but may actually be cast almost anywhere providing some form of temporary altar or image of the deity is erected prior to the casting, or upon a sacred relic. The minimum labour required to create a temporary sanctuary depends on the setting, but it should be significant enough to be considered a major effort; for example an entire day of collecting stones and rocks to form a crude altar.

The effects of the miracle are many fold. Not only does the consecrated area permit cult worshippers to recharge their Devotional Pool (see page 132), but it also allows for a number of additional cult miracles (up to the consecration's Intensity) to be embedded or bound to the area, extending their duration (or held readiness) to that of the Consecrate.

These extra miracles need not come from whoever performs the consecration, but the cult rank of the magic cannot exceed that of the consecrating acolyte or priest. Furthermore, each embedded miracle counts against the devotional pool of whichever theist cast it, until the Consecrate itself expires or, if of Instant duration, the miracle is triggered.

Such is the strength of the divine presence within the sanctified area, that requesting miracles from unaligned gods whilst inside the perimeter of the consecration becomes more difficult. Exhorting the deities of neutral cults suffer one grade of difficulty, whereas those of hostile cults are two grades harder.

### CORRUPTION

*Duration (Hours), Ranged, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Endurance)*

This dire miracle is used as a curse against enemies or those that transgress cult tenets. If the target of the spell fails to resist, they begin to deteriorate physically in a manner suitable to the god. This could be anything from

### KHUIJAKA'S SAGA

*After years of devious and brutal service Khujaka is promoted to the rank of priest and granted the opportunity to found a new shrine to the Seven Devils. Finding a suitable cave overlooking the endless plain of the city-states he constructs an altar from the skulls of cult enemies which will form the cult sanctuary where the faithful can worship their ruthless demi-gods.*

*When finished, Khujaka holds a dedication ceremony, casting Consecrate to sanctify the area. At the same time he weaves several other miracles into the consecration in order to protect the shrine. He emplaces two spells suitable for the task, Chameleon to disguise the entrance to the cave and Madness to strike down anyone foolish enough to desecrate the altar.*

*This reduces the size of his pool by three points, but Khujaka deems it necessary to provide both a place for him to renew his Devotional Pool and a secure location from which the local Badoshi warbands can launch raids against the city-states... thrice damned Meeros and its foreign champion Zamothis in particular!*





pestilent boils, vegetative outgrowths or even a slow transformation of flesh to sand.

At the end of each hour, the victim must make an unopposed Endurance roll and depending on the success level, suffer the following:

- ⇒ If the roll is a critical success, the victim takes no damage
- ⇒ If the roll is successful, the victim sustains 1d3 points of damage to every location
- ⇒ If the roll fails, the victim sustains 1d6 points of damage to every location
- ⇒ If the roll is fumbled, the victim dies in a horrific transformation of their body

Those who realise what they have contracted must either seek out someone capable of dispelling the curse, or return to the cult temple, begging for forgiveness and premature cessation of the punishment. If the victim survives, then they can heal as normal, but some disfigurement may remain.

### CURE MALADY

*Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate*

This miracle cures the effects of any mundane disease or poison afflicting the target; or magical ones whose potency is less than the value of the Devotion skill of the caster.

### CURE SENSE

*Duration (Instant), Rank Acolyte*

Cure Sense enables the theist to cure a specific type of sensory injury such as deafness, blindness and so on. The effects of the miracle are permanent. If the sensory deprivation is the result of magic however, the miracle only works if its Magnitude is greater than the Magnitude of the curse upon the target.

### DISMISS ELEMENTAL

*Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)*

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 Intensity. Failure to resist the spell causes the elemental to be dismissed, leaving the material substance of its body in place.

*Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate*

Dismiss Magic may be cast against either a general target, or a specific miracle or spell. Dismiss Magic will eliminate a combined Magnitude of spells equal to its own Magnitude. A spell cannot be partially eliminated. When used against a spell of equal or lower Magnitude which normally counters magic (such as Absorption, Spell Resistance or Reflection) then Dismiss Magic takes precedence.

If not aimed at a specific spell, Dismiss Magic starts with the most powerful magic affecting the target. If it fails to eliminate any spell (because the spell's Magnitude is too high), then the miracle ends and no more spells will be eliminated.

Dismiss Magic may be fired defensively to neutralise incoming offensive spells, by using the Counter Spell reactive action.

### EARTHQUAKE

*Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Instant), Rank Priest, Resist (Evade)*

Earthquake causes a ground tremor capable of knocking people from their feet and collapsing rigid buildings. At the very minimum, failing to resist the miracle causes the victim to fall prone. If located within a building, built up area or some vulnerable location (such as a forest or beneath a cliff), failing to evade also indicates that the person is struck and trapped by falling debris. For secondary effects, consult the Earthquake Table. Use the size of the damage dice in a Contest of Strength (see Brawn) to determine the difficulty of being extracted from the wreckage.

### ELEMENTAL SUMMONING

*Duration (Hours), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate*

This miracle calls up an elemental associated with the cult to assist as a personal guard or servant. For example cults associated with the God of Storms would summon sylphs. It summons an elemental of one cubic metre per point of Intensity in 1d3 Combat Rounds, which remains under the command of the theist for the entire duration but cannot stray further than the range. For obvious reasons,



## EARTHQUAKE TABLE

Intensity	Secondary Effects	Potential Damage
1	Suspended objects swing.	None
2	Delicately balanced objects topple.	None
3	Walls and buildings make creaking sounds.	None
4	Plaster and glass windows crack, trees, poles, and other tall objects quiver dramatically.	None
5	Heavy furniture moved, plaster and wall mounted objects fall, cracks open in walls.	None
6	Modest buildings of earth, wattle and daub or mud brick partially collapse. Minor branches fall.	1d2 damage to a single location
7	Heavy furniture overturned. Buildings of earth, wattle and daub or mud brick destroyed. Buildings of solid timber or masonry partially collapse. Fall of columns, statuary and boundary walls. Major tree limbs fall.	1d4 damage to a single location
8	Modest buildings of solid timber or masonry collapse. Ground cracks conspicuously, rockfalls from steep slopes. Underground pipes and sewers broken. Wooden bridges collapse. Small trees topple.	1d6 damage to a single location
9	Well constructed buildings of solid timber or masonry collapse. Large scale fortifications, city walls and stone bridges damaged. Ground badly cracked. Landslides and avalanches considerable. Big trees topple.	1d8 damage to two locations
10	Few, if any, structures remain standing. Tunnels and caves collapse. Broad fissures in ground. Huge trees topple.	1d10 damage to three locations
11+	Total destruction, even colossal stone monuments such as pyramids suffer partial collapse. Cliffs and mountain flanks shatter.	1d12 damage to four locations

the caster must have access to the same volume of the elemental's material to cast this spell successfully. The caster can summon a smaller elemental if material is limited.

**ENTANGLE**

*Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Evade)*

Entangle animates natural vegetation so that it lashes about, snagging and gripping the target. The victim must resist the miracle or be held immobile for its entire duration.

**ENTHRALL**

*Duration (Hours), Rank Initiate*

Enthrall increases the recipient's sexual attraction, making all those naturally interested in the recipient friendlier and more focussed upon them – which could be a very good or very bad thing depending on the circumstances. Members of the opposite sex (or

those of the same sex that would find the target sexually attractive) who attempt to resist any Influence or Streetwise rolls from the recipient suffer one grade of difficulty. Resisting Seduction attempts are treated as two grades harder.

**EXCOMMUNICATE**

*Duration (Instant), Ranged (Metres), Rank Priest, Resist (Willpower)*

Excommunicate can only be called down upon a worshipper of the caster's cult. It severs the mystical link the worshipper shares with his god, causing the target's devotional pool to be drained of all Magic Points and permanently removing access to miracles from that cult. Unless the target can make amends for whatever transgression caused the excommunication to be cast in the first place, their cult specific skills of Devotion and Exhort become mere academic knowledge with no power.



## EXTENSION

*Duration (Special), Rank Priest*

Extension lengthens the duration of any non-instantaneous miracle for as long as the caster wishes to maintain it. Extension can be cast any time, provided the miracle being extended is still functioning. Other than reducing the theist's devotional pool by several Magic Points (three for Extension and one or more for the extended miracle) the miracle has no other maintenance requirements; unless the Games Master chooses.

## FEAR

*Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)*

This miracle causes the target to be gripped with overwhelming fear. Targets which fail to resist will flee in terror away from the theist and avoid engaging in combat unless brought to bay. It has no effect on unconscious targets, targets without an INT or INS Characteristic, or targets that are currently under the effect of another emotion-controlling spell of higher Intensity.

## FECUNDITY

*Duration (Months), Rank Acolyte*

When cast on a person or creature, Fecundity will – depending on its sex - ensure it will bear or sire offspring the next time it performs a reproductive act. Provided the miracle is maintained for the full term of gestation or pregnancy, the progeny will be born healthy. Fecundity also provides the antenatal young protection against magical curses, provided the Magnitude of the adverse magic does not exceed that of the miracle.

## FORTIFY

*Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate, Resist (Evade)*

Fortify strengthens large scale constructions, making them more resilient to damage from natural disasters, siege weapons and magical attack. The miracle adds its Intensity to the natural Armour Points of all buildings and walls within its area of effect. Offensive magic which seeks to damage or modify a construction under the protection of Fortify has its Intensity reduced by that of the Fortify miracle.

## GROWTH

*Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Hours), Rank Priest*

Growth accelerates the growing speed of vegetation, ageing it by one year for each hour until the miracle concludes. Under its effects, trees and bushes can increase in size and verdure dramatically, although at the cost of wildly sprawling, tangled proliferation of every plant within the area of effect. Repeated use of this miracle can potentially grow a thick forest over what had been open fields a few days previously.

## HARMONISE

*Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)*

Harmonise causes the target to do exactly what the theist does. If not resisted the victim must mimic every physical move, albeit in a jerky, almost puppet-like manner. It only works on beings with roughly the same physiology as the caster; with limbs or locations not shared by both participants remaining unaffected by the magic. The miracle only controls gross motor skills and does not permit control of the victim's speech. Use of this magic can humiliate someone from afar, or perhaps even force them into performing a murderous or suicidal act.

If Harmonise is used to force the subject to attack or defend, the combat style rolls are automatically one grade harder to accomplish owing to the jerky movement of the victim.

## HEAL BODY

*Duration (Instant), Rank Acolyte*

This powerful miracle instantly heals all Minor and Serious Wounds suffered by the target. Like Heal Wound, this miracle has no effect on Major Wounds save to stabilise the injury, preventing death. To repair maimed or dismembered body locations requires the Rejuvenate miracle.

## HEAL MIND

*Duration (Instant), Rank Acolyte*

This miracle removes all madness and mental derangements from a single target. In the case of magically-induced madness, the spell works if its Magnitude is equal to or greater than that of the magical disorder.



## HEAL WOUND

*Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate*

Heals a single body location back to its full Hit Points, provided the injury is no more severe than a Serious Wound. It has no effect on Major Wounds save for stabilising the injury, preventing death.

## HEART SEIZURE

*Duration (Instant), Ranged (Metres), Rank Priest, Resist (Endurance)*

Whoever suffers this dire magic feels the veritable hand of the deity reach within his chest, squeezing his heart or perhaps tearing it out completely. Those that fail to resist the miracle suffer a fatal heart attack and die instantly. If the resistance roll succeeds, the target still suffers a number of Hit Points damage equal to Intensity of the spell, directly to the location where their heart is contained, normally the chest for humanoids. Creatures without hearts are immune to this miracle.

Different forms of this miracle exist, affecting different organs according to the nature of the deity offering it (Brain Seizure, for example).

## ILLUSION

*Area (Metres), Duration (Hours), Rank Initiate, Resist (Special)*

Illusion is used to change the sensory projections of an area or single target, making it seem to be something completely different. For example a tiger can be made to look like a harmless cat, sound like it meows when it roars, and feel silky soft instead of coarse wiry fur. The theist can adjust one sensory projection per two points of Intensity. Once set, the illusion can no longer be modified.

The largest target which can be affected must be able to fit within the perimeter of the miracle. Unwilling living targets may resist with Endurance. Observers who interact with the illusion are permitted an opposed Willpower roll against the miracle, in order to resist any debilitating psychosomatic effects it creates, e.g. deafness, pain, nausea. Whilst the illusion itself is incapable of causing harm, the underlying target or area remains as dangerous as it was before the miracle.

## LAY TO REST

*Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate*

This miracle is used to ensure that the soul of a recently killed person or creature reaches a deserving afterlife. Its primary purpose is to prevent angry, possibly coerced victims returning from death as vengeful spirits or reinhabiting their bodies as corporal undead.

## LEECHING

*Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Acolyte*

Using the blood of sacrifices scattered over an area, this miracle disrupts the flow of magic which enters the zone, dissipating its power. Within the area all magic, even that of the caster, is suppressed by the Magnitude of the miracle. Any encroaching spell whose Magnitude is reduced to zero is rendered inactive until the target of its effect leaves the area. Spells cast within the region with equal or less Magnitude automatically fail.

## LIGHTNING

*Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Evade)*

This miracle causes a sizzling bolt of lightning to either streak down from the sky, or be projected from the hand or weapon of the theist, towards the target. If the bolt is not evaded, it will inflict 1d6 damage per two points of Intensity to a random hit location. Natural and worn armour offers no protection against this damage, but magical protection does.

## MADNESS

*Duration (Days), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)*

This miracle infuses the target with gibbering madness. Targets which fail to resist will rant and rave uncontrollably, performing acts of utter insanity in a manner fitting to their personality, plot line and dramatic circumstances. In general, mad characters should be more harmless distractions than ticking time bombs. In the case of player characters, until the Madness subsides or is somehow cured, the insane victim should be placed under control of the Games Master unless he deems the player is capable of acting out the insanity.



### MINDBLAST

*Duration (Days), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)*

This spell blasts the intellect of the victim, obliterating their sapience. If not resisted, the victim's INT is temporarily converted to animalistic INS, removing from them the power of speech, writing or any other form of communication. It also prevents them from utilising equipment and devices. If forced to fight in this condition, the victim will by default use their Unarmed skill. Although prevented from utilising complex thought, it does not limit instinct and base cunning.

### MINDLINK

*Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate*

This miracle allows mind-to-mind communication, theistic knowledge and devotional pool Magic Points to be shared between participants. Its use is normally restricted to those of the same or closely allied cults, since once the magical link is established; there are no safeguards as to what can be tapped from the participants – all of whom must join the Mindlink willingly.

Mindlink has two main purposes. Either it allows an entire cult hierarchy to support a handful of its priests so that they may cast many miracles, powered by the devotional pools of associates and underlings; or it grants lesser ranked cult members the ability (albeit temporarily) to call forth miracles normally beyond their capability.

Each instance of Mindlink connects a pair of individuals in a two way link. Several castings using the same individual but with different partners will make them the hub of a Mindlink network, able to draw on the resources of each of the partners.

If a mental or emotion-affecting spell is cast at someone participating in a Mindlink, then everyone else directly linked to them must also resist the spell or suffer its consequences. Although participants in a Mindlink share deliberately transmitted thoughts, they remain their own entity and may sever their connection to the Mindlink by willing it so on their turn, or by leaving the spell's range.

### MIRAGE

*Area (Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate*

Mirage obscures a region, covering it with strange optical illusions, usually via the runic associations of the deity. An earth god might cause clouds of swirling sand which form unsettling faces; whereas a sun deity might infuse the area with blinding, shimmering curtain of light. The effect of this disconcerting obscurement is to conceal precisely what stands within the area and make ranged attacks extremely difficult. Firing at anyone within the Mirage suffers one difficulty grade per four points of Intensity.

### OBLITERATE

*Area (Kilometres), Duration (Instant), Rank Priest, Resist (Willpower)*

A dire spell to those who seek fame or remembrance after death, Obliterate removes every record of their existence – scouring it from scrolls, clay tablets, carved hieroglyphs and every other method of inscribing knowledge. In addition the name of that person is wiped from the mind of everyone within range, save for the casting priest, unless they resist the miracle. Although this miracle is normally used to expunge the glory of those whose crimes are so unforgivable that they must be forgotten for all time, it can be used as a cruel punishment to alienate or exile transgressors. Some darker gods offer this as a means for their worshippers to maintain secretive anonymity.

### PACIFY

*Area (Tens of Meters), Duration (Minutes), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Willpower)*

Pacify suppresses aggressive and violent behaviour within its area of effect. Those that fail to resist the miracle are unable to cause harm to another, although they may defend themselves using non-harmful techniques. If unthreatened, those subject to the magic will sheathe or drop weapons, stop belligerent demonstration and cease all arguments. The miracle does not change personal opinion, merely makes it difficult to act in a hostile manner.





## PERSEVERANCE

*Duration (Hours), Rank Initiate*

Through this miracle the recipient can channel the strength of his god, becoming inured to the effects of hard labour. Whilst the miracle remains active, the target of this spell will not receive another level of Fatigue, no matter the hardship faced. Perseverance does not grant any additional capability to lift, march or work; it just ensures the recipient will keep on going. This miracle has no effect upon Fatigue lost from asphyxiation or blood loss.

## PROPITIATE

*Area (Kilometres), Duration (Weeks), Rank Acolyte*

Used by cults who try to appease darker, more hostile deities, Propitiate exchanges regular worship for the agreement to leave a region alone. The precise effect depends on the god being propitiated, but the area affected is centred upon the shrine or temple of that cult. Propitiating a lightning deity for example would not necessarily prevent storms happening within the radius of the miracle, but no serious fires or injuries would occur from lightning strikes. Similarly the tremors of an earthquake god would still be felt in a city, but no buildings would collapse – assuming the propitiations were maintained of course.

## RAIN OF (SUBSTANCE)

*Area (Kilometres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Priest*

This miracle summons dark brooding clouds which then begin to rain a particular and most likely horrible substance with specific relevance to the cult deity, anything from blood to frogs. The miracle is intended to inspire awe or terror rather than inflict direct harm, so the actual things raining down are relatively harmless. A rain of spiders for instance would only produce non-venomous types; a rain of fire would look scary, but as each glowing ember reached the ground it would extinguish. During the event, members of the cult should be treated as having the Intimidate ability (see Creature Abilities page 150).

## RAISE UNDEAD

*Duration (Hours), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Acolyte*

Raise Undead uses the physical remains of a corpse to create either a skeleton or zombie. The miracle infuses the corpse with part of the deity's own consciousness, so that it can obey commands and act with a degree of independent intelligence. However, the skill capabilities of the undead automaton are limited to those of the theist who creates them.

The number of corpses which can be raised is equal to the Intensity of the miracle. Each skeleton or zombie also gains a bonus to its STR and CON characteristics, again equal to the Intensity. Thus a theist who exhorted his god to grant him an Intensity 9 Raise Dead, could animate 9 skeletons each with +9 to STR and CON. Only creatures of a SIZ equal or less than the caster's POW can be raised.

For further details on skeletons and zombies, refer to the Creature Chapter.

## REFLECTION

*Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate*

This miracle reflects incoming magic aimed at the target or his equipment, redirecting it back at the original caster, depending on their relative Magnitudes. It does not have any effect on spells that are already affecting the target, or spells the theist casts upon himself.

### 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.

## REJUVENATE

*Duration (Special), Rank Priest*

This miracle heals a single body location suffering from a Major Wound, no matter whether it has been crushed, mutilated or dismembered. The freshness of the injury



affects the time taken for the miracle to complete. Provided the recipient is still alive and the location was wounded within a number of hours equal to the Intensity of the miracle, then Rejuvenate will heal all the damage instantly.

Beyond this threshold the body part must undergo a more traumatic repair, which takes a number of days equal to the Hit Points lost on the location. If the miracle is allowed to lapse before the regrowth has completed, the location remains maimed and unusable, potentially left at a negative Hit Point level which cannot be cured.

### RESURRECT

*Duration (Instant), Rank Priest, Resist (Special)*

This miracle can bring the dead back to life by summoning the spirit of the deceased and persuading it to re-enter its body. For obvious reasons the theist must cast Resurrect upon the corpse, which must possess at a minimum, those body locations vital for life. If the target died due to some lingering disease, poison or magical curse, the ailment must be eliminated first or the miracle will fail.

Resurrection is not guaranteed. The deceased spirit will often have desires which preclude their return to life. The spirit may fear the hardship of their life, the lingering pain of wounds, persistent illnesses, the feebleness of old age or may even piously wish to reach their loved ones in the afterlife. On the other hand a spirit might wish to return from the dead to protect their family, seek vengeance against their killer or complete a holy quest.

