

2ND EDITION

# FANTASY AGE

## CORE RULEBOOK



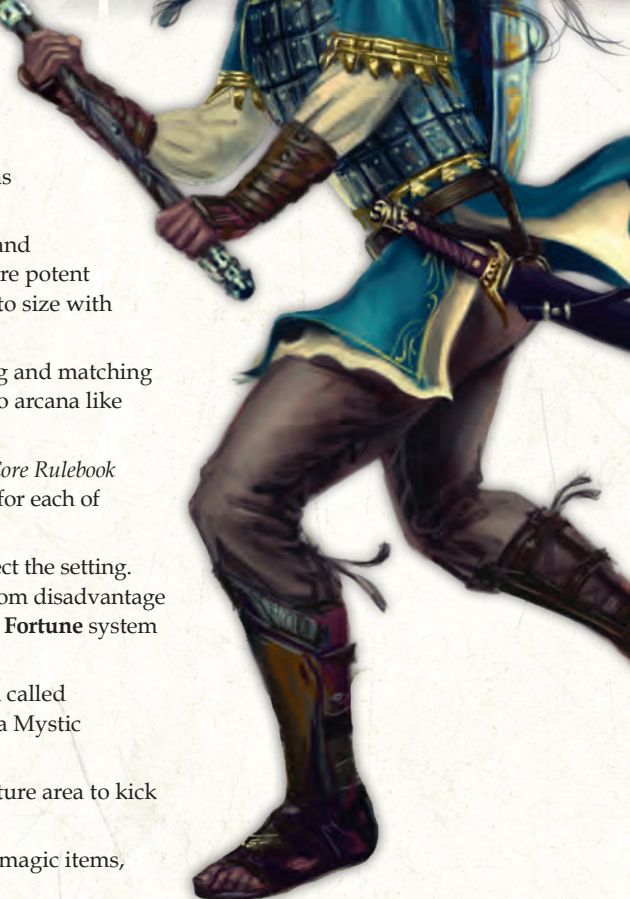
STEVE KENSON, CHRIS PRAMAS,  
MALCOLM SHEPPARD, AND OWEN K.C. STEPHENS





**L**eap into sword & sorcery RPG adventures with the *Fantasy AGE Core Rulebook*! Powered by the popular Adventure Game Engine, *Fantasy AGE 2nd Edition* is easy to learn, fun to play, and welcoming to new roleplayers. The *Fantasy AGE Core Rulebook* includes these features:

- **SIMPLE CHARACTER CREATION:** Pick an ancestry (such as draak, dwarf, goblin, or wildfolk), pick a class (envoy, mage, rogue, or warrior), pick a specialization (such as duelist, diplomat, pirate, and sword mage), and jump into the action.
- **HEROIC STUNTS:** The heart of the game is the stunt system, which brings dynamism and drama to the table. Roll doubles on 3d6 to pull off unexpected moves in combat, cast more potent spells, perform amazing feats of physical and mental prowess, or even cut a rival down to size with a few clever words.
- **MIGHTY MAGIC:** Spell casters learn arcana, which are themed groups of spells. Mixing and matching the 19 arcana gives the mage class a huge amount of flexibility. To get started, choose two arcana like Beast, Cold, Death, Earth, Fate, Fire, Healing, Protection, Mind, and Shadow.
- **GAME MASTER GUIDANCE:** If you are new to RPGs or have never GMed before, the *Core Rulebook* breaks it all down for you. Not just GM advice but practicalities as well. There's guidance for each of the GM's four roles: Game Planner, Game Host, Game Runner, and Game Moderator.
- **CUSTOMIZABLE RULES:** The GM can use optional rules for the campaign to better reflect the setting. Choices include the twin systems of **Peril** and **Daring**, which allow for dramatic swings from disadvantage to advantage as the tension builds. **Horror** rules can give the campaign a sinister turn. The **Fortune** system turns Health into a combination of resilience and luck that can influence outcomes.
- **THE STRANGER SHORES:** The *Core Rulebook* introduces a campaign setting of its own called **Stranger Shores**. Brave the Deeps, which have been the doom of many a ship. Sail with a Mystic Navigator to travel to distant lands.
- **BREAKWATER BAY:** Enter the Stranger Shores with **Breakwater Bay**, a starting adventure area to kick off your campaign. The book includes *Set Sail for Breakwater Bay*, a complete adventure.
- **SO MUCH MORE:** You'll also find character talents, challenging monsters, chase rules, magic items, relationships and bonds, and more. This is the complete package.



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2ND  
EDITION



## CREDITS

**DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM:** STEVE KENSON, IAN LEMKE, CHRIS PRAMAS, MALCOLM SHEPPARD, OWEN K.C. STEPHENS

ADVENTURE GAME ENGINE (AGE) CREATED BY CHRIS PRAMAS

**ADVENTURE DESIGN:** CRYSTAL FRASIER    **EDITING:** CAROL DARNELL, MICHAEL MATHESON, EVAN SASS    **GRAPHIC DESIGN:** HAL MANGOLD

**ART DIRECTION:** HAL MANGOLD AND OWEN K.C. STEPHENS    **COVER ART:** WAYNE REYNOLDS    **CARTOGRAPHY:** JOHN WILSON

**INTERIOR ART:** JOEWIE ADERES, HANNAH BAKER, ELENA BARBIERI, SIMON CARR, VICTOR CORBELLA, JAN CRUZ, BIAGIO D'ALLESANDRO, STANISLAV DIKOLENKO, OLGA DREBAS, TOBY FOX, MIKHAIL GREULI, ANNA GRINENKO, BRIAN HAGAN, ILICH HENRIQUEZ, JACK HOYLE, CLAUDIA IANNICIELLO, DANIL LUZIN, ANDERSON MAIA, ALYSSA MCCARTHY, JOHNNY MORROW, MIRCO PAGANESSI, WAYNE REYNOLDS, BRYAN SYME, ANDREY VASILCHENKO, AND CARLOS VILLA

**PUBLISHER:** CHRIS PRAMAS

**TEAM RONIN:** JOSEPH CARRIKER, KARA HAMILTON, TROY HEWITT, STEVEN JONES, STEVE KENSON, IAN LEMKE, NICOLE LINDROOS, HAL MANGOLD, CHRIS PRAMAS, EVAN SASS, MALCOLM SHEPPARD, DYLAN TEMPLAR, AND ALEXANDER THOMAS

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GREEN RONIN PUBLISHING

3815 S. OTHELLO ST.,

SUITE 100 #311

SEATTLE, WA 98118

CUSTSERV@GREENRONIN.COM

WWW.GREENRONIN.COM





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# FOREWORD

Welcome to *Fantasy AGE 2nd Edition*! If you are new to the game, this *Core Rulebook* and three 6-sided dice are all you need to get started. With *Fantasy AGE*, you and your friends can embark on exciting roleplaying adventures on a myriad of worlds. From the beginning, *Fantasy AGE* was designed to be a flexible game that you could use with the setting of your choice, be it from your favorite novels, a published campaign setting, or a world of your own design. Green Ronin does offer settings and adventure material, like Breakwater Bay in this book and *Freeport: The City of Adventure*, but you and your friends can take your campaign anywhere you want to go.

The story of *Fantasy AGE* begins in 2008 with our licensed *Dragon Age RPG*. When we made that deal with BioWare, I thought it was a great opportunity to show video gamers the coolness of tabletop RPGs. With that in mind, I designed a new system that I hoped would be easy to learn and fun to play. We dubbed it the Adventure Game Engine (or AGE for short). *Dragon Age* was a big hit for Green Ronin and it didn't take long for folks to ask us if we were planning any more AGE RPGs. In particular, people wanted a more general fantasy game that wasn't tied to the world of Thedas. We released the *Fantasy AGE Basic Rulebook* in 2015 and that also proved a successful line for us. From there we developed a whole series of AGE games, modifying and adding to the system to better represent different genres and properties. Now, it's become our house system, powering *The Expanse*, *Blue Rose*, *Modern AGE*, *Cthulhu Awakens*, and *Fifth Season* RPGs.

When we started working on the *Fantasy AGE Core Rulebook*, our plan was to make more of a revised rulebook than a new edition. Combine the *Basic Rulebook* and the *Fantasy AGE Companion*, add some new material, and polish it up. Easy, right? Well, no. It was more reminiscent of Hercules trying to defeat the Lernaean Hydra. Cut off one head and two more grow in its place! Last year it became clear that the *Core Rulebook* was more than a revised edition so we officially dubbed it 2nd Edition. We haven't changed the core system (you can, for example, use NPC and monster stats blocks from 1st Edition books without difficulty), but we've expanded the game, added many new options, and tightened up the rules.

The last 15 years have been quite a journey for me, the AGE system, and Green Ronin. I hope the hard work of the creative team translates to fun times on your game table. I'd like to thank everyone who worked to make *Fantasy AGE 2nd Edition* a reality, with particular thanks to Malcolm Sheppard, Steve Kenson, Owen K.C. Stephens, and Ian Lemke for their design and development work. Now the game is yours. Have at it!

Chris Pramas  
March, 2023

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Fantasy AGE*, a roleplaying game that lets you be the hero in your own sword & sorcery adventures. In *Fantasy AGE* you and your friends take on the personas of warriors, mages, councilors, and rogues in a fantastical world and try to gain fame by overcoming sinister foes and deadly challenges. Facing down a murderous ogre in ancient cursed ruins, engaging in a duel of wits with a haughty noble, or uncovering the secrets of lost civilizations are all possible. Your character may win renown or you may die alone in the trackless wilderness. Whatever your fate, your story is your own to tell. In *Fantasy AGE*, you make the choices and try to survive the consequences.

## WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

*Fantasy AGE* is what's known as a tabletop roleplaying game (RPG), so named because you usually play while sitting around a table with your friends (though it's also possible to play online with a virtual tabletop or just using your preferred voice chat option). The action is similar to computer roleplaying games. You will play a character who goes on exciting and dangerous adventures in a fantasy world. The difference is that you do it all with your imagination instead of a computer deciding what you can attempt and how those efforts turn out.

One person takes the role of Game Master (GM). The GM presents the story and acts as a referee. Those remaining are the players. Each player makes a character and roleplays them in the ensuing adventures. This relationship should not be adversarial, the GM and players work together to create an enjoyable experience for everyone. If you don't grasp how this works, don't worry. Keep reading, and by the time you finish the introduction, you should understand the basics of tabletop roleplaying and the *Fantasy AGE* RPG.

## GETTING STARTED

The first thing you need is a group of friends to play with, and one of you must take on the role of Game Master, or GM. While you can play with as small a group as one GM and one player, the game works best with one GM and three to five players. It is possible to play with more players, but that can slow down the pace of the game.

The GM has a key position, so try to make sure that they really want the job. Running a game is fun, but it's a different experience than playing. The second half of this book (starting with **CHAPTER 7: THE GAME MASTER**), explains the GM's role in detail. The GM (and only the GM) should read that part of the book. If you are a player, you should only read the first half of the book (Chapters 1–6).

Once you've settled on a GM, everyone else needs to make characters, known as PCs or Player Characters. In *Fantasy AGE*, your character has the potential to become a great hero, but begins as just another hungry adventurer scrabbling for glory. You do not get to start play as a renowned knight or master mage. Those are positions that must be earned, and that's what playing the game is all about.



## WHAT'S DIFFERENT IN FANTASY AGE 2ND EDITION?

Experienced *Fantasy AGE* players and GMs will be wondering what is different between 1st Edition (the *Basic Rulebook* and its supplements) and 2nd edition. There are many small changes throughout, but here are the notable ones.

- In 1st edition, you could play a mage, rogue, or warrior. Now you have a fourth option, the envoy, whose expertise is social situations and group dynamics.
- Player Characters can now take their first Specialization at level 1 instead of level 4.
- Class advancement has been revised to allow Defense improvements and increased damage output as characters gain levels.
- New ancestry talents and heritage specializations let you further define your character's origins.
- The game now includes conditions, such as Fatigued and Stunned, that standardize certain rules effects. Some of these are called Defeat Conditions. Now, when a character or creature drops to 0 Health, the victor can choose what happens to their opponent. They can be knocked unconscious, captured, rendered helpless, etc., so not every fight is lethal.
- Each class now has its own stunt list, and you gain these stunts individually as you go up in level. Basic stunts are those anyone can use.
- Mages can now "push" a spell on a failed casting roll to successfully cast it anyway, and only lose half their Magic Points should they opt to have the spell fizzle out regardless.
- In talents and specializations, the Journeyman degree is now called Expert, so the three degrees are Novice, Expert, and Master.
- Rules subsystems we developed for other AGE games have been revised for *Fantasy AGE* and offered as options. You can use the Fortune system from *The Expanse* instead of Health, for example. The Churn from *The Expanse* is offered as Peril here, and it's complemented by a new Daring system. There are also optional Horror rules.
- The following talents and specializations have been renamed: Alchemy is now Alchemical Explosives, Arcane Dabbler is now Arcane Disciple, and Totem Warrior is now Aspect Warrior.
- The Drinking focus is now Tolerance. Slings was added as a focus because it's also a new weapon group.

Your character is your primary responsibility as a player in an RPG. This is your alter ego in the fantasy world where your adventures takes place. Over the course of many game sessions, your character grows and changes, but every hero needs a starting point. That is exactly what **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION** provides, walking you through creating not only game stats—the abilities and corresponding numbers that tell you what your character is good at—but also a character concept, starting goals, and ties to other Player Characters. Once play begins, the portrayal and development of your character is all up to you. Playing your character, achieving goals, and navigating the perils of a fantasy world—this is the fun of playing an RPG.

## PLAYING YOUR CHARACTER

Here are some basics on playing tabletop roleplaying games.

### "WHAT DO YOU DO?"

When playing an RPG, that's the question you must ask yourself all the time. The Game Master will describe a situation, framing a scene for one or more of the Player Characters. It is then up to you to decide what your character does and why. You tell the GM what you want to do, as do the other players, and then you all work out what happens. Sometimes, you use dice to resolve actions. Other times, you simply interact with the other players and the characters portrayed by the GM, which are known as Non-Player Characters, or NPCs.

### "WHO ARE YOU?"

This is the question to keep in mind when making decisions. When you create your character, you decide on some traits and goals as a starting point. You can then flesh out your PC, and there are two basic approaches to this. The first is to paint your character in a few broad strokes and then jump right in to playing. The intention here is to come up with details about your character during play, often by using the springboard of the current adventure to create touchstones to your character's past. This is a common storytelling technique and a perfectly valid approach if you don't want to spend a lot of time working on your character before starting play. The second approach is to come up with a lot of details and role-playing ideas before the first session. If you can come to the table with a good idea of who your character is before the first die is rolled, that can help get the game going.

However you approach your character, playing the game helps you refine your ideas. After you have played your character for a while, you should have a strong sense of personality and an intuitive sense of what your character would do in a particular situation. Of course, not all situations present easy choices. It is from difficult choices that tension and drama emerge.

## ADVENTURE, CAMPAIGN, AND SETTING

An adventure is a discrete story and scenario in an RPG. You can think of it as a single novel or an episode of a TV show.



There may be several plot threads, but in the end it tells one story. The difference between a roleplaying adventure and a book or show is that you have authorship. The decisions made by you and your fellow players drive the story to its exciting conclusion.

A campaign is a series of interlinked adventures. If an adventure is a novel or TV show, a campaign is a series or a season. Some adventures may have self-contained plots, while others merge together to tell a larger story. During a campaign, the characters of the adventuring group earn experience points and gain levels. Over time they gain more powers and abilities, face greater challenges, and perhaps gain renown for their deeds. A full *Fantasy AGE* campaign will take characters from levels 1 through 20, and provide hundreds of hours of game-play and entertainment.

The game takes place in a fantasy world, though which one is up to your group. There are many worlds to choose from, or you can have the fun of making up your own. Since the world is where your campaign takes place, it is known in RPG parlance as a “campaign setting” or just setting for short. The GM can find out more about the basic setting included in this book in **CHAPTER 11: BREAKWATER BAY**.

## EXAMPLE OF PLAY

What follows is an example of play with four characters. This should give you an idea of what a game of *Fantasy AGE* is like. You’ll note various points where the example refers to dice rolling and its results. You don’t need to worry about the particulars of that right now. Just follow along with the action and see how the GM uses the rolls to test the skill of the characters.

In this example Malcolm is the Game Master (GM). Kate is playing an elf Rogue named Najah, Nicole is playing a human Warrior named Brigitte, Troy is playing a draak Envoy named Hraz, and Chris is playing a gnome Mage named Varuker.

**MALCOLM (GM):** *You’ve been traveling for several hours under the hot midday sun. The road passes through a small forest and for a few minutes at least you find some respite in the shade the trees provide. As you emerge on the other side of the forest, you see a caravan up ahead. It is not moving, but neither has it set up camp.*

**KATE (ROGUE):** *Do I see any guards around the caravan?*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *Make a Perception (Seeing) test and tell me your result.*

**KATE (ROGUE):** *[Rolls dice] I got a 13.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *Good roll. Your eyes quickly adjust to the sunlight and you scan the caravan. You see many carts and wagons but no people. The only things moving are the draft animals and they seem restless.*

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** *This doesn’t look good. I want to take a closer look.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *Just you, or are you all going?*

**TROY (ENVOY):** *Let’s all go. If this is a trap, better to be together than separated.*

**KATE (ROGUE):** *Why don’t you three go straight up the road and I’ll swing around the right side and approach from there. I’ll try to move quietly, crouched down with my bow out.*

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** *My two-handed axe is at the ready and I’m heading straight up the road.*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *I stay behind the warrior and keep an eye on the woods as we advance. We don’t need any surprises from that direction.*

**TROY (ENVOY):** *And I stay behind the mage, and keep an eye out behind us.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *You approach the caravan and no threats emerge. When you get close, you see the bodies. There are at least six corpses spread out around the carts. They look like a group of draak and dwarves.*

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** *That seems strange.*

**TROY (ENVOY):** *Not really. Stories of draak and dwarves being at odds are greatly overstated. They often work together to buy and sell all over.*

**KATE (ROGUE):** *How did they die? Do I see any arrows sticking from the corpses?*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *Or signs of fire or other magic attacks?*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *You can try to figure that out with a Perception (Seeing) test or an Intelligence (Healing) test.*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *I have Healing, so I’ll try that... but with my famously bad luck I got a total of 9. Not a great roll.*

**KATE (ROGUE):** *I’m better at Perception so I’ll stick with that. [Rolls dice] Ha, I got a 15 this time.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *You approach one of the corpses and look it over. The wounds were not made by weapons. The way the clothing and armor are torn, you’d guess claws. Big claws.*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *Do the corpses smell?*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *Now that you are closer, yes, they do. The hot sun makes it worse by the minute, too.*

**TROY (ENVOY):** *So they’ve been dead for a while, which probably means the attack ended some time ago.*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *I don’t see any creatures with claws in the area, so I’m going to move into the caravan and search for survivors.*

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** *I’m going to climb on one of the carts and use the vantage point to keep an eye on things.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *Roll a Perception (Searching) test, Chris.*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *[Rolls dice] I got a 9. Not a great roll.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *No, not great. You find more bodies but no survivors.*

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** *Maybe some of the merchants ran away. If I watched my friends get torn open like that, I might hoof it.*

**KATE (ROGUE):** *You could be right. I’ll look for tracks. That’s a Perception (Tracking) roll, right?*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *That’s correct.*



**KATE (ROGUE):** *I rolled an 11.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *The tracks are confusing around the caravan. You can see many sets of prints, some dwarf and some from larger bipeds.*

**TROY (ENVOY):** *Bipeds with large claws. I don't like the sound of that.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *You do find one set of dwarf prints leaving the scene though. Whoever it was seems to have been wounded, as there are drops of blood every few feet. The trail leads off the road and back toward the forest.*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *Let's follow it.*

**KATE (ROGUE):** *Agreed. I will lead the way.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *You follow the trail back into the woods. Maybe 30 feet from the edge you find a dwarf under a fallen log. He looks unconscious and wounded, but alive.*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *No time to mess around. I approach the dwarf and cast my Healing Touch spell. I'm using 2 magic points.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *Make your casting roll. As I recall, Heal has a Target Number of 10.*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *It does indeed. [Rolls dice] And I got a 12. [Rolls dice again] He gets back 7 Health from the spell.*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *You touch the prone dwarf and the healing magic spreads from your hands. He's lost a lot of blood but the spell revitalizes him and he wakes up with a start.*

**TROY (ENVOY):** *I move up to stand by our mage, and say "Easy, friend. You're safe now."*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *The dwarf relaxes a bit and regards the four of you. "Thank you for helping me. Where are the rest of my kin? Or our guards?"*

**KATE (ROGUE):** *You are the only one we've found alive I'm afraid.*

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** *Can you tell us what happened?*

**MALCOLM (GM):** *"It was the damn caravan master," says the dwarf. "He thought we could save time if we pulled up camp in the middle of the night. I argued with him but he wouldn't listen. I was worried when we passed into those woods but thought we were all right once we made it through. Then they came at us from the shadows—big brutes with claws as big as my head. After I saw three of the guards go down, I made a run for it. One of them caught me in the shoulder with a claw but I kept running. I made it to the woods and hid. After some time the screams and sounds of battle faded, then I passed out. Next thing I saw was you."*

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** *The size makes me think ogres but that doesn't seem quite right.*

**CHRIS (MAGE):** *No, it doesn't. Ogres are not stealthy and they usually attack with weapons, not claws.*

**TROY (ENVOY):** *Monstrous bears, perhaps? But they wouldn't normally leave bipedal tracks. We've got a mystery on our hands.*

**KATE (ROGUE):** *As usual! So much for a sunny day of easy travel.*

## THE GROUP DYNAMIC

Much of this book is focused on teaching you the rules and how to make a character. It is important to remember that roleplaying is a group activity. There are two aspects to this: the adventuring group and the player group.

Your character is one member of the adventuring group (also known as a party). Each character in the group has individual goals, but there are also larger group goals. The characters may have their disagreements and even feuds, but for the game to go on they must remain together. The adventures themselves often assure this by their plot and structure, but a good group dynamic can help. This can start during character creation when everyone is settling on what they want to play. It's a smart idea, for example, to make sure you have at least one character of each class in the group. When working out ties and goals amongst the PCs, you can build in reasons for the characters to adventure together.

The people gaming with you make up the player group and that too has a dynamic. You and your friends are going to be spending a lot of time together, so you want a group of people who fundamentally get along. Roleplaying is meant to be fun for everyone, so be aware of tension around the table. Some players try to make the game all about them, hogging the spotlight and trying to insert themselves in every scene. Don't act that way; everyone deserves a chance to shine, so be ready to take a step back when someone has a good idea or is pursuing something important for their character.

If a game session didn't go well for some reason, talk about it afterwards. It won't do any good if everyone goes home to stew. Try to figure out where things went wrong and see if you can come up with solutions, so it doesn't happen again.

A common problem is a player who is unhappy with their character. Maybe the character doesn't fit into the group well, or maybe the player finds another class preferable after some play experience. This doesn't have to be a problem. It's perfectly fine for a player to make a new character of the same level and retire the old character. It is preferable to do that than to make a player continue to play a character they aren't having fun with.

## BASIC GAME CONCEPTS

Before you delve into the rest of the book, here's a brief overview of the basic concepts of the game. You'll learn more about all of these things as you read on.

## CHARACTERS

In the *Fantasy AGE* RPG you make a character who may be very much like you, or could be extremely different. In the creation process, you make choices that help define who and what that character is. You can play a human, or someone with a very different ancestry, such as draak, dwarf, elf, gnome, goblin, halfling, orc, or wildfolk. Your other most important choice is to pick one of four classes: Envoy, Mage, Rogue, or Warrior. The nine easy steps for creating a character are detailed on page 10, in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**.



## THE ADVENTURE GAME ENGINE

*Fantasy AGE's* rules system is known as the Adventure Game Engine (or AGE). It was originally designed for the *Dragon Age* RPG, also by Green Ronin Publishing. The AGE System now includes the multi-genre Modern AGE roleplaying game, *Blue Rose: The AGE Roleplaying Game of Romantic Fantasy*, the Mythos horror RPG *Cthulhu Awakens*, *The Expanse* roleplaying game, based on the novels by James S. A. Corey, and the *Fifth Season* RPG, based on the novels by N.K. Jemisin. If you learn *Fantasy AGE*, you can easily learn other AGE games, and even transfer rules and character options between them.



Your class defines the core of your character and determines the powers at your command. Your character begins at level 1 as an inexperienced adventurer. By surviving encounters and overcoming challenges, your PC gains experience points and rises in level. Your character may eventually make it to level 20 and become one of the mightiest heroes of the campaign setting. It won't be easy, though.

### ABILITIES

Your character has nine abilities, such as Intelligence and Strength, and each one has a numeric rating, with 1 being average. When your character wants to do something, the GM may call for an ability test. This is a dice roll to determine success or failure, and it's the most common roll in the game. To make an ability test, you simply roll three six-sided dice (3d6), add the results together, and add the appropriate ability. This generates a test result, which you want to be as high as possible.

$$\text{TEST RESULT} = 3\text{D}6 + \text{ABILITY}$$

You may have to apply other bonuses or penalties, most commonly ability focuses that represent areas of special expertise. Once you determine your test result, the GM will let you know if it's a success or a failure and what happens.

Your character also has a Health rating. When damage is inflicted, this reduces Health. If it reaches 0, your character may die.

### STUNTS

In an encounter, your character can perform stunts. When doubles are rolled on a successful attack roll or ability test, this generates "stunt points." You can then use these points to pull off a number of special maneuvers or actions. Stunts are common enough to help keep combat dynamic and fun. There are also exploration stunts, which impact groups traveling (especially through the unknown, ruins, or wilderness); social stunts, which come into play when interacting primarily through conversation and discussion; and spell stunts, which let Mages enhance their spells. Many stunts are available to any character, while other stunts are available for characters to select from their character class as they gain levels.

### GAME DICE

*Fantasy AGE* only uses one type of dice: the six-sided die, also known as the d6. This is the most common die and it can be found in many classic boardgames if you need to scrounge for some. In general, dice are rolled four different ways in *Fantasy AGE*:

- **1d3:** Sometimes you need to generate a number from 1–3. In that case you roll a d6 but halve the result, so a roll of 1–2 = 1, a roll of 3–4 = 2, and a roll of 5–6 = 3.
- **1d6:** You roll a single die and simply read the result. Sometimes there is a modifier attached, such as "1d6 + 3." In that case, just add the modifier to the die roll. If you rolled a 2, for example, you'd add the modifier of 3 to get a result of 5.
- **2d6:** As above, but you roll two dice and add them together. If you rolled a 3 and a 6, for example, your result would be 9.
- **3d6:** As above, but you roll three dice and add them together. If you are making an ability test, you must ensure that two of the dice are one color and the third a different color. That third die is known as the Stunt Die, and it's important. The result of the Stunt Die can determine your level of success and allow you to perform stunts.

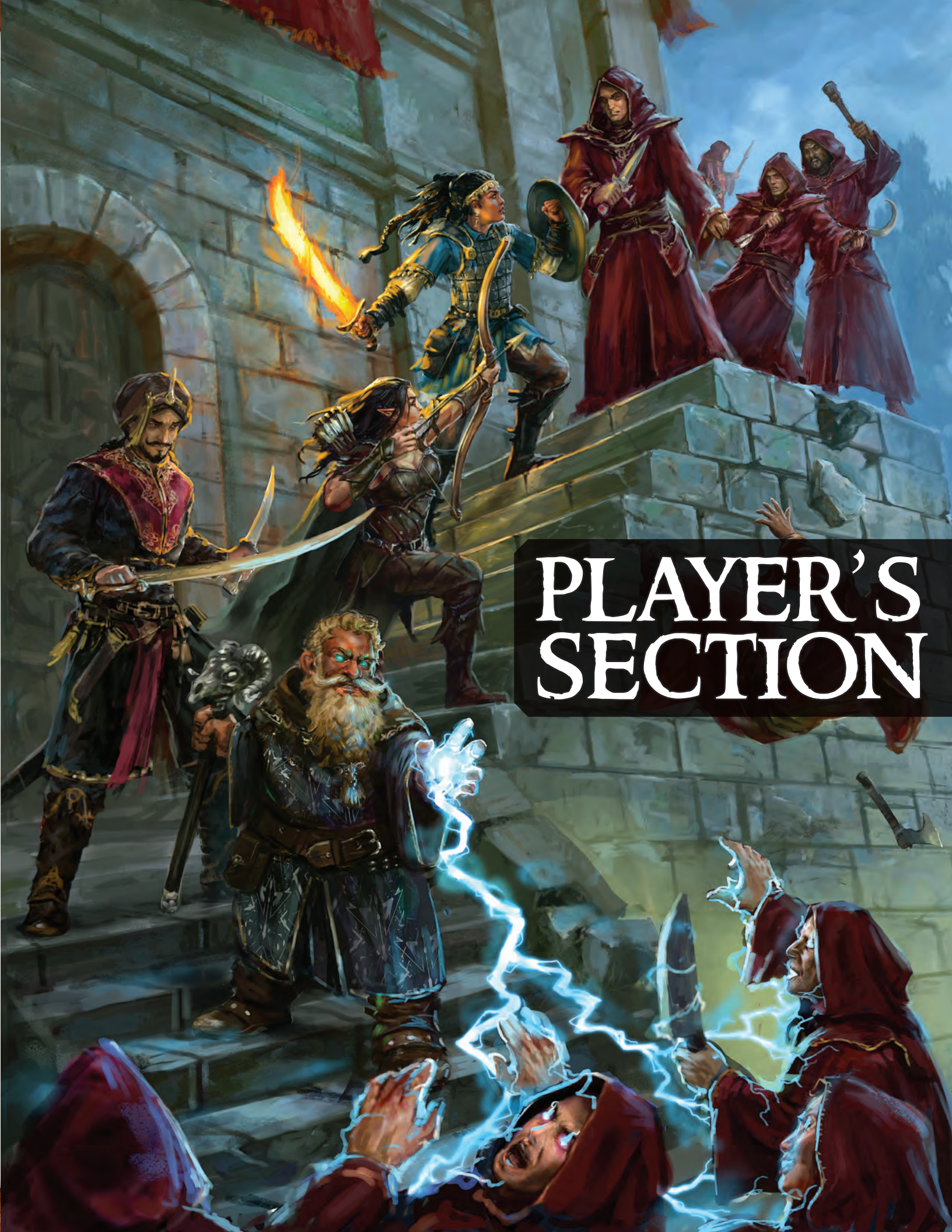
### WHERE NEXT?

If you are a player, CHAPTERS 1–6 are for you. They provide the key information you need to know about the game. When you are ready to make a character, go to CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION. That will explain the process and get you going. If you are the Game Master, you should familiarize yourself with these chapters as well, as they contain the core rules of the game. You should then move on to CHAPTERS 7–12. They explain your unique and important role in a tabletop RPG and give you valuable advice and resources.

You are now ready to enter the world of *Fantasy AGE*. Game on and may fate protect you!

## ADVENTURE AWAITS!





# PLAYER'S SECTION





# I: CHARACTER CREATION

To play in a roleplaying game, you must first make a character. This is your alter ego in *Fantasy AGE*, the persona you'll be taking on as you experience exciting and perilous adventures. Since your character is the focus of your play experience, making the right character for you is paramount. If you end up with a character you find unappealing or who isn't fun to play, you won't enjoy playing. So don't be afraid to take the time to put some real thought into creating your character. This chapter explains that process and provides examples so you can see how it's done. When you're finished, you'll have a character ready to play.

## YOUR ADVENTURES BEGIN HERE

The first time you read this chapter, you'll come across rules and terms you don't yet understand but you needn't worry. You'll learn everything you need to know as you work your way through the process, and there is a useful Glossary in the back of the book. Make sure you at least skim through the rest of the **Player's Section**, particularly **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES** and **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**. This will give you an idea of how the game system works and helps to define your character.

Before you start making a character, you need a character sheet. This is a record of all your relevant information, and you'll use it to keep track of your character's various abilities, powers, equipment, and more. You'll find a blank character sheet in the back of this book. You can also download a PDF version from [greenronin.com](http://greenronin.com).

## MAKING A CHARACTER IN 9 EASY STEPS

Making a *Fantasy AGE* character is a straightforward process that you can complete in nine easy steps. Those are listed here, and the rest of the chapter covers each step, in order.

1. **Create a character concept.** This is a rough idea of the sort of character you'd like to play. See the section following.
2. **Determine abilities.** These are your character's core physical and mental attributes. See page 11.
3. **Choose an ancestry.** Your character can be a draak, dwarf, elf, gnome, goblin, halfling, human, orc, or wild-folk. See page 12.
4. **Determine social class and background.** Your background is what you did before becoming an adventurer. See page 24.
5. **Choose a class.** This is your character's calling in life. You can choose Envoy, Mage, Rogue, or Warrior. See page 28.
6. **Pick equipment.** Your character needs gear before their adventures begin. See page 38.
7. **Calculate Defense and Speed.** Both are important in combat encounters. See page 38.
8. **Pick a name.** Every hero needs a good name! See page 39.
9. **Choose goals and character ties.** They help give your character personality. See page 39.



## STEP 1

# CHARACTER CONCEPT

Before you sit down to make a character, you should learn a little bit about the setting you'll be playing in. *Fantasy AGE* can be used with a wide variety of settings, so talk to your GM to find out where your game will be set. Once you know some basic information about the world, you can start thinking about what kind of character you want to play. You'll be making the three most important choices—your ancestry, background, and class—in steps 3 to 5 of character creation, but before you get there it's a good idea to come up with a basic character concept. This can be quite broad to start; the process of character creation will help you focus it.

When coming up with a character concept, remember that one of the conceits of the game is that your character begins as an unknown and struggling adventurer. You don't start play as the crown prince or an archmage. You must earn your honors through deeds, and you can be sure there'll be a price. So, start thinking about who your character is and how they became an adventurer. Here are some example character concepts:

- Guttersnipe raised on the streets who'll do anything to survive.
- Free spirit who fled from an arranged marriage for a life of adventure.
- Naïve farmer who wants to travel farther than 5 miles from where they were born.
- Child of a disgraced knight who wants to return honor to the family name.
- Cynical mercenary who trusts little but coin.
- A seeker of forbidden knowledge who often acts before thinking.
- An artist seeking inspiration in dark and dangerous places.
- A refugee from a village that was sacked and destroyed.
- A child of the forest more comfortable around animals than people.
- Scion of a merchant family who wants more from life than ledger books.
- A gambler who thrives on risk and danger.
- A soldier who has been scarred by the horrors of war.
- A cloistered monk who has seen little beyond the temple walls.
- A refugee from a faraway country seeking a new life.

### EXAMPLE

*Nicole and her friends are starting a Fantasy AGE campaign, so she must make a character. After talking over the setting with the group, Nicole decides that the despotic king executed her character's parents on politically motivated, trumped-up charges. Her character grew up hard in a church-run orphanage, and as an adult she yearns for justice and vengeance in equal measure.*

## STEP 2

# ABILITIES

Your character is defined by nine abilities: Accuracy, Communication, Constitution, Dexterity, Fighting, Intelligence, Perception, Strength, and Willpower. Taken together, these abilities map out your character's strengths and weaknesses. You select abilities by assigning advancements to them, resulting in each one having a numeric rating ranging from -2 to 4. A -2 is quite awful while a 4 is outstanding; a 1 is average. The higher the ability, the better. During play, abilities can increase as you gain experience and learn how to more effectively harness your natural aptitudes.

Abilities are a key component of the game and you'll use them frequently. You'll find it useful to understand the nature of each ability, so descriptions follow.

- **Accuracy** represents your character's physical precision and skill with finesse and ranged weapons, such as bows and rapiers.
- **Communication** covers your character's social skills, personal interactions, and ability to deal with others.
- **Constitution** is your character's fortitude and resistance to harm.
- **Dexterity** encompasses your character's agility, hand-eye coordination, and quickness.
- **Fighting** is your character's skill at combat with heavier weapons, such as axes and spears.
- **Intelligence** is a measure of your character's smarts, knowledge, and education.
- **Perception** covers all the senses and the ability to interpret sensory information.
- **Strength** is your character's ability to generate raw physical force.
- **Willpower** encompasses mental toughness, discipline, and confidence.

## DETERMINING ABILITIES

There are a couple of different ways you can go about determining your character's starting abilities.

### SUGGESTED METHOD

## CHOOSING ADVANCES

You can assign your ability ratings to help your character match your concept. Your character's ability ratings start at 0 and you get 13 advancements to increase them. Each advancement you spend raises an ability rating by 1, but no ability rating can be greater than 3. You must spend all 13 advancements. Ancestries and backgrounds then modify these starting ratings as normal.

You can choose to lower one or more ability ratings below 0 if you wish, as long as it matches your character concept. However, this does not grant you any extra advancements to raise other ability ratings. Consequently, most players don't choose this option.



## DETERMINING ABILITIES

3D6	STARTING ABILITY	3D6	STARTING ABILITY	3D6	STARTING ABILITY
3	-2	8	0	14	2
4	-1	9	1	15	3
5	-1	10	1	16	3
6	0	11	1	17	3
7	0	12	2	18	4
		13	2		

## ALTERNATE METHOD

### ROLLING ABILITY RATINGS

Some players prefer to have their abilities determined randomly. This can remove some required decision-making, speed character building along, and feel more organic than every character having the same number of advancements. However, it also can produce characters with wildly different levels of effectiveness. Players should check with their GM to see if rolling for ability ratings is allowed.

Using this method, you roll dice to determine your starting abilities. You will need three 6-sided dice (3d6). Roll all three and add them together to get a result. If you rolled 3, 4, and 6, for example, your result would be 13 (3 + 4 + 6 = 13).

You need to make nine of these rolls all together, one per ability on your character sheet. Consult the **Determining Abilities** table to determine your starting ability. A roll of 11 on the chart, for example, means the ability's starting rating is 1. Continue this process until all nine abilities have starting ratings.

Then, total all your ability ratings. If that total is less than 13, increase a number of ability ratings equal to the shortfall by 1 in any order you wish, until the sum total of all your ability ratings is 13. When you are done, you may swap any two of the abilities. This gives you a chance to reduce some of the randomness and customize your abilities a little.

Note that the **Determining Abilities** table is biased toward creating characters with heroic abilities—1 or higher in a world where the average person has a rating of 0. Remember, too, that each ability rating is the number ranging from -2 to 4 in the **Starting Ability** column—don't confuse it for the 3d6 roll of 3 to 18, which can be ignored as soon as you roll to discover each rating.

## EXAMPLE

*Nicole must now roll for her character's abilities. She rolls 3d6 and gets a 10. Looking at the character sheet, Nicole sees this gives her character a starting rating of 1 on her first ability (Accuracy). She makes 8 more dice rolls, getting 7, 13, 10, 13, 8, 14, 13, and 16. Her character's starting abilities are thus Accuracy 1, Communication 0, Constitution 2, Dexterity 1, Fighting 2, Intelligence 0, Perception 2, Strength 2, and Willpower 3. She then has the option of switching two of her ratings. Nicole decides to swap Strength and Willpower, so she ends up with a Strength 3 and Willpower 2.*

## ABILITY FOCUSES

A focus is an area of expertise within the larger ability. While, for example, Intelligence determines how smart your character is, a Heraldry focus indicates a special knowledge of coats of arms and royal families. In game system terms, if you have a focus, your ability is effectively 2 higher than normal when working within that specialty. This is explained in greater detail in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**. At level 11 and up the +2 bonus given by a focus may increase further, but you don't need to worry about that during character creation.

Ability focuses (or focuses for short) are one of the ways to make your character unique. There may be another Warrior in your adventuring party, but your focuses can be completely different. You'll pick those focuses later in the character creation process. And your character gains them through backgrounds, classes (including level advancement within classes), and talents. For more information about ability focuses, see **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**.

*Fantasy AGE* includes the following focuses. You may find new focuses in various AGE setting books.

### ACCURACY FOCUSES

Arcane Blast, Black Powder, Bows, Brawling, Dueling, Grenades, Light Blades, Staves, Slings.

### COMMUNICATION FOCUSES

Animal Handling, Bargaining, Deception, Disguise, Etiquette, Gambling, Investigation, Leadership, Performance, Persuasion, Seduction.

### CONSTITUTION FOCUSES

Rowing, Running, Stamina, Swimming, Tolerance.

### DEXTERITY FOCUSES

Acrobatics, Calligraphy, Crafting, Initiative, Legerdemain, Lock Picking, Riding, Sailing, Stealth, Traps.

### FIGHTING FOCUSES

Axes, Bludgeons, Heavy Blades, Lances, Polearms, Spears.