To judge the primary motivation of the spirit, work out which of their passions or devotion skills has the highest value. If this indicates that the spirit will be unwilling to return to life, it may attempt to resist the miracle using that particular passion or Devotion skill.

Resurrect must be cast within a number of days equal to the Magnitude of the spell after death, otherwise the miracle automatically fails. A resurrected character returns to life with 1 Hit Point on all extant locations.

### RIPEN

*Area (Metres), Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate*

Ripen brings forth a single crop of fruits, tubers, roots, nuts, or seeds from the vegetation within the area of effect. The miracle does not guarantee they are edible since that depends on the plants, but does ensure the crop is at the peak of its ripeness, no matter when during the year the miracle is cast. Ripen cannot cause a plant or tree to give forth more than a single crop annually, so if it is used early during the growing season, the vegetation will spend the remainder of the year recovering.

### SACRED BAND

*Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate*

When cast upon a group of worshippers the miracle binds the recipients together as a sacred brotherhood, sharing their life force between them. This has little effect until one of their number is wounded, whereupon the surviving brothers spread the effects of the injury between them.

Damage is divided evenly amongst remaining recipients, applied to the same location which was injured. Any Special Effects which occur remain only with the originally wounded band member. Thus in a band of six temple guardians linked by this miracle, if one is wounded in the arm for 8 points of damage – normally a Serious Wound – the damage is instead split so that the original target and one other suffers 2 points in that arm, whilst everyone else in the band suffers 1 point.

The maximum number of brothers who can be bound together in the band cannot exceed the Intensity of the miracle. They must also share the same basic physiology, or the miracle will fail.

The obvious application of the miracle is to augment the physical resilience of a unit of cult warriors in battle. However, it can also be used to strengthen a cult champion whilst the remainder of the pious participants remain safely hidden or out of reach of combat.



## SEVER SPIRIT

*Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Priest, Resist (Endurance)*

This miracle severs the bond between body and soul, with dire effect. If not resisted, the victim is slain instantly. If however, the victim does throw off the miracle, they still receive 1 point of damage for every 2 levels of Intensity to each Hit Location simultaneously – which may, in some cases, still seriously injure or even kill the victim.

## SHIELD

*Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate*

This miracle protects the caster from physical attacks. Each point of Intensity grants the recipient one Armour Point on all hit locations. This protection does not stack on top of worn armour, rather it supplants it in those areas less protected than what the miracle itself provides. In some circumstances, even if the protective value of the Shield is less than the worn armour, it may still ward against certain types of magical damage.

## SOUL SIGHT

*Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate*

This miracle enables the recipient to see the magical 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 permits the recipient to see into the spirit world and see beyond any visual illusions which may be concealing a creature's true form – although this may not necessarily be a good thing in certain circumstances.

## STEADFAST

*Area (Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)*

Used when facing overwhelming odds or terrifying challenges, this miracle renders those within its area immune to any natural mental or emotional manipulation. Magical attacks which generate a similar effect, such as Fear, Fanaticism, Domination and the like, must exceed the Magnitude of the miracle to stand a chance of affecting the target.

## SUNSPEAR

*Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Evade)*

Sunspear summons a shaft of blazing light down from the sky to blast a single target. If not evaded, the scorching light will burn the victim for 1d6 damage per two points of Intensity in every hit location. Natural and worn armour counts against this damage. This miracle will only function in direct sunlight.

## SURESHOT

*Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate*

Sureshot magically guides the trajectory of missiles thrown or fired so that they almost always hit, no matter the situational modifiers or cover; provided at least some part of the target is visible and they are within range of both the miracle and the weapon itself. Any failed ranged weapon attack roll is treated as a success instead. Fumbles, normal successes and critical successes remain unaffected. The target of the missile attack can still attempt to Parry or Evade as normal.

## THUNDERCLAP

*Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Endurance)*

This miracle summons a powerful blast of thunder from the open sky, to smite down foes. All non-cult members must resist the magic. Those who fail are knocked prone by the expanding wall of sound and struck deaf for the remainder of the Duration. Fumbling the resistance roll against the spell, they are struck permanently deaf.

## TRUE (WEAPON)

*Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate*

True (Weapon) augments the harm the recipient inflicts when wielding a cult-specified close combat weapon. The miracle doubles that type of weapon's damage up to the maximum that the weapon can inflict, and increases its Size by one step for the purpose of overcoming parries. Thus under the effects of a True (Sword) miracle the wielder would roll 1d8 twice for a broadsword, but would not receive more than 8 points. Other bonuses, such as Damage Modifier, are not affected.



# THEISM MIRACLES BY CULT RANK

## Initiate Spells Summary

Absorption	Lay to Rest
Aegis	Lightning
Backlash	Madness
Behold	Mindblast
Berserk	Mindlink
Breathe Water	Mirage
Cure Malady	Perserverance
Dismiss Elemental	Reflection
Dismiss Magic	Ripen
Elemental Summoning	Sacred Band
Enthrall	Shield
Fear	Soul Sight
Fortify	Steadfast
Harmonise	Sureshot
Heal Wound	True Weapon
Illusion	

## Acolyte Spells Summary

Beast Form	Pacify
Bless Crops	Propitiate
Chameleon	Raise Undead
Consecrate	Sunspear
Corruption	Thunderclap
Cure Sense	
Entangle	
Fecundity	
Heal Body	
Heal Mind	
Leaching	

## Priest Spells Summary

Awaken
Earthquake
Excommunication
Extension
Growth
Heart Seizure
Obliterate
Rain of (Substance)
Rejuvenate
Resurrect
Sever Spirit

## CHAPTER 15: CREATURES



**A**nimals, monsters and creatures of myth, legend and folklore are the focus of this chapter. The primary use of creatures is as adversaries, but they should never be thought of strictly in these terms. Every creature has its own motivations, instincts and drives, just as characters do, and they can be much more than simply sword or arrow fodder.

Most creatures in *RUNEQUEST* are defined by the same characteristics, attributes and skills as player characters. This means that some species, sapient or otherwise, can be used as player characters if Games Masters allow this in their campaign. There are, however, certain differences that help mark creatures, and different species, from standard humans, notably Instinct, and Creature Abilities.

### INSTINCT

Some creatures do not exhibit intelligence on the same scale or in the same way

as humans. It is usual, for instance, to judge animals as being less intelligent than humans because they appear to have limited reasoning and problem-solving capabilities, and are driven far more by base instinct than a reasoned approach to their environment.

Where such creatures are concerned, INT is replaced by a new characteristic, Instinct (INS), which is used to figure all attributes and skills that would otherwise rely on the INT score.

### CREATURE ABILITIES

A creature ability is something it can do naturally as a result of its physiology, biology, innate magic and so forth. Birds, for example, can flap through the air, and so Flying is an ability.

Each of the following abilities is described in terms of its game effects and how it may affect interactions with others:





#### ADHERING

The creature can move freely on vertical surfaces and even move upside down on a ceiling with no special equipment. Such Movement is always at half the creature's normal Movement rate.

#### ALLERGY

The creature has a powerful allergy or other negative reaction to a specific substance that normally does not inflict damage; such as wine, salt, water and so on. If the creature is exposed to the substance it suffers 1d6 damage per Combat Round to those locations in contact. Worn armour blocks its normal amount of Armour Points against this damage, assuming the creature is not fully drenched or immersed in the substance. Natural protection, however, does not count.

#### BLOOD SENSE

Allows the creature to detect blood over great distances, either carried by wind or water. Traces of blood can be sensed at a distance of half its INS in kilometres.

#### BREATHE FLAME

The creature breathes flame over an area as a Combat Action. The flame covers a cone in front of the creature, which stretches for its CON in metres. At the furthest extent, the width of the cone is one quarter of the creature's CON. Any creature caught in the flame suffers fire-based damage to all hit locations, though a character can attempt to Evade to halve this damage. Armour Points count as normal unless otherwise noted.

A creature can 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 require the creature to pass Endurance rolls with each roll becoming one grade harder, or suffer a level of Fatigue.

#### BURROWER

The creature is adept at tunnelling through the ground at its normal Movement rate. Some creatures are limited in the kind of ground they can move through, which is noted in the creature's description.

#### CAMOUFLAGED

The creature is adept at hiding due to its colouration or unusual surface texture. Those attempting to spot the creature suffer a penalty to Perception of two difficulty grades.

#### CHAOS FEATURE

Creatures tainted with the Chaos rune do not always obey the normal laws of physical growth and many are hideously malformed. Each Chaos Feature Trait forces the creature to roll once on the Chaos Feature table on pages 190 to 191, applying the effects immediately.

#### COLD-BLOODED

The creature does not need to eat frequently. One meal a week is sufficient to keep it healthy and well fed, and gorging itself on a large amount of meat will remove the need to eat for a month. Conversely, when exposed to temperatures below 15 degrees Celsius, its reflexes become muted, suffering a penalty of -6 to Strike Rank and the loss of one Combat Action per round. Below 5 degrees Celsius cold blooded creatures become completely torpid, entering a helpless catatonic state.

#### COMMUNAL MIND

Though a single creature of this type has only a low INT, a large group of them together possess a vastly improved intellect, potentially achieving sapience.

#### DARK SIGHT

Allows the creature to see normally in the complete absence of light.

#### DEATH SENSE

In tune with the powers of death, the creature can sense the death of living things and dead flesh at a range of up to half its INT or INS in kilometres.

#### DISEASE IMMUNITY

The creature is immune to all diseases. All creatures without SIZ automatically have this ability, although it is not specifically listed in their descriptions.

#### DIVING STRIKE

Some creatures can plummet from the sky or surge through the waters to attack their prey, striking with incredible force. This is



effectively charging for creatures which are not land based. Diving Strike increases both the Size of the attack and the creature's Damage Modifier by one step, for this attack only. A diving strike may only be used once per round. The creature must be at least one full round of Movement above its target (or possibly below if submerged) in order to use the diving strike.

#### EARTH SENSE

Some creatures, such as those tied to the Earth rune, are so in tune with the underground world that they can work perfectly well in the total darkness of the deep. By sensing vibration and air pressure, a creature with Earth Sense can fight and make Perception rolls with no penalty as long as their target is no more than their INS in metres away. If using Earth Sense above ground the range is halved.

#### ENGULFING

The creature has an orifice which can swallow targets whole. The maximum size of an engulfed victim is figured as half the creature's own SIZ, but may be less than this depending on the creature's physiology. When engulfed the victim suffers at least one damage roll based on the creature's bite attack before being swallowed – the time spent chewing depends on the creature and how sensitive its innards are. If still alive a swallowed victim will begin to suffocate, likely dying by asphyxiation before suffering any noticeable damage from stomach acid. Realistically, an engulfed victim lacks the mobility to move inside the digestive tract or the creature is so large that he will die long before he can cut its way out.

#### FLYING

The creature automatically succeeds in everyday moving and manoeuvring whilst flying, and need not roll their Fly skill unless attempting an unusually difficult task, such as flying against a powerful wind, evading a ranged attack in the air, or out-manoevring an aerial foe. A flyer may substitute the Fly skill (base STR+DEX) for Evade whilst fighting whilst aloft.

#### FORMIDABLE NATURAL WEAPONS

This creature is able to actively parry or deflect attacks using its natural weapons. This is due to a combination of fighting style and possessing natural armament being formed from resilient substances such as horn, chitin or bone which are able to shrug off damage from manufactured weapons. Note that creatures lacking this trait either rely on their natural armour to turn blows or use Evade.

#### FRENZY

When wounded or exposed to a particular substance - blood for instance - the creature must succeed in a Willpower roll or enter a frenzy. The frenzy lasts a number of rounds equal to the creature's CON. During the frenzy they must only spend Combat Actions on attacking or moving towards combat. Spellcasting, parrying, evading and anything else is forbidden; all thoughts of self preservation washed away in a red haze. In return, the creature no longer suffers pain or fatigue and is impervious to mental control. During this time it is immune to all the detrimental effects of Serious Wounds, although a Major Wound will still incapacitate. If still alive, once the frenzy finishes the creature automatically gains a fatigue level of Exhausted.

#### GAZE ATTACK

The creature has a gaze attack. This attack may be active (the creature must consciously spend an Action Point on its turn to use it on a foe) or passive (anyone looking at the creature is affected), as listed in the creature's description.

#### GRAPPLER

If the creature successfully strikes in combat, it can immediately Grapple in addition to inflicting damage. If the creature's attack was parried (or the creature itself is parrying), then the creature is granted the Grip effect against the opponent's limb or the Pin Weapon effect against his weapon instead. The creature always uses its Brawn skill to resist a victim from breaking free.

#### HOLD BREATH

The creature can hold its breath for extended periods of time. If prepared and



remaining fairly static the creature can hold its breath for a number of minutes equal to its CON. This period is halved if the creature is active, such as when swimming or fighting.

#### IMMUNITY

The creature is completely immune to damage caused by one type of source. This source (cold, fire, iron, etc.) will be noted in the creature's listing, but a narrative description may be necessary for some of the more specific immunities.

#### INTIMIDATE

The creature may intimidate opponents as a prelude to combat or to avoid it altogether: growls, snarls, lowering of horns, and so forth. Opponents must make an unopposed Willpower roll to hold their ground; a success allows a character to stand his ground, whereas a failure indicates that they must spend the next round instinctively placing distance between themselves and the creature. If he fumbles the Willpower roll, then the character flees at maximum speed. A critical success allows the character to ignore any further intimidation attempts by the creature or its brethren during that encounter. The effect continues for as long as the creature continues to act in a threatening manner, which includes it making an attack.

#### LEAPER

The creature uses Leaping attacks as described on page 96 of the Combat chapter, but can combine the leap with a physical attack such as a claw or bite. If the leaping creature wins the opposed leap attack roll, it automatically inflicts damage for one of its natural weapons on the target. This damage cannot be parried except by Passive Blocking.

#### 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 makes a successful Perception roll, it learns of the target's current injuries, Fatigue level and whether it is currently afflicted by any poison or disease. The creature is also aware of any form of life within a number of metres equal

to its Willpower skill, which may make Stealth difficult to accomplish.

#### MULTI-HEADED

The creature gains an additional Combat Action per extra head possessed beyond the first. These are lost as each individual head is incapacitated or severed. Provided one head remains active, the creature can still control its shared body. When a multi-headed creature resists spells which affect emotions or intellect, it rolls individual saves for each still intact head.

#### NIGHT SIGHT

Allows the creature to treat partial darkness as illuminated and darkness as partial darkness.

#### POISON IMMUNITY

The creature is immune to all poisons. All creatures without SIZ automatically have this Trait, although it is not specifically listed in their descriptions.

#### REGENERATION

The creature is able to regenerate Hit Points lost to damage. The speed of regeneration varies depending upon the creature. Unless specifically noted, regeneration does not replace lost limbs, and the severing of a vital location (head, chest or abdomen) will still result in death.

#### SWIMMER

The creature automatically succeeds in everyday moving and manoeuvring whilst swimming, and need not roll their Swim skill unless attempting an unusually difficult task, such as swimming against a powerful tide or leaping up a waterfall. A swimmer may substitute the Swim skill for Athletics and Evade rolls whilst in water.

#### TERRIFYING

The creature's appearance, form or aura is so terrifying it forces viewers to make an unopposed Willpower roll. Success indicates the viewer is shaken for one round and cannot act offensively. Failure causes them to flee in terror. A fumble causes the viewer to collapse unconscious from the shock. Only a critical success allows the viewer to act unhindered.



The viewer need not make any further checks for the remainder of the combat, even if more of the same creatures are present. Repeated exposure to a specific type of Terrifying monster may eventually permit the skill check to become one or more grades easier.

#### TRAMPLE

The creature is able to trample beings with a SIZ of half or less than its own, using its Athletics skill to attack. This inflicts damage equal to twice the creature's base Damage Modifier and increases the Size of the attack by one step. How and when trample is used depends on the circumstances. If immobile the creature may trample a prone opponent on its turn, but this costs an Action Point. If the trample is performed whilst the creature is moving or charging over an opponent, then the trample is a Free Action.

#### UNDEAD

Being already dead, the creature is immune to the consequences of both fatigue and severe injuries. Undead are thus immune to all the detrimental effects of Serious Wounds. Even Major Wounds do not incapacitate them, although they can still have locations severed or shattered as per normal. Treat the head or chest location of the undead creature as the area where the spirit or magic has been bound. Any location (and those contiguous to it) which is smashed or severed from the bound area ceases to function, but the remainder of the body can continue if it still has limbs with which to act. A Major Wound to the magic-infused location destroys the undead outright. Only fully corporeal dead creatures may possess the Undead trait.

#### VAMPIRIC

The creature drains its victim's blood, causing an increase in Fatigue levels. The creature must use a bite attack and cause damage with the bite to be able to drain blood at the rate described in the creature's description.

#### VENOMOUS

The creature has a venomous bite, sting or other means of attack. The creature's description provides the game mechanic effects for

the particular poison used. A venomous creature may, if desired, apply its poison by use of the Inject Venom special effect.

### INJECT VENOM

Whilst the stinger of a scorpion's tail or the fangs of a cobra are extremely threatening, a strike from the natural weapons of a venomous creature does not necessarily indicate that venom was injected. Fangs might not pass a blocking shield or stingers fail to penetrate armour. Using the Inject Venom manoeuvre indicates a specific desire for the creature to poison its foe. In exchange for forfeiting any chance to inflict damage, the creature finds a weak point in the defence/armour, bypassing it only for the purposes of applying its venom – for example a large venomous snake might attack a warrior wearing chainmail armour, and instead of inflicting damage from the bite, ducks past the victim's parry to merely scratch the back of the his sword hand, poisoning him. This combat manoeuvre can be used both offensively and defensively by venomous creatures.

#### VULNERABLE

The creature's natural and magical protection cannot mitigate damage caused by a specific type of source. This source (cold, fire, iron, etc.) will be noted as part of the trait, but a narrative description may be included for some specific vulnerabilities. For example, silver weapons might pass through the skin of a werewolf.

## CREATURES

The creatures that follow are derived from myth, legend, the natural world and, in a few cases, popular fantasy media. A limited selection is given and is by no means exhaustive. In the main these are corporeal creatures, the more intangible threats such as spirits, ghostly phantoms or wraiths are not included in the Quickstart Rules.



*The statistics here are for a worker or soldier ant. Queens are twice as large and twice as strong: 4d6+14 STR and SIZ but have a DEX of only 2d6, reflecting their largely stationary existence in the hive.*

## ANT, GIANT

Giant ants are hive-dwellers and operate under the direction of a queen with individuals taking on very specific roles (typically warrior or worker) necessary for the survival of the hive. Individual ants have highly developed instincts but working together in groups their intelligence shows remarkable degrees of problem-solving. Giant ants are also formidable predators, herding and farming smaller species of mammals and insects for food and, sometimes, incubation of eggs.

Giant ants use their powerful mandibles to seize, squeeze and crush foes. Once seized the ant uses the Grip Combat Effect to hold onto its prey and, if it continues to resist, moves its thorax around to deliver a powerful sting. If poisoned the victim is allowed an Endurance roll, opposed by the ant's Endurance, to resist the poison. If the roll is failed then the location suffers agonising pain and cannot be used for 30-CON minutes.

Individual ants are unlikely to engage foes larger than themselves, although packs of ants, working together, will have no hesitation in attacking. Single ants prefer to evade, wait, and send pheromone signals to nearby (or even distant) colleagues, summoning a larger party.

### ANT, GIANT

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 4d6 (14)	Action Points	2	1	Right Rear Leg	4/6
CON: 3d6+6 (17)	Damage Modifier	+1d2	2	Left Rear Leg	4/6
SIZ: 4d6 (14)	Magic Points	4	3	Right Middle Leg	4/6
DEX: 2d6+6 (13)	Movement	12m	4	Left Middle Leg	4/6
INS: 2d6+2 (9)	Strike Rank	11	5-9	Abdomen	4/8
POW: 1d6 (4)	Armour	Chitin	10-13	Thorax	4/9
	Abilities	Communal Mind,	14	Right Front Leg	4/6
		Formidable Natural	15	Left Front Leg	4/6
	Weapons, Venomous	16-20	Head	4/7	
Skills: Athletics 67%, Brawn 68%, Endurance 74%, Evade 56%, Perception 53%, Track 66%, Willpower 48%					
Combat Style: Ant Attack (Mandibles and Sting) 67%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Bite	M	T	1d6+1d2	As for Head	
Sting	M	M	1d4+1d2	As for Abdomen	

## AUROCHS

Standing nearly 2m at the shoulder, aurochs are a giant Pleistocene cattle species found across much of northern Europe. They are famed for their strength and belligerence. Hunting aurochs is a near suicidal pastime but very rewarding in terms of the quantity of meat provided.

Aurochs prefer to fight by charging threats with their gore attack. If the target is knocked prone and continues to move, the aurochs tramples until the victim stops responding. A successful charge increases the Damage Bonus to 2d8. If lamed an aurochs continues to fight in place until it collapses from exhaustion.

Aurochs horns are capable of both Sundering and Impaling, and, if a foe is impaled, the bull on its next turn will attempt to throw its victim with a toss of its head. If the impaled victim is conscious, he may pit either his Athletics or Acrobatics against the Brawn of the bull. If successful, he may land safely on his feet or all fours. If unsuccessful, or if unconscious, the victim suffers the equivalent to a 1d6 metre fall and lands prone.





**AUROCHS**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+24 (31)	Action Points	2	1–2	Right Hind Leg	4/12
CON: 3d6+10 (21)	Damage Modifier	+2d6	3–4	Left Hind Leg	4/12
SIZ: 4d6+24 (38)	Magic Points	7	5–7	Hindquarters	4/13
DEX: 2d6 (7)	Movement	12m	8–10	Forequarters	4/14
INS: 2d6+4 (11)	Strike Rank	9	11–13	Right Front Leg	4/11
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Tough Hide	14–16	Left Front Leg	4/11
	Abilities	Intimidate, Trample	17–20	Head	4/12
Skills: Athletics 58%, Brawn 89%, Endurance 82%, Evade 34%, Perception 38%, Willpower 38%					
Combat Style: Gore and Toss (Horns) 68%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Gore	H	M	1d10+2d6	As for Head	
Trample	E	T	4d6	As for Legs	

*Aurochs horns can span greater than a man's reach and curve forwards from the head in a perfect charging/goring configuration. Naturally the horns can impale and this is a standard Special Effect if a charging aurochs manages to gore an enemy.*

## BABOON, GIANT

Baboons are ground dwelling and typically found in open savannah, open woodland and hill areas in warm and sub-tropical climates. Ostensibly omnivores, they eat insects and occasionally prey on fish, shellfish, small mammals, birds, smaller primates and small antelopes. Baboons are foragers and have been known to raid human dwellings, preying on sheep and goats

Troops of baboons usually feature around 30 animals but larger troops are not uncommon. A troop leader can be either male or female and becomes the dominant figure of the group, choosing mates and ensuring the choicest foods. Baboons are highly vocal and use their whoops, shrieks and calls to signal to each other and indicate their positioning in the social hierarchy.

**BABOON**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 1d6+6 (10)	Action Points	3	1–3	Right Leg	1/5
CON: 3d6 (11)	Damage Modifier	-1d2	4–6	Left Leg	1/5
SIZ: 1d6+6 (10)	Magic Points	7	7–9	Abdomen	1/6
DEX: 3d6+6 (17)	Movement	8m	10-12	Chest	1/7
INS: 2d6+7 (14)	Strike Rank	16	13–15	Right Arm	1/4
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Fur	16–18	Left Arm	1/4
	Abilities	Nightstight	19–20	Head	1/5
Skills: Acrobatics 57%, Athletics 47%, Brawn 40%, Endurance 42%, Evade 74%, Perception 61%, Stealth 61%, Survival 58%, Willpower 54%					
Combat Style: Ferocious Fracas (Bite, Fist, Thrown Object) 67%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Bite	S	T	1d4-1d2	As for Head	
Sting	S	-	1d3-1d2	As for Legs	
Missile	S	-	1d3-1d2	Dependent on Object	

*The baboon template can be used for larger primates but adding additional bonuses: such as gorillas (+9 STR, +12 SIZ, 2d6+3 DEX) or man-eating carnivorous apes (+12 STR, +15 SIZ, 2d6 DEX)*

## BASILISK/COCKATRICE



*Sorcerers value cockatrice eggs for their experiments and hire adventurers to collect them. Preparation is vital...*

A curious – and deadly – combination of rooster and serpent, basilisks and cockatrice (the former is hatched from the egg of a cockerel by a serpent, and the latter from the egg of a serpent by a cockerel) are small but dreadful magical creatures. Being innately evil they detest all life and deal with it by the glare which is enough to kill anyone who meets the baleful gaze.

Either creature is about the size of a large rooster with a serpentine body, sometimes with small, useless dragon-like wings, a rooster's head and wattle, and usually two or occasionally four, rooster-like feet. They are highly, highly reclusive and often prized by sorcerers for many bodily components that are useful ingredients in rituals and spells. The blood of the basilisk is a concentrated acid but its real power lies in its Death Stare. The basilisk must expend both a Magic Point and an Action Point on its turn to activate this dreadful power. This forces an opposed roll of the basilisk's Willpower against the victim's Evade (to avert his eyes in time). If the victim loses he suffers an immediate Major Wound to the Head, haemorrhaging blood from the eyes, ears, nostrils and mouth. A further standard Endurance roll is needed on the next round to avoid death. The Death Gaze is also effective against plant-life, causing all but the hardest plants to wither and die against the monster's evil glare.

Basilisks and cockatrices have little need to enter into physical combat, relying on their gaze and Evade for defence. If injured the monster's acidic blood immediately inflicts 1d6 damage to the weapon used (armour points do not protect), with the acid continuing to inflict damage each round for the next two rounds.

### BASILISK/COCKATRICE

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 1d6+1 (5)	Action Points	2	1-3	Tail	1/4
CON: 3d6 (11)	Damage Modifier	-1d6	4-5	Right Hind Leg	1/4
SIZ: 1d6+1 (5)	Magic Points	19	6-7	Left Hind Leg	1/4
DEX: 2d6+6 (13)	Movement	6m	8-10	Hindquarters	1/5
INS: 2d6+4 (11)	Strike Rank	12	11-14	Forequarters	1/6
POW: 2d6+12 (19)	Armour	Scales	15-16	Right Winglet	1/3
	Abilities	Gaze Attack, Life	17-18	Left Winglet	1/3
		Sense, Terrifying	19-20	Head	1/4
Skills: Athletics 48%, Brawn 30%, Endurance 52%, Evade 66%, Perception 69%, Willpower 78%					
Combat Style: Gaze Attack (see description)					



## BEAR

Bears typically inhabit forested and hilly regions in temperate to arctic zones. They are generally solitary animals although mothers and cubs travel together in packs. The following characteristics represent Grizzly, Kodiak and Polar bears. These are the largest, fiercest and most unpredictable of the bear species although their need to attack is generally driven by hunger, curiosity and fear. They will roam far and wide in search of food, even entering settlements to scavenge and prey on smaller creatures. They will pursue and track injured creatures, or those that flee and leave a discernible trail. Like many predators, playing dead does confuse the bear and cause it to lose interest which may prove to be a life-saver if attacked. Despite their size and bulk they are swift and remarkable swimmers and climbers.

Bears typically attempt to grip with both claws and then deliver a bite, although swiping with a claw is also an effective means of disabling an enemy. Prehistoric ursoids, such as the short-faced bear, tend to be larger and stronger (additional +6 STR, +10 SIZ).

*Playing dead is a tactic oft-cited for dealing with bear attacks. This is fine if the bear is acting defensively. If hungry and actively chasing prey, playing dead may well be quite the wrong way to act. A hungry bear does not care if its meal is moving or static...*

### BEAR

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+18 (25)	Action Points	3	1–3	Right Rear Leg	3/10
CON: 2d6+6 (13)	Damage Modifier	+1d12	4–6	Left Rear Leg	3/10
SIZ: 4d6+20 (34)	Magic Points	7	7–9	Hindquarters	3/11
DEX: 2d6+6 (13)	Movement	8m	10–12	Forequarters	3/12
INS: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	13	13–15	Right Front Leg	3/10
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Thick Pelt	16–18	Left Front Leg	3/10
	Abilities	Intimidate, Nightsight	19–20	Head	3/10
Skills: Athletics 68%, Brawn 79%, Endurance 66%, Evade 46%, Perception 60%, Stealth 66%, Survival 60%, Swim 68%, Track 66%, Willpower 44%					
Combat Style: Ursine Fury (Bite and Claws) 78%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Bite	L	S	1d8+1d12	As for Head	
Claw	H	L	1d8+1d12	As for Leg	

## BEETLE, GIANT

Giant beetles come in many different species. All species are six-legged and some have wings that fold into the carapace. All giant beetles are naturally armoured with chitin across all surfaces save the underbelly – natural protection against predators although, in their giant forms, only the very largest carnivores are a match for them.

Beetles are not necessarily aggressive. Many beetles are omnivorous, feeding on mouldering plant detritus and vegetation and other invertebrates (and also small mammals). They prefer warm, dark conditions and so are often found underground in their vast burrows – a few types are ground-dwellers rather than burrowers.

All giant beetles rely on their armour for defence rather than evading. Grasping and then attempting to dash their foes (or simply continue biting) is a common enough tactic.

*Some creatures, actively breed and farm giant beetles for use as beasts of burden and steeds. Species that fly are prized amongst those that put these massive insects to work.*



**BEETLE, GIANT**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+12 (19)	Action Points	2	1	Right Rear Leg	5/7
CON: 3d6+6 (17)	Damage Modifier	+1d6	2	Left Rear Leg	5/7
SIZ: 2d6+12 (19)	Magic Points	4	3	Right Middle Leg	5/7
DEX: 2d6+6 (13)	Movement	12m	4	Left Middle Leg	5/7
INS: 2d6+2 (9)	Strike Rank	11	5-9	Abdomen	5/9
POW: 1d6 (4)	Armour	Chitin	10-13	Thorax	5/10
	Abilities	Burrower,	14	Right Front Leg	5/7
		Formidable Natural	15	Left Front Leg	5/7
	Weapons		16-20	Head	5/8
Skills: Athletics 62%, Brawn 68%, Endurance 74%, Evade 26%, Perception 53%, Willpower 38%					
Combat Style: Beetle Bite (Mandibles) 72%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Mandibles	M	T	1d6+1d6	As for Head	

**BOAR**

*Wild boars live in groups called sounders. Sounders typically contain around 20 animals. Boar are usually nocturnal, foraging from dusk until dawn but with resting periods during both night and day. They are omnivores with a diet including nuts, berries, carrion, roots, tubers, refuse, insects, small reptiles - even young deer and lambs.*

Wild boars inhabit woods and forests in most temperate climates. The body of the wild boar is compact; the head is large, whilst the legs relatively short. A boar's coat consists of stiff bristles and finer fur. The colour varies from dark grey to black or brown, and there can be great regional differences in colour. Adult boars measure around 2m in length, and stand around 1m at the shoulder. Larger specimens are not uncommon. Adult males are equipped with large, sharp tusks used for foraging and fighting and these tusks lend the boar its fearsome reputation.

Boars are usually solitary animals outside of the breeding season. All boars are aggressive when threatened, usually attempting to intimidate first and then launch a powerful charge using the tusks to carve at their enemies. Sows with young will almost certainly attempt to defend their progeny from potential attack and males can be highly territorial – especially if sows are nearby during the breeding season.

The animals are prized for their rich meat, strong, warm hide and their tusks which make excellent trophies. Boar hunting, using hounds to track and flush the animals, is a widespread sport throughout most cultures, but a hazardous one. Large, powerful specimens can easily eviscerate unwary opponents and whilst much of the challenge comes in facing these creatures with a long spear to receive a charge, hunter injuries and deaths are not uncommon.

**BOAR**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+9 (16)	Action Points	2	1-3	Right Rear Leg	2/7
CON: 2d6+9 (16)	Damage Modifier	+1d4	4-6	Left Rear Leg	2/7
SIZ: 3d6+6 (17)	Magic Points	7	7-9	Hindquarters	2/8
DEX: 3d6 (11)	Movement	8m	10-12	Forequarters	2/9
INS: 2d6+4 (11)	Strike Rank	11	13-15	Right Front Leg	2/7
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Bristled Hide	16-18	Left Front Leg	2/7
	Abilities	Frenzy	19-20	Head	2/7
Skills: Athletics 57%, Brawn 63%, Endurance 62%, Evade 42%, Perception 48%, Willpower 32%					
Combat Style: Goring Grunter (Tusks) 67%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Tusks	M	S	1d6+1d4	As for Head	





# CENTAUR

The classical centaur is a magical cross between human and equine forms: the upper body of a human replacing the horse's head and neck. Centaurs are noted for their intelligence and often act as teachers and tutors. They are social and herds of centaurs form their own societies based on either a barbarian or nomadic culture rather than a civilised one – although centaurs display many cultural qualities equating to civilised societies, they can also become wild and bestial, especially when drunk.

It is common for centaurs to form friendship bonds with an individual or a group of individuals, but their loyalties will always be, first and foremost, to their own herd. Centaurs mate with their own kind and cannot mate with humans, but they have human emotions and so romantic liaisons are not unknown.

Centaurs can study and practice magic just as humans can. Indeed their propensity for using it is higher than for humans as centaurs have a natural affinity with the Magic rune. Any magical style is open to them and the style favoured depends entirely on the social, cultural and religious practices of the centaur herd.

Note: The centaur's anatomy means that the Damage Modifier and Hit Points for its upper half are figured using STR x2 and CON x2.



## CENTAUR

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6+6 (17)	Action Points	2	1-3	Right Rear Leg	1/8
CON: 3d6 (11)	Damage Modifier	+1d4 (+1d10 when Trampling)	4-6	Left Rear Leg	1/8
SIZ: 3d6+18 (29)			7-8	Hindquarters	1/9
DEX: 3d6 (11)	Magic Points	16	9-10	Forequarters	1/10
INT: 2d6+6 (13)	Movement	12m	11-12	Right Front Leg	1/8
POW: 2d6+9 (16)	Strike Rank	12	13-14	Left Front Leg	1/8
CHA: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Hide on equine parts.	15-16	Chest	0/7
	Abilities	Trample	17	Right Arm	0/4
	Magic	Specialists may follow any magical tradition	18	Left Arm	0/4
			19-20	Head	0/5

*A centaur warrior of the Ephemeri Herd which worships the Great Horse Mother. This particular centaur is also a shaman - note the Beast Rune tattoo - and the flies clouding its flanks are actually allied spirits.*

Skills: Athletics 58%, Brawn 70%, Endurance 52%, Evade 62%, Insight 59%, Locale 66%, Lore (Various) 66%, Musicianship 62%, Perception 49%, Teach 64%, Unarmed 58%, Willpower 62%

Combat Style: Centaur Warrior (Spear, Shield, Shortbow) 68%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Short Spear	M	L	1d8+1+1d4	4/5
Peltaſt Shield	L	S	1d4+1d4	4/12
Short Bow	L	-	1d6+1d4	4/4
Hooves	L	M	1d6+1d4	As for Leg
Trample	H	M	2d10	As for Leg





## CHAOS HYBRID

These foul beings go by many regional and cultural names but are essentially the same thing: a chaos-warped combination of human and animal (goat, sheep and antelope) that frequently carries disease and lives only to reproduce, spread its diseases and bring havoc and suffering to the untainted.

Chaos Hybrids have their own, loosely-knit, primitive cultures based on strength and cruelty. A leader of a pack (known as a Murder) is always the strongest, fiercest and most ruthless of the bunch, having secured his place through slaughtering any challengers. Given this mind-set and philosophy it is therefore unsurprising to find that Chaos Hybrids have utter contempt for all other sapient races seeing them as prey, a means to spread their contagion and to breed with.

The creatures worship the gods associated with their atrocities:

those of murder, chaos, disease and blight. Most other sapient cultures shun them at best and hunt them down with a view to extermination at worst.

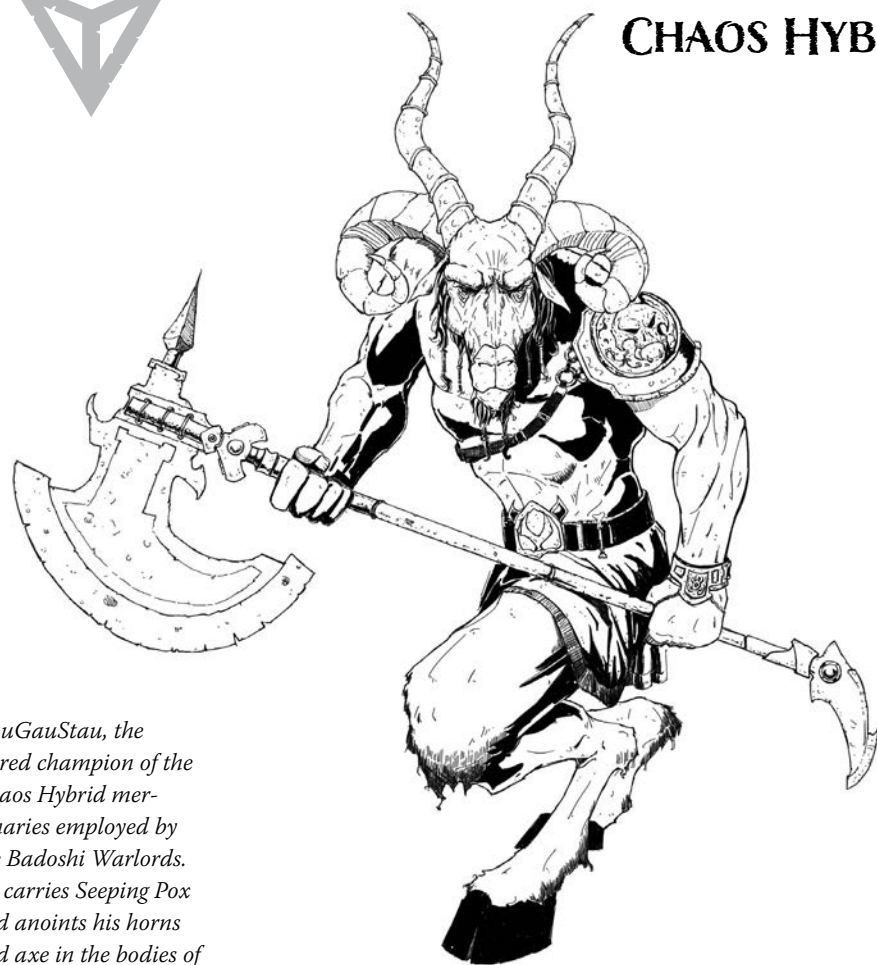
Chaos Hybrids have a chance equal to their Willpower of being cursed (or blessed) with 1d3 Chaotic Features. They are also adept magicians and most Hybrids can be expected to have a number of Folk Magic spells equal to their CHA. Each pack has at least one priest or shaman with access to the relevant magic. Note that some hybrids are born with sub-sapient intellects which may cause them to act as little more than mentally impaired beasts.

A Chaos Hybrid carries a disease (see the disease table below) which can be caught through close proximity to the creature (i.e., close combat engagement distances). Chaos Hybrid corpses remain contagious unless burned. The potency of the disease is always equal to the Chaos Hybrid's Endurance.

### CHAOS HYBRID DISEASES

1d4	Disease	Symptoms and Effects
1	Mind Rot	1 point of INT is lost every week until the disease is cured. The victim feels sleepy and indolent, the condition worsening with each point of INT lost.
2	Seeping Pox	Suppurating boils begin in a random location and spread to an adjacent location each week until cured. The boils hiss and burst easily leaving horrible welts in their wake. The affected location cannot be covered whilst afflicted and sustains 1 Hit Point of damage after infection. 1d3 points of CHA is lost when the disease reaches the Head.
3	Creeping Chills	The victim is wracked by shivers that no degree of heat can alleviate. He automatically gains 1d3 levels of Fatigue which remains until the disease is cured.
4	Red Plague	The victim breaks out in a scarlet rash that covers the entire body. 1 point of CON is lost every day through vomiting, diarrhoea and dehydration. When CON reaches zero the victim dies.