### INTELLIGENCE FOCUSES

Arcana (see **CHAPTER 5: MAGIC**), Arcane Lore, Brewing, Cartography, Cryptography, Cultural Lore, Engineering, Evaluation, Healing, Heraldry, Historical Lore, Military Lore, Musical Lore, Natural Lore, Navigation, Religious Lore, Research, Thieves' Lore, Writing.

### PERCEPTION FOCUSES

Empathy, Hearing, Searching, Seeing, Smelling, Tasting, Touching, Tracking.

### STRENGTH FOCUSES

Climbing, Driving, Intimidation, Jumping, Might, Smithing.

### WILLPOWER FOCUSES

Courage, Faith, Morale, Self-Discipline.



## ANCESTRY

You can choose from nine ancestries in *Fantasy AGE*: draak, dwarf, elf, gnome, goblin, halfling, human, orc, and wildfolk. In the default campaign world of *Fantasy AGE* all these ancestries are generally seen as equal, though various nations may be suspicious of foreigners of any ancestry, and specific groups and individuals may have different prejudices. If your GM is using a different campaign setting your choice may have important implications, so check with your GM if you have any questions.

This rulebook covers a set of classic fantasy ancestries. Your campaign setting may have some additional options, and your GM will let you know if that's the case. In addition, some characters may have additional influences represented by the Heritage Specializations (Divine Heritage, Fey Heritage, and Infernal Heritage) in CHAPTER 3 CHARACTER OPTIONS, in addition to their ancestry.

## ANCESTRY BENEFITS

Ancestry has concrete effects on your developing character. Your choice of ancestry will modify one or more of your abilities, give one or more focuses, determine the languages your character speaks, reads, and writes, and possibly provide other benefits. Once you decide on your ancestry, you'll get certain benefits automatically, plus two more selected from an ancestry-specific table. Each ancestry also possesses characteristics that can be acquired through training, and these are described in CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS.

Possible benefits include:

- **FOCUS:** You gain an ability focus.
- **SPECIAL QUALITY:** You gain some special benefit, such as a special stunt you can use, a bonus to a secondary character statistic like Speed, or some other quality whose rules are described when it appears. Dark Sight is an example of a special quality.
- **TALENT:** Gain a degree in a talent, starting with Novice degree. This is a rare ancestry benefit; most talent degrees come from your class and when you gain levels.
- **WEAPON GROUP:** Your character becomes proficient in a weapon group. If they would become proficient in the weapon group again, this usually becomes an ability focus in the weapon group instead.

### EXAMPLE

*Nicole considers the various ancestries but decides to stick with a human for her character. This allows her to choose between two focuses: Dexterity (Riding) or Constitution (Swimming). She decides equestrian lessons were unlikely at the orphanage, so goes for Swimming. She then notes basic Speed and that her character speaks and reads the Common Tongue. She then picks two benefits off the Human table and picks the focus Constitution (Stamina) and focus Accuracy (Brawling). It was a hard knock life at that orphanage.*

## MIXED ANCESTRY CHARACTERS

Some campaign settings include mixed ancestry characters (like half-elves, to pick a classic example). The *Fantasy AGE* rules allow for any two ancestries to be mixed. They also assume a campaign might include forms of mixed ancestry that don't require procreation, such as a human raised by dwarf parents learning elements of dwarf culture, or an elf who is mystically initiated into wildfolk society. However, exactly which ancestries may mix, and how, may vary depending on the setting, so talk to your GM about what you'd like to do before starting.

Creating a character of mixed ancestry is easy. First, decide which ancestry in the character's heritage is dominant. Use that ancestry's basic rules with one exception: instead of choosing two benefits on your dominant ancestry's Benefits table, you pick one benefit from your dominant ancestry, and one from the Benefits table of your character's other ancestry. You may also choose which ancestry you count as when selecting talents and specializations. Once this choice is made, it cannot be changed. Characters with roots in more than two ancestries may well exist in your campaign, but unless your Game Master develops new rules to handle such situations, only two express themselves through game statistics.

### EXAMPLE

*Kate wants to play a character whose parents were an elf and a human. She decides her character's elven ancestry is dominant. While making her character, she uses the elf rules. However, she only picks one benefit off the elf Benefits table. Her second benefit is off the human Benefits table, to represent her character's human ancestry. She selects **Weapon Group: Bows** from the elf table and **Focus: Constitution (Stamina)** from the human table.*

Similarly, with your GM's approval, you can change any languages granted by ancestry to represent a different influence growing up. However, in most campaigns, everyone is required to start with the Common Tongue to make communication between characters easier.





# DRAAK

Standing five to seven feet tall, with builds ranging from slender and sinuous to broad-backed magnificence (it isn't uncommon to meet individuals weighing 500 pounds), draak are humanoid dragons. Like their kin, they bear snouted heads, piercing eyes, and scales the color of fire, liquid gold, polished onyx, or any other color ever seen on a dragon's hide.

Confident and forceful, draak make excellent Warriors and Mages, especially since, unlike their larger kin, they're commonly driven by wanderlust and ambition. Outsiders sometimes call the draak "drakes" along with a host of other smaller dragon-like creatures, but draak view the term with anything from irritation to amusement. Nevertheless, the "corsair drakes" who raid the seas just beyond the docks of Breakwater Bay and Freeport represent a classic draak enterprise, combining a thirst for adventure with a draconic love of wealth.

There are almost as many stories about the origins of the draak as there are draak themselves—they love to tell epic creation myths that foreshadow the historical and prophesied glories of their people. In all the stories, draak are mighty Warriors

and workers of magic, and these claims, at least, are no exaggeration: when they pursue the arts of war and sorcery they often unlock legendary might. Between tales of the draak and their known aptitudes, it is no surprise communities variously revere or fear them. A draak might defend another peoples' settlement for a human lifetime, or might be known as a danger across generations, immortalized in epic tragedies.

## DRAAK NAMES

**FEMININE NAMES:** Azzoria, Ellanaraz, Kolra, Nothka, Taneen, Sharlarrak, Ulrua

**MASCULINE NAMES:** Braal, Charrax, Flagrath, Garkath, Morgarro, Rastilak, Zarrian

**FAMILY NAMES:** Brightflame, Darktide, Lightningscorch, Frostfire, Stonescale, Whirlingdeath

## PLAYING A DRAAK

If you want to play a draak, modify your character as follows:

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: Strength (Intimidation) or Willpower (Self-Discipline).
- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.
- Your Speed is equal to 10 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Draak and the Common Tongue.
- Select two additional benefits from the **Draak** table. Selecting an ability increase counts as both your benefits. Alternatively, the GM may allow you to roll twice to gain two random benefits (roll 2d6 and add them together).



DRAAK	
BENEFIT	2d6
<b>ABILITY BONUS:</b> +1 Constitution	2
<b>ARMORED:</b> Your Armor Rating is increased by 2	3–4
<b>FOCUS:</b> Constitution (Stamina)	5
<b>MAGICAL RESISTANCE:</b> Choose one ability focus from among Constitution (Stamina), Intelligence (Arcane Lore), or Willpower (Self-Discipline). You may make tests using this ability + focus instead of the usual test to resist or reduce the effects of a spell. Once you choose the type of test, it cannot be changed later.	6
<b>ABILITY BONUS:</b> +1 Intelligence	7–8
<b>ANCESTRY STUNT — FLAME BREATH:</b> You may spend 4 stunt points to immediately cast the novice Fire Arcana spell <i>flame blast</i> (see CHAPTER 5: MAGIC) as a free action.	9
<b>FOCUS:</b> Intelligence (Research)	10
<b>ABILITY BONUS:</b> +1 Willpower	11
<b>ABILITY BONUS:</b> +1 Strength	12



# DWARF

Most stories about the origins of dwarves are associated with stone, metal, and the deep places of the world. They say dwarves were carved from the stones of the mountains and hills by the gods, or sprang from great crystal caves or geodes in the depths, or were forged upon a divine anvil, providing their great endurance and kinship with metalwork.

Dwarves are known for their skill at arms and their talent as miners and builders. They call the hills, mountains, and underground cities home, but many dwarves are wanderers or merchants, responsible for bringing both trade and news back to their holdfasts. Dwarven enclaves are also common in many cities not built or controlled by dwarves.

Descendants of other ancestries often view dwarves as courageous and stalwart at best, or greedy and taciturn at worst. While not xenophobic, many dwarven settlements have a culture that can be gruff and exclusionary toward non-dwarves. However, once a dwarf considers someone a friend, they are loyal and kind forever after. Similarly, a dwarf who's been betrayed has a long memory, and will bear that grudge for centuries.

It's common for dwarves to be organized into clans of varying sizes, which are connected by a web of alliances to and rivalries with numerous other groups. Among these clans, the amount of responsibility an individual dwarf holds depends entirely on their standing. A young, but trustworthy dwarf could hold significantly more power than an older, more experienced family member who's proven unreliable.

Not as small as halflings, nor as tall as humans, adult dwarves range in height from four to five feet, but are generally stocky and solidly built. Dwarves are famous for their beards, which they can grow long and thick, and may be worn plaited, braided, in tails, or any number of other styles. Dwarves live two or three times as long as humans and remain vital and strong until the see their deathbeds.

## DWARF NAMES

**FEMININE NAMES:** Ailine, Dara, Kalin, Klara, Mora, Telka, Ulma

**MASCULINE NAMES:** Bodag, Crag, Doffin, Hador, Gurt, Thorik, Warrik

**CLAN NAMES:** Bronzeblade, Highcliff, Ironshield, Rockhammer, Steelhelm, Stonebones

## PLAYING A DWARF

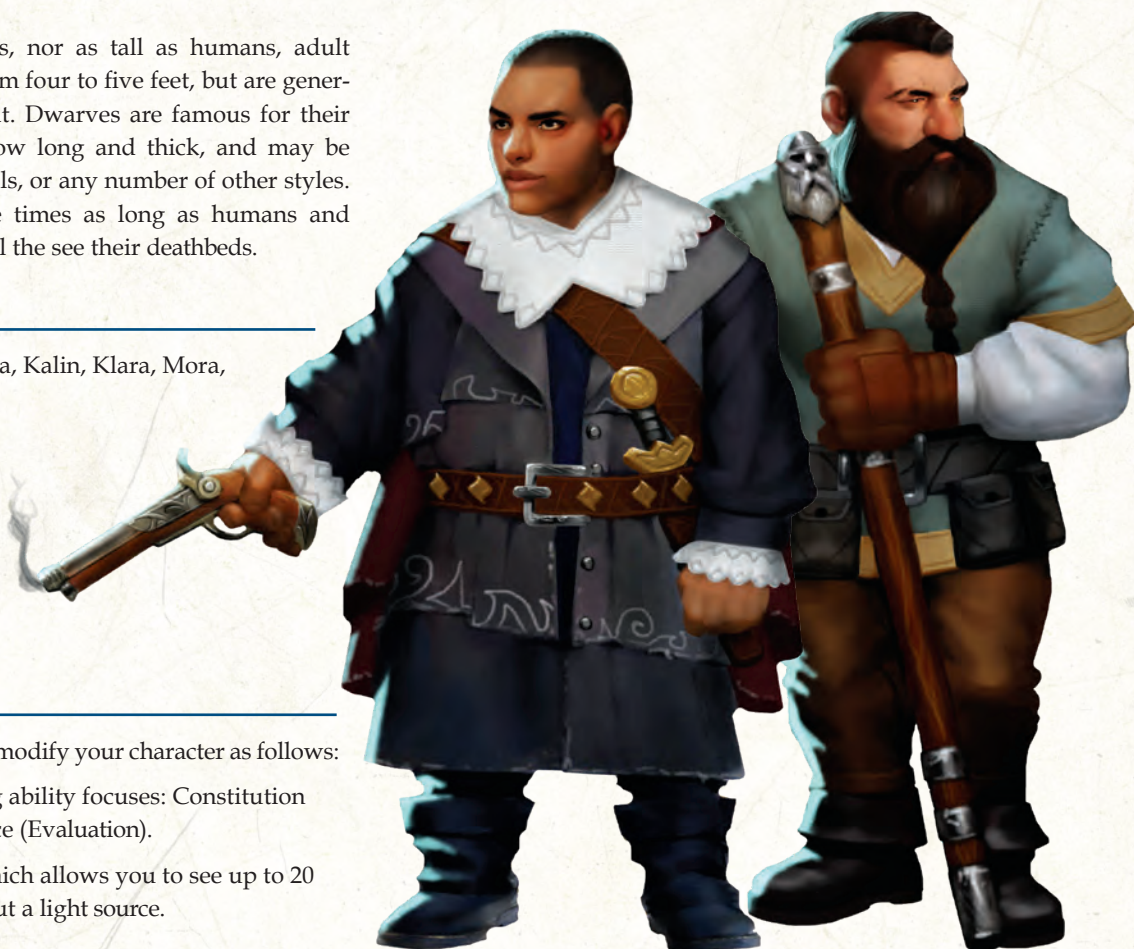
If you want to play a dwarf, modify your character as follows:

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: Constitution (Tolerance) or Intelligence (Evaluation).
- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.

- Your Speed is equal to 8 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Dwarven and the Common Tongue.
- Select two additional benefits from the **Dwarf** table. Selecting an ability increase counts as both benefits. Alternatively, the GM may allow you to roll twice to gain two random benefits (roll 2d6 and add them together).

DWARF	
BENEFIT	2D6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Willpower	2
FOCUS: Intelligence (Historical Lore)	3–4
STOUT: Your Speed is not reduced by armor penalties.	5
WEAPON GROUP: Axes*	6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Fighting	7–8
FOCUS: Strength (Smithing)	9
FOCUS: Intelligence (Engineering)	10
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Constitution	11
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Strength	12

\* If the class you choose provides this already, you can take the focus Fighting (Axes) instead.





# ELF

Elves are graceful and perceptive people with intrinsic connections to the natural world. Heirs to ancient magical traditions, they make consummate hunters and scouts as well, combining agility and subtle sorcery to great effect. They favor woodlands, rainforests, and jungles, constructing their dwellings and cities in and amongst the trees, sometimes high off the ground. Some branches of elvenkind leave the forests behind for mighty stone cities or life on the seas.

Elves, inspired by the forces of nature, are a mercurial group, changing attitude and course of action like the wind shifts direction. This often takes them far from home, as they explore the world beyond their native lands. Elves embrace new experiences, be it people from unknown cultures or the undiscovered islands of an uncharted sea. They are open and friendly, but it's often difficult to tell if they're being sincere or sarcastic. Regardless, most elves are brave and helpful, often

coming to the aid of those who don't know as much as they do about surviving in the wild.

Most commonly, elves range in height from five to six feet with a slight frame. They are particularly long-lived, and their leaders are usually selected for their age and wisdom.

## ELF NAMES

**FEMININE NAMES:** Alowar, Celemor, Elowen, Faerenel, Hereal, Lanathiel

**MASCULINE NAMES:** Alagolin, Effolond, Kyriel, Larrendir, Melloran, Serren

**FAMILY NAMES:** Andurarl, Arvanor, Derendil, Ellendi, Kell-ovan, Talloran

## PLAYING AN ELF

If you choose to play an elf, modify your character as follows:

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: Intelligence (Natural Lore) or Perception (Seeing).
- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.
- Your Speed is equal to 12 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Elven and the Common Tongue.
- Select two additional benefits from the **Elf** table. Selecting an ability increase counts as both your benefits. Alternatively, the GM may allow you to roll twice to gain two random benefits (roll 2d6 and add them together).



ELF	
BENEFIT	2D6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Communication	2
FOCUS: Intelligence (Cultural Lore)	3-4
FOCUS: Perception (Hearing)	5
WEAPON GROUP: Bows*	6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Accuracy	7-8
FOCUS: Dexterity (Initiative)	9
ANCESTRY STUNT—KEEN INSTINCTS: Select one Exploration Stunt (see CHAPTER 6: STUNTS). You can perform this stunt for one fewer stunt points than normal (minimum 1 stunt point).	10
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Dexterity	11
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Perception	12

\* If the class you choose provides this already, you can take the focus Accuracy (Bows) instead.



# GNOME

Gregarious and clever, gnomes have a natural ability to easily visualize complex shapes and systems. This encourages many of them to become builders, tinkers, and engineers. They tend to expand or repair any system they encounter, whether they're planning extensions of their warren-like homes, fixing broken contraptions, or negotiating multiparty alliances and deals. Like dwarves, they are widely considered to have a particular love of gold and gems, but they have less of a reputation as miners or smiths. Instead, gnomes often trade for the metals and jewels they desire as a pragmatic means of transporting wealth in small, easily-concealed forms.

Gnomes are known for their keen business acumen. Trade and finance are simply another set of systems for them to master and improve. Gnomes also have magic in their blood, and their arcane power has helped them stand up to more physically imposing foes on countless occasions. For this reason, Mages are always welcome in gnomish settlements and caravans.

Most gnome cities are underground complexes, though some communities prefer to live in wooded hills. Other gnomes take to the road, where they live in wagons outfitted with all the comforts of home (and a few traps to keep thieves at bay). Whether on the road or in a settlement, gnomes defer to the wisest of their community for leadership and guidance. The gnomish knack for speaking with animals makes both the local wild creatures and various domestic pets into watchful allies of gnome communities. More than one would-be attacker has been surprised to find gnomes forewarned and ready for them.

Gnomes have large eyes, big heads, and knobby fingers. Their facial features are often proportioned differently than humans or dwarves, with unusually bulbous or tiny noses, long, thick, pointed, or rounded ears, and sloping chins or heavily jutting jawlines all equally common and seen as equally pleasing to gnomish eyes. They stand only three to four feet tall and are slight compared to their dwarf cousins. Gnomes live longer than dwarves, and about three and a half or four times as long as humans.

## GNOME NAMES

**FEMININE NAMES:** Alyce, Emma, Flora, Gale, Muriel, Ruby

**MASCULINE NAMES:** Cog, Flinder, Garret, Hoster, Weldon, Yost

**FAMILY NAMES:** Gemspinner, Goldwarren, Minder, Rocktapper, Trundle, Underhill

## PLAYING A GNOME

If you choose to play a gnome, modify your character as follows:

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: Accuracy (Arcane Blast) or Constitution (Stamina).

- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.
- Your Speed is equal to 8 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Gnomish and the Common Tongue.
- Select two additional benefits from the **Gnome** table. Selecting an ability increase counts as both your benefits. Alternatively, the GM may allow you to roll twice to gain two random benefits (roll 2d6 and add them together).

GNOME	
BENEFIT	2D6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Constitution	2
FOCUS: Dexterity (Traps)	3-4
ANIMAL SPEECH: Select one type of animal (avians, canines, felines, etc.). You can speak to such animals as if you had cast <i>beast speech</i> from the Beast Arcana (see CHAPTER 5: MAGIC)	5
FOCUS: Perception (Hearing)	6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Willpower	7-8
FOCUS: Intelligence (Arcane Lore)	9
FOCUS: Communication (Bargaining)	10
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Dexterity	11
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Intelligence	12





# GOBLIN

Goblins are small, quick, curious, and all too often seen as pests rather than people. While some goblin communities consider raiding neighbors and waylaying travelers as legitimate means of gaining extra resources, most are no more likely to feud with other civilized people than a typical dwarf or human ... which may not be saying much. Goblins are less concerned with planning in advance or carefully following rules than individual freedoms, enjoying new experiences, and self-sufficiency, which often puts them at odds with more restrictive groups and societies. Goblins have also learned that some members of other ancestries are willing to kill goblins on sight, making them slow to trust, quick to depend on stealth, and rarely willing to give anyone the benefit of the doubt.

The myths and legends of most outsiders claim goblins were made to plague and pester other peoples, but the goblins themselves tell how their ancestors came into the world to trick the foolish and bring down the arrogant and self-assured who underestimated those they considered less than themselves. Great goblin heroes of legend are cunning and quick, and know how to turn their foes' strengths in their own favor, or at least those are the stories they tell, and which goblins tell about them.

Goblins prefer to live in natural settings, camouflaging their towns and sprawling multiple-village complexes so

they're hard to pick out from the trees of a forest, walls of an existing cave system, or rock of a mountain pass or alley wall. Borders are often vague at best, as befits their strong sense of individuality.

Goblins have large heads and larger ears, big mouths, lean limbs, and skin color that may be greenish, tan, brown, or blue. They are between three and three-and-a-half feet tall, with a few exceptionally lanky individuals towering above their kin at up to four-and-a-half feet. They typically have slightly reduced lifespans compared to humans, though this may have more to do with the hardships goblins endure than any inherited traits.

## GOBLIN NAMES

**FEMININE NAMES:** Anik, Curf, Fettle, Mas, Quath, Uthy

**MASCULINE NAMES:** Bofle, Dak, Ijj, Nuk, Qundil, Sketh

**FAMILY NAMES:** Dusker, Firehand, Glinteye, Kettle, Sharp-tooth, Slinger

## PLAYING A GOBLIN

If you choose to play a goblin, modify your character as follows:

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: Communication (Investigation) or Dexterity (Stealth).
- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.
- Your Speed is equal to 10 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Goblin and the Common Tongue.
- Select two additional benefits from the **Goblin** table. Selecting an ability increase counts as both your benefits. Alternatively, the GM may allow you to roll twice to gain two random benefits (roll 2d6 and add them together).

GOBLIN	
BENEFIT	2D6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Communication	2
FOCUS: Constitution (Running)	3–4
SWIFT: Your Speed increases by +4.	5
FOCUS: Perception (Empathy)	6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Accuracy	7–8
WEAPON GROUP: Light Blades*	9
FOCUS: Communication (Bargaining)	10
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Dexterity	11
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Perception	12

\* If the class you choose provides this already, you can take the focus Accuracy (Light Blades) instead.





# HALFLING

Halflings call farmlands and rolling hills their homelands. Some build their homes inside hills, while others prefer human-style buildings. When they live in human-dominated cities, halflings often build their homes in basements, and only construct larger accommodations aboveground if they expect to have boarders or to do business with non-halflings.

Folk who are known mostly for their love of food, drink, and the simple life, most halflings are hardworking people who make their way in life as farmers, innkeepers, and merchants. There are always those halflings who yearn for a life of adventure, however. To them the quaint villages of yeoman farmers are stultifying, so they leave at the first opportunity to see the wider world. While often stereotyped as thieves, halfling adventurers have many and varied pursuits.

Adventurous halflings tend to seek out new places, people, and experiences, whether taking ship and sailing off to distant shores, studying arcana and the secrets of the magical arts, or exploring ancient ruins for whatever mysteries, treasures, and dangers they may hold. Although proud of their independence, such halflings also appreciate the value of cooperation and particularly the boon company of worthy travel companions and friends.

Halflings sometimes appear to be particularly brave by the standards of other peoples. Though the fear response in halflings is not as pronounced as in other ancestries, halflings certainly know and feel fear as keenly as anyone else. They simply have a greater sense of equilibrium, allowing them to keep their wits where others might tremble. A halfling may not run in a panic but will sensibly retreat when the situation merits it.

Roughly half the size of humans, adult halflings rarely stand more than three feet tall. They are sometimes portly, but this extra weight doesn't particularly hinder them. They live about twice as long as humans.

## HALFLING NAMES

**FEMININE NAMES:** Brook, Fiona, Merriel, Rose, Violetta, Yvonda

**MASCULINE NAMES:** Braddock, Dougal, Hallaver, Samson,

Perrin, Tamshan

**FAMILY NAMES:** Brewster, Buckleberry, Hornbuck,

Pennywise, Summerton, Tankard

## PLAYING A HALFLING

If you choose to play a halfling, modify your character as follows:

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: Communication (Bargaining) or Dexterity (Stealth).
- Your Speed is equal to 8 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- *Intrepid.* When you have the Frightened condition (See CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES), the penalty you take to all ability tests is -1, rather than the normal -3.

- You can speak and read Halfling and the Common Tongue.
- Select two additional benefits from the **Halfling** table. Selecting an ability increase counts as both your benefits. Alternatively, the GM may allow you to roll twice to gain two random benefits (roll 2d6 and add them together).

HALFLING	
BENEFIT	2D6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Perception	2
STEADY: When you have any degree of the Fatigued condition (See CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES), you can still take the Run or Charge actions, and you can still move at your full Speed.	3
FOCUS: Communication (Persuasion)	4
FOCUS: Dexterity (Initiative)	5
FOCUS: Willpower (Courage)	6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Communication	7-8
FOCUS: Perception (Hearing)	9
FOCUS: Strength (Climbing)	10
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Dexterity	11
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Accuracy	12





# HUMAN

Humans are among the most numerous and adaptable of all ancestries. In fact, it's their ability to adapt to their environment that's allowed them to spread across the world, inhabiting lands alongside all the other ancestries, and making new homes for themselves in the harshest environments. Humans are often surprisingly adept at skills where they have natural weaknesses, having strived to overcome some element of their failings through study, natural knack, or sheer stubborn refusal to stay bad at something.

Whereas both human societies and other cultures often assign specific traits to "foreign" groups of humans, as with all ancestries, there are few universal truths about human nature. Some humans are greedier than the most avaricious dragon, while others reject the entire concept of wealth and give away all their possessions. Humans can move to any extreme, and often represent what is best and worst in all peoples.

Human settlements run the gamut from small hamlets to vast cities, with homes from tents and wagons all the way to vast mansions and castles. Their forms of government also vary. The only thing one can say with certainty about humans is that they will always find new and inventive ways to divide themselves. The other ancestries are grateful for this, as humans might take over if they could ever stop fighting among themselves.

Humans usually stand between five and six feet tall, but their height can vary up to a foot or more above and below that range. There is enormous physical variety among humans. And human lifespans also vary depending on their living conditions, though they are accounted elders in their sixties, and venerable at 80 or older.

## HUMAN NAMES

**FEMININE NAMES:** Catrin, Iona, Lyn, Nikki, Sienna, Zara

**MASCULINE NAMES:** Aarin, Donal, Jorm, Kellan, Marric, Thom

**FAMILY NAMES:** Apart from noble lineages, common human surnames include professions (Baker, Cooper, Smith, Ward, etc.) and place names (Highgate, Lakeside, Silverton, etc.)

## PLAYING A HUMAN

If you want to play a human, modify your character as follows:

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: Dexterity (Riding) or Constitution (Swimming).
- Pick any one ability focus for your lowest starting ability. If you have multiple abilities tied for the lowest value, you may choose a focus for any one of those lowest abilities.
- Your Speed is equal to 10 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read the Common Tongue.
- Select two additional benefits from the **Human** table. Selecting an ability increase counts as both your benefits. Alternatively, the GM may allow you to roll twice to gain two random benefits (roll 2d6 and add them together).

HUMAN	
BENEFIT	2D6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Intelligence	2
FOCUS: Constitution (Stamina)	3–4
FOCUS: Perception (Searching)	5
FOCUS: Communication (Persuasion)	6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Constitution	7–8
FOCUS: Communication (Deception)	9
FOCUS: Accuracy (Brawling)	10
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Fighting	11
ADAPTABLE FOCUS: You gain one ability focus of your choice that represents your current emphasis. However, you can change this to any other focus with one month of retraining, or immediately when you gain a new character level.	12





# ORC

Orcs are survivors and pragmatists, often dwelling in wastelands, badlands, rifts, and ruins because others claim the world's greener, gentler places. In many regions, orcs were latecomers and found verdant lands occupied, or were forced from these havens in ancient wars. Harsh living conditions drive some orcs to raid settlements for food and supplies, and others to leave their homelands and seek their fortunes alongside other peoples. Their undeniable ability to survive in the worst conditions allows them to easily find work as mercenaries, but orcs are no less skilled as makers, explorers, or even Mages if they can find the necessary training. Orc adaptability is often mental as well as physical, and they relish the challenge of learning new skills.

Within their homelands, orcs depend on strong leaders as a matter of survival. They must demonstrate great personal power and the ability to inspire loyalty. Some orc rulers maintain their positions by intimidating rivals and leading successful raids, giving them great prestige but forcing them to watch for rivals who'd overthrow them with a ceremonial duel or knife in the back. Other rulers reach their positions because they're respected for their elder wisdom or magical skill, or because the toughest, smartest orcs back them as a figure capable of binding them all to a common purpose.

Orcish features are often considered frightening by members of other ancestries, but orcs have their own standards of beauty, and sometimes characterize people like humans and elves as looking "unfinished." Various orc lineages feature pointed, bat-like ears, slits for nostrils, hairy bodies, broad mouths, and underbites that expose tusk-like teeth. They stand between five and seven feet in height, with broad, sturdy builds. Orc lifespans vary wildly and are difficult to determine.

## ORC NAMES

**FEMININE NAMES:** Beska, Eldra, Grisha, Mag, Oota, Vol

**MASCULINE NAMES:** Feld, Gar, Harsk,

Kurg, Scag, Tor

**CLAN NAMES:** Blackfire, Heartblood, Iron-tusk, Redaxe, Skullsplitter, Sunder

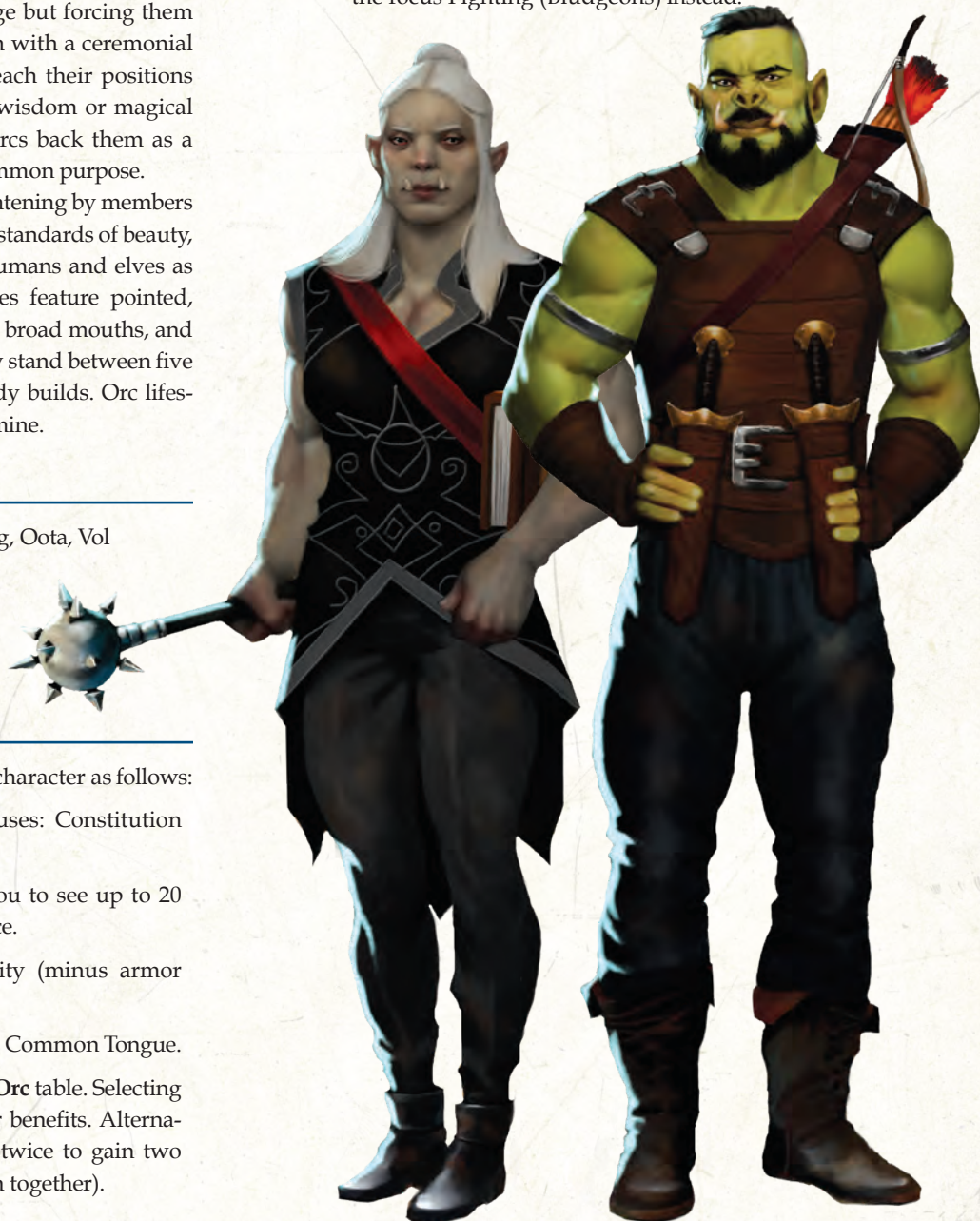
## PLAYING AN ORC

If you choose to play an orc, modify your character as follows:

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: Constitution (Stamina) or Strength (Might).
- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.
- Your Speed is equal to 10 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Orcish and the Common Tongue.
- Select two additional benefits from the **Orc** table. Selecting an ability increase counts as both your benefits. Alternatively, the GM may allow you to roll twice to gain two random benefits (roll 2d6 and add them together).

ORC	
BENEFIT	2D6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Constitution	2
FOCUS: Perception (Smelling)	3-4
TOUGH: When you have the Dying condition, you may make a TN 15 Constitution (Stamina) test each round. On a success, you become Unconscious with 1 Health.	5
FOCUS: Strength (Intimidation)	6
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Fighting	7-8
WEAPON GROUP: Bludgeons*	9
FOCUS: Accuracy (Brawling)	10
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Strength	11
ABILITY BONUS: +1 Willpower	12

\* If the class you choose provides this already, you can take the focus Fighting (Bludgeons) instead.





# WILDFOLK

Sometimes known as beastfolk, wildfolk are unrelated to the violent beastkin (who are typically adversaries). Creatures of faerie, they combine human-like features with the physical and personality traits of one broad class of animal. Thus, there are catfolk, wolffolk, and so on. However, wildfolk do not inherit the animal features of their parents; rabbitfolk can give birth to catfolk, for instance. Thus, wildfolk possess a complex society governed by both family ties and common kinship with the animals they resemble. These communities can be nomadic, settled, or a mixture of both. Wildfolk have a strong sense of hospitality. They protect anyone who asks for help and shelter in good faith. Conversely, anyone who threatens the wildfolk or their guests feels the community's wrath in the form of mass action or heroes trained and equipped by the entire clan.

Wildfolk leave their homes for many reasons. Some communities send young wildfolk out in a rite of passage (and to gather intelligence), and while many youngsters confine their journey to the wild, to live among their animal kin, others make their way through human cities, elven arboreal realms, and other such settlements. Like other peoples, wildfolk have their share of curious wanderers as well. Darker reasons to travel include losing one's community to violence and disease, which often prompts survivors to find other wildfolk communities who can accept them as hospitality demands, while examining their stories for dangers that might prompt them to send their own scouts to investigate.

As noted, wildfolk have a human-like size and body plan, with bipedal locomotion and hands with opposable thumbs, though their builds are influenced by their zoological features. An individual wildfolk has traits belonging to one or more closely related species. So one catfolk may look like a humanoid tiger while another might have a tiger's stripes but a lynx's tufted ears. Facial features might range from a furred human visage to the head of a cat scaled to a human-sized body. Wildfolk develop an exceptional awareness of their surroundings, and often use it to gain extensive knowledge about the natural world. They live about as long as humans.

## WILDFOLK NAMES

**FEMININE NAMES:** Anok, Bekk, Eeve, Faen, Kair, Liyr, Nann, Pell, Syll, Vyrr

**MASCULINE NAMES:** Borr, Daak, Domm, Garr, Johl, Lax, Olko, Toru, Rahn, Tokk

**CLAN NAMES:** Boneknife, Clovenhoof, New Moon, Nightcaller, Stoneleap, Swampstalker, Whitefang

## PLAYING A WILDFOLK

If you choose to play a wildfolk, modify your character as follows:

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: Constitution (Stamina) or Perception (Seeing).
- Your Speed is equal to 10 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read the Common Tongue, and your people's Wild-speech language.





## EVERYONE IS UNIQUE

Sometimes, people grow up in places where they don't easily fit in, be it due to ancestry, appearance, background, culture clash, or some other part of their identity not being accepted by the culture in which they're raised. It might also have nothing to do with one's ancestry—sadly, some cultures also reject certain sexual orientations, gender identities, ethnic origins, religions, and uncommon physical traits.

The process of creating a *Fantasy AGE* character involves a series of choices: ancestry, class, background, and such. You can decide your character's unique qualities or upbringing have no game stat ramifications. Or, you may decide your character still needs some "fine tuning" to feel just right. If you decide your character is unique in some way, discuss it with your GM, and if they agree, you can use the guidelines provided here.

In instances where you have a choice of an **Ancestry Benefit** or **Background benefit** you can substitute one other benefit of your choice for one existing option and receive a different bonus focus or talent (but not specialization) representing how being unique impacted your character. You must meet any of the focus or talent's prerequisites and cannot use this to increase a talent above Novice level.

WILDFOLK	
BENEFIT	2d6
<b>ABILITY BONUS:</b> +1 Constitution	2
<b>FOCUS:</b> Communication (Animal Handling)	3–4
<b>FOCUS:</b> Perception (Tracking)	5
<b>STRONG FEATURES:</b> Gain an additional ability from your species on the <b>Wildfolk Species</b> table	6
<b>ABILITY BONUS:</b> +1 Fighting	7–8
<b>FOCUS:</b> Intelligence (Natural Lore)	9
<b>FOCUS:</b> Dexterity (Initiative)	10
<b>ABILITY BONUS:</b> +1 Perception	11
<b>ABILITY BONUS:</b> +1 Strength	12

- Select two additional benefits from the **Wildfolk** table. Selecting an ability increase counts as both your benefits. Alternatively, the GM may allow you to roll twice to gain two random benefits (roll 2d6 and add them together).
- Select one entry (or optionally, roll 1d6) from the **Wildfolk Species** table, determining the sort of animal you resemble (a few examples are listed for each species). There are many kinds of wildfolk, though only six species families are listed below. You gain one of the benefits listed for your species.

### WILDFOLK SPECIES

As mentioned above, select the type of animal your wildfolk hero resembles on the **Wildfolk Species** table (or roll it randomly with 1d6). Once you've determined that, choose one of the options listed in the Benefits column. If a benefit increases a game statistic derived from other abilities, such as Speed, this doesn't change any abilities that normally modify it, and you add any listed bonus on top of other modifiers.

The following benefits require additional descriptions:

#### DARK SIGHT

You can see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.

WILDFOLK SPECIES		
SPECIES	BENEFITS	1d6
Avian (cardinal, eagle, hawk)	<i>Glide</i> , one degree in the Observation talent, <i>Natural Weapon</i> , Perception (Searching) focus	1
Canine/Vulpine (dog, fox, wolf)	+2 Speed, Perception (Smelling) focus, Perception (Tracking) focus, Strength (Intimidation) focus	2
Feline/Herpestidae (cat, mongoose, tiger)	Accuracy (Brawling) focus, <i>Dark Sight</i> , Dexterity (Stealth) focus, <i>Natural Weapon</i>	3
Rodent/Leporidae (beaver, rabbit, rat)	+1 Defense, <i>Dark Sight</i> , Dexterity (Stealth) focus, Strength (Climbing) focus	4
Ungulate (deer, goat, pig)	+2 Speed, Dexterity (Initiative) focus, <i>Natural Weapon</i> , Strength (Jumping)	5
Ursine (bear)	+5 Health, <i>Natural Weapon</i> , Strength (Intimidation) focus, Strength (Might) focus	6

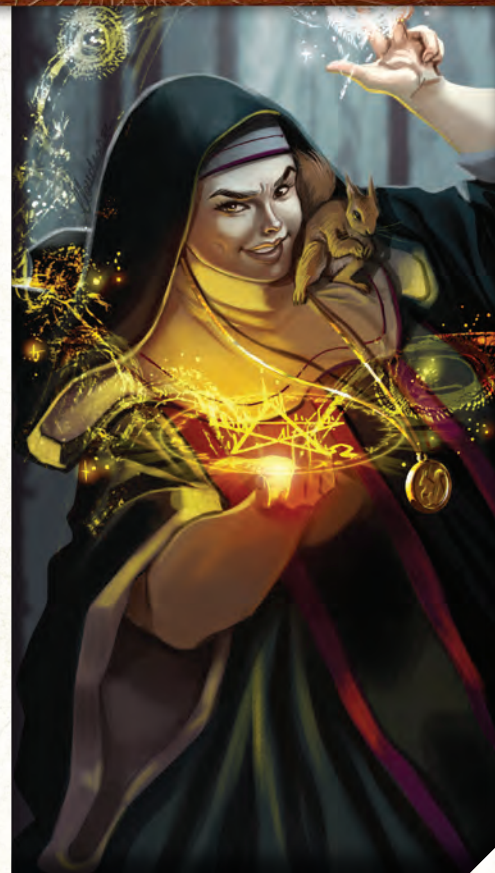
#### GLIDE

Wings, skin folds, or other physical traits allows you to glide, but not fly. You take half damage from falls, and while falling you may also move your Speed laterally. If you have at least 4 yards of overhead clearance, you can take a movement-based action without touching the ground in between, launching from your starting point and landing at your end point.