*GauGauStau, the feared champion of the Chaos Hybrid mercenaries employed by the Badoshi Warlords. He carries Seeping Pox and anoints his horns and axe in the bodies of those he has infected.*



*These are the most common diseases, but Chaos Hybrids have many dreadful contagions, especially those who worship the spirits and gods of disease.*



**CHAOS HYBRID**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+6 (13)	Action Points	2	1-3	Right Leg	1/7
CON: 1d6+12 (16)	Damage Modifier	+1d2	4-6	Left Leg	1/7
SIZ: 2d6+6 (13)	Magic Points	11	7-9	Abdomen	1/8
DEX: 3d6 (11)	Movement	8m	10-12	Chest	1/9
INT: 3d6 (11)	Strike Rank	11	13-15	Right Arm	1/6
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Tough Hide	16-18	Left Arm	1/6
CHA: 2d6 (7)	Abilities	Chaos Feature, Disease Immunity	19-20	Head	1/7
Magic	Folk Magic 48%; Specialists have either Devotion 58% & Exhort 58%, or Binding 58% & Trance 57%				
Skills: Athletics 44%, Brawn 46%, Endurance 62%, Evade 42%, Locale 52%, Perception 62%, Survival 67%, Unarmed 54%, Willpower 52%					
Combat Style: Hybrid Ravager (Spear, Club, Shield) 64%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Human Weapons	See weapon tables on pages 55 to 58				
Horns	M	S	1d4+1d2	As for Head	

**CHIMERA**

The Chimera of mythology has the head and body of a lion (or lioness) with a serpent for a tail and the head of a goat emerging from the mid-part of the beast's spine. The serpent is poisonous and the goat can breathe fire, whilst the lion's head snarls and ravages. Clearly a product of magic and perhaps the Chaos rune, the chimera is a fearsome monster able to handle multiple foes simultaneously. The breath weapon of the goat's head makes it difficult to get close to the creature and only magical or enchanted weapons inflict normal damage.

Killing a chimera can be achieved through decapitating the lion head; killing the serpent or goat heads only serves to deprive the monster of those attacks. The creature can split its attacks easily against separate enemies, assuming they are within range.

*In some myth variants the chimera is depicted as having the head of a fire-breathing lion with the horns of a goat. If using such a variation, then remember that the horns can be used as a highly effective impaling weapon...*

**CHIMERA**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+12 (19)	Action Points	5 (multiheaded)	1-2	Serpent Tail	1/7
CON: 2d6+6 (13)	Damage Modifier	+1d8	3-4	Right Rear Leg	1/8
SIZ: 2d6+18 (25)	Magic Points	13	5-6	Left Rear Leg	1/8
DEX: 2d6+9 (16)	Movement	10m	7-8	Hindquarters	1/9
INS: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	15	9-10	Goat Head	1/8
POW: 2d6+6 (13)	Armour	Mane and Hide	11-14	Forequarters	1/10
	Abilities	Breathe Flame, Immunity	15-16	Right Front Leg	1/8
		(Mundane weapons),	17-18	Left Front Leg	1/8
		Multi-headed, Venomous	19-20	Lion Head	2/8
Skills: Athletics 55%, Brawn 68%, Endurance 66%, Evade 62%, Perception 56%, Willpower 66%					
Combat Style: Chimeric Chaos (Serpent Head, Goat Head, Lion Head, Claws) 75%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Serpent Head	M	L	1d4+Poison	As for Serpent Tail	
Goat Head	L	L	1d10+Fire	As for Goat Head	
Lion Head	L	T	1d6+1d8	As for Lion Head	
Claws	L	M	1d4+1d8	As for Leg	



## CROCODILE/ALLIGATOR

Crocodiles and alligators infest tropical and sub-tropical swamps and rivers where they feed on any form of live prey. Their camouflage is perfect for their environment and by remaining perfectly still under the surface of murky water the creature can easily go unnoticed. They have little problem tackling prey much larger than themselves using ambush tactics to lunge out from cover, seize the prey, drag it into the water, then drown it. Despite their size and bulk, crocodiles are surprisingly fast and agile, albeit only maintaining this for short periods.

Crocodiles always choose Grip when a Special Effect has been generated and hold on for as long as possible, using Brawn and Athletics to take the prey into the water where it is submerged and held there, with the creature spinning around and around to facilitate both drowning and damage. Spinning does not inflict any additional damage, but it makes attempts to break free from the grip two grades more difficult. Whilst submerged victims are subject to the Drowning rules (see page 62).

### CROCODILE/ALLIGATOR

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+24 (31)	Action Points	3	1-3	Tail	5/12
CON: 2d6+12 (19)	Damage Modifier	+2d6	4-5	Right Hind Leg	5/12
SIZ: 4d6+24 (38)	Magic Points	7	6-7	Left Hind Leg	5/12
DEX: 2d6+9 (16)	Movement	6m	8-10	Hindquarters	5/13
INS: 2d6+5 (12)	Strike Rank	13	11-14	Forequarters	5/14
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Thick Scales	15-16	Right Front Leg	5/12
	Abilities	Camouflaged,	17-18	Left Front Leg	5/12
		Cold Blooded,	19-20	Head	5/13
Skills: Athletics 47%, Brawn 99%, Endurance 78%, Evade 32%, Perception 49%, Swim 80%, Willpower 44%					
Combat Style: Lurking Death (Jaws, Tail Sweep) 67%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Jaws	H	M	1d10+2d6	As for Head	
Tail	H	L	1d8+2d6	As for Tail	

*Prehistoric crocodiles can grow far, far larger. To represent something like a Deinosuchus add +12 to STR, +24 to SIZ and double its Armour Points.*

## CYCLOPS

Greek legend refers to two quite distinct races bearing the same name. For RENEQUEST, Cyclopes are a race of single-eyed giants with a taste for flesh of any kind and a natural skill for metallurgy and constructing fortifications.

The single eye of the Cyclops is found in the centre of the creature's forehead, above the hooked nose. Above the eye is a horn which is the source of magical power for the Cyclops. A typical Cyclops stands around three times the height of a man. Its lower body is goat-like and covered in rough, shaggy wool terminating in cloven hoofs.

Cyclopes live in isolated areas where they herd livestock (which are eaten raw) and manufacture metal goods in their subterranean forges often located in volcanoes or in caves near the sea. These goods are sold to those who manage to establish a relationship with the creatures, and Cyclopes are capable of forging exquisite weapons, armour, tools and jewellery.

A surly and bad tempered race, Cyclopes are quick to anger and even those who have formed something approaching a friendship have been attacked with huge rocks, tree-trunk clubs or the forging hammers the Cyclopes occasionally carry. The most unfortunate – and this includes anyone who steal their livestock – are eaten. They are prone to throwing boulders at trespassers or even passing ships using their Athletics to aim the huge rocks.



Cyclopes are capable of using Folk Magic and the horn above their single eye acts as a Folk Magic focus. If taken from a freshly killed Cyclops it contains the remaining Magic Points of the living creature, which can be used to power Folk Magic spells cast by the owner. The capacity of the horn deteriorates over time – one Magic Point is lost every year until the horn becomes useless – but until then, the Magic Points contained in the horn replenish at the same rate as its owner.

If a Cyclops is hit in the head, no matter how much damage is sustained, it must make an Endurance roll opposed by the attacker's combat roll. If the Cyclops fails in the roll it has been struck in the eye and all physical skills immediately become one grade harder. If it loses with a Fumble, it is rendered completely blind with all skills becoming three grades harder.

*The islands near Meeros are home to solitary cyclopes who take great offence when disturbed - as this young Myceras Initiate is just finding out...*



**CYCLOPS**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+24 (31)	Action Points	2	1-3	Right Leg	4/13
CON: 2d6+18 (25)	Damage Modifier	+2d6	4-6	Left Leg	4/13
SIZ: 4d6+24 (38)	Magic Points	13	7-9	Abdomen	4/14
DEX: 3d6 (11)	Movement	10m	10-12	Chest	2/15
INT: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	12	13-15	Right Arm	2/12
POW: 2d6+6 (13)	Armour	Skin & Fur (lower body)	16-18	Left Arm	2/12
CHA: 1d6 (4)	Abilities	Immunity (Fire)	19-20	Head	2/13
	Magic	Folk Magic 65% (Bludgeon, Iron Hand)			
Skills: Athletics 62%, Brawn 109%, Craft (Smithing) 64%, Endurance 80%, Evade 42%, Locale 56%, Lore (Husbandry) 66%, Perception 56%, Unarmed 72%, Willpower 66%					
Combat Style: Huge Blunt Object (Hammer, Club) 82%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Forge Hammer	E	VL	1d10+3+2d6	6/325	
Immense Club	C	U	2d8+2d6	4/270	
Thrown Boulder	E	-	4d6	4/-	
Stomp	H	L	1d8+2d6	As for Leg	





## DRAGON

The most iconic, dreaded and revered of legendary creatures, dragons are immense, winged, fire-breathing reptiles of great intelligence – and, sometimes, wisdom – which are found represented in most cultures and mythologies. Sometimes they are brute killers, preying on the helpless; sometimes they are solitary hoarders guarding huge stashes of treasure; and at other times are wise mystics that seem capable of guiding others as well as preying upon them. Dragons are fully sapient although their intelligence is fundamentally alien to human psychology meaning that their actions, whilst appearing bestial, are driven by their own, peculiar, motivations and desires.

Dragons can talk. They have their own language (Draconic) and may be capable of either speaking other languages or converse mentally, bypassing the need for individual languages. However they communicate their dominating personality constantly seeks to ensnare or trick those that listen to its seductive words. They are also capable of using magic: Folk Magic

Essentially solitary beings, dragons are encountered as individuals and extremely potent, dangerous at ones at that. A mature or old dragon is capable of handling scores of foes single-handedly although, as with any creature, they do have their weaknesses and may be prone to a lucky strike that brings them crashing down.

The dragon characteristics provided here are for a young beast and one that uses Folk Magic to augment its natural capabilities. Older specimens should have their skills, physical characteristics and natural protection augmented to reflect increasing age and experience. Also note that this is a classic western dragon. Dragons found in eastern mythologies often lack wings (yet still fly), are more serpentine in appearance and frequently have leonine features rather than reptilian. The same statistics can be used, but different Hit Locations may be required.

### DRAGON

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+24 (31)	Action Points	4	1-2	Tail	8/17
CON: 2d6+24 (31)	Damage Modifier	+2d8	3-4	Right Hind Leg	8/17
SIZ: 4d6+36 (50)	Magic Points	19	5-6	Left Hind Leg	8/17
DEX: 2d6+12 (19)	Movement	12m, 18m (Flying)	7-8	Hindquarters	8/18
INT: 2d6+12 (19)	Strike Rank	19	9-10	Right Wing	8/16
POW: 2d6+12 (19)	Armour	Thick Scales	11-12	Left Wing	8/16
CHA: 2d6+12 (19)	Abilities	Breathe Flame, Cold Blooded,	13-14	Forequarters	8/19
		Dark Sight, Diving Strike,	15-16	Right Front Leg	8/17
		Engulfing, Flying,	17-18	Left Front Leg	8/17
		Formidable Natural Weapons,	19-20	Head	8/17
		Immunity (Fire), Terrifying,			
		Trample			
	Magic	Folk Magic 78% (Avert, Befuddle, Cleanse, Coordination, Curse, Fangsharp, Find Treasure, Glamour, Heal, Mindspeech, Vigour, Witchesight)			
Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 120%, Deceit 78%, Endurance 92%, Evade 68%, Fly 90%, Insight 78%, Locale 68%, Lore (Dragon) 68%, Perception 78%, Teach 58%, Willpower 78%					
Combat Style: Death and Destruction (Bite, Claws, Tail Sweep) 90%, Flame Breath 80%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Bite	E	L	1d12+2d8	As for Head	
Claws	E	L	1d10+2d8	As for Leg	
Tail	E	VL	1d10+2d8	As for Tail	
Flame Breath	Special		4d6		
Trample	C	T	4d8		

Opposite Page

Valiant warriors of the Meerish Eagle Legion assault the dragon Alaxathros, released from its prison caves by the vengeful sorcerer Kratos...



A dragon's tail sweep can hit multiple foes, its Attack roll being simultaneously applied to everyone within reach on its rear or flank.

The fire breathed by a dragon stretches in a cone for a number of metres in length equal to the dragon's CON, and a number of metres wide equal to a quarter of CON. Anything caught in the blast ignites if flammable and the heat is powerful enough to melt unenchanted metals. Repeatedly using the breath weapon within a short period is exhausting though. If breathing fire more than once an hour, the dragon must make an Endurance roll with each roll after the first becoming one grade harder. Failing the Endurance roll gives the dragon one level of fatigue. Dragons therefore reserve their fire for only those occasions where it is absolutely necessary.



## ELEMENTALS

Elementals are physical manifestations of semi-sapient supernatural entities, related to a particular rune or element, which usually inhabit the spirit realm. With the right magic they are capable of passing into the mundane world and assuming a physical form consisting of the substance they represent.

The five elemental types are: Gnomes (Earth), Salamanders (Fire), Shades (Darkness), Sylphs (Air) and Undines (Water). The physical nature, and therefore the characteristics, of each type differ by the element it is comprised of. Gnomes are corporeal beings of gravel, mud or sand that can, nevertheless, merge with, and pass through the ground seamlessly. Sylphs are formed from blowing winds, shades from stygian darkness and shadows, salamanders from large hot fires and undines from water or any other liquid capable of supporting its fluid form.

Elementals are most commonly encountered when summoned by a particular magician (whether animist, sorcerer or priest) and put into specific service. The magician must have a sufficient volume of its base material in which to manifest it. For ease of reference, this is measured in terms of cubic metres. As a rule of thumb, the larger the elemental the more potent it is.

Elementals are naturally immune to magic that is based on their particular element. Salamanders cannot be harmed by fire spells; sylphs are unaffected by magical winds, and so forth. Neither can they be injured by mundane weapons, as their physical forms merely replenish material from the immediate environment, but are disrupted by magical damage providing it is of another type than their own.

Since elementals are amorphous they lack discrete locations. Therefore all damage it suffers is taken from its pool of general Hit Points and they are immune to serious or major wounds. However, once Hit Points are reduced to zero the spirit animating the elemental can no longer animate its body



and dissipates. One does not 'kill' an elemental though; one merely disrupts its manifestation enough to cause it to return to wherever it was summoned from.

The one weakness of an elemental is its vulnerability to the element which opposes or dominates its own. These precise relationships depend on the campaign world, but the upshot is that the elemental takes double damage from magical attacks using the element which is its antithesis.

All elementals possess the traits of Engulfing, Immunity (Own Element) and Vulnerable (Counter-Element). Furthermore they share the same fundamental characteristics and attributes:

ELEMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ATTRIBUTES

Cubic Metres	STR	DEX	INS	POW	HP	Protection
1	2d6+4	1d6+2	2d6+1	1d6+3	1d6+6	1
2	2d6+8	1d6+4	2d6+2	1d6+6	1d6+12	1
3	2d6+12	1d6+6	2d6+3	1d6+9	1d6+18	2
4	2d6+16	1d6+8	2d6+4	1d6+12	1d6+24	2
5	2d6+20	1d6+10	2d6+5	1d6+15	1d6+30	3
6	2d6+24	1d6+12	2d6+6	1d6+18	1d6+36	3
7	2d6+28	1d6+14	2d6+7	1d6+21	1d6+42	4
8	2d6+32	1d6+16	2d6+8	1d6+24	1d6+48	4
9	2d6+36	1d6+18	2d6+9	1d6+27	1d6+54	5
10	2d6+40	1d6+20	2d6+10	1d6+30	1d6+60	5
Each additional metre	+4	+2	+1	+3	+6	+1 per two steps

CuM Siz Damage

- 1 S 1d3
- 2 M 1d4
- 3 L 1d6
- 4 H 1d8
- 5 E 1d10
- 6+ C 1s12

Hit Points are rolled rather than calculated. Only damage inflicted by magical spells or weapons affects the elemental, so a sword enhanced with a Bladesharp spell would harm the elemental, but not the damage bonus of its wielder.

Protection represents the natural resilience of an elemental to magical damage. It acts just like Armour Points against any injury the elemental suffers.

An elementals' Action Points and Strike Rank Bonus are calculated normally. Its Damage Modifier however is based upon STR x2, rather than STR + SIZ. To calculate its natural weapon size and damage, see the chart opposite. In addition, elementals gain the following skills: Brawn (STR x2)+20, Evade (DEX x2)+40, Perception (INS+POW)+30, Willpower (POW x2)+50 and Elemental Combat Style (STR+DEX)+40.

Elementals injure or damage targets by either striking (pounding, throwing or blasting from afar) or by engulfing the victim entirely. Both methods require a successful attack roll and inflict the elementals' Damage Bonus. Strikes may be parried if the target is using a shield of sufficient size with which to block the substance directed at it, and damage is applied to only a single location.

Engulfing attacks however must be evaded, else the victim suffer the rolled damage to every location simultaneously. Furthermore, unless the engulfed victim can escape they automatically suffer a repeat of this damage at the start of every round. Escaping requires the victim to win an opposed test of either Acrobatics, Brawn or Evade against the Brawn skill of the elemental.

Each elemental has a number of specific abilities corresponding with its type:

- ⇒ Gnomes are capable of manipulating the earth and rock: making tunnels, opening pits, or causing rockslides are effortless activities for a gnome. They inflict damage by bashing



foes, throwing rocks or grinding them into mince if they can engulf the victim within their gravelly mass.

- ⇒ Salamanders manipulate fire, augmenting existing blazes, spreading and directing them. They produce heat and light, varying the temperature and intensity as needed. Salamanders fight with lashing whips of fire, shooting out jets of flame or by immolating victims directly by engulfing them.
- ⇒ Shades are capable of concentrating darkness, manipulating shadows and creating pockets of utter blackness even in broad daylight. They frostburn opponents with their glacial touch or freeze them solid if they can engulf them.
- ⇒ Sylphs create breezes and winds, augment naturally occurring air motion, deny air if necessary (or redirect it) and can lift objects into the air. They inflict damage by tossing or tumbling foes, blasting them with airborne debris or if they can engulf the victim, tearing them limb from limb in a vicious cyclone.
- ⇒ Undines manipulate water, whether free-flowing or standing. They can create currents, eddies and whirlpools, redirect tides, lessen (or heighten) waves and so forth. Undines smash enemies with pummeling waves, shoot high speed jets from afar, or engulf a victim and crush them under immense pressure.
- ⇒ Movement rates for elementals are as follows: Gnome 6m, Salamander 8m, Shades 10m, Sylph 10m, Undine 8m.
- ⇒ Worn armour counts against damage from elemental strikes, but not against Engulfing attacks.

AVERAGE ELEMENTALS

Cubic Metre	Natural Weapon Size and Damage	Action Points	Strike Rank	AP/HP	Skills
1	None	2	+7	1/10	Brawn 42%, Evade 52%, Perception 45%, Willpower 64%, Combat 57%
2	M/1d2	2	+9	1/16	Brawn 50%, Evade 56%, Perception 49%, Willpower 70%, Combat 63%
3	L/1d6	2	+10	2/22	Brawn 58%, Evade 60%, Perception 53%, Willpower 76%, Combat 69%
4	L/1d10	2	+12	2/28	Brawn 66%, Evade 64%, Perception 57%, Willpower 82%, Combat 75%
5	H/1d12	3	+13	3/34	Brawn 74%, Evade 68%, Perception 61%, Willpower 88%, Combat 81%
6	H/2d6	3	+15	3/40	Brawn 82%, Evade 72%, Perception 65%, Willpower 94%, Combat 87%
7	E/2d6	3	+16	4/46	Brawn 90%, Evade 76%, Perception 69%, Willpower 100%, Combat 93%
8	C/1d8+1d6	3	+18	4/52	Brawn 98%, Evade 80%, Perception 73%, Willpower 106%, Combat 99%
9	C/2d8	4	+19	5/58	Brawn 106%, Evade 84%, Perception 77%, Willpower 112%, Combat 105%
10	C/1d10+1d8	4	+21	5/64	Brawn 114%, Evade 88%, Perception 81%, Willpower 118%, Combat 111%

*The elementals here are moderate examples. Far more powerful elemental entities exist: sylphs that create hurricanes; vast undines that are incarnate tidal waves; salamanders that, when enraged, and in concert with the Earth God, create the pyroclastic flows of an erupting volcano...*

## GHOUL

Ghouls are undead creatures that feast on recently deceased corpses and carrion. They are only created from sapient races and no intelligent species is immune to the vile curse that creates a ghoul. Emaciated, blank-eyed, and equipped with sharp teeth and nails, ghouls are driven by an insatiable hunger for necrotic flesh that causes them to frequent burial sites, battlefields and charnel pits where there is a ready source of decomposing meat.

Living flesh holds no attraction for them, but if forced to defend themselves ghouls will attempt to bite which, if successful, introduces the magical curse that creates a new ghoul upon the victim's eventual death (which may be many years away). Once an infected victim dies, it gives every appearance of having passed on. But, after  $1d6+3$  days it revives with an unholy vitality, its soul corrupted into an undead monster driven by its foul cravings. The ghoul scratches its way free of whatever burial fixture holds it and then goes in search of its first meal.

The only way to ensure a ghoul will not rise from an infected body is to burn it as soon as possible – which is one of the reasons why certain cultures cremate, rather than bury, their dead.

Lifting a ghoul's curse can only be done through a Cure Malady spell of a Magnitude greater than the POW of the ghoul which bit them. An infected victim may not even be aware of their fate; those that are, are doomed without magical intervention. Even hacking off a bitten limb will not lift the curse that impregnates the soul and hibernates, waiting for death so it can be triggered.

Ghouls, being undead, are extremely difficult to destroy. As part of their transformation their skin desiccates and hardens, granting them a bonus of 1 Armour Point to whatever natural protection they once had. In addition the dire potency of their animating curse allows them slowly to regenerate damage. Even a dismembered ghoul will eventually regrow new body parts at the rate of one Hit Point per location every week until it is complete once more. The only sure way to kill one is with fire, which inflicts normal damage.

Ghoul characteristics are based upon those of the originally infected creature. They gain +6 STR, +3 CON, +3 DEX, their INT is converted to INS and CHA is lost entirely. POW, no matter what it started with, is replaced with  $1d6$ . The following ghoul is based on a human cadaver.

If a ghoul's bite penetrates armour the victim must make an unopposed Endurance roll to resist infection. Failing the roll means the victim is infected with the curse that will create a new ghoul upon death. A standard ghoul tactic is to grip an opponent with its hands and then target an area of exposed flesh. Once it has bitten it releases and flees, attempting to find somewhere to skulk until a threat has passed and it can resume feeding.







**GHOUL**

Characteristics		Attributes	1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6+6 (17)	Action Points	3	1–3	Right Leg	1/6
CON: 3d6+3 (14)	Damage Modifier	+1d2	4–6	Left Leg	1/6
SIZ: 2d6+6 (13)	Magic Points	4	7–9	Abdomen	1/7
DEX: 3d6+3 (14)	Movement	6m	10-12	Chest	1/8
INS: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	14	13–15	Right Arm	1/5
POW: 1d6 (4)	Armour	Hardened skin. If buried in it, some ghouls will be wearing armour.	16–18	Left Arm	1/5
			19–20	Head	1/6
Abilities		Death Sense, Regeneration, Undead			

Skills: Athletics 51%, Brawn 50%, Endurance 58%, Evade 48%, Perception 47%, Unarmed 71%, Willpower 38%

Combat Style: Deathless Horror (Claws, Teeth) 71%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Claws	S	T	1d4+1d2	As for Arm
Teeth	S	T	1d3+1d2	As for Head

**GORGON**

In Greek myth the gorgons were sisters cursed to immortality and a hideousness that turned mortals to stone instantly. Descriptions of these creatures vary, but *RUNEQUEST* gorgons are mortal demons with the lower half of immense serpents and the upper body of a woman. The face of a gorgon is truly hideous for mortals to gaze upon and catching sight of an unreflected gorgon’s visage petrifies living tissue as described below. In place of hair, living, writhing snakes frame the gorgon’s deadly face and their fingers terminate in claws of razor-sharp iron.

Such is the deadliness of a gorgon that these monsters must remain isolated from contact with the outside world. Temples, tombs and catacombs are their favoured retreats with those who worship them placing offerings of meat and drink at the very outer reaches of the lair before retreating swiftly. The unlucky souls who, out of curiosity, remained to see if the rumours were true stand as stone guardians, features twisted in cruel realization.

Despite their divine or infernal origin gorgons are vulnerable to mortal weapons. Their blood however is a deadly poison, so coming into contact with the ichor, whether being caught in a spray of blood (such as from a Bleed special effect) or when cleaning a blade used to wound the monster, forces the victim to resist its venomous touch.

Whilst having a monstrous nature and appearance, gorgons are not necessarily evil-doers. Victims of circumstance, their tempers have certainly been warped into murderous anger, but gorgons are intelligent and from time to time use their beautiful voices to seduce servants who can walk abroad and do their bidding. Gorgons may give fair warning or hide their features so as to enter into discourse with those they need rather than killing them outright.

The primary means of offense is the Gaze attack, which the gorgon must activate on its turn at the cost of 1 Magic Point. Any mortal creature looking in the direction of the gorgon, who can potentially see its face, must make an opposed roll of its Willpower versus the gorgon’s. If the gorgon wins the victim meets its gaze and is petrified completely, resulting in instant death. If gorgon loses, the victim manages to avert its eyes before the petrification can take effect.

*In some Greek iconography the gorgons are depicted as winged women with broad round heads, serpentine hair, the tusks of boars, lolling tongues, flared nostrils, and sometimes short coarse beards. Clearly they were dreadful demons and Games Masters are encouraged to make their gorgons as grotesque and terrible as needed. They need not follow the serpentine form shown in this example and, indeed, may also possess wings.*





### FIGHTING A GORGON

Risking a gorgon's gaze directly is stupid and dangerous. However looking at the creature in reflection poses no risk of petrification. Those who are determined to slay a gorgon then, should use a mirror or the interior of a metal shield, polished to provide a mirror-like surface. Fighting using reflection reduces the hero's combat style by two difficulty grades. Another alternative is to fight blindfold or with the eyes obscured. In this case, the combat style is reduced by three grades...

Anyone surviving long enough to enter close combat with a gorgon must deal with the snake hair as well as the monster's tail and talons. The snakes attack as one entity, striking at Short reach. The individual fangs are too small to inflict significant damage, but on a successful bite against an unprotected foe (or by use of the Inject Venom special effect) the gorgon will inject a venom with a potency equivalent to the gorgon's Endurance. The poison acts on the Combat Round after introduction paralyzing the affected area. Paralysis of the abdomen means both legs stop working. Paralysis of the chest or head leads to death within a number of turns equal to the victim's CON as organs begin to fail.

The gaze attack of a gorgon head remains effective even after a gorgon's death, the Willpower of the monster being equivalent to its living form. Using a head in this manner however can be very dangerous since both friends and foes (and even the wielder if they fumble) can become ensnared by the indiscriminate gaze.

*Aramya is the gorgon-oracle of the island of Kot, several days sail from the southern shore of Meeros. Despite her fearsome abilities she trades prophecies and insight for favours and food even though her lands are scattered with the petrified forms of those who have caught her gaze.*

#### GORGON

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6+6 (17)	Action Points	3	1-3	Tail Tip	4/6
CON: 2d6+9 (16)	Damage Modifier	+1d4	4-6	Mid Tail	4/7
SIZ: 3d6+6 (17)	Magic Points	16	7-9	Lower Body	4/8
DEX: 3d6+6 (17)	Movement	6m	10-12	Chest	5/9
INT: 2d6+9 (16)	Strike Rank	14 (includes Armour Penalty)	13-15	Right Arm	5/6
POW: 2d6+9 (16)	Armour	Scales on serpentine locations;	16-18	Left Arm	5/6
CHA: 3d6 (11)		Hoplite armour on upper body.	19-20	Head	2/7
	Abilities	Gaze Attack, Immunity (Poisons), Terrifying, Venomous			
	Magic	Devotion 57%, Exhort 67%			
Skills: Athletics 64%, Brawn 74%, Deceit 57%, Endurance 72%, Evade 74%, Insight 62%, Perception 72%, Seduction 67%, Track 62%, Willpower 72%					
Combat Style: Gorgon Horror (Talons, Tail, Snake Hair, Gaze and Bow) 74%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Talons	M	S	1d4+1d4	As for Arms	
Tail	L	L	1d6+1d4	As for Tail	
Recurve Bow	H	-	1d8+1d4	4/8	
Snake Hair	S	S	Poison	As for Head	
Gaze	Special (see description)				

## GRIFFIN/HIPPOGRIFF



*Griffins are sometimes depicted as being sapient. If such a depiction fits a campaign, give the griffin INT rather than INS, and grant them the ability of speech.*

Several spellings describe the same creature: griffon, gryphon and the one used here. A combination of the head, forequarters and wings of a giant eagle, with the hindquarters of a lion. Griffins are tenacious airborne predators that make their eyries in high places and prey on livestock up to and including horses. Although not known for fixating on humans, attacks are not unknown especially if one wanders, mounted or on foot, into a griffin's hunting territory (which can span many kilometres from an eyrie).

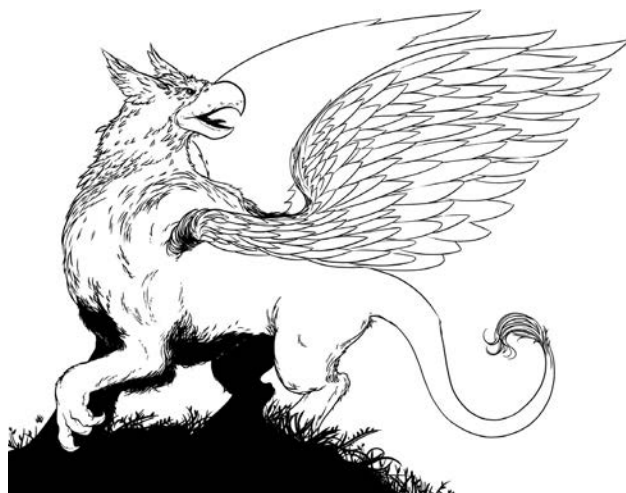
Griffins are fast and clever, employing dive attacks to harry their prey, exhausting it before swooping down to snatch it up with their immense claws. Attacks from the air are favoured over those from ground, but on land a griffin is not the ungainly creature it might seem to be. It hunkers low, like a lion, to circle its prey, and strikes out with both beak and claws to grip and slash, immobilizing the foe before taking to the wing once more.

Griffins usually form mated pairs that share an eyrie and carve out a wide hunting territory that is defended from other predators and other griffins. Mated pairs tend to hunt in concert save for when one remains to protect eggs or fledglings; yet if one gets into trouble it can unleash a powerful screech guaranteed to be heard by its mate and bring them to aid. Thus, when dealing with one griffin, a second is never far away.

Griffins can be tamed and used as human mounts if captured as chicks and raised for the task. Full-grown griffins are too wild to be tamed although stories exist of bonds being formed between some individuals and humans. Griffin cavalry mounts are therefore a much sought-after thing in certain cultures leading to daring raids on griffin eyries for eggs and chicks; though the mortality rate for such adventures is high.

Hippogriffs are the result of a mating between a horse and a griffin. Hippogriffs combine the head, forequarters and wings of a giant eagle with the legs and hindquarters of a horse. These creatures inhabit similar territories to griffins but form quite separate communities – usually nesting in groups of up to twelve individuals.

Hippogriffs display a higher measure of tolerance to their griffin cousins and are somewhat easier to train and use as mounts. In all other respects they act as griffins.



### GRIFFIN/HIPPOGRIFF

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6+12 (23)	Action Points	3	1-2	Right Hind Leg	1/11
CON: 3d6+6 (17)	Damage Modifier	+1d12	3-4	Left Hind Leg	1/11
SIZ: 3d6+24 (35)	Magic Points	11	5-7	Hindquarters	1/12
DEX: 3d6+12 (23)	Movement	8m, 18m (Flying)	8-10	Forequarters	2/13
INS: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	18	11-12	Right Wing	2/10
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Feathers and Hide	13-14	Left Wing	2/10
CHA: 2d6+12 (19)	Abilities	Diving Strike, Flying	15-16	Right Front Leg	2/11
	Magic	None	17-18	Left Front Leg	2/11
			19-20	Head	2/11

Skills: Athletics 76%, Brawn 78%, Endurance 64%, Evade 66%, Fly 76%, Perception 64%, Willpower 52%

Combat Style: Death from Above (Beak, Claws) 86%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Beak	H	M	1d10+1d12	As for Head
Claws	H	L	1d8+1d12	As for Leg



## HARPY

Monsters from legend, harpies combine the head and breast of a woman – usually an ugly, peevish hag – with the lower body and wings of a vulture. Harpies are cruel, pernicious creatures that revel in tormenting and inflicting suffering. It is rare for them to kill a foe outright, preferring instead to snatch, scratch and bite before flying off to a safe distance and shrieking insults.

A favoured torment is the theft and despoiling of food. Harpies might target an outdoors feast or banquet, or deliberately steal from food stores, setting out to wreck a fine harvest or ruin what meagre supplies a community has managed to put down for the winter months. They rarely take food for their own sustenance: their delight is purely in denying others. Harpies typically dive and strike, aiming for the head and upper body, inflicting scratches with their sharp claws. Additionally they attempt to seize weapons and shields (using the Grip special effect) which they then carry away and drop, well out of reach.

Harpies are natural enemies of iqari. If iqari move into a region frequented by harpies they devote their efforts to driving off or killing the monsters as quickly as possible.

### HARPY

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6 (11)	Action Points	3	1–3	Right Claw	1/5
CON: 3d6 (11)	Damage Modifier	None	4–6	Left Claw	1/5
SIZ: 1d6+9 (13)	Magic Points	11	7–9	Abdomen	1/6
DEX: 4d6+6 (20)	Movement	4m, 12m (Flying)	10–12	Chest	0/7
INT: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	17	13–15	Right Wing	1/4
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Feathers	16–18	Left Wing	1/4
CHA: 1d6 (4)	Abilities	Diving Attack, Flying	19–20	Head	0/5
Skills: Athletics 51%, Brawn 44%, Deceit 57%, Endurance 42%, Evade 60%, Fly 71%, Perception 64%, Willpower 42%					
Combat Style: Snatch and Grab (Claws) 71%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Claw	M	M	1d4	As for Claw	

## HORSE

There are many varieties of horse, bred for different purposes. All have enormous stamina and capacity for hard work. Most cultures have domesticated the horse for use as a primary riding and beast of burden. This example is for a standard riding mount that can be bought or hired by most adventurers. For a War Horse – one bred specifically for its size and reliability in battle – add a further 4 to both STR and SIZ. For a Heavy Horse – one used specifically for heavy agricultural work, add 8 to STR and SIZ instead.

### HORSE

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+15 (22)	Action Points	2	1–3	Right Hind Leg	1/9
CON: 2d6+6 (13)	Damage Modifier	+1d12	4–6	Left Hind Leg	1/9
SIZ: 2d6+24 (31)	Magic Points	7	7–9	Hindquarters	1/10
DEX: 2d6+3 (10)	Movement	12m	10–12	Forequarters	1/11
INS: 2d6+4 (11)	Strike Rank	11	13–14	Right Front Leg	1/8
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Hide	15–16	Left Front Leg	1/8
	Abilities	None	17–20	Head	1/9
Skills: Athletics 52%, Brawn 83%, Endurance 66%, Evade 40%, Perception 48%, Willpower 34%					
Combat Style: Rear and Plunge (Hoofs) 62%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Hoof	H	L	1d6+1d12	As for Leg	



## INSECT SWARM

Insects on their own are a nuisance. As an angry swarm, they can be lethal. A swarm of bees or wasps can contain thousands of individuals, all acting in concert. Most swarms are not in response to a threat – although it is an effective tactic – but as part of the reproductive cycle. However, any disturbance of a hive can result in swarm activity, with individuals targeting exposed areas of flesh with stings and bites to drive a foe away.

It is almost impossible to kill a swarm: there are simply too many individuals. The only hope is to either outrun it or find a way of taking cover (water is not always an effective way of evading a swarm of insects, since they often wait about for the victim to surface). A swarm may decide to cease an attack if it collectively feels a threat has been neutralized: after 1d3 rounds of combat, make a Willpower roll for the swarm. If the roll is successful then the swarm abates its attacks and returns to its nest or previous activity.

A swarm *can* be harmed if an attack – magical or mundane – which inflicts area damage can be directed at the swarm, engulfing at least 75% of it. In such cases the swarm has a number of Hit Points equal to its SIZ, and any damage reduces the size of the swarm commensurately.

The normal characteristics for creatures are not applicable to swarms. Instead, only one characteristic is given: SIZ. This is used to gauge the volume of the swarm in comparison with an average human. A swarm of SIZ 6 is enough to engulf one half of the body. A swarm of 12 is enough to engulf the entire body. A swarm of SIZ 24 could engulf two opponents simultaneously. The potency of the attack is based on SIZ, as follows:

### INSECT SWARM DAMAGE

SIZ	Sting/Bite Damage	Combat Actions
1–5	1	1
6–11	1d2	2
12–18	1d3	3
19–25	1d4	4
26–33	1d6	5

The damage from stings and bites are applied simultaneously to every location covered by the swarm. Worn armour initially counts against this damage, but is reduced by 1 point for each successful attack, as the insects begin to crawl inside gaps in the clothing. For example, a victim wearing brigandine armour who stumbles into a swarm of SIZ 6, will be immune to the swarm's first three attacks but eventually the insects will find a way in. Normal clothing provides no protection, unless especially thick – for example winter wear.

Swarms do not generate Special Effects and neither do they use Combat Actions to parry or evade unless attacked with an area affect assault. On the other hand a victim can use Evade to temporarily avoid a swarm. Otherwise they must flee, hide or seek cover. Swarms fly at a base Movement Rate of 4, but can augment this rate by using their Athletics skill.

### SWARM SKILLS:

Athletics 60%, Fly 60%, Willpower 30%, Swarm Attack (Stings or Bites) 60%

Whenever a character is stung by a swarm of poisonous insects, he may succumb to the increasing levels of venom introduced into his body. Keep track of the accumulating value of the damage suffered from each attack, which represents the growing toxicity of the venom. Every time the character experiences another attack, they must make an opposed roll of their Endurance versus the new level of toxicity. Failure means that they suffer the effects of the insect's venom.





## LION

*Lions may hunt at any hour of the day or night. Wise adventurers straying into lion territory should seek out cover in the evenings, as a fire or tent may pose little deterrent against a hungry pride, starved of game.*

Savannah and plains-dwelling big cats, lions form prides of between 10 and 20 (around five females and cubs, and two or three males). Males excluded from a pride can, and do, become rogue wanderers and so lions can also be encountered singly. The females perform most of the hunting with the males guarding the pride's territory from other prides and interlopers.

Hunting is a co-ordinated business with three or more lionesses stalking and chasing-down prey over a protracted period. Such teamwork increases the success of the hunt. Each lioness in a hunting party has a preferred role, with a leader and stalkers who triangulate to reduce the chance of prey escaping.

It is rare for lions to prey on humans but not unheard of. Settlements with livestock populations that are established too close to a pride's territories increases the chance of attacks, and rogue males (particularly the sick or injured), driven by hunger, will look for whatever prey is available.

### LION

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+12 (19)	Action Points	3	1-2	Right Hind Leg	1/7
CON: 3d6 (11)	Damage Modifier	+1d8	3-4	Left Hind Leg	1/7
SIZ: 2d6+15 (22)	Magic Points	7	5-7	Hindquarters	1/8
DEX: 3d6+6 (17)	Movement	8m	8-10	Forequarters	1/9
INS: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	15	11-13	Right Front Leg	1/7
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Mane and Hide	14-16	Left Front Leg	1/7
	Abilities	Intimidate, Night Sight	17-20	Head	3/7
Skills: Athletics 66%, Brawn 61%, Endurance 52%, Evade 54%, Perception 50%, Willpower 44%					
Combat Style: King Slayer (Bite, Claw) 76%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Bite	L	S	1d8+1d8	As for Head	
Claw	L	M	1d6+1d8	As for Claw	

## LIZARD, GIANT

*A defensive technique used by some lizard species is to shed the tail completely if it is grabbed and held by a predator. The tail will regenerate but is usually shorter and of a different hue to the original. Detaching the tail in this fashion causes the lizard no wound effects.*

Many species of giant lizard exist and, whilst appearances will differ, most giant lizards share very similar characteristics. They are all cold-blooded, all predators of some kind, and all need warm to hot conditions to thrive. Lizards are found throughout jungles, arid areas, hills and mountains as long as their environmental needs are being met.

Sight is highly important for most types of lizard, both for locating prey and for communication. Consequently many lizards have highly acute colour and heat vision and therefore excellent perception. Most lizards rely heavily on body language, using specific postures, gestures, and movements to define territory, resolve disputes, and entice mates, which leads to deliberate, almost ritualistic movements that some cultures reflect in religious dances and ceremonies.

Many lizards are brightly coloured to warn potential predators, but some keep their colouration hidden until needed (with crests, wattles, on the underside of the belly and so forth). Lizards are territorial and guard their territories against other predators but are, generally, ambivalent towards humans unless hungry or threatened. Some species, like the monitor lizards, are notorious for attacks and will consider anything warm blooded and moving fair prey.

Lizards apply a number of different techniques when hunting, anything from launching ambushes from cover, dropping atop victims, or even running rapidly over concealed patches of quicksand or water to lure prey to a lingering death.