#### NATURAL WEAPON

You can inflict 1d6 + Perception damage with claws, teeth, talons, hooves, horns, or another natural weapon, making Accuracy (Brawling) attack rolls to use it in combat. If you gain the Brawling focus its bonus applies to your natural weapon, and if a talent such as Unarmed Style increases the unarmed damage you inflict to 1d6, you gain a +2 bonus to natural weapon damage instead. You may use your natural weapon as an off-hand weapon, subject to the usual rules in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**, but if you can also carry a weapon in your actual off-hand, you must choose it or your natural weapon as your secondary weapon.





#### STEP 4

## BACKGROUNDS

Your character did not spring from nothing. Just as in real life, upbringing and circumstances can shape personality and attributes. This is represented by backgrounds in *Fantasy AGE*. They determine what your character did or was trained to do before deciding on a life of adventure. The backgrounds are broad by design, and you have some room to interpret exactly what each background means in the context of your campaign setting. Your character gets one focus from the background, but just as importantly it should serve as inspiration for your character's history and personality.

You may choose a background that fits your character concept, in which case you gain the social class listed for it (or select one of the social classes if the background belongs to multiple classes). If you choose to do this, you get the average starting money as part of your equipment in **Step 6** of character creation, rather than randomly determined wealth based on your social class.

Alternatively, your GM may allow you to roll your background randomly. Determining a background this way requires two rolls. First, roll on the **Social Class** table. Once you have that result, roll on the appropriate backgrounds table. If your character's social class is Middle Class, for example, roll 1d6 on the **Middle Class Backgrounds** table and record the result on your character sheet. Your background gives you the option of taking one of two ability focuses. Pick the one you want and note it down.

You'll refer to your social class again when buying equipment in **Step 6** of character creation.

#### EXAMPLE

*Nicole rolls a 2 on the Social Class Table, which means her character comes from the Lower Class. She decides that her character's parents had been Middle Class, but her upbringing in the orphanage after their murder left her at a disadvantage. Nicole then rolls on the Lower Class Backgrounds Table and gets a 5: soldier. That lets her choose one of two focuses: Accuracy (Brawling) or Communication (Gambling). Since she already has Brawling from her ancestry, she picks Gambling. Nicole gives her results some thought and decides that becoming a soldier was a good way for her character to escape from her circumstances. She would not join the army of the king who killed her parents though, so Nicole is thinking she joined a mercenary company that passed through her hometown.*

## SOCIAL CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

### OUTSIDER

Strangers, outcasts, or vagabonds who may have had a home at some time, but now find themselves in new lands. They own nothing but what they can carry and often make a living doing whatever they must to survive. Outsiders can be gruff and off-putting, or open, gregarious, and willing to make friends either in the hope of work or coin, or as part of a care-free nature.

### LOWER

Those who engage in backbreaking labor or work at jobs that pay little more than room and board. It's a hard life,



but during good times there's usually work around if you're willing to put life and limb on the line. In bad times it's a scramble to survive, with nights spent sleeping in doorways while looking for the next job.

## MIDDLE

The lucky few who have well-paying jobs, or benefit from families who can moderately support them. Some desperately pursue money to support the overhead required by their business. Others thrive by taking advantage of a populace that wants what they have to offer. Families in the middle class sometimes fail and fall into the lower class, while a small few grow wealthy and successful enough to join the upper class.

## UPPER

The wealthiest and most connected of all social classes, short of the highest echelons of nobility in grand empires. People from this class are rich, important, well-known, and often consider themselves superior in every way. In addition to their wealth, they often have rights not possessed by the other classes, though a few will claim they have responsibilities or gifts that entitle them to their privileges. Some, usually aristocrats consider even thinking about money vulgar, but others make fortunes through shrewd business dealings.

## BACKGROUND DESCRIPTIONS

Each background is open to interpretation depending on a character's history and experiences, so you will need to customize the background with details that make it unique to your character. An apprentice might have studied under a kindly wizard in the middle of a cosmopolitan city, or they might have suffered through a difficult apprenticeship under a warlock with dark inclinations while living in a tower in the middle of a swamp. Both are apprentices, both learned important lessons that define their character, but the details are quite different.

### APPRENTICE

### UPPER

INTELLIGENCE (ARCANE LORE) OR INTELLIGENCE (RESEARCH)

You've been trained by a spellcaster and are on your way to becoming a powerful mage. Your apprenticeship wasn't easy, but you came out the other side with valuable knowledge and experiences that set you apart from those not able or willing to delve into the mystic arts.

### ARTIST

### LOWER

INTELLIGENCE (CULTURAL LORE) OR INTELLIGENCE (EVALUATION)

Beauty drives you. It's really all that matters. Whether that beauty takes the shape of a painting, sonnet, sculpture, or something else entirely is immaterial, that it's *beautiful* and, most importantly, *you* made it, does. You've either apprenticed with another artist, in a studio with other would-be artists, or you have exceptional natural talent. Regardless, you likely specialize in a particular form of art. Now you just need to figure out how to make a living at it.

## SOCIAL CLASS

1d6 ROLL	SOCIAL CLASS
1	Outsider
2-3	Lower Class
4-5	Middle Class
6	Upper Class

## BACKGROUNDS

1d6	BACKGROUND		
OUTSIDER BACKGROUNDS		MIDDLE CLASS BACKGROUNDS	
1	Criminal	1	Guilder
2	Exile	2	Initiate
3	Hermit	3	Innkeeper
4	Pirate	4	Merchant
5	Radical	5	Scribe
6	Wanderer	6	Student
LOWER CLASS BACKGROUNDS		UPPER CLASS BACKGROUNDS	
1	Artist	1	Apprentice
2	Laborer	2	Dilettante
3	Performer	3	Noble
4	Sailor	4	Official
5	Soldier	5	Scholar
6	Tradesperson	6	Squire

### CRIMINAL

### OUTSIDER

COMMUNICATION (DECEPTION) OR DEXTERITY (LOCK PICKING)

You make your living on the streets. More accurately, you make your living off other people walking the streets. You were an urchin, orphan, or outcast with no place in the world until others taught you how to survive ... the hard way. Now, you know your way around the city. You know how to spot a mark. You know how to spot a house worth robbing. You also know that if you're caught, you're dead, or worse.

### DILETTANTE

### UPPER

COMMUNICATION (GAMBLING) OR CONSTITUTION (TOLERANCE)

Being wealthy has afforded you opportunities to indulge in the best of life: you study what interests you, you wear whatever's in fashion, you drink fine wines and eat refined foods, you have the most interesting friends, and you're always on the lookout for the next bit of gossip. Life is fine, indeed. You may revel in your role as a member of the upper crust, or you may be the odd one out in your family. Ultimately, what matters is that you're never bored.

### EXILE

### OUTSIDER

COMMUNICATION (BARGAINING) OR INTELLIGENCE (CULTURAL LORE)

You are a true outcast. Wherever you're from, you or your family did something that resulted in you being exiled. You were on the wrong side of a war, had the wrong friends at the wrong time, made some business dealings that didn't end



well, or simply broke some decidedly taboo laws. Whatever it was, you've lived on the road for a while, perhaps years, and know how to make your way in the world.

### GUILDER

### MIDDLE

COMMUNICATION (ETIQUETTE) OR DEXTERITY (CRAFTING)

You work for one of the powerful guilds that control trade in the larger cities. You may know a trade, or you may just know how to manipulate money and people to get what you want. Your talents and connections ensure you and your family do quite well, which is how you hope to keep it.

### HERMIT

### OUTSIDER

CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) OR WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)

You left civilization for some reason to become a hermit. Perhaps you took a holy vow or needed time alone to ponder an important question or remove yourself from a difficult situation, or perhaps you just don't care for people and prefer to be on your own. Whatever the reason for your isolation, time alone has hardened you and made you self-reliant.

### INITIATE

### MIDDLE

INTELLIGENCE (RELIGIOUS LORE) OR WILLPOWER (FAITH)

You are a believer and worshiper who has joined an organized religion. You may work as an acolyte or priest of a church, be a member of a society of druids, or even a member of a cult. You have learned from holy books and other followers about your chosen religion or the natural world around you.

### INNKEEPER

### MIDDLE

COMMUNICATION (BARGAINING) OR PERCEPTION (EMPATHY)

You run or work at an inn. You know what's needed to keep an inn running and the customers happy ... or at least happy enough to pay you for services rendered. Your inn's long-term survival often relies on your ability to spot trouble before it happens, sometimes by turning people away that you have a bad feeling about, and sometimes by making friends you can rely on for support.

### LABORER

### LOWER

CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) OR STRENGTH (MIGHT)

You carry, lift, tote, throw, handle, move, or otherwise deal with loads of material that have to be moved off of or onto ships or wagons or into buildings. The work isn't complicated, but it is *hard*, and you have the stamina and strength to show for it.

### MERCHANT

### MIDDLE

COMMUNICATION (BARGAINING) OR COMMUNICATION (DECEPTION)

You have a way with people, and you use that in your business dealings to become successful. You use your charisma to get the best deals or to convince others they're getting the

best deal, but all in service to *your* success. You may have a small merchant stand selling odds and ends in a bazaar, or operate a thriving shop that specializes in carpets, foreign imports, or other valuables. Instead of a store, perhaps you travel between locales, buying unusual items in one place and transporting them to sell in another. Regardless of the type of merchant you are, you know how to come out ahead in any deal.

### NOBLE

### UPPER

COMMUNICATION (ETIQUETTE) OR INTELLIGENCE (HERALDRY)

You were born a noble and raised to believe not only that you're naturally superior to everyone of a lower station, but that it was your role to take care of them as you would wayward children. Some may call you snooty but in doing so, they only reveal their ignorance. You've always enjoyed the best in life and that is as it should be. If your family hasn't managed to hold onto its position, you may be trying to regain it, but no matter what, you're still a noble.

### OFFICIAL

### UPPER

COMMUNICATION (LEADERSHIP) OR COMMUNICATION (PERSUASION)

Your game is politics and you have risen to significant heights despite non-noble birth. Whether it's your way with the masses or your ability to convince others of the wisdom of your ideas, people tend to follow your lead.

### PERFORMER

### LOWER

COMMUNICATION (PERFORMANCE) OR INTELLIGENCE (MUSICAL LORE)

You are a dancer, actor, musician, singer, or some other sort of performer. You enjoy getting in front of a room of people and affecting them through your art. You especially like it when they show their appreciation in more tangible terms, be it money or affection.

### PIRATE

### OUTSIDER

DEXTERITY (SAILING) OR STRENGTH (INTIMIDATION)

You may not have been born on the water, but you call it home. Any city you visit is merely a brief stop before heading back out to sea to find more ships to prey on. Perhaps you're actually a lawless pirate with no loyalties but to ship and captain, or maybe you're a privateer who only attacks and captures vessels of an enemy state. You may have been forcibly brought into a pirate's life, or signed up on your own to get away from a past you left behind with good cause.

### RADICAL

### OUTSIDER

COMMUNICATION (PERSUASION) OR COMMUNICATION (LEADERSHIP)

You are a troublemaker and rabble-rouser. You have dedicated yourself to opposing a ruler, politician, political party, religion, or religious institution, and you do everything in your power to spread the word about them and their corruption. Your goal is to remove that person from power or overthrow the current system.



**SAILOR****LOWER**

CONSTITUTION (TOLERANCE) OR DEXTERITY (SAILING)

You know your way around a ship better than most. You've trained and lived at sea for long stretches of time, either in a navy or on a trading ship (or both, at different times). You may call some port home, but most of your time is spent at sea. You've traveled to many different parts of the world and seen things few can dream of.

**SCHOLAR****UPPER**

INTELLIGENCE (HISTORICAL LORE) OR INTELLIGENCE (RELIGIOUS LORE)

When lords, generals, and politicians have questions, they come to you. You've studied extensively and if you don't know an answer to a question, you can probably find someone else or a book that does. Others may change the course of history, but you're the one who tells them how to do it.

**SCRIBE****MIDDLE**

DEXTERITY (CALLIGRAPHY) OR INTELLIGENCE (WRITING)

Books, scrolls, and portfolios are your life's work. The greatest libraries, universities, and scholars of your time require your services, and they pay *well* for them. Knowledge that no one ever sees isn't knowledge, it's a secret. When you get your hands on those secrets, you commit them to books, then preserve and spread that knowledge across the world and through time. You may revel in the importance of your profession, or despise it as an isolating, backbreaking task.

**SOLDIER****LOWER**

ACCURACY (BRAWLING) OR COMMUNICATION (GAMBLING)

You are a soldier, possibly a guard or mercenary, who signed up to fight for your country, or for enough silver. You've trained for combat, but also had an education in how to live and work as part of a unit, and how to take and execute orders. A soldier is useless if they don't do what they're told. If you're not an active soldier, your service may have been completed, or maybe you deserted for some reason.

**SQUIRE****UPPER**

INTELLIGENCE (HERALDRY) OR INTELLIGENCE (MILITARY LORE)

There are many knights in the world and all need help taking care of their mounts, cleaning their armor, sharpening weapons, and doing whatever else those knights ask. That is the role of the squire. In exchange for all that work, you get to learn first-hand what it takes to become a knight yourself. Depending on how long you've been apprenticed to your knight, that day may well be quite far off, or it might be drawing *very* near.

**STUDENT****MIDDLE**

INTELLIGENCE (HISTORICAL LORE) OR INTELLIGENCE (RESEARCH)

Rather than spend your life making goods or selling them, you are one of the few wealthy, connected, or smart enough to

attend a university. As a student, you spend most of your time in classes or studying. At least that ought to be the case, but it's also entirely likely you've spent *some* of your time in other pursuits you find more interesting or ... enjoyable.

**TRADESPERSON****LOWER**

COMMUNICATION (BARGAINING) OR INTELLIGENCE (EVALUATION)

Resting somewhere between the laborer and guildler, the tradesperson specializes in some kind of skilled manual labor, such as masonry, carpentry, clockmaking, blacksmithing, or any of dozens of other trades. Whichever path you've taken, you've been trained in that specialty and know how to talk about its practical and theoretical applications, which allows you to accurately plan and execute jobs.

**WANDERER****OUTSIDER**

CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) OR INTELLIGENCE (NAVIGATION)

The open road has always called to you, and you have answered. Instead of calling a single location home, you regard the entire world as yours. You love to wander, find new places, and meet new people. You rarely get lost, but even when you do it usually turns out to be an adventure worthy of the experience.





## CLASSES

If ancestry and background are where your character comes from, then class is what they have worked to become. Classes are both archetypes, defining the types of things your character is best at, and frameworks for your character's advancement and development during their adventuring career. In *Fantasy AGE*, you choose from one of four classes: Envoy, Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

- If you want a character who is good at negotiation and working with others, play an Envoy.
- If you want a character who can cast spells, play a Mage.
- If you want a character who is sneaky, play a Rogue.
- If you want a character who can fight, play a Warrior.

The classes are quite broad by design. A Rogue could equally represent a thief with a penchant for burglary and a scout in a mercenary company. Your class helps define what your character can do, but it's up to you to interpret how those capabilities fit with your character concept.

### EXAMPLE

*With her background of soldier, the Warrior class makes sense for Nicole's character. She could decide to buck that if she was keen to play another class though. Perhaps she was the squad leader for her unit, so being an Envoy makes sense. Maybe she made a poor soldier, but the mercenary company had a mage that took her on as an apprentice. Nicole considers these options, but decides that delivering bloody vengeance with a two-handed axe is more her speed, so chooses to make her character a Warrior.*

Your character starts at level 1, which means they're a novice adventurer. As characters complete adventures and gain experience points, they'll go up in level and get access to new powers. There are 20 levels total in the game, with 1–5 being "beginner" levels, 6–12 "middle" levels, and 13 and up being "high" level.

EXPERIENCE POINT TABLE

XP TOTAL	LEVEL	XP TOTAL	LEVEL
0	1	25,000	11
2,000	2	28,000	12
4,000	3	32,000	13
6,000	4	36,000	14
8,000	5	40,000	15
10,000	6	44,000	16
13,000	7	48,000	17
16,000	8	52,000	18
19,000	9	56,000	19
22,000	10	60,000	20

## CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

Each class determines certain key features of your character. A class description includes the following elements.

### PRIMARY ABILITIES

A class has four primary abilities. These are the abilities most important to the class and the ones used most often.

### SECONDARY ABILITIES

A class has five secondary abilities. These abilities are not as important as primary abilities, but all are useful in the right circumstances.

### STARTING HEALTH

Health is a measure of your character's fitness and wellbeing. Class choice determines starting Health.

### WEAPON GROUPS

Your class determines the weapons your character knows how to use. Weapons are divided into groups, and this entry tells you which ones your character is trained in. For more information on weapons and weapon groups, see **CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT**.

### CLASS POWERS

A class provides your character with a variety of special powers, such as ability focuses and talents. These powers are listed in each class description.

## GAINING LEVELS

There are two ways to gain levels in *Fantasy AGE*. First, the GM may simply elect to inform players when their characters advance a level. This usually occurs after a major milestone or campaign event is reached, such as the end of an adventure or plot arc. However, sometimes advancement can occur during a session, especially if there is a lot of in-game downtime.

The other way to advance is through experience points. If the GM prefers, they can award experience points at the end of every adventure or session. When characters have enough experience, they advance to the next level. GMs can award more or less experience if they want to slow or alternately accelerate advancement during play. The rules and guidelines for awarding experience points are covered in **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**.

The experience points required to attain each level are summarized on the accompanying table.

When you go up a level, you may also want to review your goals. Have any of them been achieved? Based on the events of the campaign, do you have any new goals? You can do this any time, of course, but leveling up is a convenient time to check-in and reassess.



## LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

When you gain a new level, your character gains a number of new abilities and resources as outlined by your class. You gain one ability advancement, one focus advancement, and one Health advancement each time you gain a level. You also get the class powers specified for your new level in your class description, which typically include Defense, stunt, and talent advancements. The following sections give the details of how to apply these level advancements as you gain them. Various classes also have other abilities (such as magic points, for Mages), which are defined in their class descriptions.

### ABILITY ADVANCEMENT

Each time a character gains a level, they get an ability advancement. For lower-ranked abilities this translates into a direct increase, but as a character grows in power, it becomes more difficult and expensive to increase their most potent abilities. The exact number of advancements required to advance an ability by 1 depends on the new rating you're trying to obtain. For abilities up to 5, it costs a single advancement. For abilities from 6 to 8, it costs two advancements. For abilities from 9 and up, it costs three advancements. This is summarized in the accompanying table. You get no benefit from advancements spent until you've gained the new rating. You should obviously keep a careful record of advancements spent that have not yet increased the relevant ability rating.

#### EXAMPLE

*Nicole's character reaches level 6 and so receives one ability advancement. She wants to raise her Strength, which is currently 5. It takes two advancements to raise an ability to 6, so she spends one now to start the process. For the time being her Strength is still 5, but she is halfway to a higher rating. She receives another advancement at level 7 but must spend it on a secondary ability (she chooses Willpower). It is not until she achieves level 8 that she can spend a second advancement and increase her Strength to an impressive 6.*

#### ABILITY ADVANCEMENT TABLE

NEW ABILITY RATING	ADVANCEMENTS REQUIRED
-1 to 5	1
6 to 8	2
9 to 12	3

### DEFENSE ADVANCEMENT

Experience makes you a cannier combatant. Each defense advancement grants you a +1 bonus to your Defense.

### FOCUS ADVANCEMENT

When you gain a focus advancement, you can pick one new ability focus (see CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS). When you gain an even-numbered level, you must choose a focus from

## YOUR FIRST SPECIALIZATION

It can be difficult to choose a specialization for your character at 1st level, as you may not be familiar enough with all the options yet to know which ones make sense. If you don't want to study all the specializations before choosing one, you can just look at the two standard options listed below for your class and pick the one you like the best.

**ENVOY:** Diplomat or Spy    **MAGE:** Arcane Scholar or Elementalist

**ROGUE:** Assassin or Razor    **WARRIOR:** Berserker or Guardian

one of your primary abilities. When you gain an odd-numbered level, choose a focus from one of your secondary abilities. Beginning at 11th level, you can take the same ability focus a second time, gaining an additional +1 bonus to its tests. (Since your focus bonus increases to +3 at 11th level, this would normally bring it to a +4.)

### HEALTH ADVANCEMENT

Your Health increases whenever you gain a new level. You gain 1d6 + Constitution at levels 2–10, and just your Constitution ability at levels 11–20 (minimum 1).

### STUNT ADVANCEMENT

You begin play with access to all the basic stunts (see CHAPTER 6: STUNTS) but can learn a new one from an advanced stunt table with each advancement.

### TALENT ADVANCEMENT

Talents grant your character various special abilities (see CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS). When you gain a talent advancement, your character becomes a Novice in a new talent or gains a new degree in a talent you already have (going from Novice to Expert or Expert to Master). Unless otherwise specified, a talent advancement must be chosen from the general talent list.

### SPECIALIZATION ADVANCEMENT

Each character gains one specialization at 1st level, and specialization advancements as they gain levels. When you gain a specialization advancement you become a Novice in a new specialization or gain a new degree in a specialization you already have (going from Novice to Expert or Expert to Master). Any specialization you take must be one allowed to your class.

For the specialization you gain at 1st level, while it still must be available to your class, you can ignore its requirements to select it. You can assign specialization advancements you gain at later levels to increase your degree in it without meeting its requirements.

Whenever you gain a specialization advancement from your class you may, if you prefer, take a degree in a new regular talent instead. See **Specialization** in CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS.



# ENVOY

An Envoy is a master of social situations, building or exploiting relationships and group interactions. The classic Envoy is an agent of a ruling court or council who both carries out the orders of their superiors and works to increase their own influence and rank. You can also use the Envoy to represent anyone who is primarily concerned with deals, diplomacy, leading, or deceiving others, from a noble captain of the guard to a scoundrel with a heart of gold or even a con artist.

As an Envoy, you aren't the best fighter in combat, and don't have the stealth and subterfuge a Rogue uses to pick off foes from the shadows. You can still hold your own in a fight, especially if you can find weaker-willed targets to cow or bamboozle, but

the Envoy is much more in their element in social encounters. If you are playing an Envoy, you should expect to do a lot of the talking with patrons, friendly rivals, suspicious officials, and tight-fisted merchants.

**PRIMARY ABILITIES:** Communication, Fighting, Intelligence, and Willpower

**SECONDARY ABILITIES:** Accuracy, Constitution, Dexterity, Perception, and Strength

**STARTING HEALTH:** 25 + Constitution + 1d6

**WEAPON GROUPS:** Any three of the following: Black Powder, Bludgeons, Bows, Brawling, Heavy Blades, Light Blades, Slings, or Spears

## CLASS POWERS

Envoys gain the following powers at the specified level.

### LEVEL 1

#### COORDINATE

You create opportunities for your allies. Whenever you generate stunt points from rolling doubles, you gain 1 SP that you can give to another character. Alternatively, you can give 2 of your SP from the Stunt Attack action (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) to an ally. If you roll doubles on a Stunt Attack action, you gain +1 SP and can transfer 3 SP to an ally. Your ally must use the SP granted at the next available opportunity (their next turn in action time) or they lose them.

#### DAZZLE

Whether it is through charming patter, a dour glare, cutting remarks, or the performance of tricks and art, you can dazzle a foe, leaving them unable to concentrate on attacking you. As a free action select one foe, who can hear you, to dazzle. If your Communication is greater than their Willpower, you gain a +2 bonus to Defense.

#### SOCIAL CHAMELEON

You have two social classes, and two backgrounds. Determine your first social class and background normally. For your second social class and background, you may select any different social class and then select any background appropriate to that social class. You select a focus for each background, as normal (thus gaining one additional focus).

Select one social class and background that represent the circumstances you found yourself in as a child. The other represents a second society you successfully integrated yourself into, gaining a new social class and background by the time you were a young adult. For example, you may have been born into the life of a criminal but fought your way up to be seen as a dilettante. Or you might have been raised as a guildler but spent enough time with soldiers to be able to move comfortably among them.

When using backgrounds to determine starting wealth, use the higher of your two backgrounds.





## SPECIALIZATION

You may pick one specialization allowed by your class (see **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**) and gain the Novice degree of its specialization talent. For this specialization, you do not need to meet any requirements listed other than allowed class. Specializations help you customize your character and give them a theme. The specializations available to Envoys are:

Arcane Disciple, Aristocrat, Bard, Champion, Crime Lord, Diplomat, Heritage (Divine, Fey, or Infernal), Knight, Mariner/Pirate, Marked, Mystic Navigator, Spy, Skald.

## STARTING TALENTS

You become a Novice in two of the following talents: Animal Training, Carousing, Command, Contacts, Inspire, Intrigue, Linguistics, Lore, Oratory, Performance.

## EVEN-NUMBERED LEVELS

At levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 you gain the following:

### ABILITIES

You gain one ability advancement, which you must spend on a primary ability.

### ADVANCEMENTS

You gain one stunt advancement and one talent advancement. At levels 6, 12, and 18, your stunt advancement can be to select a class stunt from another class (see **Class Stunts** in **CHAPTER 6: STUNTS**).

### FOCUS

You gain one ability focus, chosen from your primary abilities.

## ODD-NUMBERED LEVELS

At levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 you gain the following:

### ABILITIES

You gain one ability advancement, which you must spend on a secondary ability.

### ADVANCEMENTS

You gain one specialization talent advancement.

### FOCUS

You gain one ability focus, chosen from your secondary abilities.

## LEVELS 4, 8, AND 12

### NEW FOCUS

You learn a new focus of your choice.

## LEVEL 4

### DOUBLETALK

You are an expert in manipulating the direction of social interactions to your favor. Once during a social encounter,

you can attempt to direct the flow of events to your favor. This allows you to perform a basic social stunt for 2 SP less than usual, to a minimum cost of 0. You may choose to do this after making a check that generates SP, or when taking any other action. Unlike most reductions of stunt costs, if you lower the cost to 0 or less, you can perform the stunt even if you do not generate stunt points. You cannot use this ability during combat or exploration encounters, as the events are too chaotic to be subject to your subtle manipulations.

## LEVEL 6

### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

### DAMAGE BONUS

You may add your weapon focus (if you have one) when inflicting damage with a melee or ranged attack.

## LEVEL 8

### STUNNING REPORTE

You can daze or distract opponents with carefully chosen and timed words that affect targets capable of understanding you. To use this power, take a major action and defeat the target in an opposed Communication (Deception or Persuasion) test versus their Willpower (Self-Discipline) roll. If you succeed, your target can only take a single minor action on their next turn (see the **Stunned** condition in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**).

## LEVEL 11

### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

### DAZZLE BONUS

Your bonus to Defense from Dazzle is now +3 rather than +2.

### FOCUS BONUS

Your focuses now provide a +3 bonus instead of +2.

## LEVEL 16

### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

### STUNT DIE TO DAMAGE

You may add the value of the Stunt Die of your attack test when inflicting damage against a creature with a Willpower lower than your Communication.

## LEVEL 20

### EPIC ENVOY

Pick one type of stunt (combat, exploration, or social). You gain a +1 stunt point bonus when generating stunt points of that type.



# MAGE

A Mage is a user of mystical power, able to cast spells that seem miraculous to most. The classic Mage is a wizard whose knowledge of the arcane unlocks the secret powers of the multiverse. But the Mage class can be used to represent any user of extraordinary powers. *Fantasy AGE* treats all magic the same way and does not presume a specific source (which can vary depending on your campaign setting). This lets the Mage class equally represent sorcerers who derive power from the world's mystical energies, priests who channel the power of the gods, or even psychics who harness the power of the mind. Your GM will let you know the specifics of magic in the campaign setting and you can come up with any concept that fits within that framework.

As a Mage, your character is a master of supernatural power. So, stay away from melee combat (let Warriors handle that) and use spells to help your allies and harm your enemies. Mages generally don't wear armor, so can't take as many hits as other classes. They also have limited access to weaponry, but access to spells makes up for these limitations. You'll get access to many different spells, and a Mage who masters their use is a powerful character.

While Mages only start with four spells, they gain more over time. Mages can use generic talent advancements to purchase spell talents. These ever-increasing options require more decision making than other classes during encounters. If you've never played an RPG before, you might want to consider that before choosing this class. Whatever your experience, you'll want to read **CHAPTER 5: MAGIC** to learn more about the rules and terms used in spellcasting.

**PRIMARY ABILITIES:** Accuracy, Intelligence, Perception, and Willpower

**SECONDARY ABILITIES:** Communication, Constitution, Dexterity, Fighting, and Strength

**STARTING HEALTH:** 20 + Constitution + 1d6

**WEAPON GROUPS:** Brawling and Staves

## CLASS POWERS

Mages gain the following powers at the specified level.

### LEVEL 1

#### ARCANE BLAST

If you are holding your **arcane device**, you can make a special Ranged Attack that damages foes with a blast of magical energy. This resolves like a normal Ranged Attack (so stunts are possible), but the attack roll is an Accuracy (Arcane Blast) test. An Arcane Blast has a range of 16 yards and inflicts 1d6 + Willpower damage. Making this attack requires no magic points.

#### ARCANE DEVICE

Each Mage has an arcane device through which they can focus magical energy. Its primary use is the channeling of Arcane Blasts, but it is used with certain spells as well. The exact nature of the arcane device differs from Mage to Mage. It could be a staff, wand, holy symbol, amulet, etc. You should decide what form your arcane device takes when you make your character. If you lose your arcane device, you can attune a new one to you by spending one hour and 5 magic points to do so.

#### MAGIC TRAINING

This is the most important of the Mage's powers. It allows a Mage to cast the spells that are the hallmark of the class. You begin with Novice degree in two spell talents. Each Novice degree grants you two Novice spells. Therefore, you begin with four Novice spells, total: two from each spell talent. You gain more spells when you get spell talent advancements. See **CHAPTER 5: MAGIC** for more information about choosing and casting spells.

#### MAGIC POINTS

You use **magic points** (MPs) to power your spells. You start with a number of magic points





equal to 10 + Willpower + 1d6. It is necessary keep track of your current magic points; this is a measure of how much magical power is at your command at any given time. You spend magic points when your character casts spells. You regain them through rest and meditation. See **CHAPTER 5: MAGIC** for details. You gain more magic points as you rise in level. From levels 2 to 10, you gain Willpower + 1d6 magic points whenever you gain a new level. From levels 11 to 20, you gain only your Willpower in MPs because increasing your power at higher levels is not as easy.

#### SPECIALIZATION

You may pick one specialization allowed by your class (see **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**) and gain the Novice degree of its specialization talent. For this specialization, you do not need to meet the requirements, though it must be available to the Mage class. Specializations help you customize your character and give them a theme. The specializations available to Mages are:

Arcane Scholar, Crime Lord, Elementalist,  
Heritage (Divine, Fey, or Infernal), Mariner/Pirate,  
Miracle Worker, Mystic Navigator, Necromancer,  
Sword Mage.

#### STARTING TALENT

You become a Novice in one of the following talents: Chirurgy, Linguistics, or Lore. See **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS** for more information.

### EVEN-NUMBERED LEVELS

At levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 you gain the following benefits:

#### ABILITIES

You gain one ability advancement, which you must spend on a primary ability.

#### ADVANCEMENTS

You gain one spell talent advancement at each even-numbered level. In addition, you gain one stunt advancement at level 2, 6, 10, 14, and 18, and one non-magical talent advancement at level 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20. At levels 10, 14, and 18 you can select a stunt advancement from another class (see **Class Stunts** in **CHAPTER 6: STUNTS**).

#### PRIMARY FOCUS

You gain one ability focus, chosen from your primary abilities.

### ODD-NUMBERED LEVELS

At levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 you gain the following benefits:

#### ABILITIES

You gain one ability advancement, which you must spend on a secondary ability.

#### ADVANCEMENTS

You gain one specialization talent advancement.

#### SECONDARY FOCUS

You gain one ability focus, chosen from your secondary abilities.

### LEVEL 6

#### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

#### DAMAGE BONUS

You may add your weapon focus (if you have one) when inflicting damage with a melee or ranged attack, or your Arcane Blast focus if inflicting damage with an Arcane Blast, or your arcane focus (if you have one) when inflicting damage on a single target with a spell.

### LEVEL 8

#### RANGE BONUS

The range of your Arcane Blast attack becomes 24 yards.

### LEVEL 11

#### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

#### DAMAGE BONUS

You can spend +2 MP to do +1d6 damage, and +5 MP to do +2d6 damage with damaging spells.

#### FOCUS BONUS

Your focuses now provide a +3 bonus instead of +2.

### LEVEL 16

#### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

#### STUNT DIE TO DAMAGE

You may add the value of the Stunt Die of your attack test when inflicting damage against a creature with your Arcane Blast.

### LEVEL 20

#### EPIC MAGE

Pick one type of stunt (combat, exploration, social, or spell). You gain a +1 stunt point bonus when generating stunt points of that type.



# ROGUE

The Rogue class represents the classic swashbuckler, burglar, or stealthy operative. You can use it to represent a thief, a scout, expert, or spy. While a Warrior gets by on brute strength and a Mage on arcane power, a Rogue relies on quickness and cleverness. Whether crawling through a maze of city shadows or slipping a dagger between an enemy's ribs, a Rogue must be agile and artful to win the day.

As a Rogue, you are the eyes and ears of your adventuring group. You are excellent at ranged combat and can launch devastating melee attacks with the pinpoint attack ability. Rogues are not, however, true frontline fighters. Their Defense will be good due to Dexterity, but light armor means they can't absorb a lot of

damage. Let the Warriors go toe to toe with the enemy while you use stealth and surprise to keep them off balance.

The Rogue is the most open-ended of the classes. If you aren't sure where you want to go with your character, Rogue is a great choice, as the class provides the flexibility to develop in many directions.

**PRIMARY ABILITIES:** Accuracy, Communication, Dexterity, and Perception

**SECONDARY ABILITIES:** Constitution, Fighting, Intelligence, Strength, and Willpower

**STARTING HEALTH:** 25 + Constitution + 1d6

**WEAPON GROUPS:** Light Blades and Staves. Also select any two of the following: Black Powder, Bows, Brawling, Slings, and Dueling

## CLASS POWERS

Rogues gain the following powers at the specified level.

### LEVEL 1

#### PINPOINT ATTACK

Once per round, you can add 1d6 to the damage of a successful attack if your Dexterity is greater than your opponent's, or if your opponent is experiencing one of the following conditions: Defenseless, Prone, Stunned, or Unconscious (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES for condition rules).

#### ROGUE'S ARMOR

You are at home in leather armor. You can ignore the Armor Penalty of leather armor altogether. It affects neither your Speed nor your Dexterity.

#### ROGUE'S SPEED

When you wear leather armor or no armor, your Speed increases by 2.

#### SPECIALIZATION

You may pick one specialization allowed by your class (see CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS) and gain the Novice degree of its specialization talent. For this specialization, you do not need to meet the requirements, though it must be available to the Rogue class. Specializations help you customize your character and give them a theme. The specializations available to Rogues are:

Arcane Disciple, Aspect Warrior, Assassin, Bard, Crime Lord, Duelist, Gladiator, Heritage (Divine, Fey, or Infernal), Hunter, Mage Hunter, Mariner and Pirate, Marked, Mystic Navigator, Razor, Sharpshooter, and Spy.

#### STARTING TALENTS

You become a novice in one of the following talents: Contacts, Scouting, or Thievery.





## EVEN-NUMBERED LEVELS

At levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 you gain the following:

### ABILITIES

You gain one ability advancement, which you must spend on a primary ability.

### ADVANCEMENTS

You gain one stunt advancement and one talent advancement. At levels 6, 12, and 18, your stunt advancement can be to select a class stunt from another class (see **Class Stunts** in **CHAPTER 6: STUNTS**).

### FOCUS

You gain one ability focus, selected from your primary abilities.

## ODD-NUMBERED LEVELS

At levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 you gain the following:

### ABILITIES

You gain one ability advancement, which you must spend on a secondary ability.

### ADVANCEMENTS

You gain one specialization talent advancement.

### FOCUS

You gain one ability focus, selected from your secondary abilities.

## LEVEL 4

Select one of the following abilities:

### OPTION 1: TAKE AIM

When you take the Aim minor action, you gain +2 on the attack roll instead of the normal +1.

### OPTION 2: VITAL BLOW

When you take the Aim minor action, you can choose not to gain a +1 bonus to the attack roll. If you do this and the attack hits your opponent, their Armor Rating is halved (round down) against the damage of your attack. If you use Vital Blow with the Pierce Armor stunt, your damage becomes penetrating (thus ignoring AR altogether).

## LEVEL 6

### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

### DAMAGE BONUS

You may add your weapon focus (if you have one) when inflicting damage with a melee or ranged attack.

## LEVEL 7

### STUNNING ATTACK

You can daze opponents with sharp blows to vulnerable areas. To make a stunning attack, you must use the Aim minor action and then hit with a melee or a ranged attack. (This attack can generate stunt points as normal.) If successful, you inflict no damage, but your opponent must make a successful TN 15 Constitution (Stamina) test or gain the **Stunned** condition (see **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**). (The TN for this check increases by 1 for every three levels you gain above 7th, i.e., TN 16 at 10th, TN 17 at 13th, TN 18 at 16th, and TN 19 at 19th level.) A Stunned target can attempt the test again at the start of their turn, and, if successful, they can act normally once more. Otherwise, the only thing a Stunned character can do on their turn is take a single minor action.

## LEVEL 10

### LETHALITY

You use your wits to hit enemies where it hurts. You can add your Intelligence to your damage when making attacks.

## LEVEL 11

### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

### FOCUS BONUS

Your focuses now provide a +3 bonus instead of +2.

## LEVEL 12

### SLIPPERY

You are hard to pin down in combat. Opponents do not gain an attack bonus for outnumbering you in melee combat. Normally, attackers can gain up to a +2 bonus in such circumstances. If you also have the Master degree in the Single Weapon Style, your Defense bonus increases to +3 when fighting in that style.

## LEVEL 16

### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

### STUNT DIE TO DAMAGE

You may add the value of the Stunt Die of your attack test when you use Pinpoint Attack to inflict damage against a creature.

## LEVEL 20

### EPIC ROGUE

Pick one type of stunt (combat, exploration, or social). You gain a +1 stunt point bonus when generating stunt points of that type.



# WARRIOR

The Warrior is the classic fighter for fortune, glory, justice, or survival. Each of them joins the fray with a unique mix of natural strength, rough training, and raw bravery. You can use this class to represent any kind of martial character. Your character could be an ex-soldier, a caravan guard, a mercenary, militia, or a former blacksmith turned adventurer. A Warrior fights for all the reasons people have raised swords against one another: love, honor, revenge, justice, money, a

better tomorrow, or even a devotion to the arts of war. Some members of the Warrior class have received formal training and others fight by instinct. Any Warrior can handle themselves in a scrap.

As a Warrior you'll usually find yourself in the thick of combat. You have access to heavier armor and more weapons than members of any other class, and you can dish out and take a lot of damage. It is often up to you to engage the hardest-hitting enemies, so the Envoys, Rogues and Mages of the group have the chance to use their abilities. If you've never played a tabletop RPG before, the Warrior is a good starter class. Your powers are straightforward, and you have plenty to do in any combat encounter.

**PRIMARY ABILITIES:** Constitution, Dexterity, Fighting, and Strength

**SECONDARY ABILITIES:** Accuracy, Communication, Intelligence, Perception, and Willpower

**STARTING HEALTH:** 30 + Constitution + 1d6

**WEAPON GROUPS:** Brawling, plus any four of the following: Axes, Black Powder, Bludgeons, Bows, Dueling, Heavy Blades, Lances, Light Blades, Polearms, Slings, Spears, or Staves

## CLASS POWERS

Warriors gain the following powers at the specified level.

### LEVEL 1

#### SPECIALIZATION

You may pick one specialization allowed by your class (see CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS) and gain the Novice degree of its specialization talent. For this specialization, you do not need to meet the requirements, though it must be available to the Warrior class. Specializations help you customize your character and give them a theme. The specializations available to Warriors are:

Arcane Disciple, Aspect Warrior, Berserker, Champion, Crime Lord, Duelist, Gladiator, Guardian, Heritage (Divine, Fey, or Infernal), Holy Warrior, Hunter, Knight, Mage Hunter, Mariner and Pirate, Marked, Mystic Navigator, Sharpshooter.