**LIZARD, GIANT**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+12 (19)	Action Points	3	1-3	Tail	3/7
CON: 2d6+6 (13)	Damage Modifier	+1d6	4-5	Right Hind Leg	3/7
SIZ: 2d6+12 (19)	Magic Points	7	6-7	Left Hind Leg	3/7
DEX: 1d6+12 (16)	Movement	10m	8-10	Hindquarters	3/8
INS: 2d6+5 (12)	Strike Rank	14	11-14	Forequarters	3/9
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Tough Scales	15-16	Right Front Leg	3/6
	Abilities	Adhering (some), Cold	17-18	Left Front Leg	3/6
		Blooded, Intimidate	19-20	Head	3/7

Skills: Athletics 65%, Brawn 58%, Endurance 56%, Evade 72%, Perception 68%, Track 55%, Stealth 68%, Willpower 44%

Combat Style: Scaly Hunter (Jaws, Claws) 75%

Weapons	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	M	T	1d6+1d6	As for Head
Claw	M	M	1d4+1d6	As for Leg

**LIZARDMAN/OPHIDIAN**

Classic creatures of fantasy literature Lizardmen and Ophidians are closely related species of bipedal sapient reptiles. Lizardmen are self explanatory, possessing muscular bodies, clawed hands and feet, elongated snouts filled with snaggle teeth, heavy tails and scaled, often beautifully coloured skin. Ophidians are similar but take their primary attributes from snakes rather than lizards; and thus have a leaner, more humanoid build, stubbier snouts, venomous fangs instead of peg teeth, and are more intelligent than their brethren.

Both species share a cold, reptilian outlook on life; but whereas lizardmen tend to form primitive or occasionally barbarian societies, the ophidians are naturally inclined to civilisation, and all the decadence and treachery which it brings. Like chalk and cheese, one is a race of illiterate savages, the other amoral and urbane. The lizardmen are more prone to direct physical confrontation whereas ophidians prefer subtle manipulation or assassination.

With their thick scales and inured resilience towards both damp and desiccated environments, the reptilian races prefer to live in regions deemed living hells, such as burning deserts, arid wastelands, pestilent swamps and steamy, tropical jungles. Within these fastnesses their civilisations rise and fall in cycles beyond the ken of other sapient species. Only when differing cultures are forced into each other's territory do folk begin to go missing, killed for trespassing or taken for sacrifice; or perhaps worse still captured to be eaten, for the lizardmen are prone to cannibalism and have a taste for human flesh.



*Lizardmen and ophidians can be used as a player character species in some campaigns. Lizardmen follow primitive and barbarian cultures, whilst ophidians, with their higher intellects, may form civilised communities - albeit with a very alien feel.*



When not engaged in war, lizardmen often manufacture tools and weapons, usually for trade or as sacrifices to the local gods and spirits. Ophidians on the other hand have more refined tastes and craft art or scholarly works, their focus more being towards the sorcerous or mystical talents.

The following characteristics denote a lizardman. Ophidians have slightly different base characteristics, swapping the dice rolls for STR with POW, and SIZ with INT. They have two less Armour Points than lizardmen, but in exchange have the Venomous trait, injecting the poison with their bite. Substitute Craft with a suitable Lore skill. Most ophidians know Folk Magic, and specialists study Sorcery or Mysticism.

**LIZARDMAN/OPHIDIAN**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+9 (16)	Action Points	3	1-3	Tail	3/6
CON: 2d6+6 (13)	Damage Modifier	+1d4	4-5	Right Leg	3/6
SIZ: 2d6+9 (16)	Magic Points	11	6-7	Left Leg	3/6
DEX: 2d6+6 (13)	Movement	6m	8-10	Hindquarters	3/7
INT: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	13	11-14	Forequarters	3/8
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Tough Scales. Warriors can wear any.	15-16	Right Arm	3/5
CHA: 2d6 (7)	Abilities	Cold Blooded, Night Sight	17-18	Left Arm	3/5
	Magic	Specialists may practice Animism or Theism	19-20	Head	3/6

Skills: Athletics 59%, Brawn 62%, Craft (Any primitive) 56%, Customs 56%, Endurance 66%, Evade 56%, Insight 44%, Locale 66%, Perception 54%, Swim 69%, Unarmed 59%, Willpower 52%

Combat Style: Lizardman Warrior (Stone Axe, Shortspear, Target Shield) 69%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	M	M	1d6+1d4	As for Head
Claw	M	T	1d4+1d4	As for Arm
Tail	M	L	1d4+1d4	As for Tail
Short Spear	M	L	1d8+1+1d4	4/5
Stone Axe	M	M	1d6+1+1d4	4/8
Target Shield	L	S	1d3+1+1d4	4/9

**OPHIDIAN VENOM**

Ophidian venom has a Potency of 70%. A victim must win an opposed roll of his Endurance against the Potency of the venom else suffer the following symptoms. At the start of the round following being poisoned, the bitten location suffers the Agony condition, rendering it unusable for the next 2d6 minutes and possibly disrupting any attempts at concentration or spell casting. One hour later the victim begins to suffer the combined effects of Hallucination and Mania, developing a rabid fear of snakes. This effect lasts 2d6 days, during which time the victim grows increasingly paranoid until they must eventually be tied up for their own safety.

After the poison subsides the victim will have no recollection of what bit them or how.



# MANTICORE

A manticore is a wild beast, powerful, daring, as big as the largest lion, its thick fur of a red colour like cinnabar. Its face however is not that of a wild beast but of a man, and it has three rows of teeth set in its upper jaw and three in the lower; these are exceedingly sharp and larger than the fangs of a hound. Its ears also resemble a man's except that they are larger and shaggy; its eyes are blue-grey and they too are like a man's, but its feet and claws are those of a lion.

To the end of its insectoid tail is attached the sting of a scorpion, which might be over half a metre in length; and the tail has barbs at intervals on either side. The tip of the tail gives a fatal sting to anyone who encounters it, and death is immediate. The manticore can cast its barbs, like arrows, by flicking its tail and shooting them a great distance. Most creatures that the missile hits are killed due to the beast's poison. These barbs replenish themselves constantly so that it rarely runs out of ammunition.

Manticora are all vicious predators feeding on whatever they can hunt, but for preference it will devour human beings; indeed it will slaughter a great number; utterly fearless, willingly ambushing two or even three men and alone overcoming that number. As if this was not bad enough, a few are cursed with chaotic gifts which twist or deform them in some way, granting them wings for example.

Manticore venom has a Potency equal to the creature's Endurance. It takes effect 1 round after damage has been inflicted and causes paralysis to 1d3 contiguous hit locations. If this affects the chest the victim begins to asphyxiate and will die unless treated.



*Manticora roam the remote hills overlooking Meeros. Most are unwinged, but this brutal specimen is an exception, hinting at the work of Chaos.*

## MANTICORE

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+15 (22)	Action Points	3	1-3	Tail	6/9
CON: 2d6+9 (16)	Damage Modifier	+1d10	4-5	Right Hind Leg	3/9
SIZ: 2d6+18 (25)	Magic Points	11	6-7	Left Hind Leg	3/9
DEX: 3d6+6 (17)	Movement	10m	8-10	Hindquarters	3/10
INS: 2d6+7 (14)	Strike Rank	16	11-14	Forequarters	3/11
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Fur, Mane and Chitin	15-16	Right Front Leg	3/9
	Abilities	Frenzy, Leaper, Venomous	17-18	Left Front Leg	3/9
			19-20	Head	5/9

Skills: Athletics 69%, Brawn 61%, Endurance 72%, Evade 74%, Perception 65%, Stealth 71%, Track 60, Willpower 62%

Combat Style: Man Hunter (Bite, Claws, Barbs and Sting) 79%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Jaws	M	T	1d4+1d10	As for Head
Claws	L	M	1d6+1d10	As for Leg
Sting	H	L	1d8+1d10+Venom	As for Tail
Flung Barbs	L	-	1d6+1d10+Venom (Range = DEX x2 metres)	



*Mantids have extremely acute eyesight and hearing. Even the smallest, most well camouflaged prey can be discerned, and their hearing ranges into the frequency produced by bats to allow the mantis an opportunity to evade these predators. Not that bats would bother a giant mantis - unless the bats themselves are gigantic and, perhaps, crimson in colour.*

## MANTIS, GIANT

At three metres in length, the giant praying mantis is a quite formidable predator that feeds exclusively on creatures smaller than itself. It has two remarkable features: the elongated forelimbs that are used to catch and hold prey immobile, and its extremely long and flexible thorax which permits amazing limb dexterity whilst the body remains static. Also of note is the insect's field of vision. Its massive compound eyes and neck articulation grant the mantis a wide field of vision through 300 degrees, making it difficult to creep up on from behind.

Manti are ambush hunters. The giant variety conceals itself in foliage and branches, remaining motionless for extremely long periods until suitable prey strays within range of its forelimbs. The insects can fly, doing so mainly at night to move between hunting locations, and some mantises have distinct territories that are heavily defended. During mating season females are known to kill and eat their mates once copulation is complete.

Consummate ambushers, manti wait, motionless, for prey to wander close enough for an attack which happens with frightening speed. Match the mantis's Stealth against a victim's Perception (remembering the Camouflage penalty) in an opposed roll to determine the outcome of the ambush.

The mantis always strikes with its forelimbs first, automatically gripping the prey if the attack is successful. If it wins a special effect it usually selects Pin Weapon (if the opponent has a drawn weapon or held shield) or Kill Silently. On its next turn the victim is yanked back to the mantis which delivers a bite with its powerful mandibles, aiming for the neck, chest or abdomen in a bid to quickly incapacitate. If a victim breaks free of the insect's grip or the initial attack fails, then the mantis will attempt to fly away and hunt something else. A mantis will not try to ambush a creature that is clearly larger than itself.

### MANTIS, GIANT

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+6 (13)	Action Points	3	1	Right Rear Leg	3/6
CON: 2d6+6 (13)	Damage Modifier	+1d4	2	Left Rear Leg	3/6
SIZ: 2d6+12 (19)	Magic Points	4	3-4	Metathorax	3/8
DEX: 2d6+18 (25)	Movement	6m, 10m (Flying)	5	Mid Right Leg	3/6
INS: 2d6+2 (9)	Strike Rank	17	6	Mid Left Leg	3/6
POW: 1d6 (4)	Armour	Chitin	7-10	Prothorax	3/9
	Abilities	Camouflaged, Flying,	11-12	Right Wing	3/6
		Grappler	13-14	Left Wing	3/6
			15-16	Right Forelimb	3/6
			17-18	Left Forelimb	3/6
			19-20	Head	3/7
Skills: Athletics 78%, Brawn 72%, Endurance 56%, Evade 80%, Fly 68%, Perception 53%, Stealth 74%, Willpower 48%					
Combat Style: Unseen Death (Scything Limbs, Bite) 78%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Forelimbs	L	VL	1d6+1d4	As for Forelimb	
Mandibles	M	M	1d4+1d4	As for Head	



# MINOTAUR



Bovine-headed and man-bodied, minotaurs are anthropomorphic hybrids of myth and legend. In the original Greek myth the minotaur was a single beast known also as Asterion, which dwelled in the labyrinth of Crete, beneath the palace of King Minos, where it received regular sacrifices.

Minotaurs are much larger than humans. Males average well over two metres tall. They are powerful and massively built with a natural confidence and swagger amongst their own kind. Males are blessed with oversized horns and proudly display battle scars as badges of honour. A few have the lower halves and the hooved legs of bulls. Armour is rarely worn, more from the fact that none amongst their culture knows the art of smithing and salvaged war trophies rarely fit, rather than any philosophical attitudes towards it.

Their favoured weapons are great axes or two handed clubs, with which they delight in smashing opponents about. There is no doubting that minotaurs are tenacious fighters and have little trouble rising to aggression when the need calls for it. They are brave but merciless fighters and believe in putting a foe down as quickly and brutally as possible. When faced with chaos-tainted species, such as tainted boar-kin and chaos hybrids, minotaurs show no mercy. They have an innate hatred of chaos and attempt to stamp it out whenever and wherever they can.

Socially most minotaurs tend to be bluff, gruff and taciturn with a reputation for being, at best, rude to other species and, at worst, outwardly aggressive. Some of this reputation comes with the struggle minotaurs have with human tongues. They can understand them well enough, but speaking them is difficult. No minotaur can speak a human tongue at higher than 50%, owing the sheer differences in minotaur physiology and vocal dynamics.

Minotaurs have a polygynous social structure. Males may take several wives and herd leaders always have a harem, which are won by demonstrating martial prowess and great deeds. Primarily vegetarians, minotaurs consume vast amounts of fruits and wild grains every day,

*Several minotaur tribes live in close proximity to Meeros although they maintain a respectful distance. Like the Meerish they revere Myceras, although they depict the War God as the primary deity of their cosmology - the father of all other gods.*

*They consider the Meerish pantheon to be a blasphemy against Myceras and do not recognise Meerish temples or rites.*

*They do, however, recognise the bravery that Myceras's warriors exhibit in battle and accord a level of respect to those who display courtesy and honour.*

## MINOTAUR

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6+6 (17)	Action Points	2	1-3	Right Leg	0/7
CON: 2d6+6 (13)	Damage Modifier	+1d6	4-6	Left Leg	0/7
SIZ: 2d6+15 (22)	Magic Points	11	7-9	Abdomen	0/8
DEX: 2d6+3 (10)	Movement	8m	10-12	Chest	0/9
INT: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	12	13-15	Right Arm	0/6
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Horns and Hide. Warriors	16-18	Left Arm	0/6
CHA: 3d6 (11)		may wear any armour	19-20	Head	3/7
	Abilities	None			
	Magic	Some herds may have specialist priests and shaman. Sorcery tends to be shunned.			

Skills: Athletics 57%, Brawn 79%, Customs 66%, Endurance 66%, Evade 40%, Insight 44%, Locale 56%, Lore (Herding) 66%, Perception 54%, Unarmed 57%, Willpower 42%

Combat Style: Minotaur Warrior (Great Axe, Longspear used one handed, Hoplite Shield, Gore) 67%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Massive Axe	E	VL	2d8+2+1d6	6/12
Long Spear	H	VL	1d10+1+1d6	4/10
Hoplite Shield	E	M	1d4+1d6	6/15 (generally only used in pitched battles)
Gore	L	M	1d8+1d6	As for Head





*Unless buried or armed with a weapon, human mummies typically attempt to grapple their opponents in close quarters (see Grappling page 149). When possible they use the Choose Location (head) to grab their victim's throat and begin strangling, continuing to exert damage each turn whilst simultaneously asphyxiating them.*

## MUMMY

Animated corpses, usually by sorcery or other magic, but sometimes through sheer force of will, which have been subjected to mummification processes to help preserve them in preparation for the afterlife. Mummies lack any functioning internal organs (which have been removed during mummification) and so are essentially bone, sinew and desiccated flesh. Like most undead this makes them naturally resilient to damage.

Mummies are, however, somewhat susceptible to fire. The bandages used in their preparation, and the fluids used for embalming, are usually flammable. Any strike with a naked flame has a chance equal to the damage rolled of setting the creature alight. This means that the original damage continues to affect the hit location struck each round until extinguished, and also spreads to one adjacent hit location every round inflicting further damage.

There are three main types of Mummies:

- ⇒ Marionette mummies animated through sorcery are mere automatons which need to be actively controlled by the caster, otherwise they have no purpose or direction. In effect the sorcerer 'wears' the body of the mummy as a proxy to perform some nefarious deed.
- ⇒ Guardian mummies are those inhabited and controlled by a spirit, which has been bound into the corpse. Depending on the type of spirit this means that these mummies are usually instinct-driven and have no real intelligence, merely a subconscious command which they are compelled to perform.
- ⇒ Vengeful mummies that self animate through sheer force of will are usually motivated to complete a specific act or task denied to them during life. This might be revenge (on a murderer, say) or protecting their burial chattels. These fearsome mummies display the same intelligence they held in life.

Mummy characteristics are based upon those of the original creature, maintained intact by the act of preservation, and further infused with an unnatural strength and vitality. They gain +2 Armour Points due to the bandaging, and bonuses to STR and CON particular to the power of the magic or spirit animating them. The INT, POW and CHA of the mummy are based upon what spirit or will currently animates it. The following statistics are for a human mummy of average physical characteristics, but which has been possessed by its ancient, former soul.

### MUMMY

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6+9 (20)	Action Points	2	1-3	Right Leg	2/7
CON: 3d6+9 (20)	Damage Modifier	+1d6	4-6	Left Leg	2/7
SIZ: 2d6+6 (13)	Magic Points	22	7-9	Abdomen	2/8
DEX: 3d6 (11)	Movement	6m	10-12	Chest	2/9
INT: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	12	13-15	Right Arm	2/6
POW: 1d6+18 (22)	Armour	As per original creature	16-18	Left Arm	2/6
CHA: 3d6 (11)		with bandages and burial armour.	19-20	Head	2/7
	Abilities	Immunity (Poison, Disease), Life Sense, Undead			
	Magic	Some may retain the magical skills possessed in life.			
Skills: Athletics 51%, Brawn 63%, Endurance 70%, Evade 42%, Perception 63%, Unarmed 71%, Willpower 84%					
Combat Style: Vengeful Strangler (Hands) 71%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Hands	S	T	1d3+1d6	As for Arm	



# PANTHOTAUR

These creatures are a lean combination of a human with the furred head, abdomen, legs, tail and retractable claws of a large cat – either a lion, tiger, leopard, panther or jaguar. Panthotaur retain their big cat ferocity and cunning and, in the case of lion panthotaur, social behaviour by forming prides. Otherwise they exhibit near-human sapience. Visually they are beautiful to behold, parts of their body covered with a fine fur that matches the feline they are related to.

Their different psychologies and dietary requirements mean that panthotaur do not mix easily with humans and so remain apart from them. Occasionally humans might find themselves as prey but, generally, panthotaur opt for smaller game and give humans a wide-berth. Panthotaur are territorial, occupying lands similar to their animal cousins (jungles, bush and savannah) and may even command prides or solitary individuals of their beast brethren.

Armed with effective natural weapons and incredible agility, these creatures rarely use armour or even weapons beyond a simple sling or spear. Rather they use speed and stealth to hunt and defend their territories. Hit and run techniques are preferred to toe to toe slugging matches.



*The Panthotaur of Zamothis' world inhabit the savannahs of the northern region, bordering the realm of the Badoshi. They revere the Sun Goddess Ar-Aya and, being master mathematicians have built vast, stepped pyramids in her honour. Pictured above is one of the high priestesses of the Pantheris. Her collar is symbolic of her relationship with the sun and marks her as a formidable theist magician.*

## PANTHOTAUR

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6+6 (17)	Action Points	3	1–3	Right Leg	1/6
CON: 2d6+6 (13)	Damage Modifier	+1d4	4–6	Left Leg	1/6
SIZ: 3d6+6 (17)	Magic Points	11	7–9	Abdomen	2/7
DEX: 2d6+12 (19)	Movement	8m	10-12	Chest	1/8
INT: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	15 (includes SR Penalty)	13–15	Right Arm	1/5
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Fur and Leather Kilt	16–18	Left Arm	1/5
CHA: 2d6 (7)	Abilities	Intimidate, Night Sight	19–20	Head	1/6
	Magic	Specialists can learn any magical discipline.			

Skills: Athletics 66%, Brawn 54%, Endurance 56%, Evade 78%, Locale 56%, Perception 64%, Stealth 72%, Survival 54%, Track 56%, Unarmed 76%, Willpower 52%

Combat Style: Panthotaur Warrior (Sling, Spear) 76%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	M	T	1d4+1d4	As for Head
Claw	M	M	1d6+1d4	As for Arm
Short Spear	M	L	1d8+1+1d4	4/5
Sling	L	-	1d8+1d4	1/2



## SCORPION, GIANT

*Scorpions have incredibly resilient physiologies allowing them to survive the most extreme environmental conditions ranging from intense cold to extreme heat. Games Masters may therefore want to grant giant scorpions the Immunity (Cold) and Immunity (Heat) abilities - extending these even to resisting magical forms.*

Larger than a full grown human, giant scorpions are found mostly in hot, arid climates where they make their nests in caves and burrows, but they are natural survivors and can be found in almost any climate. They are generally nocturnal, opportunistic predators that wait for passing prey to stray into range of their pincers. Whilst voracious and capable of eating large amounts in one sitting, they can also go without food for long spans of time. The scorpion lacks a discernible head, with its eyes, mouth and other sensory organs located in the cephalothorax. The mouth consists of a pair of extremely sharp mandibles that can tear through tough skin or armour.