#### STARTING TALENTS

You become a Novice in two of the following talents: Archery Style, Dual Weapon Style, Pole Weapon Style, Single Weapon Style, Throwing Weapon Style, Two-Hander Style, Unarmed Style, Weapon and Shield Style. You also start as a Novice in Armor Training.

### EVEN-NUMBERED LEVELS

At levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 you gain the following:





#### ABILITIES

You gain one ability advancement, which you must spend on a primary ability.

#### ADVANCEMENTS

You gain one stunt advancement and one talent advancement. At levels 6, 12, and 18, your stunt advancement can be to select a class stunt from another class (see **Class Stunts** in **CHAPTER 6: STUNTS**).

#### FOCUS

You gain one ability focus, selected from your primary abilities.

#### ODD-NUMBERED LEVELS

At levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 you gain the following:

#### ABILITIES

You gain one ability advancement, which you must spend on a secondary ability.

#### ADVANCEMENTS

You gain one specialization talent advancement.

#### FOCUS

You gain one ability focus, selected from your secondary abilities.

#### LEVELS 4, 8, AND 12

#### IMPROVED ARMOR RATING

Your Armor Rating increases by 1. If you have no Armor rating it is now 1.

#### NEW WEAPON GROUP

You learn a new weapon group of your choice.

#### LEVEL 6

#### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement.

#### DAMAGE BONUS

You may add your weapon focus (if you have one) when inflicting damage with a melee or ranged attack.

#### LEVEL 10

#### EXPERT STRIKE

Once per round you may inflict an additional 1d6 damage with a successful melee or ranged attack. This cannot be an attack granted by a stunt, such as **Lightning Attack**.

#### LEVEL 11

#### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

#### FOCUS BONUS

Your focuses now provide a +3 bonus instead of +2.

#### LEVEL 15

#### QUICK STRIKE

In any round in which you do not use **Expert Strike**, you can choose instead to make a melee attack vs. an adjacent opponent as a minor action. You do not gain stunt points for this action.

#### LEVEL 16

#### ADVANCEMENT

You gain one Defense advancement (+1 Defense).

#### STUNT DIE TO DAMAGE

You may add the value of the Stunt Die of your attack test when inflicting damage against a creature with a melee or ranged attack.

#### LEVEL 20

#### EPIC WARRIOR

Pick one type of stunt (combat, exploration, or social). You gain a +1 stunt point bonus when generating stunt points of that type.

## CLASS CONCEPTS

*Fantasy AGE* classes are meant to provide broad archetypes for different fantasy adventure heroes. As their specialization lists show, each class encompasses a lot of possibilities. Consider the following examples:

**ENVOY:** Characters primarily described as “charming” or “cunning,” including real-world explorers like Marco Polo, Bungaree, and Zheng He. Envoys from folklore and fiction include crafty-minded Odysseus, upright magistrate Judge Dee, Merry Man Alan-a-Dale, Glen Cook’s Garrett P.I., and Tamora Pierce’s Alianne of Pirate’s Swoop.

**MAGE:** Characters primarily defined by their magical powers, from monks and mystics to wizards and warlocks. The name derives from the ancient Persian Magi, and similar users of magic can be found in many cultures: Abe no Seimei, Abramelin the Mage, Morgan le Fey, Väinämöinen, and Zhang Guolao. Fictional mages include Tomi Adeyemi’s Zélie Adebola, Naomi Novik’s Agnieszka, Michael Moorcock’s Elric, and Mercedes Lackey’s Elspeth.

**ROGUE:** Although rogue says “thief” to many, the class encompasses various characters focused on quickness, cleverness, and agility. Historical examples include the monk Ji Gong and pirates like Anne Bonny and Ching Shih. Rogues from fiction and folklore include Ali Baba, Robin Hood, the Three Musketeers, David Eddings’ Silk, George R.R. Martin’s Arya Stark, and Scott Lynch’s Locke Lamora.

**WARRIOR:** Characters best known for their strength and fighting ability, including demigods like Gilgamesh, Hercules, and Arjun of the Hindu epic Mahabharata. Historical warriors include the Dahomey Amazons, actual warrior princess Khutulun, rebel gladiator Spartacus, the elephant riding Trung Sisters, and Polish knight Zawisza the Black. Warriors from fiction include J.R.R. Tolkien’s Éowyn, Charles R. Saunders’ Imaro, Joe Abercrombie’s Logen Ninefingers, and Sofia Samatar’s Tavis.



## STEP 6

# EQUIPMENT

Player Characters do not start their adventures with much to their names. In play, your character will have a chance to get better equipment but must start with the basics. Think of better gear as something to aspire to. See **CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT** for things you might be able to buy or acquire over time. Characters begin play with the following:

- A backpack and a waterskin
- Traveler's garb. These are worn but durable clothes appropriate for ordinary local weather and mark the wearer as an itinerant, or more pragmatic than fashionable. To make a different statement with your garb, you must purchase suitable items in the **Clothes and Fashion** section of **CHAPTER 4**.
- If you are an Envoy, you get light leather armor and one weapon.
- If you are a Mage, you get one weapon and an arcane device (see class description).
- If you are a Rogue, you get light leather armor and two weapons.
- If you are a Warrior, you get heavy leather armor and three weapons.
- If you choose a bow or crossbow, you get a quiver and 20 arrows or bolts.
- If you have the Weapon and Shield talent, you get a medium shield.



Make sure to pick weapons from weapon groups your character knows. Otherwise, you'll suffer penalties when you wield them, and there will be little point in carrying the weapons around. Also, remember that some weapons have a minimum Strength requirement, so be sure your character is strong enough before picking something like a two-handed sword. You'll also want to write down your armor's Armor Rating on your character record sheet. This is a measure of the armor's protection, and you'll need to know that during combat.

## STARTING WEALTH

Your character also gets an amount of silver pieces to buy additional gear depending on their social class. If you selected your background and social class, you begin with an additional 50 silver pieces. If you rolled your social class and background randomly, the amount of money you begin with is rolled on the following table.

### STARTING MONEY BY SOCIAL CLASS

SOCIAL CLASS	SILVER PIECES
Outsider	15 + 3d6
Lower Class	25 + 3d6
Middle Class	50 + 3d6
Upper Class	100 + 3d6

You'll find a complete list of available items in **CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT**.

### EXAMPLE

*Nicole is ready to outfit her Warrior. She writes on her character sheet that she has a backpack, traveler's garb, and a waterskin. As a Warrior, she gets heavy leather armor and three weapons. She chooses two-handed axe, mace, and crossbow. Since she took a crossbow, she also gets a quiver and 20 bolts. She then rolls 3d6 and gets 12. With her Lower Class background that means she starts with 37 silver (25 + 12). She spends 17 silver on 20 yards of rope, a lantern, and a small tent. That leaves her with 20 silver as the campaign begins, so she has some resources for food, lodging, etc.*

Of course, starting equipment is merely a suggestion and should be tailored to individual campaigns and concepts as needed. A game centering around a group of nobles might have characters who start out with substantially better arms, armor, and resources, while a game where everyone is an escaped slave or prisoner might not even have the modest mount of the equipment described here.

## STEP 7

# DEFENSE AND SPEED

There are two final numbers you need to calculate for your character: **Defense** and **Speed**.

Defense measures how hard it is to hit your character in combat. The higher the Defense, the better. You calculate Defense as follows:



## DEFENSE = 10 + DEXTERITY + SHIELD BONUS (IF APPLICABLE)

Shield bonuses are explained in CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT. For the moment, you just need to know that light shields have a +1 bonus and medium shields a +2 bonus.

### EXAMPLE

*Nicole now calculates her Warrior's Defense. With her Dexterity of 1, her Defense is 11 (10 + 1). Since her primary weapon is the two-handed axe, she can't raise that by using a shield.*

Your Speed determines how many yards you can move in a single move action (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES for more information on actions). Each ancestry has a base Speed, to which you add your Dexterity. Armor may reduce your Speed when worn, as detailed in CHAPTER 4.

### STEP 8

## NAMES

What is a character without a name? Although this step is toward the end of the character creation process, it should not be an afterthought. The right name can be that little something that sums up who the character is or wants to be. Each ancestry description includes some sample names to get you started, but there are thousands of names from dozens of cultures—historical and fictional—from which you can choose. Making up your own is also, of course, an option.

### EXAMPLE

*Nicole needs to name her Warrior, and wants something tied to the values she loves and wants her character to embody. She looks through some lists of names and settles on Brigitte for its many powerful, inspiring mythological and fictional associations.*

### STEP 9

## GOALS AND TIES

Now your character is almost ready to go. Before you jump into your first adventure, though, take a few minutes to think about your character's goals and what ties you might have to other characters in the group. Even if you've made your character on your own, it's a good idea to take these last steps together. Setting up goals and ties as a group allows you to riff off each other and come up with complementary ideas.

## GOALS

Your character can have any number of goals. Try to come up with at least three. Goals usually have something to do with why your character became an adventurer in the first place. It's not a common calling, and certainly not a safe one. These driving forces often translate into one or more goals.

When making your list, try to come up with a mix of short- and long-term goals. Short-term goals are things you want to

focus on now, and long-term goals are of a size and scope that may require years or even decades of struggle. A good GM will take your goals into account when running the game, and the more info the GM has to work with, the better.

So, what makes a good goal? Two things. First, a good goal should help define your character by making explicit what is important. Second, it should provide story hooks your fellow players and the GM can use in play.

### EXAMPLE

*Nicole is nearly finished with her Brigitte. In the first session of the campaign, she gets together with her group to finalize their characters. She decides Brigitte's greatest goal is to overthrow the king who murdered her parents. That's obviously a long-term goal, but one that the GM can get a lot of use out of when coming up with adventures. Brigitte's next goal is to find out more about the political group her parents belonged to. Since she was young when they died, and no one in the orphanage told her anything, she knows little about it. She'd like to know what it was her parents died for. Lastly, Brigitte is looking for her best friend from her days as a soldier. The two were deployed to different units and lost track of each other. Brigitte has no blood family left, so finding this friend represents reclaiming the one she made for herself.*

## TIES

The classic RPG set-up has the group meeting in a tavern and embarking on a series of death-defying quests together despite being virtual strangers. That sort of approach can work if you are developing the characters as the campaign progresses, but the group's cohesion will be stronger if the characters start with some ties. It doesn't mean that all the characters need to know each other before play begins, but they should have *some* connections. Characters might have grown up in the same village, served in the same military unit, or even been romantic rivals. Or they can be distant cousins, chased by a shared enemy, or in debt to the same underworld figure.

You should try to come up with at least one tie for each other Player Character, even if it's a tenuous one. The group bond will grow over time but it's a good idea to plant the seed early, so it can grow.

### EXAMPLE

*The other players in Nicole's group are Kate, who is playing an elf Rogue named Najah, Owen, who is playing the human Envoy Adhar, and Chris, who is playing a gnome Mage named Varuker. The players talk about some potential ties between them. Kate likes the idea of the despotic king from Brigitte's background, so she decides that Najah spent several months in the king's prison for stealing a piece of art that was, in fact, taken by a corrupt official. Chris suggests that Varuker met Brigitte when three bounty hunters attacked the Warrior in a bar, and he used his magic to even the odds. Nicole likes that idea, so they make it so. With that finished, they are ready to play!*





## 2: BASIC RULES

**N**ow that you've made a *Fantasy AGE* character and learned a bit about the game, it's time to play.

This chapter starts with practical advice on being a player, but most of it is concerned with the rules: how to figure out what happens when chance and other special circumstances influence the heroes' path through the adventure. Thus, in this chapter you'll find rules for ability tests, narrative and action time, exploration, social, and action scenes (which include combat), stunts, and healing.

If you feel a bit overwhelmed after reading this chapter, don't worry. You don't need to memorize all this to play. The Game Master (GM) is there to adjudicate the rules, and you'll pick things up along the way. It's better to learn *Fantasy AGE* by playing it. If you're the GM, learn what rules you can, but get straight into running the game as soon as possible.

### THE BASICS OF PLAY

If you've never played a roleplaying game before, you may still be wondering what it means to be a player. Before getting into the nitty-gritty of ability tests and running action scenes, let's take a step back and review the basics.

### YOUR CHARACTER SHEET AND OTHER ESSENTIALS

Your character sheet is the cornerstone of your Player Character, or PC. You'll need it for each and every game session, along with three six-sided dice (*Fantasy AGE* doesn't use

any other kind), one of which should look different from the others. You'll also need something to take notes with. A pencil and some scratch paper is ideal.

Some groups use miniature figures and maps to note where characters are, but you can play *Fantasy AGE* perfectly well without them by imagining where characters and objects are, what some call "theater of the mind." See **Miniatures, Battle Maps, and VTTs** later in this chapter for optional rules your GM can invoke when you're using the aforementioned physical tokens instead. Spare coins, dice, and scrap paper can always be employed for a rough sense of where everyone and everything is, and you don't need any optional rules to use maps or miniatures at all. It's entirely up to the group.

The GM can look at your character sheet at any time, but the other players normally don't need to look at your sheet, and their PCs acting in the world not only don't know what's on your character's sheet but know nothing of rules and numbered ratings. They know that some people are stronger than others, or have training they lack, and so on. Practitioners of magic know arcana and spells exist, but nothing of the dice rolls they use. This is the divide between player knowledge—what you know about the rules, and anything you might have found out outside of adventures in the game world—and character knowledge, which is limited to what the hero you play has experienced in their fictional world. Keeping those two spheres of knowledge separate helps the game run smoothly, and if you're not sure what your character would know about something, ask your GM.



You should ensure that your character sheet is up to date. It's up to you to track Health, experience points, ability increases, new equipment, and other details. When you show up at a session, your character should be ready to go. Health is going to change the most, going up and down as your character gets into fights and heals up. As noted above on taking notes, tracking this on scratch paper is best so you don't have to constantly erase and write new totals on your sheet during play. If your character is wounded at the end of a session, be sure to note your character's current Health for the next session.

## PLAYING ADVENTURES

During a session, you'll play your character through an adventure: a story where your character is one of the heroes (or antiheroes, perhaps). It's the GM's job to present the adventure, and yours to play a leading role in its story.

Each adventure consists of a series of related scenes called encounters. Each encounter builds on the last—they're all part of one story. Some adventures reach a climax and conclusion in one game session—that is, in the period from when you start play, to when you end it. Other adventures may require a few game sessions to finish. These in turn may lead to future adventures, as part of a series of linked stories called a campaign. Over time, your character grows more competent and might change as a person. The GM helps you represent this by either granting a new character level periodically or by awarding experience points at the end of each session. Rules for experience points can be found in **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**.

As the scenes where story action takes place, encounters are the building blocks of an adventure. There are three basic types of encounters in *Fantasy AGE*:

- **ACTION ENCOUNTERS:** These are classic action scenes where characters defy immediate physical dangers. They might battle foes, try to escape a collapsing building, or chase a fleeing cultist through a crowded street—or all the above at the same time!
- **EXPLORATION ENCOUNTERS:** These scenes delve into the world, its puzzles, and dangers that don't so much jump out at you as lie in wait. They include such challenges as searching a grisly sacrificial altar for clues, overcoming natural hazards, avoiding traps, solving puzzles, or slipping into underground lairs without being detected.
- **SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS:** These scenes feature conversation, intrigue, interpersonal drama, romance, and tense interrogations. Characters might interrogate a sly pirate, blend in at a cult ritual in masked regalia, or talk their way out of trouble when the Watch find them somewhere they're not supposed to be.

Each type of encounter has different challenges and rewards. Some require a lot of dice rolling, while others don't need any. Different players may prefer different types of encounters. One may live for the thrill of combat, another for the challenge of problem solving, and a third for getting to know the people who populate the story. Likewise, different

character classes tend to excel at different types of encounters. A good adventure uses all three types of encounters to mix things up and provide something for everyone.

## ACTING IN CHARACTER

During a game session, the GM sets the scene, telling you what people, places, and things are present. The GM portrays any person or creature who isn't a Player Character. For that reason, the GM's characters are often called Non-Player Characters, or NPCs. The GM may describe what your characters experience through their senses, or act in the part of an NPC to communicate with you or other PCs.

Players decide how their characters react to the world around them, including the people and creatures in it, fighting threatening enemies and aiding potential allies. As a player you can describe what your character does, saying, "I don't care if the alley's dark—I run after the goblin anyway." You can also talk as if you're playing the role of your character. You might say, "Stop, thief!" to the goblin before telling the GM you're going to give chase.

If you think there will be confusion as to whether your character is speaking or you're just talking out of character, make it clear by saying who is speaking. Note that everything you say that has to do with the game rules is out of character.

## THE CORE SYSTEM: ABILITY TESTS

If you're called upon to roll dice in *Fantasy AGE*, it will usually be to make a test: a roll to see whether your character succeeds or fails at something. The rules for tests are what most of the game's other rules are based on, so if you know how to roll for tests you'll pick up the rest quickly.

The dice come out whenever a character's action is important to the story and there's a chance it might fail. That's when it's time to roll an ability test. Here's how you do it:

$$3D6 + \text{ABILITY} + \text{FOCUS} = \text{TEST RESULT}$$

It's that simple, but to make sure you completely understand, let's go through the process step by step.

### STEP 1: ROLL 3D6 AND ADD THEM TOGETHER

To perform an ability test, roll three six-sided dice (abbreviated 3d6), all at the same time. You want to roll high to succeed! One of the dice should be a different color or otherwise visually distinct from the other two. This special die is called the Stunt Die (see **The Stunt Die and Stunt Points**). In some tests, the Stunt Die has an important place, allowing you to perform extraordinary feats, or measure how well you succeeded. Add the numbers on all three dice together.

### STEP 2: ADD AN ABILITY

Next, add the ability rating you're testing to the 3d6 roll. If you want to lift something heavy, add Strength. If you want



## THE STUNT DIE AND STUNT POINTS

You always roll three dice when taking an ability test, two dice of one color or style, and one die of another. The visually distinct die is known as the Stunt Die, and it has several uses in the game system. It is used to generate stunt points (SPs), to measure degrees of success, and to break ties. When you see a reference to the Stunt Die, just remember it's the "odd die out" in an ability test.

When doubles come up on certain successful tests, this generates SPs. By "doubles," we mean you roll the same number on any two of your three dice. If your roll succeeded in the first place, you could then use stunt points to pull off special maneuvers or earn extra benefits above and beyond simple success. Stunt points are often used in combat encounters to keep fights dynamic and fun, but you can also use stunt points in exploration and social encounters. Check out **CHAPTER 6: STUNTS** for more information on those options.

### ABILITY (FOCUS) FORMAT

In *Fantasy AGE* we usually note the required ability and appropriate focus for each test, as follows:

#### Ability (Focus)

For example, we might specify that to hit an enemy with an axe, roll Fighting (Axes) against your target's Defense. If you don't have the Fighting (Axes) ability focus, you'd just add your Fighting to the 3d6 roll, and not the additional bonus (usually +2) for the focus.

to hit the bullseye in an archery contest, add Accuracy. The GM will tell you which ability applies, but it's usually self-evident, or specified based on other rules in this book. Actions associated with specific abilities include the following:

- **ACCURACY:** Hitting targets with ranged or lighter hand-to-hand weapons.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Convincing someone to help you, tricking someone, artistic performance, getting information out of someone by talking to them.
- **CONSTITUTION:** Resisting pain, illness, poison, or some forms of magical alterations of your body, or performing physical tasks without getting tired.
- **DEXTERITY:** Initiative tests to see who goes first in a fight, sneaking around, doing anything that requires good motor coordination above all.
- **FIGHTING:** Hitting targets with heavier hand to hand or ranged weapons.
- **INTELLIGENCE:** Knowing and remembering things, as well as reasoning things out.
- **PERCEPTION:** Using your sensory input to find things out, discovering hidden objects, or noticing how someone else is feeling.
- **STRENGTH:** Any action that primarily requires raw muscle power or straightforward athletic ability, such as lifting heavy things or climbing.
- **WILLPOWER:** Resisting fear and magical compulsions, sticking with something emotionally difficult, standing firm in the face of danger.

Beyond these general guidelines the focuses associated with different abilities tell you what they apply to.

### STEP 3: ADD A FOCUS, IF YOU HAVE IT

If your character has an ability focus that applies to the test, add its bonus to the 3d6 + ability total. In most cases, the focus bonus is +2. This increases to +3 if your character is level 11 or higher. That's not common, so it's usually +2. The focus indicates you have special training or a particular aptitude for the actions it covers.

In a few cases, you must have the focus to even attempt something, but these are relatively rare circumstances. In most cases, you can still attempt a test even if you don't have the focus, but you don't get a bonus.

Even if you have several focuses that could apply, you can use only one on a test. You never gain the benefits of more than one focus on an ability test.

### STEP 4: DETERMINE YOUR TEST RESULT

Once you've added the ability and its appropriate focus (if your character has it) to the 3d6 roll, you have your test result.

#### EXAMPLE

*Brigitte is trying to vault over a fence while running. The GM decides this needs a Dexterity test. Brigitte's player rolls 3d6 and gets a 10 (3 + 3 + 4). She then adds her character's Dexterity of 3, and another 2 because she has an applicable focus (Acrobatics). Brigitte's final test result is 15 (10 + 3 + 2).*

A higher result is always better. That's because you'll be comparing your total to a Target Number or an opposed roll. Which one will it be? That depends on the type of test.

## TYPES OF TARGETS

Once you know an ability test's result, you need to compare it against another number to determine if you succeeded. The number you use depends on the type of target: A Target Number or an opposed roll.

### TARGET NUMBERS

A Target Number (abbreviated as TN) is a set number. If your roll equals or exceeds this number, you succeed at the test. In combat, an enemy's Defense rating is the TN you need to meet or exceed with your roll to hit with an attack. This is part of that character or creature's game statistics (see **Combat**). In other situations, the GM sets the TN based on how hard they think the action would be to perform.



## TARGET NUMBERS

TARGET NUMBER	TEST DIFFICULTY	50% CHANCE	90% CHANCE	EXAMPLE
7	Routine	-4	+0	Climbing a tree
9	Easy	-2	+2	Finding the nearest tavern in Breakwater without a guide
11	Average	+0	+4	Running down a crowded alley without tripping
13	Challenging	+2	+6	Fixing a broken sword
15	Hard	+4	+8	Picking the lock of a well-built treasure chest
17	Formidable	+6	+10	Hitting bullseye with a dart on a rocking ship
19	Imposing	+8	+12	Navigating through a storm that only comes once in a generation
21	Epic	+10	+14	Learning a mystic secret by studying an ancient, coded text that's been cursed by forgotten gods.

The **Target Numbers** table lists standard target numbers, a description of the approximate test difficulty as a guideline, and the minimum modifier—a combination of ability rating and focus—needed for a character to have a 50% chance of success, as well as the minimum bonus needed for an approximately 90% chance of success. Note that a focus, with a standard bonus of +2, effectively makes tests involving that focus one level of difficulty easier.

Note that with the exception of combat (rolling against Defense) Target Numbers are used when no creature is actively hindering your attempt to perform the action. If some entity is acting against you, an opposed roll might be more appropriate.

## OPPOSED ROLLS

When your character directly competes with another PC, NPC, monster, or against some dynamic opposing force (such as the malevolent presence in a haunted temple, for instance), the GM would usually call for an opposed test. In this type of test, all competitors roll dice and calculate their test results as shown earlier in this chapter.

The highest test result wins. Depending on the nature of the test, other participants either lose, or do less well, in descending order of test result. For example, in a wagon race down the streets of Breakwater, the highest result comes in first place, while others come in second, third, and so on in order of test result.

Many opposed rolls feature different abilities and focuses, since not all participants in an opposed roll are necessarily doing the same thing. For example, a character trying to catch up with someone traveling through thick woods might roll Perception (Tracking) opposed by their quarry's Intelligence (Navigation) or Dexterity (Stealth), depending on the quarry's exact strategy for avoiding pursuers.

The nature of opposed rolls means the bonus to the roll against your character is based on the opposition's ability rating and whether or not they have a focus. If the Game Master doesn't know what an opponent's bonus would be, they can set a Target Number (see the **Target Numbers** table) and subtract 10. Thus, a challenging competitor in a footrace would have a bonus of +3 (TN 13 - 10), which the GM can break down into a Constitution of 3, or a Constitution of 1 with the Running focus.

## ROUNDING, MULTIPLYING, & STACKING

At times, the rules ask you to come up with a fraction (usually just half) for a die roll, ability rating, or other number that comes up in play. In these situations, round fractions down.

Sometimes the rules ask you to multiply a number. This isn't very common in *Fantasy AGE*, but when it does happen check if it's referring to a static number (like an ability rating) or a dice roll (like damage). If asked to multiply a static number, do so as you normally would. If asked to multiply a dice roll, roll the dice a number of times equal to the multiplier and add all of the results together. The specific situation provides instructions as to whether to add any bonuses more than once.

Finally, there are some situations where you might be affected by multiple bonuses and penalties. The Game Master decides whether these stack on top of each other (so two +2 bonuses become a +4 total, for example) based on the situation. For example, it doesn't make sense for a character who has the Blinded condition (see **Conditions**) to also suffer a penalty to attack an enemy benefiting from Concealment-level cover (see **Cover**).

## OPPOSED ROLLS WITH TARGET NUMBERS

In some cases, the GM can specify that an action uses both an opposed roll and a TN. This is usually in cases where no matter who wins, every participant must avoid misfortune by doing well. For instance, if you are climbing up the rigging of a pirate ship in a contest to see who can reach the top first, the GM may declare it to be an opposed TN 13 Strength (Climbing) test. Anyone who fails the test falls to the deck below, but the person with the highest successful result reaches the top first!

### EXAMPLE

*Brigitte notices a woman taking in the night air on the opposite side of the roof. She wants to quietly sneak to the trapdoor and slip into the building without the woman noticing. The GM decides this is an opposed test of Brigitte's Dexterity (Stealth) vs. the woman's Perception (Hearing). Brigitte's player rolls a test result of 10, and the GM rolls a test result of 12 for the woman. The GM tells Brigitte's player that Brigitte kicked a potted plant she hadn't seen in the dark. As the sound echoes, the woman whips around and sees Brigitte – and Brigitte sees the woman's angry expression in the moonlight.*



## TIED OPPOSED ROLLS

If two participants in an opposed roll tie, whoever rolled higher on the Stunt Die wins. If it's still a tie, whoever has the higher ability wins. If these remain tied, and the nature of the action means there wouldn't be a tied result? Flip a coin.

## MODIFYING DICE ROLLS

Sometimes the rules or the GM modify your dice roll. You can get bonuses for conditions that assist your efforts, and penalties when something hinders your efforts. The general rule is if something affects your character's abilities it's a modifier to your roll, but if something that isn't directly affecting the character makes an action more difficult then it should modify the Target Number or opposed roll. However, since a positive modifier is equivalent to lowering a TN, and a negative modifier is equivalent to increasing the TN, on a 1-to-1 basis Game Masters shouldn't worry too much about adjusting the right thing.

In *Fantasy AGE*, a small modifier can have powerful effects. A +2 or -2 makes an action one difficulty level lower or higher, respectively, on the Target Numbers table.

In the vast majority of cases, bonuses should range from +1 to +3, and penalties should range from -1 to -3. More severe modifiers should only come up in special cases, or where specified by the rules.

## TESTS AND TIME

The GM decides how much time each test takes. This varies from a couple of seconds to an hour or more, depending on the action. Slipping a playing card up your sleeve without anyone seeing is a minor action (see **Action Time**, later in this chapter for more information on types of actions), taking but a moment, while asking around town about a specific person might eat up two hours.

While you most commonly roll tests when you initiate an action, sometimes you roll them as a reaction, or to resist something or someone. If pushed to the edge of a cliff, for instance, you might roll a Dexterity test to avoid falling. If a sorcerer tries to bend your will, you might roll a Willpower (Self-Discipline) test to resist. These sorts of reaction tests usually happen during another character's turn; taking them almost never uses up any time. When it comes around to your turn again, you get to perform actions as usual.

If characters are racing against time the GM might call for an advanced test. See **Advanced Tests** for further details.

## DEGREES OF SUCCESS

Most of the time, you only need to know if you succeeded in your ability test. Sometimes, however, it's important to know how well you succeeded. This is one of the uses of the Stunt Die. Check the dice on your ability test and note the number on the Stunt Die. If your character is level 6 or higher and you have the focus involved with the test, you can add the focus bonus to the Stunt Die when deter-

mining the degree of success. The higher the number, the more impressive your success. A 1 on your Stunt Die means you barely pulled it off, while a 6 or better means you did it flawlessly. (Note that if you failed the test, the result of the Stunt Die is irrelevant.) The GM will then adjudicate what this degree of success represents. It might provide a modifier to related rolls, additional information, more favorable reactions from GM-controlled characters, or sometimes just a flashier description. None of these benefits should be quite as good as anything offered by stunts, and the GM decides what they are.

Your GM states when the result of your Stunt Die is important.

### EXAMPLE

*Brigitte flees the scene of an attempted burglary and wants to stash her sword and robbery gear in an alley while she hides in plain sight at a nearby inn. The burgled lordling will be searching for clues, so the GM wants to know how good a job Brigitte did of hiding her kit. Brigitte's player rolls a successful Dexterity (Legerdemain) test and gets a 5 on the Stunt Die. That means the gear is extremely well hidden. When the noble's thugs search the alley, the GM decides to represent this success by adding 2 to the test's TN. With the added difficulty, none of the thugs find the kit, and Brigitte enjoys her drink in peace.*

## TYPES OF TESTS

The following types of tests will come up in *Fantasy AGE* games. In most cases, you'll be making basic tests, with a scattering of simple tests when your actions can only have a yes/no result. The Game Master will sometimes call for advanced or challenge tests. They require slightly more bookkeeping, but are still straightforward and described in full in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES**.

### SIMPLE TESTS

A simple test pits your roll against a Target Number or opposed roll in situations where you need an easy result, and there's no possibility that success could provide additional in-game benefits. For this reason, a simple test doesn't generate stunt points if you roll doubles, and you can't add stunt points from other sources to enhance one. If you succeed, your character successfully accomplishes the task—that's it. Most simple tests are Initiative, reactions, and simple yes/no answers.

The most common simple test is your Initiative roll (see **Combat**), where all the result does is tell you when it's your turn. Reaction rolls, to avoid an incoming threat or otherwise respond to something without taking an action, are also simple tests unless the GM or rules say otherwise. This includes any die rolls called for by spending stunt points; when you spend stunt points to make a new test, that new test cannot itself earn stunt points.

The GM shouldn't use simple tests in common situations where players would enjoy the possibility of using stunts, which are for most dramatic situations, but they're useful



whenever an easy yes or no answer would be the best thing to find out.

#### EXAMPLE

*While on a ship bound for Breakwater Bay, Brigitte wants to know more about her destination and talks to the crew and other passengers. The GM decides this is a TN 11 Communication (Investigation) simple test. Brigitte has no intention to influence anyone else on the ship and this is too general a query to provide more than basic information. Brigitte has Communication 2 and no applicable focus, and the player rolls 3, 4, and 3 on the dice.  $\text{Communication } 2 + 3 + 4 + 3 = 12$ : success. Brigitte learns the information available about Breakwater Bay. Even though there were two 3s in the roll, the result doesn't generate stunt points because it's just a simple test.*

## BASIC TESTS

Most tests are basic tests. In a basic test, you roll against a Target Number or opposed roll. If you prevail you not only achieve your goal, but you might generate stunt points. If any two dice of the 3d6 you roll land on the same number you gain stunt points equal to the number on the Stunt Die: the visually distinct die we asked you to keep note of in **Your Character Sheet and Other Essentials**. If you gain stunt points, you can spend them on various advantages—stunts—that provide benefits on top of your basic success.

Except for Initiative and tests caused by spending stunt points (both simple tests), almost all tests in combat are basic tests. Most tests in dramatic situations should be basic tests as well. By unlocking the Stunt Die's potential, they help bring out Adventure Game Engine's special characteristics.

## ADVANCED AND CHALLENGE TESTS

Advanced tests are used when an action can be accomplished gradually, or when you're racing against time. A challenge test is a special type of advanced test representing a sequence of actions where time isn't the only factor, but failure has consequences a bit more intense than disappointment or inconvenience. Chases are a common form of challenge test in action-oriented adventures. Other examples include climbing a mountain or breaking into a well-guarded estate. Time may be a factor, but mistakes can be inconvenient at best, deadly at worst...

Full rules for advanced tests and challenge tests (including chases) can be found in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES**. As a player, all you need to know is that during these, the Game Master will ask you to make multiple rolls against a TN, and each time you succeed you add your degree of success to that from prior successful rolls, accumulating progress over time. During a challenge test, failing a roll in this series can have escalating consequences that may hinder your efforts, and sometimes even harm your character.

## COOPERATION

On many occasions, especially in advanced tests, characters want to work together to work faster and achieve





## CHASES

When multiple individuals take the Run or Full Speed major actions, or when the action otherwise shifts to racing and pursuing, it's time for a chase.

Chases are a form of challenge test and covered in **CHAPTER 8** because the Game Master normally sets up the chase for you. Depending on the chase, action might continue round by round, or switch to other time increments. While an acrobatic rooftop pursuit might use rounds, guiding horses through a mountain pass to catch up with a foe might call for a slower pace.



better results. This is not possible in action time, where each individual character's actions are closely tracked. The effects of cooperation depend on the task. Sometimes you need a minimum number of people to get anything done. Sometimes many hands make light work, and sometimes things fall between or outside these circumstances. **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES** provides guidelines for the Game Master, and they'll tell you which rules apply when you work with others on a task.

## MEASURING TIME

When we refer to "time" in *Fantasy AGE* it can mean a few different things.

### REAL TIME

Real time is the passage of time in real life. The rules rarely refer to real time, but sometimes we'll talk about game sessions, which is simply one of the occasions where your friends get together for a few hours to play. There's no set length for game sessions, but many people find two to four hours ideal. Assume the rules are referring to narrative time or action time, not real time, unless specified otherwise.

### NARRATIVE TIME

Narrative time is time as it passes in the game world. It passes at whatever rate the GM or rules say it does. The GM might say, "An hour later, you get where you wanted to go," so that this period passes in just seconds of real time, or might require dice rolls and details so that a few moments of narrative time stretch for minutes. Narrative time includes adventures, which are storylines lasting from beginning to end like the episodes of a TV show, a short story, a chapter in a book, or a story in a single movie. Important scenes in adventures are called encounters. Some spells and other effects may last that long.

### ACTION TIME

Inside each encounter involving combat and other action scenes, time passes in rounds of 15 seconds each.

## WORKING WITH TIME

It is the GM's job to track time in the game, but you should track time-related things that matter to your character, such as how long your spells last. With the exception of five-minute breathers to recover after injuries it's rarely important to track time to the minute. If you tell the GM you want to climb a ridge the response might be, "It takes you about an hour to make the climb." On a voyage, the GM might say, "One week later you dock at the port." While the GM should track this time (a calendar is useful for this) they can skip describing anything that isn't especially exciting.

A typical game will have sections of narrative time interspersed with frenzied action time. When the GM says, "Roll for initiative," it signals that the game is switching to action time.



## ACTION TIME

When swords clash and lightning arcs from a spellcaster's fingertips, *Fantasy AGE* moves into action time. While narrative time is loose, action time is more tightly defined. Once it begins, the GM tracks time in 15-second increments called rounds (so there are 4 rounds in a minute). During each round, every character or creature in the encounter gets an opportunity to participate (called their turn) during which they can take a certain number of actions (see **Actions**, following). Once everyone has taken their turn, the round ends and a new one begins.

When action time begins, the following procedure takes effect.

1. The GM says, "Roll for initiative." Action time is now in effect.
2. Each player makes an initiative roll for their respective characters. This is a simple Dexterity (Initiative) test with no target number—you can't fail at initiative. The GM rolls initiative for each major NPC and each group of minor NPCs (major NPCs act individually, while minor NPCs act together). Note that initiative rolls never generate stunt points, even when the dice score doubles.
3. The GM compares the test results of all the characters and arranges them into an initiative list from the highest total to lowest. This is the order in which characters take their turns on each round of the combat. If there's a tie, whoever rolled higher on the Stunt Die wins. If it's still a tie, whoever has the higher ability wins.
4. The character at the top of the initiative list takes their turn. On their turn, a character can take a major action and a minor action, or two minor actions. Once these actions are resolved, the character's turn is over.
5. The next character on the initiative list takes their turn.
6. Repeat step 5 until each character has taken their turn.
7. Once each character has taken their turn, the round ends and a new one begins. Continue steps 4–7 each round. You do not need to roll initiative each round. The turn order remains set for the duration of the encounter. If new characters join the encounter, they roll initiative at the start of the round they appear and get added to the initiative list.
8. When the encounter ends, the GM declares that action time is over. Narrative time resumes.

### EXAMPLE

*The Warrior Brigitte, her close friend the Mage Alaina, and the Rogue Najah, are investigating an abandoned fortress when four goblins attack them. The players each roll for initiative and the GM rolls once for the goblins (as a group—they act at the same time on the initiative list). Putting the test results in order, the GM writes down the initiative list: Najah 14, Brigitte 12, Goblins 9, and Alaina 8. Najah takes his turn first, followed by Brigitte, the goblins, and Alaina. Then a new round begins with Najah taking another turn, and so on.*

## ACTIONS

When it's your turn in a round, you tell the GM what you want to do. These are categorized into various actions. On your turn, you may select one of the following options.

- You may take one major action and one minor action, or:
- You may take two minor actions.

In addition, you may do anything that the rules or GM say are "reactions," "free actions," or otherwise don't "use up an action." You cannot normally take two major actions.

### MAJOR & MINOR ACTIONS

A **major action** asks the character to make a focused effort, often affecting something or someone that can resist them, and usually requires an ability test. Taking a swing at an enemy, trying to pick a lock in the middle of a fight, and providing first aid to a wounded ally are all examples of major actions.

A **minor action** is not as involved as a major action. It still represents a deliberate effort on the character's part, but usually works automatically with no test involved. Things like running toward a new position, fetching an item from a container, or knocking an arrow to shoot are all examples of minor actions.

You can take these actions in any order, and you can take fewer actions if you like.

### FREE ACTIONS

Some actions take a negligible amount of time. These are known as **free actions**, and they don't count toward your usual action limitations. The rules will note when something is a free action. The GM can always restrict the number of free actions you can take if it wouldn't be realistic for you to perform them all on your turn. You can generally talk as a free action, but since a round is only 15 seconds long what you can say is limited.

### REACTIONS

Finally, some spells, traps, and other situations call for an immediate test to avoid their full effects. These are **reactions**, which take next to no time and don't use up your minor or major actions.

A list of the most common major and minor actions follows. You are not limited to these actions. If you want to do something else, just say so and the GM will adjudicate it. The GM may require you to roll an ability test depending on what you are trying to do.

### VARIABLE ACTIONS

Some **variable actions** may require a major, minor, or free action depending on how they are applied, such as reloading a ranged weapon (which depends on what kind of weapon you're using), and using magic (where the required action depends on the spell you're casting).



## MAJOR ACTIONS

### ALL-OUT ATTACK

You attack one adjacent enemy in hand-to-hand combat, throwing full power behind the attack even though your ability to react to counterattacks will suffer. If you hit, you can choose to replace one of your damage dice with the result of your attack roll's Stunt Die (but are not required to do so, especially should the Stunt Die turn out not to be higher than any of your damage dice). Whether or not this attack hits, you suffer -2 to your Defense until your next turn.

### CHARGE

You move up to half your Speed (rounded up) in yards and finish with a melee attack against an adjacent enemy. You can combine this with a Move minor action. If you moved at least 4 yards in a straight line before reaching your target, you gain a +1 bonus on your attack roll.

### DEFEND

You concentrate on defending yourself this round. Until the beginning of your next turn, you gain a +4 bonus to your Defense.

### FULL SPEED

When sailing, driving a wagon, or operating another large vehicle, the Full Speed action indicates you're devoting your full attention to making it go as fast as possible. Going at Full Speed to flee or pursue triggers a chase, as per **Chases** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES.

### HEAL

You provide quick medical assistance to an injured ally. You must be adjacent to your ally and have some source of bandages (a healer's kit, or even just ripping your cloak into strips). This is a TN 11 Intelligence (Healing) test. If you succeed, your ally gets back an amount of Health equal to the Stunt Die + your Intelligence (minimum 1 Health point). A character cannot benefit from another Heal action until they take additional damage.

### MELEE ATTACK

You attack one adjacent enemy in hand-to-hand combat. An enemy within 2 yards of you is considered adjacent.

### RANGED ATTACK

You shoot or throw a missile weapon at one visible enemy within range.

### RUN

You move up to double your Speed in yards. If riding a mount, you may urge it forward up to double its Speed. You cannot use Run and the Move minor action in the same turn except under the conditions listed with the **Move** action, on the following page.

### STUNT ATTACK

Instead of trying to simply damage an opponent, you focus on performing a specific action stunt, like attempting to subdue an enemy with a hold. Roll an attack as usual. A successful attack awards you 2 automatic stunt points of a type appropriate for the attack, but inflicts no damage. If you roll doubles you earn stunt points equal to the Stunt Die result or 2 SP, whichever is more. If you score doubles you may choose a stunt that damages your opponent, but the base attack still inflicts 0 damage.

Given the complexities of combat, with feinting, positioning, and redirects all as important as direct attacks, normally a Stunt Attack can be attempted with any weapon you have available—you can make a Stunt Attack with a sword even if you plan to use the stunt points to skirmish the foe, you don't have to make a Brawling attack just because you want to shove someone. You may attempt Stunt Attacks against objects as well as opponents, though the GM may rule that some stunts do not apply. See **Attacking Objects** in this chapter for more information.

## STUNT ATTACKS OUTSIDE OF COMBAT

Stunt attacks are designed specifically for use in combat because they represent a trade off: giving up the chance to damage a foe in order to attempt something more complex. Of course, players may want to try using Stunt Attacks for social and exploration stunts, but whether such efforts are allowed is entirely up to the GM. As a general guideline, a player should only expect to be able to attempt a Stunt Attack in noncombat situations if they can sacrifice some other useful option to do so—if a royal fete offers only so many opportunities to impress people, a player might well be allowed to give up one such opportunity to attempt a Stunt Attack for a social stunt. The GM ascribes a test difficulty or picks an opposed test based on the situation, and the available stunts depend on which fit what's happening in the story.



## MINOR ACTIONS

### ACTIVATE

This action allows you to start using certain abilities or items, such as a magical device. The specific spell, item, or other circumstance determines whether you use the Activate action once, after which it runs for its duration, or must be used each round. The specific rules in each case will tell you which.

### AIM

You take the measure of your opponent and plan your next strike. If your next action is a Melee Attack or Ranged Attack, you gain a +1 bonus on your attack roll.

### GUARD UP

You are ready to defend and counterattack. You gain a +1 bonus to your Defense until your next turn. You may not use Guard Up and the Defend major action in the same turn.

### MOVE

You move up to your Speed in yards and can combine this with actions like falling Prone, standing up, mounting a horse, or climbing aboard a vehicle, but these actions consume half your Speed (rounded up). While engaged in a chase (see **Chases** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES) you can only use Move to perform actions such as mounting a steed, entering a vehicle, or standing from or dropping to a Prone position. You do not then gain half your Speed because the chase assumes you're already moving as fast as you can.

### PREPARE

When you take this action, you postpone your major action to use at a later point. You declare one major action and your choice to Prepare it. After you do so, the next person in initiative order acts, and so on, but at any time until the start of your next turn, you can interrupt another character and take your prepared action immediately. If you don't use the prepared action by your next turn, you lose it.

### PRESS THE ATTACK

You stand ready to pursue an enemy if they fall back or flee. You can take this action after successfully striking an enemy target with a melee attack (whether you inflict damage or not). After you declare this action, if that enemy moves away from you, you may immediately move up to your Speed in yards in direct pursuit at no additional cost in actions. This occurs immediately after your foe's movement and before they can do anything else. Your movement need not bring you adjacent to that enemy if you can't go that fast. In that case, you simply move as far as you can before you stop. You can decide to forego some or all the movement this action allows when your enemy triggers it.

### READY

You draw a weapon or otherwise ready an item that is stowed. As part of this action, you can also put away something you already have in hand. You could, for instance, sheathe a sword and pull out a bow.

### STAND FAST

You brace yourself to counter your foe's tricks and tactics. Until your next turn, when an enemy wants to affect you with basic combat stunts, or other stunts that would move or injure you, they must spend 1 SP to get past your guard before spending additional SP on those stunts.

## VARIABLE ACTIONS

### CAST A SPELL/USE A POWER

You attempt to cast a spell or use another special ability. This may be a major action, minor action, or free action depending on the power and the use of any related stunt and may require a specific ability test. Consult the text of each spell or power.

### RELOAD

You reload a missile weapon. This may be a major action, minor action, or free action depending on the weapon, the stunts used, and your talents.





## COMBAT

When words fail, fists, blades, arrows, and crackling magic might win the day. That means combat, which takes place during action time, round by round.

Like everything else in *Fantasy AGE*, the core of combat is the ability test. The most common type of test is called an attack roll and is used to try to hit an opponent. This section shows you how to make attacks and inflict damage—and it tells you what it takes to defeat an opponent.

## MOVEMENT

In combat and other round-by-round action encounters, your Speed rating and the actions you take determine how far you can move. Even though a round is 15 seconds long, characters are assumed to move at a pace that allows them to remain wary of danger.

- A **Charge** major action lets you move half your Speed (rounded up) in yards and make an attack.
- A **Run** major action lets you move double your Speed in yards. When several individuals take this and/or the **Full Speed** vehicle action this triggers a chase, designed by the Game Master, and covered in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES**. You can't combine this with the Move minor action on your turn.
- A **Move** minor action lets you move your Speed in yards. You can't combine this with the Run major action on your

turn. You can also use Move to stand up from Prone, fall Prone, enter a vehicle, or mount a riding animal at the cost of half your Speed (rounded up).

In addition, certain stunts, such as Skirmish, and various talents, qualities, and other abilities may modify or add movement, as stated by their individual rules.

Note that movement sometimes involves rounding fractions up, instead of the usual practice of rounding game values down.

## ROUGH TERRAIN

The GM may say some areas are rough terrain. Examples include muddy ground, rocky, uneven ground, or going up a slope that isn't steep enough to require a Strength (Climbing) test, but still slows you down. Every yard of movement on rough terrain counts as 2 yards for the purpose of calculating how far you can go.

### EXAMPLE

*Najah has a Speed of 13 and crosses 4 yards of rough terrain. This counts as having used 8 yards of movement if Najah had been on normal terrain instead, so she can only move another 5 yards total with a Move action.*

## MOVEMENT TESTS

Ordinary and rough terrain should fit the vast majority of terrain types characters encounter. Anything else is usually a hazard that inflicts damage or a condition a test might let you



reduce or avoid. Or it can be something that requires a test to traverse at all, such as Strength (Climbing) to get over a wall, or Dexterity (Acrobatics) to cross a tightrope.

## CHASES

When multiple characters or creatures take Run or Full Speed actions to race or in pursuit of one another, the GM switches to the rules for chases in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES. Movement becomes abstracted at this point, as all participants are moving as fast as they can and attempting various maneuvers to avoid pursuers or close in on the pursued.

## MAKING ATTACKS

To deliver an attack with a weapon or unarmed blow, follow these steps. (Combat magic is covered in CHAPTER 5: MAGIC.)

1. Start by picking a target. To make a melee attack, you must be adjacent to your opponent (within 2 yards of your target). To make a ranged attack, you must be able to see your target and be within range. See CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT for more information about weapon ranges.
2. Make an attack roll. This is a basic ability test based on the weapon group of the weapon you are using (Fighting for a battle axe, for instance, or Accuracy for a bow). This is modified by a focus, if applicable, and any other relevant bonuses (such as aiming, charging, special items, talents, etc.). Your Target Number is your opponent's Defense.
3. If your test result is equal to or greater than your opponent's Defense, your attack hits.

### EXAMPLE

*It's Brigitte's turn. She sees the footpad that robbed her close friend Aliana 4 yards away and uses the Charge action to close the distance and punch the footpad. Brigitte's player makes an attack roll. This is an Accuracy (Brawling) test, which is right up Brigitte's alley thanks to her experience as a street fighter. The roll is a 9, and she gets +3 for her Accuracy ability, +2 because she has the Brawling focus, and another +1 for charging. Her test result for the attack roll totals 15 (9 + 3 + 2 + 1). This beats the footpad's 11 Defense, so Brigitte connects with her fist.*

## MELEE AND RANGED ATTACKS

The two basic types of attack are melee and ranged.

- **MELEE ATTACKS:** These represent hand-to-hand strikes with fists, feet, swords, daggers—weapons you don't throw or shoot, at least while in this type of close combat. You can usually make a melee attack against enemies who are within 2 yards of you.
- **RANGED ATTACKS:** These represent thrown or shot weapons, such as hurled knives, spears, grenades, loosed arrows, crossbow bolts, sling bullets, or the use of firearms such as the arquebus. The specific weapon determines whether an attack is within short range (attack roll has no penalty) or long range (attack roll takes a -2

## MISSILE WEAPON RANGES

WEAPON	SHORT RANGE	LONG RANGE	RELOAD
Arquebus	12 yards	24 yards	Major Action
Blunderbuss	6 yards*	—	Major Action
Crossbow	30 yards	60 yards	Major Action
Fustibale	14 yards	28 yards	Minor Action
Grenade**	4 yards	8 yards	Minor Action
Hunting Sling	12 yards	24 yards	Minor Action
Long Bow	26 yards	52 yards	Minor Action
Musket	24 yards	48 yards	Major Action
Pistol	8 yards	16 yards	Major Action
Short Bow	16 yards	32 yards	Minor Action
Slingshot	10 yards	20 yards	Minor Action
Throwing Axe	4 yards	8 yards	Minor Action
Throwing Knife	6 yards	12 yards	Minor Action
Throwing Spear	8 yards	16 yards	Minor Action

\* Shot is 2 yards wide; see weapon description for details.

\*\* Terminates in a blast; see weapon description for details.

penalty), as listed on the **Missile Weapon Ranges** table here and in CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT.

Some weapons can be used for both melee and ranged attacks. This doesn't change the ability, focus, or damage modifier used. For instance, throwing a spear uses Fighting (Spears) for attack rolls and uses Strength to modify damage whether used in melee or ranged combat.

## INFLICTING DAMAGE

Once you've hit an opponent, you inflict damage unless you're performing some special move, like a Stunt Attack. Your damage roll determines if you struck a telling blow or one that was glancing and ineffectual. Armor is important here as it protects the wearer from a certain amount of damage. The procedure for calculating damage follows.

1. Roll your weapon's damage and add any other relevant modifiers (such as talents and extraordinary powers). Add your Strength ability to damage with Fighting-based attacks and your Perception ability for damage with Accuracy-based attacks. You can find the damage for each weapon in CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT. In various circumstances, gaining levels in a class may increase the damage you inflict. See CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION for details and note them on your character sheet.
2. Subtract your opponent's Armor Rating from the attack. To review the different kinds of armor and their ratings, see CHAPTER 4.
3. The result of steps 1 and 2 is your damage total. The GM deducts this amount from your opponent's current Health. Note that if your opponent is well-armored, you may hit but inflict no damage.



### EXAMPLE

*Brigitte smashes her fist into the footpad's gut! The punch is an unarmed attack with a damage of 1d3, so Brigitte's player rolls 1d3 and gets a 2. She adds Brigitte's Perception of 3 for a total of 5. The footpad is wearing light leather armor, which has an Armor Rating of 3. The damage total is 2 (2 + 3 = 5, - 3), so the GM deducts 2 from the footpad's Health.*

When any form of damage reduces your Health to 0, you're defeated. What happens next depends on your attacker's intentions and the Game Master. Similarly, if you reduce an enemy's Health to 0, you decide their fate. See **Defeat** for more information.

## DAMAGE TYPES

In some cases, rules such as spell, hazard, and adversary descriptions will note that the damage represents a specific harmful force or element, such as fire damage, ice damage, acid damage, and so on. However, *Fantasy AGE* doesn't have strict damage types beyond standard and penetrating, and these descriptions tell you how the source of damage manifests in the world of the game. Some creatures are vulnerable to some types of damage or resistant to others, and various other effects may be linked to it. In these cases, the Game Master looks at how the damage is described versus how any special property is described, and then decides whether one applies to the other. For instance, an ice creature that is described as vulnerable to fire might also be vulnerable to damage described as "heat," even if there are no open flames involved, because the GM decides it's logical.

## NORMAL AND PENETRATING DAMAGE

*Fantasy AGE*'s two formal damage types are **normal damage** (usually just called "damage"), which character and creature Armor Ratings can normally reduce, and **penetrating damage**, which Armor Rating doesn't reduce.

- **NORMAL DAMAGE:** This is the kind inflicted by blades, fists, arrows, and other implements and moves meant to hurt through raw kinetic energy. When you're struck by these attacks reduce their damage by your Armor Rating,

COVER			
COVER RATING*	ATTACKS INTO COVER	ATTACKS OUT OF COVER	EXAMPLES
1	-1 attack	0 attack	Concealment: Mist, Smoke, Curtains, etc.
2	-2 attack	-1 attack	Light Cover: Underbrush, Windows, etc.
3	-3 attack	-2 attack	Heavy Cover: Thick Woods, Doors, etc.
Total	Can't be attacked	Can't attack	Total Cover: Behind a Wall

\* If an attack does penetrating damage or can pass through cover, reduce its rating by 1 for the purposes of penalizing the attack, to a minimum rating of 1/Concealment

whether it's from worn armor, magic, or other sources. The GM can decide armor has partial or no effect because of the way a form of damage is described; a poison may not list a damage source, but if you drink it your armor obviously won't help you. However, if anything would go through a character's armor (or equivalent for those with special qualities or magic items that provide an Armor Rating) it usually inflicts standard damage unless the rules specifically say it's penetrating damage.

- **PENETRATING DAMAGE:** This kind of damage ignores Armor Rating—it doesn't reduce it by its value—and comes from special weapons, hazards, and abilities. Very few things reduce penetrating damage.

## USING DEFENSE

You usually don't have to take any action to avoid attacks. It's a reflex and covered by your Defense rating. You might take actions to modify your Defense, however, such as **Defend**, **Guard Up**, or a **Stunt Attack** that boosts your Defense.

## SHIELDS AND ACTIVE DEFENSES

Characters must be aware of attacks to use shields to defend against them, and they must be able to place the shield between themselves and an incoming blow. They don't need to know the exact angle and source of an attack since the whole point of using a shield is that its large surface area allows for less exact defenses. Still, against surprise or back attacks a character loses their shield's Defense bonus. The same thing applies for other "active" supplements to Defense.

However, once a character has been attacked once by surprise or from behind (successfully or not, unless the attack not only missed but went entirely unnoticed!) they regain their shield bonus against subsequent attacks from the same direction or event.

## USING COVER

Characters take cover to avoid ranged attacks by crouching behind objects, crouching in thick foliage, and so on. Cover imposes a penalty against all ranged attacks, but if you use it cover penalizes your ranged attacks as well, hindering your perception and ability to operate your weapon. Total cover, where you are completely hidden, prevents you from attacking or being attacked by ranged attacks unless they inflict penetrating damage or the GM rules they can pass through the cover. If an attack inflicts penetrating damage or can otherwise pass through whatever a character is using for cover, reduce its rating by 1 for the purposes of penalizing the attack, to a minimum rating of 1.

See the **Cover** table for ratings and descriptions.

## ATTACK ROLLS & CIRCUMSTANCE

The Game Master can also assign bonuses and penalties to the attack roll to reflect the circumstances of the encounter, just as you do in opposed tests. In general, these bonuses and penal-





ties should range from 1 to 3. They can account for anything that would affect the attacker's ability to hit the target, such as lighting, terrain, and tactics. Some modifiers, such as for cover, are already noted elsewhere. In cases where a disadvantage might be more complex than a modifier, the GM might assign a condition (see **Conditions**) instead.

Beyond modifiers and conditions, the GM can always use common sense criteria to decide that certain actions not explicitly banned by the rules are still impossible. For example, it's pretty much impossible to use a fustibale (staff sling) in melee combat, since it requires room to swing and aim properly.

The **Attack Roll Modifiers** table describes the standard adjustments to attack rolls in various situations.

## CONDITIONS

Some attacks and other threats have effects other than damage. This is the case with certain stunts, spells, and the special qualities of various creatures. These use whichever rules are listed with them. In some cases, however, the disadvantages they impose are standardized as conditions.

### GENERAL DISADVANTAGE

The GM doesn't need to impose conditions in cases where a simple penalty will do. As noted in **Modifying Dice Rolls**, a -1 to -3 penalty to actions is often appropriate when the Game Master thinks something might interfere with a character's ability to act. Use conditions only when more complicated effects are necessary.

### CONDITION FORMAT

Conditions use the following format.

### ATTACK ROLL MODIFIERS

MODIFIER	CIRCUMSTANCE
Blinded Condition	Combatant is in impenetrable darkness, such as in an underground cave.
-3	Melee attacker in heavy snow, ranged attacker on a cloudy night. Fighting with hands tied.
-2	Fighting during a starry night, or in thick foliage.
-2	Ranged attack while threatened by enemies at melee range.
-1	Combat in low light conditions, such as a moonlit night.
0	Normal circumstances.
+1	Attacker is on higher ground. Melee attacker and allies outnumber defender 2 to 1.
+2	Melee attacker and allies outnumber defender 3 to 1. Defender is drunk.
+3	Defender is unaware of the attack.

### NAME OF CONDITION

Descriptions begin with a summary of the condition.

**EFFECT:** This lists the rules effects of the condition

**VARIANT (OPTIONAL):** Some conditions possess a variant that slightly modifies their effects. If this is the case, it is noted here.

**RECOVERY:** This lists the ways in which a condition might stop affecting a character. If the description says, "based on circumstance," the condition's duration and other factors affecting recovery depend on what caused the condition, whether they're specified in a hazard, spell, or special quality, or determined by the GM.



## COMMON CONDITIONS

The following are descriptions of common conditions in *Fantasy AGE*. Game Masters should feel free to come up with their own additional conditions using these as a basis, or to modify these conditions as best suits their campaign.

### BLINDED

You cannot see.

**EFFECT:** A Blinded character automatically fails ability tests reliant on sight, such as Perception (Seeing). Fighting while Blinded imposes a -5 penalty to attacks and other actions, and your Defense is reduced by 5. Ranged attacks made while Blinded simply fail. Individuals used to severe visual impairment may experience reduced penalties from this condition at the Game Master's discretion.

**RECOVERY:** Unless otherwise noted, you lose this condition when healing increases your current Health to at least half of its maximum. If your Health is already at half its maximum or higher, the next instance of healing removes this condition. This condition can also be inflicted as a Scar (see **Scarred**).

### CONFUSED

You have irrational thoughts which make your actions erratic.

**EFFECT:** When Confused, roll a TN 15 Willpower (Self-Discipline) test at the start of each of your turns as a reaction and simple test. If you fail, the GM gives you false information which you find totally convincing and which you must use as the basis for your decisions, even if it seems totally irrational. You cannot be persuaded to harm yourself, though you can be prompted to take risky actions.

**RECOVERY:** Based on circumstance. When the cause is a failed horror test (see CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES), the condition lasts for 2d6 rounds.

### DEAFENED

You cannot hear.

**EFFECT:** A Deafened character automatically fails ability tests reliant on hearing, such as Perception (Hearing). The character suffers a -5 penalty to Defense against any opponent they cannot see.

**RECOVERY:** Unless otherwise noted, you lose this condition when healing increases your current Health to at least half of its maximum. If your Health is already at half its maximum or higher, the next instance of healing removes this condition. This condition can also be inflicted as a Scar (see **Scarred**).

### DEFENSELESS

Your ability to protect yourself from attacks is seriously impaired due to physical or mental interference. A GM may decide a character who is totally bound or unable to act in any way to protect themselves is Defenseless.

**EFFECT:** A Defenseless character loses their Dexterity bonus to Defense and suffers a -3 penalty to their Defense rating after that. If a character is bound and Defenseless (such as being tied up, manacled, caught in a net, and so on, in addition to being Defenseless), they are vulnerable to a coup de grace (see **Coup de Grace**).

**RECOVERY:** Based on circumstance. If an ability makes a target Defenseless and does not list a duration, they are Defenseless for 1 round.

### DYING

You will perish soon without aid. This normally happens when you are at 0 Health (see **Defeat and Death**). You are vulnerable to a coup de grace (see **Coup de Grace**).

**EFFECT:** Your current Health drops to 0 if it is not at 0 already. You risk death after 4 + Constitution rounds (at the end of the final round) unless you are healed to above 0 Health. If you are conscious, you can talk but cannot take any other actions. At the end of the final round, you make a TN 13 Constitution (Stamina) test. If you fail, you die. If you succeed you are Unconscious (see **Unconscious**) for 1 hour (unless healed) but no longer Dying, at which point you must attempt another TN 13 Constitution (Stamina) test with the same results, except that if you generate

stunt points on the second or subsequent tests you stop being Unconscious.

**RECOVERY:** You lose this condition as soon as an ally's action or other beneficial event raises your current Health to 1 or higher, or you make a successful Constitution (Stamina) check after an hour.

### FATIGUED

You are drained of physical and mental energy.

**EFFECT:** You gain one degree of Fatigued. You can gain this condition multiple times, with cumulative effects: each time, you gain an additional degree. Fatigued effects are as follows:

- *1st Degree – Winded:* The character has a -1 penalty to all tests and cannot Run or Charge.
- *2nd Degree – Tired:* The character has a -2 penalty to all tests, cannot Run or Charge, and moves at half normal Speed.
- *3rd Degree – Exhausted:* The character is nearly spent. An Exhausted character has a -3 penalty to all tests, moves at half their normal Speed, and cannot Run or Charge. Additionally, if the character loses more than half their total Health while Exhausted, they gain the Unconscious condition. If the character was already at half their total Health or less when they became Exhausted, they become Unconscious as soon as they take additional damage.

The first degree of Fatigued can be inflicted as a Scar (see **Scarred**). With such a Scar, when you gain a degree of Fatigued, you go from Winded to Tired, and can recover back to only Winded.

**RECOVERY:** You can recover from being Winded with a breather, shift from Tired to Winded with a light rest and remove the Tired condition, or move from Exhausted to Tired, with a total rest. See **Healing and Recovery** for details.



## FRIGHTENED

Fear diminishes your competence.

**EFFECT:** You are afraid of a specific person, place, or object. Until this fear subsides, you must use one of your actions to move away from the source of your fear or suffer a -3 penalty to all ability tests, with the exception of any tests required to remove obstacles to your retreat. If you are cornered by the source of your fear you do not suffer any penalty to your actions as long as they're intended to help you defend yourself or find an escape route.

NPCs gain the Frightened condition upon failing a Morale check (see **Morale** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES), with their foes being the source of their fear.

**RECOVERY:** When the cause is a failed horror test, the condition lasts for 2d6 rounds. Otherwise, based on circumstance.

## HELPLESS

You are almost entirely unable to act. This is a Defeat Condition, and it should be virtually never be inflicted outside defeat.

**EFFECT:** You are conscious but can't take minor or major actions, including those which require only mental effort, though you can take reactions (such as rolling to avoid damage) and free actions (such as speaking). You can stagger or crawl 2 yards per round.

**RECOVERY:** If you gained this condition because your current Health dropped to 0, you lose it as soon as your current Health recovers to 1 or higher. Otherwise, based on circumstance.

## HINDERED

Your actions are moderately impaired.

**EFFECT:** You lose one of your minor actions, so that you may only take a single major or minor action on your turn.

**VARIANT—INFLUENCED:** You may be Influenced instead of Hindered. In this case, the GM controls what you do on your minor action. This may be the result of confusion, magical mind control, or other extraordinary situations. The GM decides whether you remember the actions you take while influenced. Outside of action

time, the GM may impel you to take any action that would consume no more than one-third of your time and cannot compel you to injure yourself or anyone else.

**RECOVERY:** Based on circumstance.

## PRONE

You're lying on the ground.

**EFFECT:** Prone characters can only crawl 1 + Dexterity (minimum 1) yards as their Move action unless they stand (see **Recovery**). Prone characters cannot use the Run major action on any turn where they are Prone, even if they get up. Characters get a +1 bonus to melee attacks against Prone characters but suffer a -1 penalty to ranged attacks against them.

**RECOVERY:** Unless you're unable, a Move minor action allows you to stand, though that uses up half your Speed, limiting you to half your normal Move.

## SCARRED

You have a wound that resists all normal healing.

**EFFECT:** When you are Scarred you suffer some mark or other condition that you cannot easily heal from or remove. A scar can be as simple as a mark on you that you cannot remove and must disguise if you wish it to not be noticed. A GM may also decide to have a scar be represented with a persistent general disadvantage (see **General Disadvantage**, in this chapter), or by a -2 penalty to one ability. A scar can also be a persistent version of another condition (normally Blinded, Deafened, Fatigued, or Slowed). If the Scarred condition is inflicted by an ability that does not specify the kind of scar, the GM selects a condition for the scar based on the circumstances.

The Scarred condition is normally the consequence of either a special ability or being defeated by a creature or hazard (see **Defeat and Death**, in this chapter).

**RECOVERY:** The Scarred condition is not normally recovered except by spells, abilities, or items that specifically say they can end the condition. In a world with powerful magic, creatures, and lore, there should always be some way to remove a scar if you look for it long and hard enough, but that is entirely the GM's purview.

## SLOWED

Your ability to move is impaired.

**EFFECT:** Your Speed drops by half and you suffer a -3 penalty to Chase Tests (see **Chases** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES) that rely on your personal muscle power, and -3 to your current initiative rating. This condition can also be inflicted as a Scar (see **Scarred**), indicating an injury which hinders your movement.

**RECOVERY:** Based on circumstance.

## STUNNED

Your ability to act is seriously impaired.

**EFFECT:** You lose your major action. You may only take one minor action each round.

**VARIANT—CONTROLLED:** You may be controlled instead of impaired. In this case, the GM controls what you do on your major action. This may be the result of serious confusion, strong magical influence over your actions, or other extraordinary situations. The GM decides whether you remember the actions you take while controlled. Outside of action time, the GM may impel you to take any action that would consume no more than half of your time. You may be forced to injure another, but not yourself, and you cannot be forced to kill anyone.

**RECOVERY:** Based on circumstance.

## UNCONSCIOUS

You lose consciousness. You are vulnerable to a coup de grace (see **Coup de Grace**). This may happen if your health is dropped to 0.

**EFFECT:** As you are Unconscious you cannot take actions of any kind. You do not perceive any details of the events around you, though a successful Perception test at -10 allows you to notice particularly loud, sudden, or painful events (such as being slapped).

**RECOVERY:** If you gained this condition because your current Health dropped to 0, you lose it as soon as your current Health recovers to 1 or higher. If you are merely sleeping with no outside influence, succeeding at a Perception test as noted above wakes you. Otherwise, based on circumstance.



## DEFEAT AND DEATH

Health is an abstract measurement of your character's toughness, ability to survive illness and injury, and general fighting mettle. In combat, losing Health may represent a sword wound, getting battered with blunt force, straining against being grabbed, or even suffering stress in the face of danger.

When your Health drops to 0, your final reserves give out. You've been **defeated**. Similarly, when you whittle an enemy's Health down to 0, you've defeated them, and they're at your mercy. You might kill them—or you might show some mercy.

### AT 0 HEALTH

Nothing can reduce your Health below 0. Anything that might do so drops it to 0 instead, and attacks on a 0 Health target do not inflict damage in the usual sense. Instead, any further injury might inflict a coup de grace (see **Coup de Grace**, following). You cannot be at 0 Health without gaining a Defeat Condition, which renders you vulnerable to a coup de grace. Finally, at 0 Health, you can't take a breather to recover Health. Others must heal you, or you must take a light or total rest.

### DEFEAT CONDITIONS

When a character drops to 0 Health from an attack, they take a Defeat Condition of the attacker's choice, subject to GM approval. If the character drops to 0 Health because of an environmental hazard or other mindless force, the GM decides which condition applies. These Defeat Conditions are listed in **Conditions** but are summarized here too, as follows.

#### DYING

You are Unconscious and risk death after 4 + Constitution rounds (at the end of the final round) unless you are healed to above 0 Health. At the end of the final round you make a TN 13 Constitution (Stamina) test. If you fail, you die. If you succeed you are Unconscious (as the condition) for 1 hour (unless healed), at which point you must attempt another TN 13 Constitution (Stamina) test with the same results, except that if you generate stunt points on the second or subsequent tests you stop being Unconscious. If you are conscious while Dying you can talk but cannot take any other actions.

#### HELPLESS

You can't take minor or major actions, including those which require only mental effort, but can take reactions (such as rolling to avoid damage) and free actions (such as speaking). You can stagger or crawl two yards per round.

#### UNCONSCIOUS

You cannot take actions of any kind or perceive events around you.

## RECOVERING FROM DEFEAT CONDITIONS

You lose a Defeat Condition when your current Health recovers to 1 or higher. As noted, you cannot regain Health from a breather if your current total is 0. Furthermore, any Defeat Condition renders you vulnerable to a coup de grace.

### COUP DE GRACE

Coup de grace is French for "blow of mercy," but in *Fantasy AGE* it encompasses several actions you may take against foes who have Defeat Conditions. Each coup de grace requires a major action. In addition to attacks, characters at 0 Health can suffer a coup de grace from a hazard, spell, or other special circumstance. In these cases, the method of harm uses its normal rules, and if it would have inflicted damage to the 0 Health character, it instead inflicts a coup de grace of the Game Master's choosing from the following.

#### CAPTURE

You bind your fallen foe with rope, manacles, or something else that restricts their ability to freely move. Roll Dexterity (Crafting) or Accuracy (Brawling). Your captured foe must beat this roll in an opposed test to escape by using Dexterity (Legerdemain) or Strength (Might) as a major action to escape. If you use restraints that can be opened using a key, your captured foe may roll Dexterity (Lockpicking) instead, at a TN based on the quality of the lock. To escape at all, your captive must be able to take actions, so they cannot make the attempt while their Defeat Condition remains in force.

#### KILL

Using an appropriate weapon or other method, you kill your enemy. With a hand-to-hand attack, this is automatically successful. With a ranged weapon, you must make an attack roll against Defense 10, regardless of the target's normal Defense.

#### SCAR

You impose a Scarred condition on your fallen foe. In melee range, you inflict the Scar of your choice. With a ranged weapon, you must make an attack roll against Defense 10, regardless of the target's normal Defense. Only the most villainous characters would inflict anything more serious than a cosmetic scar on a defeated foe.

### SIMPLE DEFEAT

Extras (see **Extras** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES) and any other minor Non-Player Character the Game Master allows can either be killed instantly upon being reduced to 0 Health, or otherwise disposed of so that they never bother the Player Characters again—knocked Unconscious, they do *not* come looking for revenge, for instance. GMs can often keep the story focused by saying a foe has suffered a simple defeat, which tells you not to worry about them again and look to the next challenge.





## ATTACKING OBJECTS

There are times you might want to cut the wheel off a cart or kick in a door. Attacking an object in combat is much like attacking a living opponent. You make an attack roll as usual, but instead of Defense ratings, objects use Target Numbers based on their size. Use the **Object Target Numbers** table as a guide.

The GM may modify your roll if the object is moving or other factors would apply. In addition, if you're adjacent to the object and it isn't moving, it's easier to hit; you get a +5 bonus to your attack roll – after all, it's easy to hit a shed with a hammer if you're standing right in front of it.

In some cases, an attack roll isn't always appropriate. If the object would be easy to hit, or what you want to do is to disable or modify it instead of just wrecking it, a simple or basic test might be called for instead. The GM decides which game system to use. Finally, note that some stunts bypass the rules here; use the rules listed for the stunt instead of those in this section.

If you attack an object as part of a stunt then the attack has whatever effect the stunt designates. If an object might be gradually battered apart, the GM can assign it Health and Armor Ratings based on the desired goal (it takes more damage to destroy a door than just kicking it open). The GM can also determine that some attacks inflict double damage to particular objects (roll damage dice twice and add the totals together, including bonuses), while others inflict half damage. The GM may decide that some attacks are penetrating, or even useless against given targets. This represents the fact that while an axe will readily chop down a tree, a club won't.

### OBJECT TARGET NUMBERS

TARGET SIZE	TARGET NUMBER
Very large (a shed)	7
Large (a cart)	9
Human-sized (a door)	11
Small (a wagon wheel)	13
Very small (a small shield or large weapon)	15
Diminutive (a small weapon like a dagger)	17
Minuscule (a candle; a doorknob)	19
Almost invisible (a keyhole; a coin)	21

## COMBAT STUNTS

Combat is more than just two fighters taking turns whacking at each other. A good fight should be dynamic and feature a lot of movement and action. When those actions would have a special effect, *Fantasy AGE* uses stunts. The full list of combat stunts, including advanced stunts usable by members of certain classes, can be found in **CHAPTER 6: STUNTS**. Basic combat stunts can be found there as well, but are repeated in the **Combat Stunts** table on the next page. The following is a quick rundown of how stunts work in combat.

### STUNT POINTS

In combat, you gain stunt points (SP for short) in the following circumstances:



## COMBAT STUNTS

SP Cost	STUNT
1–3	<b>BOOST:</b> You gain a +1 bonus per SP spent to your first test on your next turn.
1	<b>RAPID RELOAD (RANGED):</b> You can immediately reload a missile weapon as a free action.
1–3	<b>SKIRMISH:</b> You can move yourself or the target of your attack 2 yards in any direction for each 1 SP you spend.
1	<b>STAY AWARE:</b> Make a simple TN 11 Perception test with the focus of your choice. If you succeed, the GM either gives you a new piece of information you noticed, or you gain a +1 bonus to the next test you make (as long as it is before the end of your next turn).
2	<b>DISARM:</b> You and your opponent must make an opposed attack roll. If you win the test, you can knock your enemy's weapon to the ground, sending it 1d6 + Strength yards away in a direction you choose.
2	<b>GRAB (MELEE):</b> You grapple with your enemy. You and your target make opposed Accuracy (Brawling) tests. If you win, you grab your target and they can't move out of your reach until after your next turn. On subsequent turns, you may use a minor action to maintain the grab, preventing them from moving away from you as long as you make another successful opposed simple Accuracy (Brawling) test with your target, though your target rolls this test as a reaction—they don't need to use an action to try to break free. Grabbing a foe doesn't prevent them from attacking, casting spells, or taking other actions—they just have to stay adjacent to you while doing it.
2	<b>KNOCK PRONE:</b> You and your opponent must make an opposed attack roll. If you win the test, you can knock your enemy Prone, as the condition.
2	<b>MIGHTY BLOW:</b> You inflict an extra 1d6 damage with your attack.
2	<b>PIERCE ARMOR:</b> You find a weakness in your enemy's armor. The target's Armor Rating is halved (rounded down) versus your attack.
2	<b>PIN (GRABBED):</b> If you currently hold a target by using the Grab stunt and use this stunt as well (this doesn't have to be from the same attack as the grab), they also acquire the Defenseless condition (see CHAPTER 2). If you release the grab or they break free from it, they stop being Defenseless.
3	<b>DEFENSIVE STANCE:</b> Gain a +4 bonus to Defense until the beginning of your next turn.
3	<b>LIGHTNING ATTACK:</b> You can make a second attack (against the same enemy or a different one within range and sight). You must have a loaded missile weapon to make a ranged attack with this stunt.
4	<b>CRUSHING BLOW:</b> Your attack is strong or well-placed enough to compromise your enemy's armor or tough skin. You reduce your target's Armor Rating by 2 or damage their shield so it provides no Defense bonus. Against natural Armor Ratings, this represents a wound that makes the foe more vulnerable, and if the GM decides this stunt doesn't work on them, they should offer you a chance to spend SP on a different stunt. The penalty can be removed with an hour of repair work for worn armor, or an hour of rest for a natural AR. You can use this stunt multiple times to further reduce a target's Armor Rating.
4	<b>SEIZE THE INITIATIVE:</b> Your attack changes the tempo of the battle. You move to the top of the initiative order—your new rating becomes the previous highest initiative roll + 1. This means you may get to take another turn before some of the combatants get to act again. You remain at the top of the order until someone else seizes the initiative or otherwise increases their rating above yours.
5	<b>LETHAL BLOW:</b> You inflict an extra 2d6 damage with your attack.

- **STUNT POINTS FROM DOUBLES:** When you succeed on an attack roll or other basic test and any two of your three dice land on the same number, you gain SP equal to the number on the Stunt Die. This happens even if the Stunt Die wasn't one of the matching dice.
- **STUNT POINTS FROM STUNT ATTACKS:** If you use the Stunt Attack action, you don't inflict damage or any other basic effect by succeeding, but you automatically gain 2 SP to use on combat stunts.
- **STUNT POINTS FROM SPECIAL EFFECTS:** Some special circumstances noted in the rules or provided by the Game Master can award bonus SP. Talents, Relationships, ancestry, and advancing in a character class might all provide more stunt points in various situations.

### COMBINED STUNT POINTS

If you roll doubles on a Stunt Attack, you get 2 SP or the value on the Stunt Die, whichever is higher. Otherwise, stunt points from multiple sources stack unless some source of SP notes it cannot be combined with other sources.

## SPECIAL SITUATIONS IN COMBAT

In most combat encounters a *Fantasy AGE* Game Master will improvise a rule during an unusual situation, and that's just fine—the Adventure Game Engine is designed for easy improvisation. Some situations are common enough, or require enough detail, that they merit specific treatment. The following sections cover these.

### GRENADES

In *Fantasy AGE*, explosive grenades are rare, the result of untrustworthy magic, volatile alchemy, and similar extraordinary efforts. Simple incendiaries that burst on impact are a bit easier to find, but might be considered a waste of good glass, oil, and/or alcohol.

Unlike attacks with weapons that must be carefully aimed, you don't need to score a direct hit on your targets with a grenade, you just need it to get close enough to catch them in the blast radius.



All grenades are ranged weapons with a short range of 4 yards and a long range of 8 yards. Like using any other item during action time, you must use the Ready action to have the grenade in your hand, and only then you can take a Ranged Attack action. However, you're not trying to hit a specific target, but a specific location within range, where a hurled object can possibly land (over a stack of boxes, but not through a solid wall, for instance). Note that, unlike other ranged weapons, you do not add Perception to grenade damage.

A grenade attack is a TN 11 Accuracy (Grenades) test, modified for difficult throws at the GM's discretion. Success means the grenade lands and detonates where you intended, but failure means the grenade lands up to 1d6 yards away in a direction of the GM's choosing, and then explodes. Grenades affect everything and everyone within 2 yards of the explosion, dealing damage and any additional effect.

## GRENADE STUNTS

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You can use stunts with grenade attacks. Each stunt can affect only one target, but you need not assign all stunts to the same target (and you still cannot use the same stunt twice on a single grenade attack). If you catch two foes in the blast of a grenade and generate 4 SP, for example, you could use Pierce Armor on one foe and Knock Prone on the other.

## MINIATURES, BATTLE MAPS, AND VIRTUAL TABLETOPS

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Many game groups play through combat encounters without the use of props, a style that is sometimes called "theater of the mind." The GM and players keep a mental picture of the battlefield. They describe actions and figure out distances and relative positions on the fly. This keeps combat loose and doesn't bog the game down in tactical details. Other groups prefer to have a visual representation of the landscape and their characters. This has traditionally been accomplished with miniatures and battle maps, but nowadays virtual tabletop programs are also commonly used. The following section discusses how to do this on the tabletop or virtual tabletop apps, and it adds a few new rules that take advantage of better knowing your relative position. The explanations come first, then the rules.

### BATTLE MAPS

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A battle map (sometimes referred to as a battle mat) shows the features of the encounter area. They come in a variety of sizes and formats. One option is the vinyl battle map overlaid with 1-inch squares. These maps can be drawn on with wet-erase markers, so terrain can be sketched out and then wiped away when the encounter is over. City walls, pits, water features, and even furniture can be quickly sketched in for all to see. Wet-erase markers come in different colors, allowing scenes to use, for example, blue for water, black for buildings, green for vegetation, and brown for relative altitudes of terrain. The height of objects can be written next to them, allowing players to distinguish quickly the 10-yard wall from the 20-yard tower.

Another option is the use of pre-printed maps. These fully illustrate the battlefield and are useful for common locations like inns, shrines, dungeons, and so on. They have the advantage of looking great, but they limit your flexibility. Another possibility is map tiles, which are smaller areas that can be built out into a larger map. You can get printed sets of such tiles or PDFs that you can print out as needed. There are also some computer programs that let you design your own maps and then print them.

Finally, some virtual tabletop applications have built-in tools to display maps with graphics assets and ways to represent scale built right in.