The giant species has few natural predators, placing it at the top of its local food chain. Its venom, tough exoskeleton and ability to rapidly retreat to its burrow or cave makes capturing one of these scuttling arthropods difficult and risky.

Scorpion venom has a Potency equal to the creature's Endurance. It acts on the next round after injection and inflicts Agony on the location. After a further hour the venom slowly breaks down the tissue, causing the location to additionally lose 1 Hit Point per hour, which normally results in the loss of the limb (or death of the victim if head or torso) unless the poison is successfully treated. If desired the Games Master may substitute this venom with another, as the effects of giant scorpion venom can run a huge gamut of different effects depending on its species (see Poisons page 66 to create new ones).

### SCORPION, GIANT

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+12 (19)	Action Points	3	01-02	Tail	6/8
CON: 3d6+6 (17)	Damage Modifier	+1d8	03	Right Rear Leg	6/7
SIZ: 2d6+15 (22)	Magic Points	4	04	Left Rear Leg	6/7
DEX: 2d6+9 (16)	Movement	8m	05	Mid Right Leg	6/7
INS: 2d6+2 (9)	Strike Rank	13	06	Mid Left Leg	6/7
POW: 1d6 (4)	Armour	Chitin	07	Fore Right Leg	6/7
	Abilities	Adhering, Burrower,	08	Fore Left Leg	6/7
		Formidable Natural	09-12	Thorax	6/9
		Weapons, Venomous	13-15	Right Pincer	6/8
			16-18	Left Pincer	6/8
			19-20	Cephalothorax	6/10
Skills: Athletics 65%, Brawn 71%, Endurance 64%, Evade 72%, Perception 53%, Stealth 65%, Willpower 48%					
Combat Style: Scuttling Horror (Sting, Pincers) 75%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Pincer	H	L	1d8+1d8	As for Pincer	
Sting	L	VL	1d6+1d8+Venom	As for Tail	

## SHARK

Sharks are consummate predators which roam the waters searching for prey and are merciless in its pursuit. They will attack anything that is helpless or panicking in the water, and are extremely sensitive to blood, allowing them to home in on prey from many kilometres away.

Once a shark tastes blood it does not stop in its attacks. Driving a shark away is exceedingly difficult and, by the time one shark has been deterred, another half dozen may have already arrived to join the feast.



**SHARK**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+18 (25)	Action Points	3	1-3	Tail	2/12
CON: 2d6+9 (16)	Damage Modifier	+2d6	4-6	Dorsal Fin	2/11
SIZ: 2d6+35 (42)	Magic Points	7	7-10	Hindquarters	2/13
DEX: 2d6+9 (16)	Movement	12m (Swim)	11-14	Forequarters	2/14
INS: 2d6+3 (10)	Strike Rank	13	15-16	Right Fin	2/11
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Thick Hide	17-18	Left Fin	2/11
	Abilities	Blood Sense, Frenzy, Swimmer	19-20	Head	2/12

Skills: Brawn 87%, Endurance 62%, Evade 52%, Perception 57%, Swim 81%, Willpower 34%

Combat Style: Shark Attack! (Bite) 81%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	E	M	1d10+2d6	As for Head

**SKELETON**

Skeletons are the remains of dead creatures whose flesh has long rotted away, which are subsequently animated through magic. Any kind of skeleton can be animated and need not specifically be bones, as even the empty husks of giant insects can be raised from their rest.

They are susceptible to weapons delivering blunt-trauma, which smashes the bone (or chitin) and disrupts the joints. Such weapons increase their damage dice by one step when used against skeletons (for example a club with 1d6 damage would become 1d8). On the other hand skeletons reduce the damage dice of slashing weapons by one step, and thrusting weapons by two steps.

Similar to mummies there are several types of skeletons depending on the type of magic used to animate them. Those raised by theism are controlled by the supernatural entity called upon by the priest, granting the undead a semblance of independent action, though their skills are dependent on the nature of the deity or demon called upon.

Skeleton characteristics are based upon those of the original creature, but modified to reflect the loss of flesh and muscle. Their STR and CON are halved (but receive bonuses according to the strength of the animating magic), and DEX is increased by half again – but never higher than the maximum for the species. The INT, POW and CHA of the skeleton are based upon the caster's own or the spirit that currently animates it. Skeletons can wear armour and wield any weapons they would naturally have in their previous life.

**SKELETON**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 12	Action Points	3	1-3	Right Leg	0/5
CON: 12	Damage Modifier	None	4-6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ: 13	Magic Points	16	7-9	Abdomen	0/6
DEX: 16	Movement	6m	10-12	Chest	0/7
INT: 11	Strike Rank	14	13-15	Right Arm	0/4
POW: 16	Armour	None	16-18	Left Arm	0/4
	Abilities	Undead	19-20	Head	0/5

Skills: Athletics 68%, Brawn 45%, Endurance 44%, Evade 72%, Perception 57%, Unarmed 68%,

Willpower 72%

Combat Style: Skeletal Warrior (Sword, Spear, Peltast Shield) 68%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Short Spear	M	L	1d8+1	4/5
Peltast Shield	L	S	1d4	4/12
Shortsword	M	S	1d6	6/8

*It is rumoured that the teeth of certain creatures, cursed with the Chaos and Undead runes, can be buried and, with the right incantations, emerge from the ground as murderous skeletons of their host form.*

*Of course this may simply be a myth used to terrify Meerish children into cleaning their own teeth properly. Or it may have something to do with a spell formula found in the infamous Death Scrolls of Bhaast.*



## Snake, Giant

*All snakes have the inherent ability to unhinge their jaws in order to ingest subdued or slain prey. However since most serpents have a rather small head in proportion to their body length and must spend hours swallowing victim, they do not receive the Engulfing ability in combat. Despite this minor restriction, a snake can swallow a creature of up to their own size. It takes one day per point of SIZ to fully digest the meal.*

The largest naturally occurring large snakes (the constrictors, such as the python and anaconda) can reach huge lengths. This entry describes snakes of a more monstrous scale that are capable of swallowing prey whole and are truly terrifying in their appearance. The vast bulk of giant snakes are non-venomous: they rely on their size and strength to catch and then kill prey without the need to poison it for incapacitation. Of course, for added horror, giant snakes can be made venomous as well.

Snakes can adapt to most habitats although, being cold-blooded, they are sluggish in cooler climes. They can be found anywhere from deserts to jungles; forests to mountains. Wherever there is enough prey, giant snakes may not be far removed. All giant snakes are either camouflaged for their environment or possess the ability to mesmerise their prey. However, even the most brightly patterned serpents can be difficult to detect, and because snakes often remain motionless and silent for many hours, stumbling into a snake's path is not difficult to do.

Whether they strike from ambush or hold mesmerised victims motionless whilst they approach, constrictors loop prey with their coils and wind themselves tight, cutting off circulation and air, suffocating and crushing the victim. Once the prey is dead or unconscious it is swallowed whole and digested over a long period, meaning that snakes can take considerable periods between meals. Escaping from a giant constrictor's coils is a monumental feat requiring an opposed test of Brawn skills.

Giant constrictors with the ability to mesmerise must engage the target in direct eye contact, which prompts an opposed roll of Willpower skills. If the victim loses, they remain motionless, unable to react or save themselves. The first attack of the snake against a surprised or mesmerised target (if it generates a Special Effect) will target the chest or abdomen. No damage is inflicted but the attack automatically establishes a grapple. On the snake's next turn, it inflicts its Damage Modifier by tightening its coils applying the damage to the Chest or Abdomen area directly: armour does not protect against this constriction damage. Giant snakes usually keep their heads out of combat unless outnumbered by opponents.

### Snake, Giant

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6+9 (20)	Action Points	3	1-3	Tail Tip	4/13
CON: 3d6+12 (23)	Damage Modifier	+2d6	4-5	Mid End-length	4/13
SIZ: 3d6+30 (41)	Magic Points	7	6-7	Fore End-length	4/13
DEX: 2d6+12 (19)	Movement	8m	8-9	Rear Mid-length	4/14
INS: 2d6+5 (12)	Strike Rank	16	10-12	Mid Mid-length	4/14
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Scales	13-14	Fore Mid-length	4/14
	Abilities	Camouflaged	15-16	Rear Fore-length	4/13
		or Gaze Attack (Mesmerism), Cold Blooded, Grappler	17-18	Mid Fore-length	4/13
			19-20	Head	4/13

Skills: Athletics 79%, Brawn 91%, Endurance 66%, Evade 68%, Perception 59%, Stealth 71%, Willpower 54%

Combat Style: Crushing Death (Constrict, Bite and Writhe) 79%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	H	VL	1d8+2d6	As for Head
Constrict	E	T	2d6	As for Body Segment
Tail Slap	E	VL	1d6+2d6	As for Tail Segment





## SPIDER, GIANT

Even hardened adventurers can harbour arachnophobia – the fear of spiders – which makes the giant variety even more terrifying. Giant spiders are excellent predators, using all manner of ingenious methods of luring and trapping prey. Whether they use concealed burrows (trapdoor spiders), sticky webs, or are fast running hunter-killers; spiders are cunning, patient, and deadly. When using a giant spider, decide how it hunts and use the appropriate combat techniques described here to run the encounter.

All giant spiders have the ability to adhere to vertical surfaces. This means they can squat on a cave ceiling and cling to or scurry up a wall at great speed. They have excellent vibratory, as well as visual perception, through the hairs on their legs, making them difficult to sneak up upon unless care is taken to move extremely slowly and not disturb the silken trip lines which surround their lairs.

Spiders pinion prey with one or more of their legs before biting with their mandibles. Provided the bite penetrates any armour, it injects venom into the victim, which has a Potency equal to the spider's Endurance. Games Masters are free to develop their own poisons for particular species, but as a default use the following toxin.

Generic spider poison acts 1d6 rounds after injection (during which time the spider either retreats or maintains its grip) and paralyzes the victim if not resisted. Once immobile the spider will wrap the victim in silk. Paralysis lasts for a number of hours equal to one quarter of the spider's CON. However, the venom has a more deadly secondary effect. Each hour after the initial poisoning, the victim loses 1 Hit Point from every location as his insides begin to liquefy. This continues until the victim is dead.

Spider silk is incredibly strong and sticky: treat a silk binding or a strand of web as having 6 Armour Points and Hit Points equal to half the spider's SIZ. Touching an adhesive web glues the limb to the strand, unless the victim can win an opposed roll of their Brawn against the silk's Stickiness (equal to the spider's Endurance). If this fails they remain fastened, unable to break free by strength alone. Attempting to cut free exposes the tool or weapon used to the same process. Despite popular belief, spider webs are not flammable, but a character might slowly burn their way through a web by using a flame to shrivel the strands (fire damage ignores the silk's Armour Points).

### SPIDER, GIANT

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6+9 (20)	Action Points	3	01-02	Right Rear Leg	4/9
CON: 3d6+6 (17)	Damage Modifier	+1d10	03-04	Left Rear Leg	4/9
SIZ: 3d6+18 (29)	Magic Points	4	05-06	Mid Right Leg	4/9
DEX: 3d6+9 (20)	Movement	10m	07-08	Mid Left Leg	4/9
INS: 2d6+2 (9)	Strike Rank	15	09-10	Fore Right Leg	4/9
POW: 1d6 (4)	Armour	Exoskeleton	11-12	Fore Left Leg	4/9
	Abilities	Adhering, Earth Sense,	13-14	Abdomen	4/12
		Grappler, Venomous	15-16	Front Right Leg	4/9
			17-18	Front Left Leg	4/9
			19-20	Cephalothorax	4/11
Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 69%, Endurance 64%, Evade 80%, Perception 53%, Stealth 69%, Willpower 48%					
Combat Style: Eight Legged Horror (Legs, Mandibles) 80%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Mandibles	L	T	1d6+1d10	As for Head	
Legs	L	VL	Grapple	As for Leg	

*Some spiders are capable of leaping disturbingly long distances using their powerful musculature. If designing spiders that are hunter-killers, grant them the Leaping ability to reflect this method of chasing down prey.*



## TIGER

With the exception of smilodon, tigers are the largest of the big cats. Highly territorial, and generally solitary (save for females with cubs) they frequent many different climates including arctic environments. Their natural camouflage, usually with the characteristic black stripes, means they can move with high stealth, increasing their ambush capabilities. The pattern of stripes is unique to each tiger, and helps the animals to conceal themselves amongst the shadows, foliage and long grass as they stalk their prey.

The chief means of attack is the powerful bite, followed by claw rakes. A hungry tiger is tenacious and will stalk prey for a great distance if driven by an empty stomach. They are undeterred by prey larger themselves although these cats are still cautious given that - generally - they do not hunt in large numbers and have little in the way of support.

### TIGER

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+15 (22)	Action Points	3	1–2	Right Hind Leg	2/8
CON: 2d6+6 (13)	Damage Modifier	+1d10	3–4	Left Hind Leg	2/8
SIZ: 2d6+18 (25)	Magic Points	7	5–7	Hindquarters	2/9
DEX: 2d6+12 (19)	Movement	8m	8–10	Forequarters	2/10
INS: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	16	11–13	Right Front Leg	2/8
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Fur and Hide	14–16	Left Front Leg	2/8
	Abilities	Camouflage, Intimidate,	17–20	Head	2/8
Night Sight					
Skills: Athletics 71%, Brawn 68%, Endurance 66%, Evade 68%, Perception 60%, Track 56%, Stealth 72%, Willpower 54%					
Combat Style: Striped Death (Teeth, Claws) 81%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Bite	L	S	1d8+1d10	As for Head	
Claws	L	M	1d6+1d10	As for Leg	

## VAMPIRE

Kings and queens of the undead, vampires sustain themselves through drinking of blood of sapient creatures. The following type of vampire is based upon European myth, but can be tweaked to fit the countless different versions of other cultures and fantasy worlds.

The manner of becoming a vampire depends on the campaign. In some settings vampirism may be the rare result of a curse, possession or deliberate self transformation. In others vampirism may be a contagious disease which affects anyone bitten by one of these monsters. Many superstitions surround the creation of vampires and thus the real cause may remain obfuscated. About the only thing which is definitively known is that vampirism only affects sapient species.

When raised as a vampire, the creature receives the following benefits:

- ⇒ The vampire gains the Undead ability, rendering it immune to the detrimental effects of most injuries and the affects of Fatigue, save for that lost by not feeding (see below).
- ⇒ The vampire is infused by an unholy strength and speed. Multiply STR and DEX by two.
- ⇒ The vampire's natural weapons are augmented by the growth of fangs and iron hard finger nails, if the species did not already possess something similar.
- ⇒ The vampire becomes immune to most non-magical attacks, its flesh instantly re-knitting together or invulnerable unless specifically decapitated in a single blow – although it can still be destroyed by burning, drowning or exposure to sunlight.



- ⇒ The vampire gains a gaze attack with the power to dominate sapient and animal victims. The vampire must spend a Magic Point on his turn and engage the target in an opposed Willpower roll. If the victim loses it falls under the control of the vampire's will (see below).
- ⇒ The vampire might also develop an alternate form providing it with alternate senses and means of locomotion. Shape-Shifting requires a successful Willpower roll to initiate and takes 1d3 combat rounds to complete. It costs at least 1 Magic Point to shape-shift and 1 point per hour thereafter to maintain.

**VAMPIRE SHAPESHIFT TABLE**

1d100	Alternate Form
01-75	None. The vampire cannot shape-shift.
76-80	Wolf (use all physical characteristics for the wolf entry).
81-85	Bat (becomes a bat-like monstrosity but retains its original SIZ. It gains the Flying ability and Fly skill).
86-90	Swarm of Rats (becomes a pack of rats which can scatter in all directions to eventually coalesce at a later time).
91-95	Gaseous (becomes non-corporeal and can, in its mist-like form, pass through any gap permitting the flow of air).
96-100	Roll Twice – ignoring this result if rolled again.

In return, vampires exhibit certain weaknesses, as follows:

- ⇒ The need to consume blood weekly. For each week it does not feed, the vampire suffers a level of Fatigue which does not recover until it feeds again; each victim (who must be drained to death) reducing its Fatigue level by one. If the vampire drops to the level of Comatose they enter a state of suspended animation, but do not die.
- ⇒ Susceptibility to sunlight, suffering 1d6 damage per round to each location it contacts.
- ⇒ Catatonic sleepers, vampires find it difficult to awaken if disturbed during the hours of daylight. Consequently they try to find remote and easy to secure lairs.
- ⇒ Vulnerability to impaling weapons of a particular type of wood (ash or hawthorne for example).

All other superstitions concerning vampires, such as its dislike of garlic or lack of reflection, are merely folklore and need not have any basis in truth, although a fun concept would be a newly raised vampire who believes that they *are* true.

Vampires are fearsome opponents. In combat they are almost unstoppable without magical weapons or offensive spells, although for some reason their neck is vulnerable to decapitation if the blow does twice the Hit Points of the head in a single strike.

Impaling weapons made of certain types of wood can harm a vampire, bypassing their natural immunity to mundane weapons. These however do not actually kill the vampire, but instead prevent it from instantly regenerating the damage inflicted upon it. A headless spear, arrow or crossbow bolt which both Impales and inflicts a Major Wound, renders that particular location immobile. If this is the head or chest the vampire becomes quiescent. Removing the stake allows the creature to rise again.

Perhaps the most frightening power of vampires is their ability to dominate victims, turning folk into unwitting servants for the creature. Although this power requires direct eye contact and the investment of a Magic Point, which the vampire does not recover until he lets the domination drop, until that time the victim can be controlled anywhere within a range of the vampire's POW in kilometres. Whilst the victim may remain at the beck and call of its master, the vampire must actually concentrate to the exclusion of all else to actively control one of its servitors.

*Japanese and Malaysian myths have similar vampiric forms (the rokuro-kubi and penanngglan respectively). These vampiric creatures detach their heads from their bodies, sometimes dragging their entrails with them, and take to the night skies to hunt fresh blood. At daybreak they return to their bodies and reform, with daily life continuing as normal.*

*Using these kinds of undead in RUNEQUEST means adjusting the hit locations slightly: 01-15 strikes the entrails and 16-20 strikes the head. The creatures have the Flying ability and all other relevant abilities for traditional vampires.*

*A rokuro-kubi or penanngglan may not even be aware of what happens to them after sunset, living relatively normal lives during daylight hours.*



Vampires do not normally feed during the midst of combat. However, if pressed, they can drain a victim of blood in a matter of moments, sucking one level of Fatigue per Round until interrupted or the victim is dead. Usually vampires prefer to take their time drinking rather than glutting themselves.

**VAMPIRE**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6x2 (22)	Action Points	3	1-3	Right Leg	0/5
CON: 3d6 (11)	Damage Modifier	+1d4	4-6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ: 2d6+6 (13)	Magic Points	11	7-9	Abdomen	0/6
DEX: 3d6x2 (22)	Movement	6m	10-12	Chest	0/7
INT: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	18	13-15	Right Arm	0/4
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	None	16-18	Left Arm	0/4
CHA: 3d6 (11)	Abilities	Allergy (Sunlight), Darksight, Gaze Attack (Domination), Immunity (Mundane Weapons), Undead, Vampiric, Vulnerable (Special)		Head	0/5
	Magic	Some may retain the magical skills possessed in life.			
Skills: Athletics 74%, Brawn 65%, Deceit 54%, Endurance 62%, Evade 64%, Influence 62%, Perception 54%, Seduction 64%, Stealth 75%, Unarmed 84%, Willpower 62%					
Combat Style: Generally fights using Unarmed					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Bite	M	M	1d4+1d4	As for Head	
Fists	M	T	1d3+1d4	As for Arm	

**WINGED APE**

Winged apes resemble silverback gorillas save for the pair of huge, bat-like wings sprouting from the shoulders, giving them flight. Despite being flying creatures they are primarily ground-dwellers, using their flight simply to chase prey, move short distances quickly and intimidate others. They lack the strength to maintain sustained flight or even take off without a running start; often requiring a high place from which to launch themselves.

Winged apes frequent hilly, mountainous and jungle areas, often finding homes in ancient, overgrown ruins. They are omnivorous but follow a largely herbivorous diet, seeking meat only on rare occasions. That said, if an intruder is killed, winged apes will happily feed on the carcass.





The apes are highly territorial and extremely aggressive to those who their territory. They form groups of between 10 and 30 individuals with a strong and aggressive male as the pack leader, and supplemented by several strong beta males. The alpha male has the privilege of mating with all the females in the pack and other males must wait their turn or challenge the alpha male for breeding rights.