Most battle maps are gridded with squares, but hexes (a holdover from board wargaming) are also an option. The rules work the same for squares or hexes. Note that when using squares, moving diagonally transports the character farther in terms of scale distance, but in *Fantasy AGE*, we accept this distortion by default.

## MINIATURES

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Roleplaying games grew out of the miniatures wargaming scene of the '60s and early '70s, so using miniatures with RPGs has been common from the start. Originally, they were model soldiers used to play historical games that recreated various battles and campaigns of the past. When the fantasy genre started becoming more popular, manufacturers were quick to create accompanying miniatures ranges. Today, you have an enormous number of minis to choose from, manufactured by dozens of companies. With the advent of 3D printing, many hobbyists print their own at home.

You will need one miniature for every character or monster in the encounter, and many players like to bring suitable minis for their own characters. Most roleplaying miniatures are made from pewter, plastic, or resin, and modeled in what's called 28mm scale (the idea being that a typical human model measures 28 mm from the base of the feet to the eyes). Such minis are a little over 1 inch tall generally speaking, but minis for horses and monsters in that scale can be much bigger. These days there are several pre-painted lines of plastic minis, though many gamers prefer to paint their own. There are also some cheaper options than miniatures, such as circular 2D tokens and cardboard stand-ups. Several companies make these in PDF format, so you can print out what you need when you need it. If none of these fit the bill but you still want a visual representation on the table, you can always use coins, colored stones, or even dice to represent characters on the map. If you do use dice, make sure no one scoops them up to make a roll!

A final thing to mention about minis is basing. It used to be quite common for lead miniatures to be cast with an integral base to keep the models stable on the table. The sizes of these built-in bases were quite inconsistent though, which made it hard on wargamers trying to form up their units properly. That led to the use of bases of card, wood, or plastic that developed into some standard sizes. The best base sizes for 28mm minis on a battle map is 20mm or 25mm, either round or square in shape. These fit into the 1-inch squares of most battle maps perfectly, with one human-sized mini taking up one square.



Unfortunately, life is chaos and thanks to the phenomenon of “scale creep,” miniatures have gotten bigger and bulkier over the decades. Sometimes they simply come on bigger bases like 32mm but other times the bases fit but the minis are so bulky it’s hard to place other minis next to them. Bigger bases or bulkier models do not fit neatly into a 1-inch square, but don’t panic. You may need to fudge it a bit but that’s just fine for our purposes. We aren’t going for a precise simulation here so just squeeze things in as you can. Larger creatures will take up multiple squares and can use 40mm or even larger bases depending on their size.

## GRIDLESS MAPS AND 3D TERRAIN

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It is possible to play with miniatures or tokens without using a gridded map. This is typically the way it works in miniature wargames, and there are plenty of options for battle maps without grids. They are done in different colors to represent base terrain types. You can find maps that look like green grass, sand, stone, snow, water, etc. 3D terrain can then be placed onto the map to build out the scene. Some gamers, particularly those who regularly play minis games, have a ready supply of hills, buildings, ruins, and so on. There are many companies that make such terrain, and some gamers go to great lengths to fully create an environment. A cheaper option is again provided by PDF products. You can find fold-up terrain that you can print out and assemble as needed.

## VIRTUAL TABLETOPS

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Virtual tabletops (VTIs) are applications that allow game groups to roleplay online instead of face-to-face. There are many benefits to this, such as the ability to play with people thousands of miles away from you and the ease of sharing illustrations and maps with the group. As you can imagine, VTIs have become even more popular with the health hazards of the last few years. As with face-to-face games, you can play in different styles. For some groups, the ability to have character sheets and voice communication online is enough, and a number of chat applications fit the bill. Others play with gridded maps and tokens just as previously described, using VTT apps that let groups share, mark, and change maps online. Various roleplaying games even have character sheets, tokens, maps, adventures, and even entire rulebooks optimized for use through these services, including *Fantasy AGE* and other Green Ronin games.

## BATTLE MAP SCALE

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Throughout the *Fantasy AGE* rules, distances are given in yards, and this is easy to translate onto battle maps. 2 yards in the rules becomes 1 square on a gridded map, and 1 inch on a gridless map. Round fractions up. So, a short bow with a range of 32 yards can shoot up to 16 squares on a gridded map or 16 inches on a gridless map.

### TACTICAL SPEED

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In the standard rules, a character’s Speed is the number of yards they travel with a Move action. When using battle

maps, we convert this to what is known as Tactical Speed. The formula for this is simple:

$$\text{SPEED} \div 2 \text{ (ROUNDED UP)} = \text{TACTICAL SPEED}$$

On battle maps, Tactical Speed is the number of spaces on a gridded map you can cover with a Move action. On a gridless battle map, Tactical Speed is instead the number of inches moved. For example, a character with Speed 13 has a Tactical Speed of 7. With a Move action, that character could travel up to 7 squares on a gridded map or 7 inches on a gridless one.

When moving through an area of rough terrain (woods, tilled fields, upslope, etc.), the normal rules apply so that every square or inch of movement on rough terrain uses up 2 inches of Tactical Speed, as noted under **Movement**, previously.

## MOVING THROUGH COMBAT

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Characters can attack at any point in their movement. However, moving, attacking mid-movement, and continuing to move slows their Tactical Speed by 1. It also costs 1 square or inch to leave melee combat range, as the character is hindered by the need to protect themselves while exiting. These costs stack, so if a character intends to move, hit a character in hand-to-hand combat, and move again, that consumes 2 squares or inches of movement.

## LINE-OF-SIGHT AND COVER

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Many actions in *Fantasy AGE*, especially if they involve missile weapons and spells that act at a range, are affected by whether or not there’s an unimpeded straight line between participants, such as an archer and their target. They are also affected by who can perceive whom. An unimpeded line to a target you can perceive is sometimes called a “line of sight,” though it may not actually require visual perception, depending on the situation.

A battle map can help players and the Game Master determine if they have an unimpeded line to a target, or whether they can perceive a target. If nothing gets in the way of a straight line measured from the edge of one character’s miniature or token base, or the square it occupies—whichever is smaller—to the target’s base or edge of the square, these characters have an unimpeded line between them, and if they can also perceive each other, can use ranged attacks against each other, provided they have the means to do so at the relevant distance. Characters with an unimpeded ability to perceive one another can’t hide from each other.

However, if a target can place part of themselves behind an impediment to an otherwise direct line, such as by leaning against the corner of a building or squatting behind a bench, they can gain a Cover rating determined by the GM (see **Using Cover**). Total Cover breaks the “line of sight.”

## RANGED AND MELEE ATTACKS ON BATTLE MAPS

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Convert weapon ranges using the standard map scale of 2 yards to 1 square or map inch, rounded up.



Melee weapons typically have no range. You must be adjacent to your opponent (touching base to base or in the hex or square right beside them) to attack. The only exception is for long melee weapons, such as heavy lances, two-handed spears, and those of the Polearms group. Characters with the Pole Weapons Style talent (see **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**) can attack targets up to 2 squares or inches away. If you were behind an ally and had Pole Weapons Style, for example, you could attack an opponent on the other side of that ally.

## COMBAT POSITIONING AND MODIFIERS

In most cases, using a map clarifies the relative position. When two attackers are in melee combat with one character, each attacker gains +1 to attack rolls. If the advantage is 3-to-1, this bonus increases to +2. Characters in *Fantasy AGE* don't use special facing rules and are assumed to be turning and shifting to deal with the action around them.

## STUNTS ON THE BATTLE MAP

Most stunts involving range and movement are easily converted using the 2 yards = 1-inch rule. Round fractions up. If a stunt specifies a random number of yards, use half the dice amount possible for map inches, so 1d6 yards becomes 1d3 inches, for instance.

## VEHICLES, MOUNTS, & COMBAT

Combatants can ride horses and other mounts in combat. When multiple characters pursue and evade each other at high speed, that triggers a chase, which requires the GM's help to plan. Otherwise, accounting for mounts requires a few special rules.

You can mount an animal or enter a cart or similar conveyance as part of a Move action, but you can move only half your Speed before entering—the rest of your movement is devoted to getting in the saddle or climbing aboard. Once in the saddle or at the reins, you use Move and Run actions as normal, but you move using the mount's Speed. When multiple characters use the Run action, it triggers a chase using the rules in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES** under **Chases**. Passengers do not have to use Move and Run actions, as they are simply carried along. They take actions as normal, but the GM should bear their situation in mind.

Enemies can choose to attack you, your mount, or your cart, wagon, or other conveyance. Some carriages might provide cover (see **Taking Cover**). Attacking a carriage uses the rules for attacking objects. The GM determines how much damage is required to rip open the door, bust a wagon wheel, and so on.

## RIDING MOUNTS

When engaging in melee combat from a higher position than your opponent, atop a mount such as a horse, you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls. Some mounts are trained for combat and can attack on their own, but most can't. If they can attack,

## OPTIONAL RULE: COVER TO COVER

GMs may encounter situations in which characters shoot from cover, then move to another source of cover. If this all happens before anyone else gets a chance to counterattack on their turn, it can be annoying. Shouldn't this movement expose them? It's fine to say no for the sake of speeding up play. If you think characters should have a chance to attack opponents moving cover to cover, you can give such targets the Exposed condition.

### EXPOSED

When you move from cover to cover, you briefly expose yourself to ranged attacks.

**EFFECT:** You do not gain the benefits of cover against ranged attacks until the start of the next round. Opponents who go after you in the initiative order thus have a chance to shoot you while you are exposed. At least part of the path you traveled must be visible to the attacking characters.

It is generally easier to apply damage on the shooting character's turn. You can run into situations, however, in which the attack defeats the target while they were on the move. A further complication is that the now defeated character may have taken an action after movement that's already been resolved. If the target took no other action after moving, it's simple enough to move their miniature/token back into the open anywhere along the path traveled between cover. If the target did take another action, assume they took the shot just as they were moving into cover and managed one last action before defeat. It's better to do it this way than going back and canceling actions that have already been resolved.

**RECOVERY:** Exposed characters automatically recover at the start of the next round.

they attack on your turn. You don't need to roll initiative separately for the mount. Attacking a mount inflicts damage to the mount's Health, and you roll against its Defense.

Opponents can use the Knock Prone stunt to try to dismount you. This is more difficult than overbearing someone on foot, though, so you get a chance to resist it. If you make a successful Dexterity (Riding) test, you remain mounted. The TN for this test is equal to 10 + opponent's Strength. If you fail, you are knocked to the ground, take 1d6 penetrating damage, and are now Prone. The GM controls the actions of the mount until you re-mount or the encounter ends.

## FLYING COMBATANTS

Some combatants have the ability to fly. These are mostly monsters, but PCs may get access to magic that lets them fly, so the rules are included here for your reference. You can skip this section when you are just learning to play, as no characters can fly at level 1.

Flight is indicated parenthetically after the character's Speed. Thus, a character with Speed 6 (Flying 12) moves at 6 on the ground, but 12 when flying. *Fantasy AGE* handles fliers with the use of special actions available only to them. When flying a character must use one of the following actions each turn: Circle, Dart, Dive, Fly, or Fly High. A character who fails to do so for



any reason is subject to falling damage (see **Hazards**). Only one of these five actions can be used on a turn. A character could not, for example, dive and then circle. Flying characters cannot take the **Charge**, **Move**, or **Run** actions until back on the ground.

For the most part, stunts affect fliers the same as other characters, except that any stunt that would knock a flying creature Prone instead reduces its flying Speed by 3 for the

remainder of the encounter. Multiple instances are cumulative. The GM can decide that if a flying creature's Speed drops too far, it falls instead. This is usually the case for winged creatures when stunts or injuries reduce their Speed by more than half. If a creature flies due to a magical property, or otherwise doesn't rely on wings to fly, you must usually reduce its Speed to 0 to bring it down.

## MINOR ACTIONS

### CIRCLE

The flying character circles above the battlefield at a low altitude, moving a number of yards equal to their Flying Speed. Ranged attacks from the ground add 20 yards to the horizontal distance from the shooter to the target to represent the height of the flier. A circling character can attack other circling characters with no penalty. A character must start their turn flying to circle.

### FLY

The character moves a distance equal to their Flying Speed. The character is roughly 3 yards off the ground and can be attacked in melee by opponents on the ground. The character's own melee attack rolls receive a +1 bonus vs. opponents on the ground due to the height advantage. A character can choose to land after flying, in which case the normal rules apply once more. Prone characters cannot fly until they take a **Move** action to stand up first.

## MAJOR ACTIONS

### DART

The character flies as fast as they can after any previous action, moving twice their flying Speed in yards. If other creatures use the Dart, Full Speed, or Run actions in pursuit, this triggers a chase, as per **Chases** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES. Ranged attacks from the ground add 20 yards to the horizontal distance from the shooter to the target to represent the height of the flier.

### DIVE

A character that was circling or flying high the previous round can dive this round. A character that was circling can move a number of yards equal to Flying Speed and make a melee attack against an opponent on the ground. A character who was flying high can move a number of yards equal to double their Flying Speed and make a melee attack against an opponent circling or on the ground. In either case, the attack can take place at any point in the character's movement and receives a +1 bonus on the melee attack roll and damage roll. At the end of the dive the character is roughly 3 yards off the ground, just as if they had taken the fly action.

### FLY HIGH

The character can move a number of yards equal to their Flying Speed while climbing far above the battlefield. While flying high, the character can neither attack nor be attacked (even by other characters flying high). A character must start their turn circling to fly high.

### EXAMPLE

*A castle warden dispatches a raven to deliver a vital message. The raven takes to the air on its turn with the fly action. An enemy scout sees the raven and fires off a quick shot. No penalties apply, but the shot still misses. Next, the raven takes the circle action and continues to move away. The scout takes another shot, determined to bring the bird down. The horizontal distance to the raven is 20 yards, but since it's circling another 20 yards is added to that to determine range. This makes it 40 yards, which is long range for a longbow. The scout thus incurs a -2 penalty and misses again. On its third turn, the raven flies high. The scout curses as the raven streaks skyward and out of range.*

## HEALING & RECOVERING

When your character is wounded, there are several ways to heal.

### HEAL ACTION

Another character can aid you with a Heal action, as described previously in this chapter. You can't benefit from another Heal action until you take more damage (there is only so much benefit you can gain from first aid).

### EXTENDED HEALING

Another character can devote three hours to treating your injuries, provided they have access to the correct supplies



and equipment, and you're taking a light rest at the same time. If these conditions can be satisfied, the healer makes a TN 13 Intelligence (Healing) test. If they succeed, they restore Health equal to the healer's Intelligence + 5 + healer's level + the Stunt Die result.

## MAGIC

You can be healed with a spell or other supernatural power, following the rules listed for the spell, power, or other circumstance.

## REST

Rest can help you heal as well. There are three kinds of rest.

### BREATHER

A breather is a 5-minute rest after an encounter that lets you catch your breath, tend to minor cuts and abrasions, drink some water, and so on. After a breather, you get back 5 + Constitution + Level in Health. If you have the Winded Fatigue condition, a breather removes it. You can only take one breather after an encounter. If you have a Defeat Condition at the end of an encounter, you can't take a breather.

### LIGHT REST

A light rest consists of at least three hours where you don't perform any actions more strenuous than speaking, reading, or walking slowly (no more than half your usual Speed). You may benefit from extended healing (see **Healing and Recovering**) while taking a light rest. If you have the Tired Fatigued condition, light rest reduces it to Winded. If you're Winded, light rest removes the condition.

### TOTAL REST

Total rest is sleep, or the equivalent for creatures that don't sleep, consisting of at least six hours of total inactivity. You recover 10 + Constitution + Level in Health. If you have any Fatigue condition except Exhausted or Dying, it vanishes. If you are Dying from Fatigue, use the rules for the Dying condition. If you are Exhausted, total rest drops your Fatigue condition to Tired.

### EXAMPLE

*Brigitte drives off the goblins before Najah dies, and the combat encounter ends. Najah is still at 0 Health and Dying, so Brigitte tries to save him with a Heal action. She makes an Intelligence (Healing) test, which is not her strong suit. However, she gets an 11 and just manages to save Najah's life. She rolled a 10 (3 + 3 + 4) and then added her Intelligence of 1 for a total of 11. Najah gets back 5 Health (the Stunt Die result of 4 plus 1 for Brigitte's Intelligence). Not much, but better than Dying. With Najah saved, Brigitte can relax a bit and take a breather. She rests for 5 minutes. She is level 2 with a Constitution of 2, so she gets back 9 Health (5 + 2 + 2). Since Najah had 0 Health when the combat encounter ended, he cannot take a breather.*





# EXPLORATION ENCOUNTERS

Exploration encounters do not normally put characters' lives in immediate danger, and because they happen primarily in narrative time, they do not require as many detailed rules as combat. Much of the time, exploration encounters can be resolved simply by roleplaying, describing the situation, or using advanced and challenge tests. Exploration stunts are listed in CHAPTER 6: STUNTS, providing tools to give more flair and twists to situations calling for more finesse than combat.

Exploration encounters involve searching an area, investigating a mystery, making things, and doing pretty much anything where the focus is on places, objects, and information, instead of action or social exchanges. But there's no strict division between encounter types, so exploration encounters flow into action encounters and are punctuated with social situations.

## INVESTIGATIONS

Secrets are part of *Fantasy AGE* stories. Uncovering them often consumes the lion's share of an adventure. The investigation rules in this section can be used to structure anything from a murder mystery to the cipher that translates a book of eldritch lore. The Game Master lays out the clues, and throughout the story, you follow them to the secrets you need to know.

Many investigations have social components and mix with social encounters. On that note, don't confuse the general rules for investigations here with the Communication (Investigation) focus, which is used as *part of* investigations for getting information through interviews and similar social ploys, but cannot be used to examine physical evidence or perform other information-gathering tasks.

### SIMPLE INVESTIGATIONS

Some investigation scenes are simple. Succeed at an ability test against a TN set by the GM, and you gain the information you need. You just need to be in the right place at the right time. In some cases, a roll won't be required. The information is either obvious once you get there, or the GM assumes your character has the interest and ability to find it. The GM

may also ask for a specific focus that represents the required knowledge or intuition to notice the information.

#### EXAMPLE

*Malevir looks closely at the scene of a wagon accident. The GM calls for a TN 13 Perception (Seeing) test. Malevir's player scores a 15. Malevir notices a thin length of cord tangled up in the legs of a horse that died in the accident. Malevir knows that cord. It's used by the assassins of the Cult of the Unnameable Silence! The GM might have also pointed out the cord to anyone with the Strength (Driving) focus, since their experience with wagons means they'd know something was amiss, and their eyes would gravitate to the cord—though such a character may not know it's a tool of the Cult of the Unnameable Silence.*

## DETAILED INVESTIGATIONS

Some investigations must be carried out across multiple steps, forming an investigative trail. The trail consists of **leads**, which are hints to where more solid useful information, or **clues**, can be found. Once you've used the lead to find the clue, it shows you the next lead, and so on. Think of a lead as showing you where the "locked door" of a clue is, and how to "unlock" it. The next lead (or multiple leads) can be found on the other side.

Discovering all the clues along a path of productive leads produces a **reveal**: the ultimate truth these clues uncovered.

#### EXAMPLE

*Malevir's knowledge that the Cult of the Unnameable Silence tried to make a wagon crash look like an accident produces a lead. Sneaking into the home of the wagon's driver—following the trail suggested by the lead—he finds a threatening letter from a local strongarm criminal. The letter is a clue that details the driver's debts. It suggests new leads to the footpad's hideout, or to find out where that is, if Malevir and the other characters don't already have that information. If they unlock the next clue, they discover the reveal: the Cult of the Unnameable Silence is taking over the local criminal underworld. Of course, this reveal may simply prompt a deeper investigation....*

## INVESTIGATION STRUCTURE

The Game Master doesn't need to pre-plan the trail; they can improvise depending on what the heroes do. In some situations, characters can use certain stunts, talents, and other advantages to open up additional clues and leads. Therefore, the GM creates several leads with connecting clues, but with room for alternatives.

An investigative trail doesn't need to be a linear path. It can have many branches, but in most cases following any branch to the end will produce the same reveal. The GM should avoid putting dead ends in an investigation unless enemies block the trail deliberately, or as a momentary setback that can be reversed by creative heroes. Branches can also meet back up with the main "trunk" of the investigation as well, all headed for the same reveal.

## HAZARDS AND HORRORS

In both action and exploration encounters characters experience all kinds of dangers other than enemy-swung blades, foe-shot arrows, and spells from sinister wizards. In most adventures, traps, falling, fire, poisons, and other hazards challenge heroes as well. The Game Master is responsible for running hazards, so the rules can be found under **Hazards** in CHAPTER 8.

Beyond physical danger, frightening phenomena—demons, risen corpses, unspeakable secrets, and terrifying enemies—might challenge a character's mental fortitude and sense of connection to the world. CHAPTER 8 also covers these situations under **Morale** and **Horror**.



In any event, the GM must determine the following for each lead.

## SITUATION

What brings the characters to the lead, and what is the lead in the story? A stray bit of cloth brocade from a soldier's jacket could be a lead, as could an anonymous letter that, at first glance, seems full of gibberish. A combat encounter could also constitute a lead.

## UNLOCKING METHOD

What unveils the clue and leads springing from it? The following options are available.

- **AUTOMATIC:** Just showing up, finding the object, or otherwise doing what's necessary brings forth the clue. The GM can tell you based on your prior knowledge or common sense. An NPC might be willing to spill the beans.
- **HAVING THE FOCUS:** Like the automatic method no roll is needed, but the character examining the lead must have one or more specific focuses. Noticing that a cross-bow-toting killer never intended to hit their target might be automatic for anyone who talks to the supposed target, looks at where the bolt hit, and has the Accuracy (Bows) focus. A character with the Intelligence (Evaluation) focus might automatically notice fake gems, and so forth.
- **ABILITY TEST:** Commonly, unlocking a lead requires an ability test. This is often an Intelligence, Communication, or Perception test, but any ability might be useful. For instance, a Fighting test might reveal an enemy studied at a particular sword fighting school. The GM determines the most useful, or primary focuses, and any tangential or partly useful focuses along with the TN of the test. See **Investigation Focuses** below for more details.

## CLUE AND NEXT LEAD

Determine the payoff of the new clue and the next lead. The clue is simply information. The GM tells you what the unlocked lead means. The GM should not just provide information based on the lead itself but add whatever the hero's previous knowledge and common sense would bring forth. The solved lead also points toward a new lead, until you've uncovered enough clues to prompt the full reveal.

## INVESTIGATION FOCUSES

The GM decides which, if any, focuses are helpful or even required to unlock a lead. A focus that is best suited to unlock a lead is a **primary focus**. If an ability test is required, roll the dice, then apply the ability + focus modifier as usual.

Some focuses are useful in small ways, but less than ideal. These are **tangential focuses**. For instance, you might not have Intelligence (Arcane Lore), the primary focus to examine old ceremonial robes, but you might ask the GM if your Intelligence (Evaluation) might help. The GM might then decide

it's a tangential focus and reveal less information, or information more suited to the focus in question. If an ability test is required, the TN increases by +2 for a test with a tangential focus. In other words, you don't gain any advantage from your focus unless its bonus is +3 or higher, but you can at least make the attempt.

If you don't have a primary or tangential focus, the GM decides whether you can make a test to unlock the lead at all, especially for tests with a required focus.

The GM doesn't need to decide on primary and tangential focuses ahead of time and can define them after talking to the players. If you present a good enough argument an unlikely focus might become a tangential focus, or even a primary one.

### EXAMPLE

*After Brigitte dispatches a killer from the Cult of the Unnameable Silence, Malevir searches the body and finds a scrap of paper from Breakwater Bay's harbormaster's record-book with parts scratched out: the lead. He passes it to Alaina to figure out. The GM calls for a TN 11 Intelligence (Cultural Lore) test. Alaina has Intelligence (Cryptography). The GM says this is a decent tangential focus, raising the TN to 13. Alaina's player succeeds with a roll of 15. The GM tells Alaina the scrap of paper refers to the Bloody Hook, an abandoned, beached ship of sinister reputation.*

## THE REVEAL

Once the GM decides you've unlocked enough leads and deciphered enough clues along the trail, they provide the reveal: the final truth about the subjects being investigated. The GM can simply inform you, or provide it through an NPC, discovered documents, and other story elements. Again, the GM draws on your prior knowledge and common sense. The reveal's facts should be either scattered throughout the clues you've discovered, or the clues should bring you somewhere where it all comes to light.

The GM doesn't always have to provide a moment for the reveal. You may discover it on your own with the facts at hand. If the GM thinks it would be useful, they can inform you that you've figured everything out, and perhaps grant additional rewards to recognize your cleverness.

### EXAMPLE

*The heroes have unlocked several leads. Malevir discovered the Cult of the Unnameable Silence killed a wealthy sea captain, making it look like an accident. Research uncovers the cult has long wished to recover the hideous idol of their god, and it looks like some heavy object was stolen from the captain's vessel. While examining it, the cult ambushes the heroes, whereupon they find a coded clue leading to the beached ship, the Bloody Hook. This is where their trail ends, for having driven off the slavers who once claimed the abandoned ship, the Cult of the Unnameable Silence now has all the space and privacy they need to sanctify the idol and unleash its dark powers upon Breakwater Bay.*





## SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

Social encounters involve interactions between people, which in many *Fantasy AGE* games include intelligent non-humans. Naturally, social encounters may be combined with exploration or action encounters. An investigation might require interviews, and combat can stop or start at the utterance of a single, critical word.

The GM may always run social encounters as a pure role-playing exercise, without any rules. The GM plays the part of any NPCs, while you speak as your character or tell the GM the sorts of things you'd like your hero to say. The following rules aren't meant to get in the way of roleplaying, but to provide inspiration for social scenes, align improvised dialogue with the goals of the story, and streamline interactions that might otherwise be awkward or dull.

ATTITUDES		
3D6 ROLL	ATTITUDE	SIMPLE INTERACTION MODIFIER
3 or less	Very Hostile	-3
4-5	Hostile	-2
6-8	Standoffish	-1
9-11	Neutral	+0
12-14	Open	+1
15-17	Friendly	+2
18+	Very Friendly	+3

Some spells and supernatural powers influence characters while sidestepping these rules completely. Their rules take precedence over those in this section.

Stunts can enhance social actions. **CHAPTER 6: STUNTS** provides a list of social stunts.

## IMPRESSIONS AND ATTITUDES

First impressions matter. The GM decides how an NPC feels about your character based on that NPC's motives and emotions. In other words, the GM sets the NPC's attitude. The GM doesn't need to use any rules, but might find it useful to select an attitude from the **Attitudes** table, or roll 3d6, adding the following modifiers:

- **COMMUNICATION:** Add the Communication ability rating of the character taking the lead in making contact. If a Communication focus would apply to the first impression, add its bonus as well.
- **REPUTATION:** Add +2 for a reputation that would impress the NPC. Impose -2 for a reputation that would offend the NPC.
- **OTHER MODIFIERS:** The GM can add other modifiers to the roll based on the NPC's feelings and motives.

The GM can apply a roll or choose an attitude for a group of similar NPCs or set different attitudes for each individual.

One overriding rule is that NPCs will never defy their most deeply held values or sacrifice their personal safety without



some truly exceptional circumstance coming into play. Violent threats using Strength (Intimidation) are one way to sway an unwilling NPC. Blackmail, lies, and other methods might work, but the NPC could resent you for this with potential future consequences.

### VERY HOSTILE

The NPC can barely contain their dislike and is inclined to respond to contact either with violence or by leaving the characters' presence. They may nurse a grudge and oppose the characters in the future. This is a rare spontaneous impression, and the GM should come up with a specific reason why any first impression would get a Very Hostile response.

### HOSTILE

The NPC reacts to contact with ire but might disguise this. They'll either refuse to provide help or undermine the characters' apparent interests.

### STANDOFFISH

The NPC would prefer that the characters just leave them alone. They'll either avoid the characters, ignore them, or ask interlopers to go away.

### NEUTRAL

The NPC hasn't decided things either way about the characters making contact, and responds with cool caution, bored disinterest, or polite detachment, depending on their personality.

### OPEN

The NPC is curious or inclined to listen to characters. They react based on personal motives and interests. Things could go either way. A negative variation of Open is **Cowed**, where the NPC is a bit afraid of what the characters might do if they don't act receptive. Once the threat appears to be gone, the NPC becomes Standoffish.

### FRIENDLY

The NPC takes a shine to the characters making contact and is inclined to help them, though will hesitate to provide any assistance that could cause them problems. A negative variation of Friendly is **Shaken**, where the NPC helps characters out of fear. Once the threat appears to be gone, a Shaken NPC becomes Hostile.

### VERY FRIENDLY

The NPC is exceptionally welcoming and provides gestures of respect or hospitality without being prompted. The NPC may provide extraordinary help, though nothing that contradicts their values. This is a rare spontaneous impression, and the GM should come up with a specific reason why any first impression would get a Very Friendly response. A negative variation of Very Friendly is **Terrified**, where the NPC anxiously does anything possible to avoid a perceived threat. If the threat is gone and the NPC feels safe, their attitude shifts to Very Hostile.

## INTERACTIONS

It's perfectly possible to roleplay social interactions without using any rules, but sometimes the element of chance can create unexpected twists and inspire creative strategies.

### SIMPLE SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

The simplest way to carry out social interactions is to decide what you want from the NPC, and how you'd like to convince them to achieve it. After that, make an opposed test between your chosen strategy (often a Communication test with an appropriate focus) versus the NPC's Willpower, who might apply a focus the GM considers relevant for the attempt (see CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS for Willpower focuses).

If the GM decided on the NPC's attitude beforehand, you may gain a bonus or suffer a penalty to your interaction test based on the NPC's attitude, as shown in the Attitudes table above. Unless events in the story dictate otherwise, most NPCs begin interactions with a Neutral attitude toward you.

The GM can always decide the NPC will never do certain things or will acquiesce to some requests automatically. Otherwise, if you win the opposed test, the NPC basically acts in your favor, though not always exactly as you would prefer.

#### EXAMPLE

*Late at night, Seanni wants to get a look at a temple's records guestbook and, as they walk in, they smile at an attending acolyte. After chatting about how awful it is to work nights all the time, Seanni says they simply must figure out if a friend has checked in to, "Donate and get your blessings before our...business venture." The canon apologizes because such records are private, but at least she can look a name up. Seanni explains their friend uses several different pseudonyms, and they must get a peek at the ledger to figure it all out. The acolyte again explains that records are private, and Seanni says, "You know what it's like to work at all hours. They all expect something unreasonable, and we've just got to stay awake. Can you bend the rules just this once? I won't tell anyone." Seanni's player rolls Communication (Persuasion) versus the acolyte's Willpower (Self-Discipline). The GM informs Seanni's player that they can add +1 to Seanni's roll because the acolyte has an Open attitude. Seanni rolls a 14, adding the attitude bonus, against the acolyte's 12; the acolyte smiles sheepishly and hands over the ledger.*

### DETAILED SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

Sometimes you want to flex your social muscles or get involved in more complex intrigue. This is where detailed social interaction applies. In these rules, the goal is to change an NPC's attitude to one where they feel inclined to do something in your favor. This may involve significant effort, so this system is better applied to major favors or long-term changes in a relationship with the NPC. Again, some NPCs may never act in certain ways, and few will betray strongly held beliefs.

The effort involved to achieve such significant influence is measured in shifts. A shift represents a change in attitude,



## SOCIAL RULES FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

The rules in this section are normally only used by Player Characters to sway NPCs, but you can use them with other players to guide your roleplaying. In this case, the rules serve as advice, telling you what you might do, not what you must do. You select your own starting attitude.

If you change your attitude and put yourself at a disadvantage because the rules suggest your character would be swayed by social maneuvering, the GM may reward you in some fashion. If you use experience points, following the rules may earn a bonus XP award, or some other reward among those devised by the GM or listed in **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**.

opinion, object of attention, or any other social hurdle you must overcome.

The GM decides the NPC's current attitude, and the attitude required to comply with your wishes. Note the number of shifts required to move along the scale from the NPC's current attitude to the target attitude. For instance, moving from Standoffish, to Neutral, to Open, to Friendly is 3 shifts. Add 1 shift to focus the NPC's attention toward doing what you wish. Furthermore, the GM can add 1 or 2 shifts to represent the NPC's greater resistance to your efforts if the desired actions would inconvenience or trouble them in some way.

The final number of shifts can be cleared in two ways: social maneuvers or in a grand gesture.

### SOCIAL MANEUVERS

Each shift becomes an action you need to perform to adjust the NPC's attitude. You can suggest an action, or the GM can require one. These may be opposed tests with the NPC, or a specific task for you to complete, such as buying the NPC a present, or laying low one of their rivals. These tasks clear any additional shifts that represent resistance first. Subsequent shifts improve the NPC's attitude, and your last task directs them to your goal. Utterly blowing a task may set progress back by one or more shifts at the GM's discretion, but in many cases nothing may happen, though any change in attitude can linger, providing a partial benefit. Thus, shifting attitudes is something that can happen gradually between other encounters.

#### EXAMPLE

*Seanni wants to infiltrate the Cult of the Unnameable Silence and must win the trust of the group's "Guardian of the Unknown" through social maneuvers. The GM decides the suspicious Guardian is Standoffish, and Seanni must make him Friendly. That's three shifts, plus one more shift to get the Guardian of the Unknown to induct Seanni into the conspiracy. Seanni must perform four tasks that gradually increase their trustworthiness in the Guardian of the Unknown's eyes. Seanni starts off by arranging to run into the Guardian of the Unknown a few times on the street, introducing themselves and casually saying, "Everyone knows there's a truth behind it all that most people can't handle." Building rapport this way*

*is represented with an opposed Communication (Persuasion) vs. Willpower (Self-Discipline) check, which Seanni wins. The Guardian of the Unknown now regards Seanni with a Neutral attitude, as a smart local character. Next, Seanni arranges to bump into him at the inn, and buys him a few drinks. Seanni's player roleplays this well, getting the taciturn man to open up, and the GM decides no roll is required, and the Guardian of the Unknown (whose name is Jeth, Seanni learns) is now Open to Seanni. When they meet again, Seanni confesses that they know Jeth belongs to the Cult of the Unnameable Silence, and that Seanni considers this a good thing. This time, the test is Communication (Etiquette) vs. Jeth's Willpower (Faith); Seanni narrowly succeeds, and the Guardian of the Unknown is now Friendly. The GM decides the Guardian makes the next move. "If you want to join us," says Jeth, "You need to bring a freshly severed hand to us on the night of the next new moon."*

### THE GRAND GESTURE

Instead of performing multiple small tasks to clear shifts, the GM may allow you to make an ambitious effort to influence the NPC in one fell swoop. The grand gesture is an advanced test (see **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES**) representing any complex project that might win the NPC's favor. A grand gesture test has a Success Threshold of 3–5 (determined by the GM), multiplied by the number of shifts, with interval times and other details set by the GM. If you complete the gesture in time, you produce the desired attitude and response, but if you fall short, you get nothing.

#### EXAMPLE

*Brigitte wants to join an elite mercenary company, but to do so, she needs to graduate at the top of a grueling training course. By policy, the supervising warriors are Hostile; to pass, she needs to make them Friendly by excelling at the tasks set before her over 2 weeks. That's four shifts, plus one shift to graduate. The GM decides this is a grand gesture, an advanced test with a Success Threshold of 20 (4 multiplied by 5 shifts) and each increment lasts a day and requires a different combat-related attribute and focus. After some early setbacks, Brigitte manages to score 22 by day 14. She's now a member of the mercenary company. If she'd washed out, she would have gained nothing.*





## 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS

**A**fter ability ratings, focuses, talents, and specializations are the building blocks of your character. And each provides ways to make them unique.

Your character starts with the focuses and talents they gained during character creation, and they'll earn more by gaining levels. Ability focuses are usually gained through ancestry, backgrounds, and classes, while talents are, with a few exceptions, gained through class alone (barring special circumstances, such as magic items).

Characters also gain class stunts as they advance—special stunts available only to characters who have earned them, and which are slightly more effective than ordinary stunts. These are covered in **CHAPTER 6: STUNTS**.

### SHAPING YOUR CHARACTER

Focuses and talents provide game system benefits, but they also give you convenient backstory hooks. Let's say you take the Horsemanship talent. Well, where did your character learn to ride horses? Perhaps an aunt passed on her expertise, or maybe it was part of militia training. You can come up with anything you like but answering these kinds of questions tells you more about your character.

Specializations provide a further path to customization. Each represents a dedicated calling that requires a mixture of deep social ties, hard training, and dedication to the practice or group it represents. Every specialization provides a unique talent that distinguishes your character from other members of the same class.

### ABILITY FOCUSES

As noted in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**, a focus is an area of expertise within a larger ability. A character with Communication 3 and the Deception focus is a good communicator in general, but they excel at fooling others. A test will usually list the ability focus that applies alongside the ability, such as a "TN 13 Intelligence (Arcane Lore) test." Attack rolls use the focus matching the weapon you're using, such as Fighting (Axes) to make an attack with your axe. Ability focuses work as follows:

- If you have the ability focus the test calls for, you get a +2 bonus to your roll, added on top of your ability rating. Thus, if you have a Fighting of 3 and the Axes focus granting this +2 bonus, you gain a +5 bonus to attack rolls (which are a type of basic test, as per **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**).
- In addition, if you are level 6 or higher, then the focus bonus also adds to the test's degree of success. This doesn't increase the number of stunt points you gain on doubles, or increase your overall roll result, but when assessing how successful you are by looking at the Stunt Die you add your focus bonus. This is especially useful in advanced and challenge tests.
- At level 11 and above, all the focuses you have earned provide an additional +1 bonus, and you gain the option to double focus (see **Double Focuses**).



The GM will usually let you know which focus applies to each test, but if it isn't clear don't be afraid to ask if a focus applies. You can learn more about ability tests and how focuses apply in **CHAPTER 2**. Descriptions of the ability focuses follow. The GM has the final call on whether a focus applies to a given test.

Here is a complete list of focuses in the core game. You may find new focuses in other *Fantasy AGE* books.

### ACCURACY FOCUSES

**ARCANE BLAST:** Using the Mage's class power of the same name. See **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**.

**BLACK POWDER:** Significant skill with weapons from the Black Powder weapon group. Black powder weapons are not in every campaign setting, so ask your GM before taking them.

**BOWS:** Significant skill with weapons from the Bows weapon group.

**BRAWLING:** Significant skill with weapons from the Brawling weapon group.

**DUELING:** Significant skill with weapons from the Dueling weapon group.

**GRENADES:** Making ranged attacks with grenades and any thrown weapon not covered by another weapon group, such as when throwing stones.

**LIGHT BLADES:** Significant skill with weapons from the Light Blades weapon group.

**SLINGS:** Prowess with weapons from the Slings weapon group.

**STAVES:** Prowess with weapons from the Staves weapon group.

### COMMUNICATION FOCUSES

**ANIMAL HANDLING:** Interacting with and caring for animals.

**BARGAINING:** Negotiating with others and making deals.

**DECEPTION:** Lying to and tricking others.

**DISGUISE:** Making yourself look like someone else or a different class of person.

**ETIQUETTE:** Knowing the social niceties of various cultures.

**GAMBLING:** Playing games of chance and profiting from them.

**INVESTIGATION:** Interviewing people for information and finding and deciphering clues.

**LEADERSHIP:** Guiding, directing, and inspiring others.

**PERFORMANCE:** Entertaining an audience with an artistic talent.

**PERSUASION:** Convincing others to agree with you.

**SEDUCTION:** Improving your likeability and attractiveness, as a friend or lover. Naturally this focus cannot be used to change the feelings of someone against their will; they must be open to the possibility of feeling closer to you.

### CONSTITUTION FOCUSES

**ROWING:** Propelling a vessel with oars.

**RUNNING:** Moving effectively in both short and long-distances.

**STAMINA:** Enduring fatigue, disease, and privation.

**SWIMMING:** Moving through the water and staying afloat.

**TOLERANCE:** Resisting toxins and other internal stresses, from alcohol to assassins' poisons. (In older *Fantasy AGE* products this may be referred to as Drinking, which is just another name for the same focus).

### DEXTERITY FOCUSES

**ACROBATICS:** Executing gymnastic, balancing, and tumbling maneuvers.

**CALLIGRAPHY:** Writing with artful penmanship.

**CRAFTING:** Making items with manual skills like wood-working, sculpting, leather working, glassblowing, etc.

**INITIATIVE:** Acting quickly in tense situations.

**LEGERDEMAIN:** Using sleight of hand to trick others, hide things, escape bonds, and pick pockets.

**LOCK PICKING:** Opening locks without using keys.

**RIDING:** Directing a mount such as a horse or pony.

**SAILING:** Operating sailing vessels, from a simple skiff to working in the crew of a huge galleon. Sailing includes the general operations of larger row-powered vessels as well, though actually propelling them uses the Rowing Constitution focus.

**STEALTH:** Sneaking about quietly and out of sight.

**TRAPS:** Detecting and disarming traps and other mechanical devices.

### FIGHTING FOCUSES

For information on weapon groups, see **CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT**.

**AXES:** Prowess with weapons from the Axes weapon group.

**BLUDGEONS:** Prowess with weapons from the Bludgeons weapon group.

**HEAVY BLADES:** Prowess with weapons from the Heavy Blades weapon group.

**LANCES:** Prowess with weapons from the Lances weapon group.

**POLEARMS:** Prowess with weapons from the Polearms weapon group.

**SPEARS:** Prowess with weapons from the Spears weapon group.

### INTELLIGENCE FOCUSES

**ARCANA (VARIOUS):** Knowledge of and skill at wielding a particular area of magic. There is a separate focus for each arcana, and only spellcasters — primarily Mages — can take these focuses. See **CHAPTER 5: MAGIC** for more information.

**ARCANE LORE:** Knowing about magic and its traditions.

**BREWING:** Making ale, mead, and other concoctions.

**CARTOGRAPHY:** Making and reading maps.

**CRYPTOGRAPHY:** Creating and deciphering codes and ciphers.

**CULTURAL LORE:** Knowing the traditions and beliefs of various cultures.

**ENGINEERING:** Knowing the practicalities of construction, building, and invention.

**EVALUATION:** Determining the value of goods, from coins and gems to works of art and antiquities.

**HEALING:** Aiding the wounded and sick.

**HERALDRY:** Knowing coats of arms and royal families.

**HISTORICAL LORE:** Knowing important events and personalities from the past.

**MILITARY LORE:** Knowing strategy, tactics, and famous applications thereof.



**MUSICAL LORE:** Knowing musical traditions and songs.

**NATURAL LORE:** Knowing natural flora and fauna.

**NAVIGATION:** Planning and following a route from one place to another.

**RELIGIOUS LORE:** Knowing religious traditions and practices.

**RESEARCH:** Making a systematic investigation, usually using records, archives, and books.

**THIEVES' LORE:** Knowing the scams, codes, and power structure of criminals and their conspiracies.

**WRITING:** Expressing yourself with the written word.

## PERCEPTION FOCUSES

**EMPATHY:** Discerning the feelings and emotions of others.

**HEARING:** Using your auditory sense.

**SEARCHING:** Finding things that are hidden or obscured, such as secret doors.

**SEEING:** Using your visual sense.

**SMELLING:** Using your olfactory sense.

**TASTING:** Using your gustatory sense.

**TOUCHING:** Using your tactile sense.

**TRACKING:** Following tracks and other signs of passage.

## STRENGTH FOCUSES

**CLIMBING:** Scaling walls and other vertical obstacles.

**DRIVING:** Directing and guiding carts, carriages, and other wheeled vehicles.

**INTIMIDATION:** Overawing others physically and with threats.

**JUMPING:** Springing and leaping.

**MIGHT:** Performing feats of raw power, such as lifting or holding up heavy objects.

**SMITHING:** Crafting metal items, from weapons to jewelry.

## WILLPOWER FOCUSES

**COURAGE:** Overcoming fear in the face of adversity.

**FAITH:** Deriving inner strength through spiritual or moral belief.

**MORALE:** Maintaining good spirits and confidence in yourself or your group. NPCs use this focus more than PCs.

**SELF-DISCIPLINE:** Focusing your mental energy or controlling your impulses and emotions.

## DOUBLE FOCUSES

Focuses grant a flat +2 bonus to one's ability tests. This bonus increases to +3 at level 11, but even that may not be enough to reflect your character's training, dedication, and experience.

Therefore, at higher levels, characters can take a focus for a second time to further improve their bonus on those rolls. Starting at level 11, when you would gain a new focus, you may instead select a focus you already have to increase your bonus with that focus by an additional +1. This is known as "having a double focus" or "double focusing," since you're devoting opportunities to gain two focuses, total, on a single focus. Since all focus bonuses automatically increase to +3 at 11th level, this increases a double-focus bonus to +4.

You still must always select a focus for a primary ability on even-numbered levels and a focus for a secondary ability

## TYPES OF TRAINING

"Training" can sound ambiguous at times. Here's how *Fantasy AGE* distinguishes between different forms of training.

- **TRAINING IN ARMS AND ARMOR:** "Training" (sometimes "proficiency") only applies as a distinct game term with armor and weapons. It represents a level of basic training. Your class provides training in various weapon groups and armor types, and you may learn others as you advance in level. These do not provide any bonuses, but instead reduce penalties. Without basic training in a weapon group, you take a -2 penalty to attack rolls and inflict half damage with a weapon. Without training in an armor type, you take its penalty to Dexterity-based tests and Speed when wearing it. This basic training is *not* equivalent to having a focus. Theoretically, you could take a focus in a weapon you are untrained in, which would provide its usual bonus, but you would still do half damage when using it.
- **HAVING THE FOCUS:** When you have a focus, you enjoy its bonus to tests (typically +2 until level 11, +3 at level 11 and after). In some cases, having the focus means you have knowledge characters without it lack. Hypothetically, you can have a focus in a weapon but lack basic training, though this isn't a great idea—it might represent the fact that your character's training is more theoretical than practical. You gain the focus bonus and while this offsets the attack roll penalty, you still only inflict half damage.
- **DOUBLE FOCUSING:** At level 11 or later you may use a focus advancement to increase the bonus of a focus you know by +1, to a total of +4 (as all focuses go to +3 once you reach 11th level).
- **TALENT:** A talent provides whatever benefits are listed for it. This may be additional basic training, expanded or more potent use of a focus, and so on. The talent's description determines its benefits. A talent only gives you proficiency in a weapon or armor type, or a new focus, if its rules explicitly say so.

on odd-numbered levels, so your double focus selection must be from the same ability as a new focus you'd be able to take.

## OPTIONAL: TRADE FOCUSES

*Fantasy AGE* is not the game of everyday life; it's about adventurers facing grave threats in extraordinary circumstances. This is why, while there are focuses to cover trade skills, they are quite broad. There is one focus—Smithing—that covers armorers, weaponsmiths, goldsmiths, and so on. This is intentionally inaccurate; the game is designed to give heroes broad abilities. For the purposes of most *Fantasy AGE* games, the Smithing focus is enough.

Some players may want finer distinctions than the current focus list provides. Maybe your character is a dwarf from a famous family of weapon makers and it's important to you that their skills are specifically those of a weaponsmith, rather than a common blacksmith. If you want to do that and your GM agrees, you can take almost any trade you can think of that fits your campaign world and turn it into a focus. These focuses will be much narrower than most in the game, but if that suits your character concept (or an NPC's nature as per the needs of the GM) the option is open to you.



# TALENTS

Your character has areas of natural aptitude and/or special training called talents. They provide a way to customize your character that goes beyond background and class. Each talent is divided into three degrees: Novice, Expert, and Master. Each of these provides a game system benefit. Your character must be a Novice in a talent before you can become an Expert, and an Expert before becoming a Master. Your class tells you when your character gains a new degree in an existing or new talent as part of its list of level advancements.

When talents are listed for a character, the standard format is talent first, followed by the degree achieved in parentheses. Carousing (Expert), for example, or Performance (Novice).

## STACKING TALENT BENEFITS

Multiple talents may provide overlapping benefits. If this is the case, here's how they interact, with the proviso that the GM can disallow anything they believe will produce an overly powerful combination.

### ACTION-BASED BENEFITS

If two talents say you must take a special minor or major action, these are generally separate actions, and their benefits do not stack with each other. For instance, if you have a talent that allows you to use a minor action to attack, and one which allows you to use a minor action to use a different special ability, you must use two minor actions, one for each benefit—not one action with both benefits.

### DAMAGE BONUSES

These stack with each other unless the GM rules otherwise.

### REROLLS

If multiple talents allow you to reroll the same test, each additional talent adds a +1 bonus to the reroll. You cannot reroll the exact same test more than once.

## TALENT & SPECIALIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Talents and specializations often have requirements. With the exception of character ancestry and class requirements, these do not apply to talents you get at 1st level—just the ones you acquire as you advance.

## MIND YOUR TALENTS

Keeping track of a talent's advantages is the responsibility of you, the player. The Game Master has other things to concentrate on, and over time your character's abilities will probably become too complex for the GM to memorize or quickly reference alongside those of the other PCs, not to mention the NPCs they're managing. Thus, it's up to you to point out when a talent would affect play.

Note that even though this is your responsibility, the GM has the final decision on when and how your talents function.

## STUNT COST REDUCTIONS

Stunt cost reductions stack. If they reduce a stunt's cost to 0 (negative costs are impossible) you may only use the stunt once on each occasion that you use stunt points (whether from rolling doubles, using a Stunt Attack, harnessing a Relationship, or from other source), but the stunt itself still costs 0 SP.

## STUNT DIE BONUSES

Stunt Die bonuses do not stack.

## TEST BONUSES

These stack with each other unless the GM rules otherwise.

## TALENT ENTRY FORMAT

A catalog of the talents available follows. They use the following format:

### TALENT NAME

**ANCESTRIES:** The ancestries that can take this talent are listed here. This is a rare requirement, and if no ancestry entry appears, members of any ancestry may take the talent.

**CLASSES:** Classes that can take this talent are listed here.

**REQUIREMENTS:** After Level 1, you cannot take this talent unless you have the requirements specified here. Listed requirements are minimums. In some cases, a requirement may list a class *or* one or more other requirements, in which case characters with the listed class do not need to meet any other requirements from this entry. If there is no requirements entry, there are no additional requirements.

A short description of the talent.

**NOVICE:** The benefit gained when you become a novice.

**EXPERT:** The benefit gained when you become an expert.

**MASTER:** The benefit gained when you become a master.

### ALCHEMICAL EXPLOSIVES

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mage class or Intelligence 2

You know how to create a variety of grenades using alchemical formulas.

These vials are not magic per se, though they may not utilize entirely mundane natural laws. If you have the ingredients, you can make a vial in an hour. You're also familiar with black powder, and you can make 10 shots' worth in an hour if you have the appropriate ingredients. See **Grenades** in **CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT** for details on the vials you can make with this talent.

In the previous edition of *Fantasy AGE*, Alchemical Explosives was called Alchemy.

**NOVICE:** You know the basics of alchemy. You can make blast vials and thunder vials. You can also make black powder without potentially explosive mishaps.



**EXPERT:** You are at home in a laboratory. You can make fire vials and ice vials.

**MASTER:** Your alchemical knowledge is vast. You can make acid vials and lighting vials.

### ANIMAL TRAINING

**CLASSES:** Any

You know how to train animals.

**NOVICE:** You know the basics of dealing with animals. With a week of training, you can teach an animal to follow a simple one-word command like “heel,” “follow,” or “attack.” You can teach a single animal a number of commands equal to your Communication.

**EXPERT:** You can train animals to follow more complex commands, like “guard this place” or “return to me when strangers approach,” or command it to ignore its usual instincts, such as by training a horse to engage in combat instead of fleeing. Teaching a complex command takes two weeks of training and the total number of commands a single animal can learn is equal to your Communication +2.

**MASTER:** Your training can turn animals into prime physical and behavioral examples of their kind. With a month of training, you can increase an animal’s Dexterity or Strength by 1. It also gains the Willpower (Morale) focus. An animal can only receive such training once. You may also take a month to train an animal to wear armor especially made for it, which provides benefits equivalent or similar to the Armor Training talent. (See CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT’s description of barding — horse armor — for an example.)

### ARCANE TRAINING

**CLASSES:** Mage

**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice degree in one or more arcana

Your arcane training and knowledge of spells are expansive.

**NOVICE:** You learn two additional Novice degree spells from any arcana you know.

**EXPERT:** You learn an additional Novice degree or an additional Expert degree spell from any arcana you know. Your power over the arcana’s degree must at least equal the degree of the chosen spell.

**MASTER:** You learn an additional spell of any degree from any arcana you know. Your power over the arcana’s degree must at least equal the degree of the chosen spell.

### ARCHERY STYLE

**CLASSES:** Rogue and Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Trained in the Bows weapon group

You are experienced with bows and crossbows.

**NOVICE:** You know how to punish enemies who get too close. When shooting a bow or crossbow at an enemy within 6 yards of you, you inflict +2 damage.



**EXPERT:** Due to long hours of practice, you can reload faster than common bowmen. You can reload a bow as a free action and a crossbow as a minor action.

**MASTER:** When shooting a bow or crossbow, you can perform the Lightning Attack stunt for 1 stunt point less than usual. If you are using a crossbow, you’ll also need to perform a Rapid Reload stunt to take advantage of this benefit, since you must have a loaded weapon to use Lightning Attack.

### ARMOR TRAINING

**CLASSES:** Warrior

You have learned to fight while wearing armor. You only take the armor’s penalty to your Speed, while those without this talent suffer the penalty to both Speed and Dexterity-based tests.

**NOVICE:** You can wear leather and mail armor without suffering a penalty to Dexterity-based tests.

**EXPERT:** You can wear plate armor without suffering a penalty to Dexterity-based tests.

**MASTER:** You can get the most out of heavy armor. Add +1 to your Defense while wearing any armor with “heavy” in its name (heavy leather, heavy mail, heavy plate).



## CAROUSING

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Envoy class or Communication and Constitution 1

You take your fun seriously.

**NOVICE:** You can drink other people under the table. When making Constitution (Tolerance) tests, you gain a +1 bonus to the Stunt Die. While you cannot normally perform stunts (certain drinking-related social stunts excepted) when resisting the ill effects of consumed substances, this bonus not only adds to your roll, but aids in reaching the Success Threshold for advanced tests.

**EXPERT:** The tavern is your second home. At a tavern or in any organized celebration (such as a wedding), you may reroll any Communication-based test, but must keep the results of the second roll.

**MASTER:** Celebrations are your pulpit, court, and occasional gymnasium. At a tavern or organized celebration, you gain +1 SP whenever you roll doubles on any social test, or any attack roll using unarmed combat or improvised weapons.

## CHIRURGY

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mage class or Intelligence (Healing) focus

You can treat wounds and illnesses.

**NOVICE:** You have trained in the art of chirurgy, and your aid is swift and sure. Heal is a minor action for you.

**EXPERT:** You have the hands of a healer. When you use the Heal action, your ally gets back an amount of Health equal to (Stunt Die × 2) + Intelligence.

**MASTER:** Your healing ability is legendary. When you use the Heal action, your ally gets back an amount of Health equal to (Stunt Die × 3) + Intelligence.

## COMMAND

**CLASSES:** Envoy and Warrior

You are a natural leader.

**NOVICE:** Your presence inspires your allies. If you take a minor action to make a heroic gesture (raise your sword, shout a battle cry, wave a flag, etc.), your allies gain a +1 bonus to Willpower tests for the rest of the encounter.

**EXPERT:** You inspire your allies. Any allies you can communicate with gain a +2 bonus when rolling for initiative.

**MASTER:** When you stand firm, your allies stand with you. When an ally you can communicate with fails a Willpower test prompted by horror or a threat to morale (see CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES), you may roll Communication (Leadership) against the same TN or opposed roll. If you succeed, a number of allies equal to your Communication + Leadership focus bonus are considered to have succeeded against the danger as well, regardless of what they actually rolled.

## CONTACTS

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Communication 1

You know how to turn even chance meetings with people into ongoing associations.

**NOVICE:** You can attempt to make a contact out of an NPC with a successful Communication (Persuasion) test. The GM will set the target number based on the likelihood of you knowing the NPC or having mutual friends. The more distant the NPC's homeland or social class from yours, the more difficult the test will be. A contact will be friendly, but won't go out of the way to help you without additional motivation. You can't make a contact out of an NPC who already dislikes you or is an enemy.

**EXPERT:** Once you've established a contact, you can try to get a favor with another successful Communication (Persuasion) test. The target number is based on the nature of the favor and whether it puts the contact in any danger.

**MASTER:** You can turn an acquaintance into an ally with a show of loyalty. If you do a significant favor for a contact, they will treat you as a friend when you ask them for favors. They will go out of their way to help you and will be willing to put themselves in danger for you.

## DRAAK SECRETS

**ANCESTRIES:** Draak **CLASSES:** Any

Your ties to dragonkind are stronger and deeper than those of typical draak.

**NOVICE:** Your draconic power grows. Select one of the following benefits from the **Draak** table in CHAPTER 1: *armored*, *magical resistance*, or the ancestry stunt *flame breath*. You gain this benefit. You cannot pick a benefit you already had.

**EXPERT:** You grow a pair of wings, which you can fold away and protect when not in use. Though you cannot fly, you gain a +2 bonus to all Strength (Jumping) checks, and you gain the *glide* special quality: You take half damage from falls, and while falling you may also move your Speed laterally. If you have at least 4 yards of overhead clearance you can take a movement-based action without touching the ground in between, launching from your starting point and landing at your end point.

**MASTER:** Your wings strengthen to grant you the ability to soar through the clouds. You can fly at half your Speed.

## DUAL WEAPON STYLE

**CLASSES:** Rogue and Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Dexterity 2

You've trained to fight with a melee weapon in either hand. Anyone can do so, allowing you to attack with either weapon each time you make an attack, but without this talent it provides little actual benefit.

**NOVICE:** Wielding two weapons can aid in attack or defense. If you take the Activate action, you can gain either a +1 bonus



on your melee attack rolls or a +1 Defense bonus vs. melee attacks until the end of the encounter. You can switch the bonus you are taking with another Activate action. Normally, using a weapon in each hand increases its minimum Strength requirement by 2, or 3 for especially unwieldy weapons. For you, the requirement increases by 1 or 2, respectively.

**EXPERT:** You can perform the Lightning Attack stunt for 1 SP less than normal, if it uses a weapon other than the one you initially used for the attack.

**MASTER:** You can overwhelm opponents with blows from both weapons. If you make a melee attack with your primary weapon and are not charging, you can make another attack with your secondary weapon as a minor action. The second attack cannot generate stunt points, and you only add half of your Strength (rounded down) to damage.

### DWARVEN SECRETS

**ANCESTRIES:** Dwarf **CLASSES:** Any

You live for the stone-hearted ways of the dwarves.

**NOVICE:** Subterranean and sunless realms tell you their secrets readily. You may use Intelligence (Engineering) tests to determine your direction indoors and underground, including whether you're going up or down, at a TN determined by the Game Master. If someone without this degree could do the same, you gain a +2 bonus to your test, on top of any provided by focuses and other advantages. If they could not, the TN is 15—which is always your maximum TN to find your direction and whether you're going up or down.

**EXPERT:** When besieged, a true dwarf takes up the axe. When using a weapon from the Axes group, you gain +1 SP whenever your attack roll scores doubles.

**MASTER:** You partake of the endurance of stones against foul magic—or you call upon secret teachings to counter sorcery with the power of certain runes. If you fail any test to resist or reduce the effects of a spell, you may make a second test using Constitution (Tolerance) against the same target for the same benefits if you succeed. In any case, you must keep the results of this second roll.

### ELVEN SECRETS

**ANCESTRIES:** Elf **CLASSES:** Any

You have attuned your soul to the elven way.

**NOVICE:** The keen vision and grace of your people guides your hands. When using the Aim action in conjunction with a weapon that requires Accuracy-based attack rolls, you gain an additional +1 bonus to your attack roll.

**EXPERT:** You tread too lightly to disturb a leaf, or to sink into snow or mud. You can touch an object without disturbing a speck of dust. You never suffer Speed penalties for moving over difficult ground (including rough terrain, if you're using the miniatures rules in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**) and attempts to find traces of you using the Searching or Tracking focuses suffer a -3 penalty.

**MASTER:** You cultivate a circle of calm awareness. Without looking for them, you might discover tracks and hidden objects that pass within 4 yards of you, provided anyone in your position would have any chance to perceive them at all. You should alert the GM to this ability because they must see if you sense them on your behalf. Instead of rolling dice, you automatically score 10 + Perception + the applicable focus. You may also actively search for such things, making tests as usual.

### FIREARMS STYLE

**CLASSES:** Rogue and Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Trained in the Black Powder weapons group

You know how to shoot.

**NOVICE:** Careful aim with your guns pays great dividends. The Aim action when using firearms grants you a +2 bonus to hit instead of the usual +1.

**EXPERT:** You reload your weapons with a speed few believe possible. Any firearm normally taking a major action to reload now take a minor one. All firearms normally taking a minor action to reload no longer require an action, though you may only reload one such firearm per round.

**MASTER:** You can score a bullseye beyond the normal ranges of your guns. You may double the effective long and short ranges of your guns. In your original, unmodified short range, you gain +2 to damage rolls. The exception to this is blunderbusses and other scattershot weapons, which add a flat 2 additional yards to their range and +2 to damage at any part of its limited range.

### GNOME SECRETS

**ANCESTRIES:** Gnome **CLASSES:** Any

You have a true gnomish heart, which sees the patterns common to earthworks, mechanisms, and magic.

**NOVICE:** The secrets of things are visible to you through toolmarks and design. Whenever you use Intelligence (Evaluation), Dexterity (Crafting), or Strength (Smithing) to interact with an object, a successful test tells you something about its history, even if you would have no rational way of knowing it—though without context, your impressions may become confused.

**EXPERT:** It's a dangerous thing to trick a natural trickster. Once per encounter, if you notice someone attempting to deceive you through stealth, sleight of hand, or some other covert physical action (such as by succeeding at a Perception-based test against them) you may immediately perform one minor or major action in the form of spellcasting, a Dexterity-based test, or an Accuracy-based attack, out of initiative order and before anyone else has a chance to act.

**MASTER:** Burrows and other underground sites are not dead environments, but reflect a slower, deeper expression of living power—one you tap. You gain a bonus breather whenever you are underground (meaning, whenever a substantial amount of dirt and rock is above and around you) once for every period between total rests.



## GOBLIN SECRETS

**ANCESTRIES:** Goblin

**CLASSES:** Any

You have learned tricks and tips from the generations of goblins that came before.

**NOVICE:** You have learned that in combat, caution is often the secret to survival. You know that when you cannot kill a foe outright you may be better served by hampering them. When striking a target while using a Light Blade, you can choose to do half as much damage as normal to gain a +2 bonus to your Defense against attacks from that target for 1 round.

**EXPERT:** You can use your small size and ability with the blade to confound a foe, making it easier for allies to hit them. When you hit a target while using a Light Blade, you can choose to do half as much damage as normal to reduce the target's Defense by 2 for 1 round. You cannot use this ability and the Novice degree ability of this talent at the same time.

**MASTER:** Your goblin fighting skills are unsurpassed. When you hit a target while using a Light Blade, you can choose to do half as much damage as normal to gain the benefits of both the Novice and Expert degrees of this talent.

## GREAT ENDURANCE

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Warrior class or Constitution 2

You have incredible stamina.

**NOVICE:** You can reroll a failed Constitution (Stamina) or Constitution (Tolerance) test, but you must keep the result of the second roll.

**EXPERT:** You can go without rest for much longer than others. You ignore one instance of the Fatigued condition (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) you might gain in between total rests, and you gain a +2 bonus to tests to resist hunger, fatigue, or exhaustion.

**MASTER:** You have become highly resistant to pain and gain a natural +1 increase to your Armor Rating. This even applies against toxins and damaging illnesses.

## HALFLING SECRETS

**ANCESTRIES:** Halfling

**CLASSES:** Any

Your people may be smaller than others, but halflings have a subtle strength you know how to harness.

**NOVICE:** You're good at getting out from under foot. Against any creature at least double your size, you gain a +1 bonus to Dexterity (Stealth) and Dexterity (Legerdemain) tests.

**EXPERT:** Bigger folk are easier to hit, too. Gain a +1 bonus to Accuracy-based attack rolls against creatures at least double your size.

**MASTER:** The bigger they are ... the more imperative it is to get away. You gain the Rogue stunt Misdirect, regardless of class, and if you take it again as a Rogue you affect an extra person in addition to the number allowed by the SP you spend, though you must still spend at least 1 SP.

## HORSEMANSHIP

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Dexterity (Riding) focus

You are a skilled rider and can handle horses and other beasts of burden with ease.

**NOVICE:** You can jump into the saddle quickly and know how to stay there in combat. Mounting a steed is a free action for you, and you gain a +2 bonus to tests to resist being thrown from your mount, including the opposed attack roll to resist the Knock Prone stunt being used against you.

**EXPERT:** You ride like the wind. When you ride a mount, it gains a +4 bonus to its Speed.

**MASTER:** You were born in the saddle. You add +1 to your Defense while mounted. You may also reroll a failed Dexterity (Riding) test, but you must keep the result of the second roll.

## HUMAN SECRETS

**ANCESTRIES:** Human

**CLASSES:** Any

Steeped in the legends and pride of humanity, you have further developed your ancestral abilities.

**NOVICE:** When things are turning against you, you always seem to be able to turn them around to your benefit. When an attack against you uses the Mighty Blow or Lethal Blow stunt, you gain 1 SP. This SP must be used before the end of your next turn.

**EXPERT:** If a spell that affects you does extra damage to you with the Mighty Spell or Lethal Spell stunt, you gain 1 SP. This SP must be used before the end of your next turn.

**MASTER:** When an attack against you uses the Knock Prone, Pierce Armor, or Lightning Attack stunt, you gain 1 SP. This SP must be used before the end of your next turn.

## INSPIRE

**ANCESTRIES:** Any

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Envoy class or Communication 3

You drive others to do great deeds. You may be an expert speaker or leader, but this talent is often about being an exemplar and source of trust, dependability, and stability as much as it is overt interaction skills.

**NOVICE:** You inspire calm and courage in your friends and allies. As long as you are conscious and they are within sight of you, any allies gain a +1 bonus to all Willpower tests. Any ally directly defending you from harm when you are Unconscious or incapacitated receives the same bonus.

**EXPERT:** With you around, things don't seem as bad. Once per encounter, you can spend two minor actions to offer words of inspiration to your allies. All who hear these words heal 1d6 + your Communication in Health and gain a +2 bonus on their next test.

**MASTER:** You can inspire greatness in others. As long as you are conscious and they are within sight of you, any ally generating stunt points generates +1 SP. Any ally directly defending





you from harm when you are Unconscious or incapacitated receives the same bonus.

### INTRIGUE

**CLASSES:** Rogue or Envoy

**REQUIREMENTS:** Envoy class or Communication 2

You are a master of secrets.

**NOVICE:** You understand how to navigate the waters of social situations. Choose one of the following Communication focuses: Etiquette, Deception, or Seduction. If you fail a Communication test with your chosen focus, you can reroll it, but you must keep the result of the second roll.

**EXPERT:** You always gain more information than you give out. Reduce the cost of the Spot Tells and Pay Attention stunts by 1 SP.

**MASTER:** You know how to end a conversation. Once per encounter, you may reduce the cost of the Manipulate stunt by 2 SP.

### LINGUISTICS

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Envoy class or Intelligence 1

You can learn new languages easily. When you learn a new language, you learn to both speak and read it. The GM decides which languages exist in a particular campaign, and all characters begin knowing how to speak, read, and write the language used for trade and travel (sometimes called the

“common tongue”) as well as their native language. Some rare, occult, and academic languages are functions of Intelligence-based Lore focus tests instead.

**NOVICE:** You learn how to speak, read, and write a new language from among those commonly spoken where you have lived and traveled.

**EXPERT:** You learn an additional commonly used language, or one that is uncommon but not a secret. You can also imitate a specific dialect with a successful Communication (Performance) test, with a TN that depends on how familiar the audience is with it.

**MASTER:** You learn two more common or uncommon languages. You can also pick any one language you know and speak it like a native—that is, without an accent.

### LORE

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mage class or Intelligence 2

You have an inquisitive mind and readily absorb facts and information, having studied various sources of lore available to you.

**NOVICE:** You have studied hard. Reduce the cost of the Extra Information stunt by 1 SP whenever you use a Lore focus. A Lore focus is any Intelligence focus with the word “lore” in it, such as Cultural Lore and Historical Lore.

**EXPERT:** You are an accomplished researcher. When making Intelligence (Research) tests, you gain a +1 bonus to the



result of the Stunt Die. This allows you to reach the Success Threshold of an advanced test faster, and you gain more stunt points, when stunts can be used. Advanced tests are detailed in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES**.

**MASTER:** While your knowledge is vast, you have two areas of particular specialization. Pick any two of your lore focuses. When making tests using those focuses you can reroll a failed test, but you must keep the result of the second roll.

### MIGHTY THEWS

**CLASSES:** Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Strength 1

You have intensely developed your physical strength.

**NOVICE:** You may reroll a failed Strength (Might) test, but you must accept the result of the second test.

**EXPERT:** As long as you brace yourself, you can perform incredible feats of strength. If you use the Activate action to brace yourself add +1 to the Stunt Die for all Strength-based tests as long as you don't move from your current location.

**MASTER:** Your increased strength translates to the ability to inflict brutal blows. Add +2 to the damage inflicted by any weapon that adds Strength to damage.

### MIXED WEAPON STYLE

**CLASSES:** Warrior or Rogue

**REQUIREMENTS:** Dexterity 1

Thanks to a combination of training and brutal experience, you can effectively use a one-handed close combat weapon in one hand, and a one-handed ranged weapon in the other – typically a pistol or hand crossbow. While anyone can fight with a weapon in each hand (attacking with either weapon each time an attack is made), doing so provides little concrete benefit without this talent.

**NOVICE:** You shoot a ranged weapon to make yourself harder to hit in close combat. By using a minor action, you may make an attack roll using your ranged weapon's appropriate Accuracy focus. This attack doesn't inflict damage and is a simple test that can't gain or use stunt points. Instead, one melee attacker you choose must roll the higher of your Defense or your attack roll to hit. You may use this maneuver to react to an incoming attack even if it isn't your turn, as long as you have a minor action left during the round.

**EXPERT:** When using the Novice benefit of this talent, you can now inflict half normal weapon damage (including half of any ability bonus to damage) with your minor-action ranged attack roll, if the attacker misses you and your ranged attack roll is equal to or higher than their Defense.

**MASTER:** Instead of using the Novice or Expert degrees of this talent, you may make a standard attack with one of your weapons as a major action, then make a second attack with your other weapon as a minor action, as a simple test that can't gain or use stunt points. Your minor-action attack uses the full damage of the weapon, but only half of any ability

bonus to damage you may have. You must be equipped with a melee weapon in one hand, and a ranged weapon in the other, such as a sword and a pistol.

### MOUNTED COMBAT STYLE

**CLASSES:** Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Dexterity (Riding) focus

You are a trained cavalier or horse-warrior, adept at fighting on horseback.

**NOVICE:** You can use the mobility of your mount to your advantage in combat. When mounted and making a Move action, you can move part of your allowed distance, then use your major action to make a melee or ranged attack, and then move the rest of your allowed distance without reducing your Speed by 2 yards (see **Moving Through Combat** in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**) and can leave melee combat range without reducing your Speed by 2 yards. You may also use both hands while riding, and you can make full use of a shield while mounted.

**EXPERT:** Your mounted charge is fearsome. You can move at your mount's full Speed when making a Charge action and inflict +2 damage if your attack strikes home.

**MASTER:** You and your mount are one. The Knock Prone stunt cannot dismount you and as long as your steed is moving, you both gain a +1 bonus to Defense.

### OBSERVATION

**CLASSES:** Rogue

You have a nearly preternatural eye for detail.

**NOVICE:** You notice things others do not. Choose one of the following Perception focuses: Empathy, Searching, or Seeing. If you fail a Perception test with your chosen focus, you can reroll it, but you must keep the result of the second roll.

**EXPERT:** You gain the Novice benefit for a second focus among those listed at that degree and if your tests with either of these succeed, and you roll doubles, you gain +1 SP on top of the Stunt Die result.

**MASTER:** Your powers of observation alert you to imminent danger. When using either of the focuses you concentrated on in prior degrees, you may use the Ready for Action stunt for 1 SP less.

### ORATORY

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Envoy class or Communication (Persuasion) focus

You are a skilled public speaker who can sway others with your words.

**NOVICE:** You know how to work a crowd. If you fail a Communication (Persuasion) test when trying to convince a group, you can reroll it, but you must keep the results of the second roll. You can't take this reroll in an intimate setting or when trying to persuade an individual.



**EXPERT:** Your words are like magic. When you perform the Inspire stunt, your allies gain a +2 test bonus instead of a +1.

**MASTER:** You can agitate a crowd. If you make a successful Communication (Persuasion) test when addressing a group and the result of your Stunt Die is 5 or 6, you rouse them to immediate action. You can't necessarily control what they do, though you can try with Communication (Leadership) tests, but they take your words to heart and act on them.

## ORC SECRETS

**ANCESTRIES:** Orc **CLASSES:** Any

On gray, broken ground, or in the red-stained precincts of battle, the ways of the orcs are the ways of fierce survivors.

**NOVICE:** Against foes, fire, and other dangers, you stand bloody but unbowed. Add 5 Health to your total.

**EXPERT:** You're inured to long marches and the privations your people regularly experience. You ignore one instance of taking the Fatigued condition that occurs between total rests.

**MASTER:** Following the ways of your clan or a personal vision, you build up a tolerance to a particular threat. Choose one type of hazard from among fire, cold, poison, or another category agreed upon by you and the GM (though it cannot be things like "weapons," "falling," or "kinetic energy"). You gain a +1 bonus to tests to resist or avoid this hazard, and you take half damage whether you succeed or fail.

## PERFORMANCE

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Envoy class, or Rogue class, or Communication (Performance) focus

You have prodigious talents as an actor, musician, or other performing artist.

**NOVICE:** You know how to play an instrument, sing, act, and otherwise entertain an audience. When using the Communication (Performance) focus, the Crowd Appeal stunt only costs you 1 SP per person.

**EXPERT:** You can get the feel of a room and adapt accordingly. If you have 15 minutes to observe a crowd before performing or speaking in front of them, you gain a +1 bonus to any Communication-based tests to influence or entertain them.

**MASTER:** When performing, you exude confidence and style. You may perform the Sway stunt while entertaining an audience for 2 SP instead of its usual cost of 4, and its effects last until the end of the day.

## POLE WEAPON STYLE

**CLASSES:** Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Trained in weapons from the Polearms or Spears weapon group

Pole weapons can be cumbersome, but not in your hands. You can fight in this style with a two-handed spear, or any weapon of the Polearms weapon group.

**NOVICE:** You can use the length of your weapon to advantage. You treat enemies up to 4 yards away as if they were adjacent to you, so you can make melee attacks against them (they can't do the same unless they also have this talent). If an ally is between you and your opponent, you can still attack with no penalty. In fact, this is a common tactic.

**EXPERT:** Once prepared, you are hard to move. You gain the benefits of the Stand Firm action (see **Minor Actions** in CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) as long as you're holding a pole weapon and not moving, without using an action. If you also use a minor action to Stand Firm alongside this benefit, you gain an additional +2 bonus to tests to avoid being moved or knocked down as well.

**MASTER:** You get the most of your pole weapon's design features. This equates to a +2 to initiative when using pole weapons and a 1 SP cost reduction on a specific stunt, depending on the pole weapon::

- **GLAIVE:** Mighty Blow
- **HALBERD:** Defensive Stance
- **MILITARY FORK:** Pierce Armor
- **TWO-HANDED SPEAR:** Seize the Initiative

## QUICK REFLEXES

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Rogue class or Dexterity 2

You move and react quickly, making you difficult to pin down and allowing you to surprise opponents with swift, sudden actions.

**NOVICE:** You can prepare yourself for action in an instant. Once per round, you can use Ready as a free action on your turn.

**EXPERT:** You can flip yourself up or drop down with lightning speed. You can go Prone or stand up as a free action, instead of as part of your Move action.

**MASTER:** It is hard to get the drop on you. You may reroll your initiative once per combat encounter. Your new roll is your initiative rating for the remainder of the encounter.

## SCOUTING

**CLASSES:** Rogue

Skilled in reconnaissance, you can move unnoticed while observing key details, always prepared for possible threats.

**NOVICE:** You can use the lay of the land to your advantage. If you fail a Dexterity (Stealth) test you can reroll it, but you must keep the results of the second roll.

**EXPERT:** You are a skilled observer. If you fail a Perception (Seeing) test you can reroll it, but you must keep the results of the second roll.

**MASTER:** You know how to get the drop on your enemies. You can perform the Seize the Initiative stunt for 2 stunt points instead of the usual 4. Furthermore, you gain a +2 bonus on attacks made on your next turn.





## SINGLE WEAPON STYLE

**CLASSES:** Rogue and Warrior

You can fight effectively wielding only a single one-handed melee weapon.

**NOVICE:** Fighting with a single weapon demands increased awareness. If you take the Activate action, you gain a +1 Defense bonus until the end of the encounter while fighting with this style.

**EXPERT:** You can create a web of steel with but a single weapon. Your bonus to Defense increases to +2 while fighting in this style.

**MASTER:** When using this style, you gain a +1 bonus to the Stunt Die of your attack roll, increasing both your chance to hit and the SP you might gain from doubles. Do not count the Stunt Die bonus when checking for doubles—use the numbers on the die faces as usual.

## THIEVERY

**CLASSES:** Rogue

What's yours is yours and what's theirs is yours too.

**NOVICE:** Select one focus from Dexterity (Lock Picking), Dexterity (Traps), Perception (Searching), or Intelligence (Thieves' Lore). If you fail a test with this focus you can reroll it, but you must keep the results of the second roll.

**EXPERT:** You gain the Novice benefit with a second focus from the Novice list.

**MASTER:** You gain the Novice benefit with an additional, third focus from the Novice list.

## THROWN WEAPON STYLE

**CLASSES:** Rogue and Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Training in the Axes weapon group, Light Blades weapon group, or Spears weapon group

You are adept with throwing weapons.

**NOVICE:** Your accuracy is uncanny. You gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls with throwing weapons.

**EXPERT:** You can arm yourself with a throwing weapon in an instant. You can ready a throwing weapon as a free action instead of a minor action.

**MASTER:** You throw weapons with speed and accuracy. Reduce the cost of the Lightning Attack stunt by 1 SP when using a throwing weapon.

## TWO-HANDER STYLE

**CLASSES:** Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Strength 2, training in one of the following: the Axes weapon group, the Bludgeons weapon group, the Heavy Blades weapon group, the Polearms weapon group, or the Spears weapon group

You are deadly with two-handed melee weapons.



**NOVICE:** The length of your weapon and the power of your attacks forces foes to yield ground. When you hit with a melee attack with a two-handed weapon, you can move the target 2 yards in any direction as if you had used the Skirmish stunt. If a target is immune to Skirmish, or Skirmish costs more SP to perform on them, they are immune to this ability.

**EXPERT:** You can strike fearsome blows with your weapon. You inflict +2 damage when using the Mighty Blow stunt.

**MASTER:** You and your weapon are as one. When wielding a two-handed weapon you can choose to reroll your damage, but you must keep the results of the second roll.

### UNARMED STYLE

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Training in the Brawling weapon group

You know a thing or two about brawling.

**NOVICE:** Your hands are as tough as iron. When you attack with your fist, you inflict 1d6 damage instead of 1d3, and you can add Strength instead of Perception to your damage. If you would already inflict 1d6 damage or more with Accuracy (Brawling) attacks, add +2 to damage instead.

**EXPERT:** Your punch can drop the toughest opponents. You can perform the Knock Prone stunt for 1 SP less than usual when making a Accuracy (Brawling) attack.

**MASTER:** You know a variety of moves intended to injure, restrain, and defend yourself against enemies. Add +1 to the Stunt Die of Accuracy (Brawling) attacks, increasing both your chance to hit and the number of stunt points you gain on doubles. Do not count the Stunt Die bonus when checking for doubles—use the numbers on the die faces as usual.

### WEAPON AND SHIELD STYLE

**CLASSES:** Warrior

You've been trained to fight with a single-handed melee weapon and shield.

**NOVICE:** You can use shields of all types. You are now proficient in their use and get their full Defense bonuses. (Without proficiency, your Defense bonus would never exceed +1.)

**EXPERT:** You know how to get the most from your shield. When using a shield, you can perform the Defensive Stance stunt for 1 SP less than normal.

**MASTER:** Your defend with your shield with prodigious skill. The shield Defense bonus of any shield you use increases by 1.

### WEAPON TRAINING

**CLASSES:** Any. Note that while Warriors may take this talent, their class abilities give them training in a large number of weapon groups, so it is usually not to their advantage to learn it on top of those.

You've been trained to fight with more weapons than usual for someone with your background and experience.