**WINGED APE**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+12 (19)	Action Points	3	1–3	Right Leg	2/8
CON: 2d6+9 (16)	Damage Modifier	+1d8	4–6	Left Leg	2/8
SIZ: 2d6+15 (22)	Magic Points	11	7–9	Abdomen	2/9
DEX: 2d6+6 (13)	Movement	4m (land), 8m (flying)	10	Chest	2/10
INS: 2d6+7 (14)	Strike Rank	14	11–12	Right Wing	0/8
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Fur	13–14	Left Wing	0/8
	Abilities	Diving Strike, Flying,	15–16	Right Arm	2/7
		Formidable Natural Weapons	17–18	Left Arm	2/7
			19–20	Head	2/8
Skills: Athletics 62%, Brawn 71%, Endurance 62%, Evade 46%, Fly 62%, Perception 55%, Willpower 52%					
Combat Style: Rip Apart (Fists, Teeth, Wing Strike) 72%					
Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	
Bite	M	T	1d3+1d8	As for Head	
Fists	M	M	1d4+1d8	As for Arm	
Wing	M	L	1d3+1d8	As for Wing	

## WOLF

Oldest of the canine species and feared pack-hunters, wolves are native to temperate and sub-arctic climates, preferring forests, hills and moorland. A pack consists of between 12 and 30 wolves led by an alpha male – usually the strongest of the pack but often the oldest. The pack hierarchy is incredibly strong; most individual wolves are subservient to the alpha male and challengers to the position are set-upon by the others. Any male that beats the alpha generally assumes the alpha male position and may drive out the loser (if death does not result) or the loser may assume a life of subservience to the new leader, thereby retaining a place in the community.

Wolves are most active at night but can be roused to activity during the day. Hunting expeditions are highly co-ordinated affairs. A pack chooses and stalks its prey carefully and attacks, when they happen, consist of successive waves of between three and six animals aiming to incapacitate the prey before tearing out the throat or cutting off air at the windpipe. The alpha male feeds first, followed by the remainder of the pack in an established order. The youngest members of a pack may have to make do with scraps.

In combat wolves rely on their powerful bite rather than their claws. Once a bite takes hold the wolf locks its jaws and continues to exert pressure through the canines and by vigorously shaking the head, deepening and lengthening the bites. Wolves therefore tend to choose the Grip and Choose Location Special Effects (always aiming for an exposed area). A Grippped victim sustains biting damage throughout the duration of the grip as the wolf worries at the wound.

If the alpha male is forced to flee then the pack follows suit, although braver individuals may attempt to gain status by remaining to fight.

Dire wolves are much larger specimens; double STR and SIZ.

### LYCANTHROPY

*Lycanthropy is the condition that transforms a human into a wolf form through some appropriate environmental trigger (full moon, for example). Any character struck by lycanthropy transforms into a wolf of a SIZ similar to the human form, but replacing INT with INS. STR, CON, DEX and POW is the higher of the human or wolf form, as are the listed skills. Some lycanthropes also gain immunity to mundane damage, but retain a vulnerability, silver being their traditional weakness. The wolf form lasts for a number of hours equal to the lycanthrope's CON. The transformation process takes 1d3 minutes and is excruciatingly painful.*





**WOLF**

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 1d3+6 (8)	Action Points	2	1-2	Right Hind Leg	1/4
CON: 3d6 (11)	Damage Modifier	-1d2	3-4	Left Hind Leg	1/4
SIZ: 1d3+6 (8)	Magic Points	7	5-7	Hindquarters	1/5
DEX: 3d6 (11)	Movement	8m	8-10	Forequarters	1/6
INS: 2d6+6 (13)	Strike Rank	12	11-13	Right Front Leg	1/4
POW: 2d6 (7)	Armour	Fur	14-16	Left Front Leg	1/4
	Abilities	Night Sight	17-20	Head	1/4

Skills: Athletics 59%, Brawn 36%, Endurance 62%, Evade 52%, Perception 60%, Track 64%, Willpower 44%

Combat Style: Pack Savage (Bite) 59%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	S	T	1d4-1d2	As for Head

*An aquatic form of the wyvern exists, replacing the hindquarters and tail with the fins and tail of an enormous fish. The sea-wyvern gains the Aquatic ability and Swim at 74%.*

**WYRM/WYVERN**

Wyrm and wyvern are draconic entities that have serpentine bodies, a fierce, dragon-like head, and wings. The only difference between the two is that wyrms lack any legs, whereas wyverns possess a set of hind legs. The wings in both species are too small to sustain flight over long distances which mean they normally traverse terrain by either wriggling or hop about with long, leaping bounds.

Neither creature has the intelligence of a dragon, being mere predatory beasts. They lack a breath weapon but make up for this with savage ferocity and imposing size. They are found in a diverse range of terrain, favouring hilly and moorland regions although both can be found in forests, jungles or swamps making their lairs in deep burrows. Wyrms are capable of hugging the ground and slithering, snake-like, to stalk prey. Wyverns are less discreet, relying on frontal assaults.

**WYRM/WYVERN**

Characteristics	Attributes		Wyrm	Wyvern	Location	AP/HP
STR: 2d6+18 (25)	Action Points	3	1-4	1-3	Tail	6/12
CON: 2d6+12 (19)	Damage Modifier	+2d6	-	4-5	Right Hind Leg	6/13
SIZ: 4d6+30 (44)	Magic Points	11	-	6-7	Left Hind Leg	6/13
DEX: 2d6+12 (19)	Movement	8m, 16m (flying)	5-8	8-10	Hindquarters	6/14
INS: 2d6+5 (12)	Strike Rank	16	9-12	11-14	Forequarters	6/15
POW: 3d6 (11)	Armour	Scales	13-15	15-16	Right Wing	6/13
	Abilities	Cold Blooded,	16-18	17-18	Left Wing	6/13
		Dark Sight,	19-20	19-20	Head	6/14
		Flying, Frenzy				

Skills: Athletics 64%, Brawn 89%, Endurance 78%, Evade 68%, Fly 74%, Perception 63%, Willpower 62%

Combat Style: Draconic Terror (Bite, Tail Sweep) 84%

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	E	L	1d12+2d6	As for Head
Tail	E	VL	1d10+2d6	As for Tail

# ZOMBIE



Any recently deceased corpse animated through magic or some exotic plague is a zombie. Mindless, decaying and driven by a desire to consume flesh and blood, zombies have no intellect to speak of. Magically created zombies are often under the control of a caster in a similar way to Skeletons (see page 181). The freshness of the original corpse at the time of its animation defines much of a zombie's toughness. Their characteristics start as equivalent to the creature in life, but (assuming no burial) are reduced by one point for each day which passes after death before it is raised. Once animated a zombie does not normally rot any further, but retains its foul stench.

Of course the rate of the initial degeneration depends on the environment. In cold or subterranean climates the rate may slow down to one point per week; whilst places like bogs or glaciers may preserve corpses indefinitely. However quickly it deteriorates, once a corpse has lost half of its STR or CON what remnants of flesh remain will simply slough off the underlying bones. From this point the body can only be raised as a skeleton.

Zombies are relentless in whatever task assigned to them and pursue it tirelessly. As per the Undead trait they are not subject to fatigue. Neither are they unduly affected by damage and the only thing that will stop a zombie from moving is to destroy either the head or chest (whichever of the two the animating magic or disease is primarily located) by reducing it to a Major Wound. Thus fresh corpses can be quite difficult to put down, whereas badly rotted ones are rather vulnerable.

- ⇒ Magically raised zombies take on the mental characteristics and physical skills of the caster or spirit controlling the body. Note that some methods of animating zombies can grant the corpse bonuses to their deteriorated characteristics. In addition they can wear armour and wield any weapons they would naturally have in their previous life.
- ⇒ A zombie created by some virulent plague is an autonomous creature, retaining the physical skills and degenerated mental characteristics of the original being, but any INT value is converted to INS. In addition it usually carries the disease which caused its own transformation. To make this type scarier, treat Zombie Plague as a mundanely incurable disease with a Potency of 80%. Anyone bitten by the zombie must make an opposed roll of their Endurance versus the potency. Failure to beat the plague means that they begin to rot before they die; losing characteristic points at a rate of one per hour. After 1d6 hours they expire from the disease and minutes later arise as a zombie.

*Zombies created through magic need no sustenance. Those created by plague or contagion may need to consume blood, flesh, hearts or brains to remain functional. These zombies are driven by hunger and may possess the Life Sense ability to help them hunt.*

## ZOMBIE

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 3d6-2 (9)	Action Points	2	1-3	Right Leg	0/4
CON: 3d6-2 (9)	Damage Modifier	-1d2	4-6	Left Leg	0/4
SIZ: 2d6+6-2 (11)	Magic Points	0	7-9	Abdomen	0/5
DEX: 3d6-2 (9)	Movement	6m	10-12	Chest	0/6
INS: 2d6+6-2 (11)	Strike Rank	10	13-15	Right Arm	0/3
POW: 3d6-2 (9)	Armour	None	16-18	Left Arm	0/3
CHA: 3d6-2 (9)	Abilities	Undead	19-20	Head	0/4

Skills: Athletics 38%, Brawn 40%, Endurance 58%, Evade 38%, Perception 40%, Unarmed 58%, Willpower 48%

Combat Style: Generally fights using Unarmed

Weapons:	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	S	S	1 + Disease	As for Head
Fists	S	T	1d3-1d2	As for Arm



# CHAOS FEATURES

## CHAOS FEATURES

1d100	Feature	Effect
01-02	Acidic	Possesses a flesh dissolving acidic ichor which sprays whenever the skin is damaged, causing damage to the attacker; roll 1d4 to determine the strength of the acid, 1=1d2, 2=1d4, 3=1d6 and 4=1d8 damage per wound.
03-04	Alluring	Produces pheromones which attract and seduce victims. The creature gains the Seduction skill at POW x5%. It can be resisted using Willpower as per any Seduction.
05-06	Asymmetric	One half of the creature is larger, longer or taller than the other, double the Hit Points for locations in the larger side and halve the Hit Points of locations for the smaller.
07-08	Boneless	The creature possesses resilient, malleable cartilage rather than bone. It can squeeze through any size of gap and takes no damage from any fall.
09-10	Brainless	Sensory organs are distributed over the entire body and sentience is located elsewhere – but not in the head. The brain is found in a random location.
11-12	Burning	The creature seethes with chaotic heat, injuring anyone within Short range; roll a d4, 1=1d2, 2=1d4, 3=1d6 and 4=1d8 damage per round.
13-14	Chameleon	Naturally blends with its surroundings and has an effective Stealth skill of 100%+POW.
15-16	Climbing	Gains the Adhering Ability.
17-18	Contagious	Inflicts a virulent disease with a delay of 1d8 hours and potency of CONx5%, which reduces a random characteristic by 1d8 points: roll a d6, 1=STR, 2=CON, 3=DEX, 4=INT, 5=POW or 6=CHA.
19-20	Corroding	Weapons sustain 1d8 damage each time they strike the creature. Weapon Armour Points offer no protection.
21-22	Dampener	All magical effects within the creature's POW in metres are suppressed by 1d8 Magnitude. Spells reduced to zero Magnitude are dispelled unless part of a permanent enchantment.
23-24	Deathly	Drains the vitality of nearby plants and creatures. Those in Short range of the creature must succeed in an unopposed Endurance roll each round to avoid suffering 1 point of damage to every Hit Location, ignoring armour.
25-26	Disturbing	Creature is covered with unsettling forms, such as miniature arms, multiple eyes or mouths, writhing pseudopods, etc. Viewers must succeed in an unopposed Willpower test or be helpless with horror until they can make the roll successfully.
27-28	Domineering	Manipulates those around it with mental commands, which cannot be resisted unless the target is successful in an unopposed Willpower test.
29-30	Draining	Temporarily weakens the magical power of an opponent, draining 1d8 MP with each successful strike.
31-32	Droning	Produces a buzzing noise that sedates listeners. All within the creature's POW x5 in metres must succeed in an unopposed Willpower roll to avoid falling asleep for 1d8 minutes.
33-34	Entangle	Restricts the movements of those within melee range, who must succeed in an unopposed Brawn roll to avoid being rendered physically helpless each round.
35-36	Frightening	Creature appears terrifyingly dangerous; viewers must succeed in an unopposed Willpower roll or flee the creature immediately.
37-38	Icy	Radiates freezing waves of cold, injuring anyone within melee range; roll 1d4, 1=1d2, 2=1d4, 3=1d6 and 4=1d8 damage per round.
39-40	Intangible	Moves through solid objects as though non-corporeal. Whilst intangible it cannot be harmed, but neither can it attack.
41-42	Leaper	Has powerfully sprung limbs, multiplying its jump range by a factor of 1d4+1.
43-44	Levitating	Hovers above the ground giving it the ability to move over any surface without sinking or leaving tracks.
45-46	Mimic	Assumes the shape of a creature it successfully touches, maintaining its own Characteristics, but mimicking the locations and appearance of the being contacted.



**CHAOS FEATURES**

1d100	Feature	Effect
47-48	Mournful	Appearance is sad or pathetic. Observers must succeed in an unopposed Willpower roll to be able to begin attacking it
49-50	Mutated	Roll a random location and remove it from the creature. It no longer has this location, but it still functions perfectly well without it, even defying logic.
51-52	Nerveless	Does not feel any pain, and ignores the effects of Serious Wounds.
53-54	Neutralising	Any spells cast at the creature are immediately neutralized.
55-56	Obfuscating	Produces a cloud of mist, spores or darkness that blinds observers. Those affected must succeed in an unopposed Perception roll every turn to see the creature.
57-58	Oversized	One location is swollen doubling its Hit Points.
59-60	Paralysing	Renders victims incapable of movement; those touched must succeed in an unopposed Endurance roll to avoid 1d8 minutes of paralysis.
61-62	Perceptive	Possesses an odd primary sense; roll a d6, 1=Echolocation (sonar), 2=Thermoception (heat), 3=Cerebralception (sapient consciousness), 4=Nociception (pain), 5=Ethoception (souls), 6=Thaumaception (magic). The creature does not rely on sight to perceive others and may lack eyes.
63-64	Poisonous	One unarmed attack inflicts a venomous poison with a delay of 1d8 rounds and a potency of CONx5%, which inflicts a Poison Condition selected from page 66.
65-66	Polymorph	Changes shape every round, maintaining its Characteristics, but assuming the locations of the new form and carrying over any damage already suffered (Games Masters should prepare various forms in advance).
67-68	Projector	Any damage inflicted on the creature is felt by anyone within POW metres, who suffer the psychological, but not physical effects as if they had been wounded too.
69-70	Quick	Movement rate is multiplied by a factor of 1d4+1.
71-72	Reflecting	All magic cast on the creature is reflected back against the caster.
73-74	Regenerating	Recovers 1 Hit Point per round to every location, unless the creature has suffered a Major Wound in the injured location.
75-76	Roaring	Produces a thunderous roar, deafening listeners, who must succeed in an unopposed Endurance roll to avoid becoming temporally stunned for 1d3 Turns.
77-78	Scintillating	Possesses a shifting chromatic aura that confuses onlookers. All attacks against the creature are one grade harder.
79-80	Shadowy	The creature absorbs the ambient light in its immediate surroundings, creating a pool of total darkness with a radius equal to POW in metres.
81-82	Shocking	Charges itself with electricity, inflicting a shock on those that hit it (if using metal or uninsulated weapons, or are struck by it; roll 1d4, 1=1d2, 2=1d4, 3=1d6 and 4=1d8 damage per blow).
83-84	Silent	Completely inaudible – even its attacks.
85-86	Slimy	Cannot be grappled or gripped in close combat. The creature leaves a sticky mucus trail wherever it travels.
87-88	Stench	Releases nauseating odours that sicken inhalers, who must succeed in an unopposed Endurance roll to avoid uncontrollable vomiting for 1d3 Combat Rounds.
89-90	Sticky	Secretes a strong glue or mucus which causes items to stick to its skin, requiring a successful unopposed Brawn roll and a Combat Action to free.
91-92	Teleporter	Can freely teleport to a new location once per round. The location must be within a number of metres equal to POW x2.
93-94	Transmuter	Changes the substance of organic material it touches into another substance; living victims must succeed in an unopposed Endurance roll to avoid the struck location being changed into crystal, dust, stone, wine, bronze and so on.
95-96	Vampiric	Hit Point damage inflicted on an opponent is transferred to itself, healing any wounds currently suffered.
97-98	Warded	Invulnerable to one specific type of material; steel, wood, stone, flesh, etc.
99-100	Weakening	Temporarily reduces the STR of an opponent by 1d8 each successful (undefended) hit.

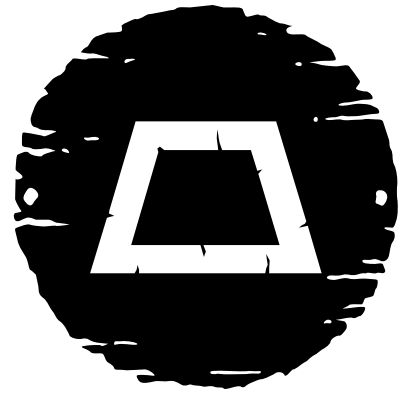








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## ESSENTIALS VS CORE RULES

The RUNEQUEST Essentials rules offer a great introduction to the RQ system, but there is much more to be found in the full book!

- ⇒ *Expanded character creation, including Social Class, families, allies and Passions, plus more careers*
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- ⇒ *An extensive chapter covering Religions, Cults and Brotherhoods - a key feature of RUNEQUEST*
- ⇒ *Double the creatures and monsters (including a full range of spirits)*
- ⇒ *Extensive rules on how creatures fight, including guidance for assigning natural weapon sizes, reach and damage*
- ⇒ *Comprehensive Games Master advice including rules for Social Conflict*

So, if you have enjoyed these Essentials rules, we hope you'll consider upgrading to the full system. All our products are available online at the Design Mechanism Store and through all good game stores.

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**WELCOME TO THE  
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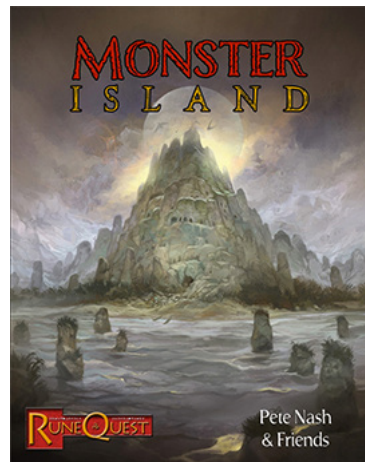
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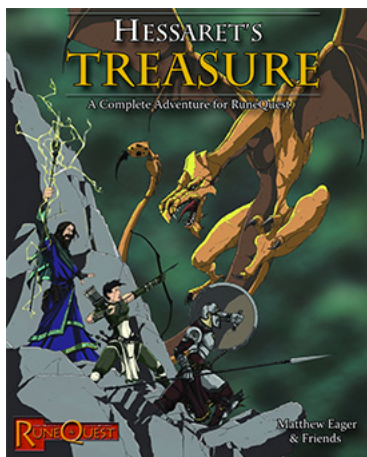
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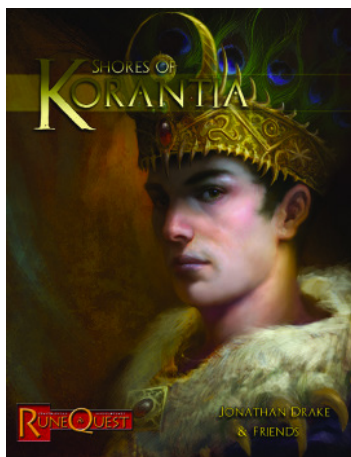
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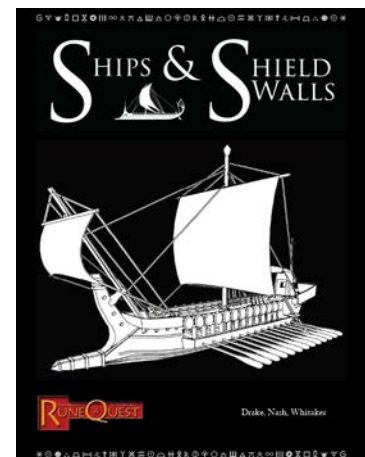
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This special version of RuneQuest 6th Edition is designed to introduce players and Games Masters to the essentials of the game. In this book you will find the core of the RuneQuest engine, in a stripped-down format, but still complete enough to create characters and begin adventuring with one of roleplaying's most enduring and respected systems.

The intention is that this book will give you a taste of the mechanics and encourage you to move onto the full edition of the rules. The full rulebook contains much, much more: more game options, more magic, more monsters more cults.

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