**NOVICE:** Select a single weapon from a weapon group you are not trained with. You are now trained in that weapon. You no longer inflict half damage with that weapon and no longer suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls with it. This proficiency does not extend to other weapons in the same group, and you do not gain the focus for the weapon group.

**EXPERT:** You are now trained with a second weapon in the weapon group you selected at the Novice level.

**MASTER:** You are now trained with all weapons in the same group as a weapon you selected at the Novice level.

### WILDFOLK SECRETS

**ANCESTRIES:** Wildfolk **CLASSES:** Any

Steeped in the traditions of your fellow wildfolk, you have strengthened ancestral bonds with your animal kin.

**NOVICE:** Your enhanced animal senses serve you well. You gain a +1 bonus to tests using two Perception focuses of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You are naturally attuned to animals that share your nature. No creature you share a bestial species family with (such as cats, for Feline wildfolk) will attack you unless you attack first, or unless something or someone forces it to. If you use the social influence rules in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**, your animal kin have an Open or better attitude toward you. You may communicate with animals you resemble as well. You understand their natural gestures and utterances, and they understand your use of Wildspeech. The GM uses your character's description, and their category in the **Wildfolk Species** table in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**, to determine a range of species these benefits apply to. For instance, ursine wildfolk can safely communicate with members of any bear species—brown, polar, and so forth.

**MASTER:** You can express your bestial nature fully. You may use an Activate action to take the shape of a creature that shares your bestial heritage based on the criteria listed in the Expert degree. You gain the appearance, size, natural weapons, innate Armor Rating, and movement abilities (such as flight) of the creature. To calculate your Speed and base Defense ratings, subtract a typical member of a species' Dexterity from its own Speed and Defense, then add your own Dexterity. You also gain any other natural abilities the creature possesses which the GM determines are not overly powerful, such as a canine's ability to gain far more information from their sense of smell than any human could, regardless of any bonus to Perception (Smelling).

You maintain your own ability ratings (even if they do not match your apparent size), ability focuses, talents, specializations, and Health. As this is a magical transformation, up to 100 pounds of worn and carried items vanish while you are in animal form, but they reappear when you change back. You can communicate in Wildspeech, but no other language, and you cannot use tools or cast spells.

To change back, you must use another Activate action or lose consciousness. You gain a degree of the Fatigued condition (see **CHAPTER 2**). If you lose consciousness, you change back (and take the Fatigued degree) whether you wanted to or not.



# SPECIALIZATIONS

A specialization is another way to customize your character and focus your class. If you say your character is a Warrior, that's a broad statement. If you say that your character is a knight, it says quite a bit more. You get access to specializations through your class, as described in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**, but they also depend on the campaign. Specializations also represent social roles, training regimens, and even supernatural influence in the game world.

## REGULAR TALENTS AS SPECIALIZATIONS

Whenever you gain a specialization advancement from your class, you may, if you prefer, take a degree in a regular talent instead. If you are level 1–7, you can only use this to take a Novice degree in a new regular talent. If you are level 8–15, you can use



this to advance a regular talent you have at the Novice degree to the Expert degree. If you are level 16 or higher, you can use this to advance a regular talent you have at the Expert degree to the Master degree.

## ARCANE DISCIPLE

While Mages have access to magical powers through their class, others may gain mystical talents as well. Sometimes called “arcane dabblers” or “hedge witches,” arcane disciples are less devoted to the pure study of magic than Mages, combining what they know with other professions and passions. Despite being stereotyped as haphazard students of the Art, arcane disciples often have their own traditions and can develop versatility as they pick up whatever spells and enchantments they can without regard for arcana and dedicated fields of study.

### ARCANE DISCIPLE TALENT

**CLASSES:** Envoy, Rogue, Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Intelligence 2, Willpower 2, the Intelligence (Arcane Lore) focus

You have studied some magic alongside your other pursuits.

**NOVICE:** You gain one Novice spell from any arcana. You also gain magic points equal to your 5 + Willpower + 1d6.

**EXPERT:** You gain one Novice spell from any arcana in addition to the one you got with the Novice degree. You may also reduce the strain of casting in armor by 3. You also gain an additional 1d6 + Willpower magic points on top of those provided at Novice degree.

**MASTER:** You gain one Expert spell of any arcana. Alternatively, you may take two more Novice spells from any arcana. You once again gain 1d6 + Willpower magic points on top of those provided at the Novice and Expert degrees.

## ARCANE SCHOLAR

While all Mages have a certain working knowledge of arcana, some choose to go deeper into the study of magic: delving into ancient texts and the works of renowned scholars, collecting knowledge and lore like others do gold, and valuing it at least as much. You learn the secrets of arcane lore and through them master insights beyond those of other spellcasters. Perhaps one day future arcane scholars will seek out your works to learn more.

### ARCANE SCHOLAR TALENT

**CLASSES:** Mage

**REQUIREMENTS:** Intelligence 3, the Intelligence (Arcane Lore) focus

You have made a study of arcane lore and magic items.

**NOVICE:** You have a wide knowledge of magic theory and practice. If you fail an Intelligence (Arcane Lore) test you can reroll it, but must keep the results of the second roll. Furthermore, you can read magical texts in virtually any language,



as your scholastic abilities fill in for your lack of linguistic knowledge. Additionally, you gain the *identify enchantment* spell even if you do not possess the Enchantment Arcana.

**EXPERT:** You can cast the *identify enchantment* spell for 0 MP as a major action instead of 1 minute. Also, you can automatically tell if an item is cursed after examining it for 1 minute.

**MASTER:** You can automatically determine if an item is enchanted or cursed simply by examining it as a major action. You do not need to touch the item but must be within 5 yards.

## ARISTOCRAT

Regardless of your current social status, you are acknowledged as having a heritage that stretches back to the lords and ladies of some well-known land. You may have no lands or retainers, but you know the names, behaviors, and ancient agreements that once bolstered your family's prestige and power.

### ARISTOCRAT TALENT

**CLASSES:** Envoy

You have been taught special ways to operate in the upper ranks of society and government.

**NOVICE:** You know the essence of noble leadership. Choose one of the following Communication focuses: Bargaining, Etiquette, or Leadership. If you fail a Communication test with your chosen focus, you may reroll it, but you must keep the result of the second roll.

**EXPERT:** Authority demands weaponry and wealth. When you hit a target which you are capable of communicating with, add +2 to damage. In addition, when you gain a level, you earn 10% of the value of unspent coins, though not other valuables. You may invest the coin of fellow PCs (but never NPCs) alongside your own.

**MASTER:** You have an aura of command that leads others to obey you. When you use the Impress basic social stunt, your bonus is 1 more than the number of SP you spend. Also, your profits from the Expert ability to invest money increase to 20%.

## ASPECT WARRIOR

Aspect Warriors channel deities of hunting, ferocity, and raw physical prowess. These are gods of rough honor, close to nature, and often have animal symbols. As one of them, you touch the fighting spirit of your chosen deity, emulating their might and adopting the tactics they're known for in myth cycles.

In the last edition of *Fantasy AGE*, the aspect warrior was known as the beast warrior, and had a slightly different premise, which may be used if desired.

### ASPECT WARRIOR TALENT

**CLASSES:** Rogue or Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Willpower 2, Constitution 2

A ferocious deity of nature, hunting, or battle guides your hand.

## UNLOCKING SPECIALIZATIONS

The default assumption of the rules is that every specialization for your class is open to you, as long as it exists in the campaign. This gives you the broadest array of choices. Your GM may require you to work to access certain specializations, however. If that is their decision, you can unlock a specialization in three ways:

- **YOU CAN FIND A TRAINER.** This is an NPC who already has the specialization. Trainers have motivations of their own, of course, so they may require money, favors, oaths, or actions before agreeing to teach you.
- **YOU CAN GO ON A QUEST.** These can vary wildly but basically your GM creates a special side adventure, the completion of which will unlock the desired specialization. If you wanted to become an assassin, for example, you might have to go to a major city and impress its Assassins' Guild.
- **YOU CAN FIND A TOME.** The knowledge of some specializations has been written down and can sometimes be learned by reading and study. The "tome" could be a magic item or special site, such as a temple that has long trained warrior monks, whose fighting techniques are recorded in pictograms.

**NOVICE:** Pick a divine aspect that inspires you. This aspect is associated with an animal that you consider sacred. Examples are noted in parentheses, but the GM makes the final call based on the gods in their campaign world. You are considered to have the Communication (Animal Handling) focus with this type of animal. If you already have the Communication (Animal Handling) focus, it gives an additional +1 bonus when used with this type of animal.

In addition, pick one of the following bonuses based on the selected animal:

- **GREAT HUNTER (PANTHER, WOLF, TIGER):** +1 bonus on melee attack rolls
- **GREAT TRICKSTER (CROW, MONKEY, RABBIT):** +1 Defense
- **RAGING ONE (BEAR, SHARK, WOLVERINE):** +1 bonus on melee damage
- **SWIFT ONE (CHEETAH, OWL, HAWK):** +1 Speed
- **UNYIELDING ONE (HORSE, STAG, TURTLE):** Natural Armor rating of 1

**EXPERT:** You learn to channel your divine aspect more fully. The stunt(s) listed for your animal can be performed for 1 SP less than normal. Stunts whose cost becomes 0 SP can still only be performed when stunt points are generated.

- **GREAT HUNTER (PANTHER, WOLF, TIGER):** Lightning Attack
- **GREAT TRICKSTER (CROW, MONKEY, RABBIT):** Taunt
- **RAGING ONE (BEAR, SHARK, WOLVERINE):** Lethal Blow
- **SWIFT ONE (CHEETAH, OWL, HAWK):** Skirmish
- **UNYIELDING ONE (HORSE, STAG, TURTLE):** Stay Aware

**MASTER:** Your chosen deity empowers and protects you. You are considered to have an Armor Rating equal to your



Willpower +2 or an Armor Rating conferred by worn armor, whichever is higher, as the two sources of AR do not stack with each other.

## ASSASSIN

Quiet and cunning Rogues may master the art of death. Assassins are never the obvious threat. They leave the blustering and the battle cries to Warriors, while they sneak up from behind to plant a knife in the back. While many assassins are professional killers for hire, others take up their vocation for another purpose, whether fanatical devotion to a death-cult, or a desire to eliminate certain targets from the world for the greater good.

### ASSASSIN TALENT

**CLASSES:** Rogue

**REQUIREMENTS:** Dexterity 2, Intelligence 2

You know how to kill quickly and efficiently.

**NOVICE:** You can assess a nearby opponent and spot weaknesses that can be exploited in combat. With an Activate action you can mark for death a visible target within 10 yards of you. You inflict +2 to damage against the one you marked for death until they're defeated, you're defeated, or the encounter ends. You may only mark one target for death at a time.

**EXPERT:** You know how to exploit your target's weaknesses. When you make a pinpoint attack against an opponent you have marked for death, you inflict an extra 1d6 damage. If this reduces your target's Health to 0 you may inflict the Kill coup de grace result immediately and automatically, even with a ranged weapon.

**MASTER:** Even the quickest of targets cannot escape you. You can make Pinpoint Attacks against all opponents, no matter their Dexterity.

## BARD

For some people, the life of a performer is the life of a herald, historian, and keeper of cultural secrets, to be preserved for future generations and used in the here and now, so the tales of ancient heroes drive the audience to greatness—and stories of their follies inspire some sensible caution. That's the bardic way. Some bards are trained in formal societies and called on to be judges and lawgivers since they remember the old traditions. Others are performers first, and keep their own counsel unless called upon.

### BARD TALENT

**CLASSES:** Envoy or Rogue

**REQUIREMENTS:** Communication 2, the Performance talent (Novice), at least one Lore-based Intelligence focus

You can move others with song and verse and can pluck out secrets alluded to by ancient hymns and epics.

**NOVICE:** You drive others to perform heroically. Once per encounter you can take a major action and with a successful

TN 13 Communication (Performance) test, spin a tale or sing a song to inspire an ally capable of perceiving the effort. This may happen before or during an encounter. An inspired ally may reroll one failed test during the encounter. You may use the Crowd Appeal stunt with this ability to influence multiple allies.

**EXPERT:** Bards often remember stories and tales that provide useful insights. This allows you to use the Extra Information exploration stunt for 1 SP less than usual. Once per encounter you can also add your Intelligence (Musical Lore) focus bonus to any other Lore-based test.

**MASTER:** Tales of brave companions inspire your friends, and stories of horrific death give your enemies pause. As a major action you make either a TN 13 Communication (Performance) test to inspire allies, or a Communication (Performance) test opposed by your enemies' Willpower (Morale) tests to demoralize enemies, assuming these targets can perceive your performance. Success means you can either grant allies +1 to attack, damage, and Willpower-based rolls, or impose a -1 penalty to attack, damage, and Willpower-based rolls from your enemies. You can attempt each type of action until it succeeds once, after which its effects last for the encounter. Once you succeed at one of these options, you may not attempt the other during the same encounter.

## BERSERKER

All Warriors fight, but some feel the call to battle singing in their blood during a crimson haze of pure aggression. These berserkers may revel in the glory of combat, or hope their unique talents ultimately serve the cause of peace. Berserkers usually belong to societies who believe combat is glorious, but a few take up the path of battle rage because it awakens individual instincts.

### BERSERKER TALENT

**CLASSES:** Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Strength 2, Willpower 2

You use your rage as a weapon.

**NOVICE:** You can drive yourself into a killing frenzy. Once per encounter, you may use the Activate action to become Berserk. You receive a +2 bonus on Willpower (Courage) and Willpower (Morale) tests while Berserk. You also receive a +2 bonus to damage rolls in melee combat. However, you suffer a -2 penalty to your Defense, Perception-based tests, and Willpower (Self-Discipline) tests while Berserk. You drop out of a Berserk state after two rounds where you can't or don't attempt a melee attack. Once you stop being Berserk, you can't become Berserk again during that encounter.

**EXPERT:** Your rage becomes more potent. While Berserk you gain the same bonuses and penalties as described in the Novice entry, but your bonus damage in melee combat increases by an additional 1d6, on top of the previous +2.

**MASTER:** Your fury is unstoppable! If your Health drops to 0 while Berserk, you do not take a Defeat Condition until you



are struck a number of times equal to your Constitution, or a number of rounds pass equal to your Willpower, whichever comes first. Your Health is 0, and although you're Defenseless (as the condition), you can still stagger through battle as pure rage keeps you standing.

## CHAMPION

There are many tough and capable Warriors, but those who can truly inspire their allies and intimidate their enemies are few. As a champion you don't just fight, you are a palpable presence on the battlefield. Comrades in arms look to you for strength and courage in the chaos of battle. Foes hesitate and lose heart when fighting you.

### CHAMPION TALENT

**CLASSES:** Envoy or Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Communication 2, Strength 2. If you belong to the Envoy class, you do not need to meet these requirements.

You are a beacon of determination and resolve on the battlefield, terrifying your enemies and inspiring your allies.

**NOVICE:** Your battle roar intimidates your opponents. When you take the Charge action, you can shout a war cry that gives all enemies within 8 yards of your charge's final position a -1 on attack rolls on their next turn.

**EXPERT:** You can lead your allies in an inspired defense. First, you must use the Activate action to enter *Rally Mode*. When you do so, allies within 8 yards gain +1 Defense and a +1 on Willpower (Morale) tests while this mode is active. You can end your Rally with another minor action.

**MASTER:** Your presence on the battlefield cannot be ignored. When in *Rally Mode* your Expert effects affect allies within 12 yards of you. They also receive a +1 bonus on Willpower (Courage) tests and inflict +1 damage with melee attacks.

## CRIME LORD

Crime lords are the soldiers and bosses of the various criminal cabals and syndicates found in most campaign settings. Crime lords are enforcers, counselors, and aspiring leaders leaning on social leverage but entirely willing to get their hands dirty. Some are deliberately colorful figures—and they mete out creative punishments to fit their image—but others prefer to intimidate through simple menace: a scowl, a drawn hood, and a knife on the table.

### CRIME LORD TALENT

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Willpower 2, the Strength (Intimidation) focus or Communication (Deception) focus, the Intelligence (Thieves' Lore) focus. If you belong to the Envoy class, you do not need to meet these requirements.



You're a princeling of the criminal underworld—or an aspiring one, at least.

**NOVICE:** Your brutal style of command is only matched by your ability to hide threats and directives in innocuous words. You can perform the Hidden Message and Undermine social stunts for 1 SP less than normal.

**EXPERT:** You are exceptional at taking advantage of opportunities to push others to their limits through threats and careful lies. Add +1 to the Stunt Die to your Communication (Deception) or Strength (Intimidation) tests, increasing your chance of success, degree of success (including in advanced tests, where it contributes to the Success Threshold, as per CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES), and the number of stunt points doubles will score.

**MASTER:** You cultivate an aura of intelligent menace. You and a number of allies equal to your Communication rating



gain a +1 bonus to opposed tests and attack rolls against foes with a Willpower lower than the higher of your Strength or Communication.

## DIPLOMAT

Sometimes, fighting isn't the answer. Other times, fighting *was* the answer, but now you need someone to negotiate terms and treaties. In both cases, the diplomat shines. You are part negotiator, part courtier, and sometimes a bit of a spy. Diplomats often come from privileged backgrounds, but this merely indicates the opportunity to join the profession. Some diplomats gain their skills outside of a recognized political body and act as negotiators for mercenary companies, gangs, revolutionary movements, cults, or in any other situation where a calm, persuasive voice is preferable to blood-stained steel.

### DIPLOMAT TALENT

**CLASSES:** Envoy

**REQUIREMENTS:** Communication 2, Novice degree in the Linguistics talent

You are skilled at statecraft and diplomacy.

**NOVICE:** You are adept enough at social graces to win friends and avoid embarrassment. Choose two focuses from among the following: Communication (Etiquette), Intelligence (Cultural Lore), or Intelligence (Heraldry). You may reroll a failed test with your chosen focuses, but you must accept the result of the second roll.

**EXPERT:** You are excellent at operating within established rules and customs to achieve your aims. When performing a Communication or Intelligence-based test that utilizes or investigates a treaty, set of traditional customs, or a code of law, add +1 to the Stunt Die, increasing your total roll, degree of success (including in advanced tests, where it contributes to the Success Threshold, as per CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES), and the number of stunt points doubles will score.

**MASTER:** You can use your skills to delay or perhaps even prevent violence. Once per encounter, when combat is imminent, if you can communicate with potential combatants you may make an immediate Communication (Etiquette) test as a free action, opposed by your enemies' Willpower (Morale) rolls. Anyone in your audience who was defeated in the opposed test cannot attack unless attacked first, or until you have had a chance to say one thing, be it a plea to negotiate, insults to motivate your side, or information revealing it's all a mistake—whatever it is, they have to listen first. If you are stalling for time, the Game Master can require additional opposed tests.

## DUELIST

Heavily armed and armored Warriors may dominate the battlefield, but duelists rule the streets and alleys of cities. In such conditions the quick blades and wits of duelists count for more than raw strength. They eschew cumbersome

shields and fight with a weapon in each hand instead. The classic duelist fights with a rapier and either a main gauche or a spiked buckler in their off hand, though some pride themselves on fighting with more unusual weapon combinations.

### DUELIST TALENT

**CLASSES:** Rogue or Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Accuracy 2, Dexterity 2, proficiency in the Dueling weapon group, at least the Novice degree in one Fighting Style talent that applies to Accuracy-based melee weapons

You excel in the art of fencing.

**NOVICE:** You favor a more sophisticated form of fighting. While using an Accuracy-based melee weapon for which you possess a Fighting Style talent, you inflict +2 damage.

**EXPERT:** You defend yourself like an artist of the blade. Once per round, you may use a minor action to perform a *Duelist's Parry* with an Accuracy-based melee weapon. To do so, make an attack roll opposed by the incoming melee attack—it doesn't work against ranged attacks. If you succeed, you deflect the attack. You may use the duelist's parry out of initiative order, as long as you have an unused minor action, which it uses up.

**MASTER:** You learn how to riposte attacks, and to interrupt a strike with one of your own. You may devote your major action to a *Duelist's Parry*, even out of order, and if your roll beats that of both the attack and the opponent's Defense, your parry is also an attack and capable of generating stunt points with doubles. Furthermore, you are no longer limited to one *Duelist's Parry* per round, so you can devote your major action to the Master ability, and your minor action to the Expert ability.

## ELEMENTALIST

One of the foundations of the arcane arts is the understanding of the balance between the elements—the primal forces of the world. While most Mages work with the different elements as tools, some possess (or are drawn to forge) a deep connection with one or more of them. For some Mages this connection to the elements is profoundly spiritual, while for others it is all about knowledge, understanding, or power. Depending on the esoterica the Mage values, the elements are either primal components of the cosmos or numinous ideals magic converts into base material phenomena.

### ELEMENTALIST TALENT

**CLASSES:** Mage

**REQUIREMENTS:** One of the following arcana talents: Air Arcana, Cold Arcana, Earth Arcana, Fire Arcana, Lightning Arcana, Shadow Arcana, Water Arcana, or Wood Arcana

You have a talent for elemental magic. Choose one of the following spell talents to be your favored arcana:



*Air Arcana, Cold Arcana, Earth Arcana,  
Fire Arcana, Lightning Arcana, Shadow Arcana,  
Water Arcana, or Wood Arcana.*

**NOVICE:** You not only gain a +1 bonus to casting rolls for spells from your favored arcana, but benefit from a +2 bonus to resist such spells when they're directed at you, as well.

**EXPERT:** Your knowledge of your element is deep. When casting spells of your favored arcana, their cost in magic points is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1.

**MASTER:** You understand the ties between elemental forces. You can choose a second favored arcana from the list.

## GLADIATOR

You may not have been born in the arena, but some might say you were reborn there, transforming from your former life into a famed warrior—of sorts. Learning to fight in numerous contests of arms for sport and reward, you are adept at both taking lives and thrilling crowds. Many gladiators were inducted into the profession against their will, but this specialization is appropriate to any pit fighter or prize fighter. This specialization can represent both barehanded brawlers and weapon-wielding pit fighters.

### GLADIATOR TALENT

**CLASSES:** Rogue or Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Constitution 2, the Strength (Intimidation) or Communication (Performance) focus

You excel in personal contests of arms, especially in front of a crowd.

**NOVICE:** You're good at dispatching and disabling foes. As a free action you can either deliver a coup de grace or cause a foe you defeated to suffer the Scarred condition, as per CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES. You must have the Game Master's permission to inflict more than a cosmetic scar.

**EXPERT:** Fighting with flair, your words and movements confound your enemy. If you use the Taunt stunt successfully in combat, you can extend its duration to your enemy's next two turns, instead of just their next turn.

**MASTER:** You're a bloody-handed *entertainer*. You may use basic social stunts as combat stunts, and when you do so, you get a rebate of 1 SP you may use for any other appropriate stunt, as long as you can justify it in the story, in the GM's opinion.

## GUARDIAN

Guardians are trained to defend others. Experienced guardians often have numerous scars, indicating where they took a blade, arrow, or mystic bolt for their sworn charges. Some guardians protect others as a religious calling, while others are essentially highly specialized mercenaries and warrior-vassals. Some warriors believe protecting others is the highest martial skill. They study this specialization's methods as an art form.



### GUARDIAN TALENT

**CLASSES:** Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Constitution 2, Dexterity 2, Novice degree in the Two-Hander Style, Pole Weapons Style, or Weapon and Shield Style

You know how to protect others.

**NOVICE:** The basic act of guardianship is to throw yourself in harm's way. Use an Activate minor action to select one ally within 4 yards. Once per round, when that ally is hit by an attack, you may make an opposed test of your Dexterity (Initiative) against the attack roll. If you succeed, you make the attack target you instead, as if it never hit the ally. This attack does hit you if the roll that originally was going to hit your ally would have hit you instead. You may select a new ally as a free action at the beginning of your turn.

**EXPERT:** If you succeed at using the Novice ability, you may use a minor action to make a melee attack against the enemy attacking the ally you're protecting, even when it isn't your turn. You cannot generate SP with this attack, however, and even if you defeat the opponent, their attack strikes simultaneously and is calculated against your Defense as usual.

**MASTER:** If you succeed at a counterattack using the Expert ability (which in turn requires using the Novice ability), your opponent never hit you with the attack you took for your ally, even if the roll indicates you would have been hit.



## HERITAGE SPECIALIZATIONS

Not every specialization reflects training or even traits a character wants to develop. Heritage Specializations reflect changes in a character's physical body that can become more pronounced and powerful over time. These traits generally come from some quirk in the character's background — they may be a half-human descendant of a demon, have been born with a special destiny powered by divine grace, or have been selected as a future emissary of the fairies as a child — and may be a common history well-known in the character, or be a hidden trait the character can't explain.

As with ancestry, heritage does not necessarily affect a character's personality — an elf with infernal heritage has the same potential for kindness and cruelty as any other elf. Heritage almost always presents physical manifestations that begin easily concealed but grow more pronounced as you embrace it and gain additional ranks in the specialization, and these traits may mark a character as outsiders, depending on their home culture.

The *Fantasy AGE* rules do not require heritage specializations to be selected at first level (even a scion of an infernal prophecy may not manifest any fiendish properties until well into adulthood) or restrict a character to only taking one heritage specialization. However, individual campaigns and GMs may place such restrictions on heritage specializations (or even disallow them entirely), so check with your GM before taking one.

There are three heritage specializations detailed in this book: Divine Heritage, Fey Heritage, and Infernal Heritage.

### DIVINE HERITAGE

Glistening shards of divinity or angelic power linger within you. Your ancestor may have been a legendary herald of the church or a fallen angel, or a god may have found brief passion with your mortal parent. You may instead be a favored champion of some divine being, invested with a sliver of their glory.

Subtle divine heritage usually manifests as flecks of metallic color in the skin or eyes, geometric designs in freckles or scars, an extraordinarily lyrical voice, unusual height, or minor traits associated with your divine parent. Higher ranks of this specialization are accompanied by a divine glow or halo, the growth of stunt wings, unnatural skin texture, or music that follows the hero's movement.

#### DIVINE HERITAGE TALENT

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Communication 2

Your divine heritage infects you with righteous light.

**NOVICE:** You can call forth the light within you. Thus, you may use the Fire Arcana spell *arcane lantern* without a casting roll or spending magic points, but only for a combined total of one hour between periods of total rest (see **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**). If you also learn the spell itself, as a Mage or through some other means, you can cast it at will for 0 MP

unless you have to push it (see **CHAPTER 5: MAGIC**). Furthermore, when you glow with this light and roll doubles on a basic test with social effects, you gain +1 SP on top of the Stunt Die result, as long as witnesses aren't enemies of the divine power it represents. Finally, your vision cannot be impaired by bright light.

**EXPERT:** Not even blades and arrows can stay you from your divine purpose. You gain access to the following stunt:

SP	STUNT
1-3	<b>RIGHTEOUS FOCUS:</b> Increase your Armor Rating by 1 per SP spent until the beginning of your next turn. When you use this stunt, you shine with divine light.

**MASTER:** You can channel your inner light to an intensity that can either empower life or burn your enemies. By using an Activate minor action you summon a visible divine aura. While the aura is active, your attacks and damaging spells inflict an additional 1d6 damage on enemies of your divine patron or ancestor. In addition, you can perform the Heal action on an ally within 10 yards, without equipment, as a minor action on your turn, once per round.

### FEY HERITAGE

Your cousins are the springtime brook and the sun-dappled thicket, and some untamed element of the wild surges in your blood. You might have been one of the children snatched by fairies, the offspring of your mother's dalliance with a dryad, or born within a sacred henge. You could instead be a favored lover of a powerful fey or the survivor of some primordial event like a once-a-century storm.

Subtle fey heritage usually manifests as the ability to hear unheard voices and laughter, an earthy or floral scent, vine-like whorls in the skin, and vibrant hair colors. Higher ranks of this specialization are accompanied by animalistic traits like slitted pupils, antlers, antennae, fins, or else plant-like growths from the hair or flesh.

#### FEY HERITAGE TALENT

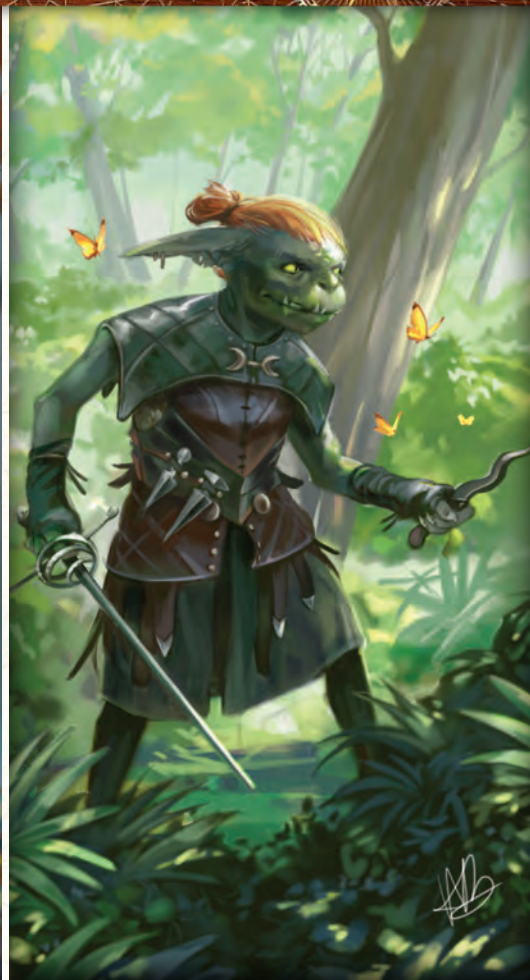
**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Perception 2 or wildfolk ancestry

Your faerie heritage grants you a cunning insight into the natural world.

**NOVICE:** You have the blessings of the secret powers that rule green places. Unless summoned or enhanced with magic, environmental hazards such as exposure, natural poisons, and even naturally occurring deadfalls inflict 2d6 damage less than usual. Reduce the damage dice by 2d6; if the result is 0 dice, you're immune to the hazard. You easily move through underbrush and other naturally difficult terrain, so that it doesn't reduce your movement unless you have to make tests to traverse it, such as a Dexterity (Acrobatics), Strength (Climbing), Constitution (Swimming) or similar test.





**EXPERT:** As your ties to the Faerie realms hidden in the wilds deepen, whispers in the deep green bless you with a single benefit from the **Wildfolk Species** table in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**. You only gain one benefit, not all those associated with a wildfolk species type. Wildfolk gain this benefit in addition to their existing qualities, and it does not have to be from the wildfolk's usual species.

**MASTER:** Your fundamental connection to the Faerie wild can slip you away from danger. If there is any plant life or live earth within 2 yards of you, you can use a major action to collapse into flowers, leaves, vines, and foliage—or perhaps leave a topiary-like plant figure in your place—and reappear, with all worn and carried items, in any thick brush, or crawling out of living earth, anywhere within a mile of your original location. Unfortunately, this reduces you to 0 Health. You gain the Helpless Defeat condition, and you can't use this ability again until a lunar month (or the equivalent in your campaign) has passed.

## INFERNAL HERITAGE

Simmering bits of demonic heritage flow through you, by birth or circumstance. You may have ancestors who escaped hellish realms or struck bargains with demons, been exposed to artifacts of supernatural evil, or were once possessed by a being from the lower realms.

Subtle infernal heritage usually manifests as extra fingers or toes, strange patches of coloration, uncommon eye colors,

and/or a sulfurous scent. Higher ranks of this specialization are accompanied by horns, a tail, hooves, and/or unnatural coloration in the skin or hair.

### INFERNAL HERITAGE TALENT

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Willpower 2

Your infernal heritage inures you to the rigors of hell and provides a sixth sense about unnatural evil.

**NOVICE:** You become resistant to heat, fire, and flame, able to reach into boiling water or touch hot metal without injuring yourself. You reduce damage taken from any fire source, even magical ones, by an amount equal to your Willpower. Hot weather won't harm you on your travels either. You also gain Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source. If your ancestry already provides Dark Sight, increase the range by 10 yards.

Some manifestations of one's infernal heritage recall legends of frozen hell-realms instead. These produce resistance to cold, not heat, using the same rules. They also provide Dark Sight, as above.

**EXPERT:** The presence of infernal supernatural forces sings to your blood and bones. When you encounter supernatural forces related to your heritage, including magic items, sites, spells, true demons, others of your kind, and cases of demonic possession, you can make a Perception (Empathy)



test with a TN set by the GM (usually the Spellpower of spells, an opposed test vs. Willpower (Self-Discipline) for creatures, but items and sites could be any TN) to either detect a demonic element, or intuit one useful piece of information if you already know the forces of corruption are present. This may or may not apply to distantly related or unrelated malevolent powers, at the GM's discretion.

**MASTER:** Depending on whether your heritage evokes lethal cold or hellfire, you can imbue your melee attacks and touch with it. If you are aligned with flame, you can set ordinary fires with a touch, and when you use the Mighty Blow or Lethal Blow stunts, the extra damage you inflict is penetrating damage, unless your foe is resistant to fire. If you are aligned with abyssal chill, you can freeze a gallon of water with a touch and extinguish moderately sized fires. You also inflict penetrating damage with Mighty Blow or Lethal Blow due to your cold-infused melee attacks unless your foe is resistant to cold.

## HOLY WARRIOR

You raise steel and shed blood for a holy cause—or at least a zealous one. Your bloody-handed faith has been answered with certain blessings. In some campaigns, gods openly grant Holy Warriors their status in a blaze of supernatural power. In others, the source is more subtle and the existence of Holy Warriors don't even guarantee that the gods truly exist, leaving the true source of a Holy Warrior's power a matter of speculation. No matter the truth, you bring hope to friends of your faith and put holy terror into the hearts of its enemies.

### HOLY WARRIOR TALENT

**CLASSES:** Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fighting 2, the Willpower (Faith) focus

You are a holy warrior for a higher power.

**NOVICE:** Your fury at enemies of the faith (or cold desire to bring them "final mercy," perhaps) helps your blows rend them asunder. When performing a Mighty or Lethal Blow stunt against an enemy of your faith (as determined by your GM), you may add your Willpower to the total damage it does.

**EXPERT:** Your faith chains you to the true path, against deception and temptation. You gain a +1 bonus to Willpower (Faith) tests. Furthermore, you may always choose to use Willpower (Faith) against tests attempting to sway you from your sworn duties or otherwise alter your thoughts or emotions, regardless of the usual ability and focus required to resist such effects.

**MASTER:** For you, bloodshed is a sacrament. Once per round you can choose to make an attack that hits an adjacent (within 2 yards) ally strike you, instead. When you take damage from this redirected attack, you may add your Willpower (Faith) focus bonus to your Armor Rating.

## HUNTER

Members of the Hunter specialization master the art of stalking their quarry. They learn how to relentlessly track their prey and quickly bring them down. Most hunters specialize in a particular type of creature, but their abilities are applicable to stalking other quarry.

### HUNTER TALENT

**CLASSES:** Rogue or Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Perception 2, the Perception (Tracking) focus

You are a master tracker and a skilled hunter of people, beasts, and monsters.

**NOVICE:** You know how to stalk your prey and strike true. If you fail a Perception (Tracking) test you may roll again, but you must accept the results of the second roll. In addition, pick one weapon group from among Bows, Spears, and Slings. You gain +2 to damage with all weapons of that type.

**EXPERT:** You know how to ambush your prey. If you succeed at a Perception (Tracking) test to follow a target, or a Dexterity (Stealth) test to lie in wait, your first attack roll against them generates 1 SP whether you roll doubles or not, and stacks with SP from doubles or other sources.

**MASTER:** You have the persistence and accuracy of a predator. Each time you successfully hit an enemy, you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls and damage if you attack them again on your next turn. This lasts until your bonus becomes +3/+3, you miss, you do not attack them on your turn, you take damage from any other source, or you are seriously distracted, such as by the effects of a spell or special quality.

## KNIGHT

An armored, mounted knight is one of the greatest forces on the battlefield. Learning knightly fighting methods requires rigorous training as a squire. Knighthood is generally seen as an honorable vocation, even if not all knights manage to live up to that ideal. Knights are most often sworn to a feudal liege, religious order, or other community, which not only gives a knight a cause but takes care of their expensive requirements. Knights need arms, armor, and horses, as well as people to take care of them.

Envoy characters cannot normally take some of the prerequisites of the Knight specialization, so they can only adopt it at Level 1.

### KNIGHT TALENT

**CLASSES:** Envoy or Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, proficiency in the Lances weapon group, Mounted Combat Style (Novice)

As an armored cavalier, you're the hammer of the battlefield.

**NOVICE:** Your enemies need to get out of your way or be crushed, impaled, or both. When you hit an enemy from atop a mount



with a melee weapon, your target must also make a Dexterity (Initiative) test opposed by your successful attack roll. If they fail, they must choose between being pushed 4 yards away from where they were hit (they choose the direction) or standing firm and taking an extra 1d6 damage. This applies to both mounted and foot combatants, except for others with this ability, who are immune. In addition, if you are an Envoy, you may learn the Mounted Combat Style talent normally restricted to Warriors.

**EXPERT:** Your lance hits with the strength of an ogre. When performing a mounted Charge action, add 1d6 to your weapon's damage; if it's from the Lances weapon group, add an additional +2 to damage.

**MASTER:** Your foes tremble at the thought of you crashing into them astride your steed. Add +1 to your Defense while mounted. You can also urge your mount to move their full Speed, not half, during a mounted Charge action.

## MAGE HUNTER

There is darkness in magic, and someone must protect the world from evil spells and sorcerers. You have learned how to fight spellcasters, steeling your spirit against their powers. You may have consecrated your weapons against magic, or you may know how to strike at the meridians and other subtle flows of magic that course through spells and creatures. In any event, your path is a calling, whether driven by religious conviction, civic duty, or a desire for revenge.

### MAGE HUNTER TALENT

**CLASSES:** Rogue or Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Accuracy 2, Willpower 2, proficiency in the Black Powder weapon group

With fire, bullet, bolt, and blade, you drive back evil sorcerers and their horrors.

**NOVICE:** Your Accuracy-based ranged attack rolls count as magical, for the purposes of damaging creatures resistant to non-magical attacks. You receive a +2 bonus to tests to resist spells and horror (see CHAPTER 5: MAGIC for how to resist spells, and CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES for horror rules).

**EXPERT:** Your bonus to tests to resist spells and horror increases to +3. Furthermore, you can attack spells themselves. As a major action, make an attack roll with a magical weapon (including the magical attack granted to you by the Novice degree) against the Spellpower of a spell whose duration is currently running. You inflict damage against the magic points used to cast the spell as its "Health." If you inflict cumulative damage equal to or exceeding the spell's magic points, the spell's duration ends. This power doesn't work on magic items, permanent spells, or spells with an instantaneous effect, and cannot undo the effects that spells have brought about prior to your attack. The GM is the final arbiter of which spells may be attacked.

**MASTER:** You can drain Mages and other magic-using creatures (defined as any creature with magic points) of power.

When you hit such a creature with a magical attack (including the magical attack granted to you by the Novice degree), your target loses 1d6 + your Willpower in magic points in addition to taking normal damage.

## MARINER AND PIRATE

You know the ways of the sea. This specialization is unlike others, because the dividing line between mariner and pirate is a permeable one. A mariner is an able member of the crew of any vessel, from trading vessels to warships, ready for danger but used to following a chain of command and the loose customs of the sea. A pirate is a sea-raider and rough survivor, ready to slit throats or hoist sail as the chaotic situation on most pirate ships demand. Between pirates and mariners lie so-called "privateers," who hunt the seas under the debatable authority of another nation.





## MARINER AND PIRATE TALENT

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Dexterity (Sailing) focus

You're a skilled sailor, trained in the rough business of shipboard combat. However, your focus may be on defending and fighting as part of a regular crew, raiding and surviving aboard a pirate ship, or some mixture of both. Consequently, each degree has a Mariner and Pirate benefit. As you gain a new degree, choose one option or the other. You do not have to have a prior degree in one of these to choose the next one, so you can, for example, choose the Novice Pirate benefit, the Expert Mariner benefit, and the Master Pirate benefit. If you want the benefits you skipped, you must take it as part of a second specialization advancement.

**NOVICE—MARINER:** Years at sea make sailing second nature. You may reroll any Dexterity (Sailing) test, but must take the second result.



**NOVICE—PIRATE:** Your sea legs and awareness of marine combat makes you even more effective on the water than on land. You gain +1 Defense and +1 damage to attacks when fighting on a ship.

**EXPERT—MARINER:** A life in the riggings makes you an agile shipboard combatant. On ship's ladders or rigging, you can climb your full Speed and fight with a one-handed weapon at no penalty. If you would fall due to the Knock Prone stunt or another circumstance aboard ship, you may make a last-ditch Dexterity (Sailing) test to catch yourself in addition to any other test the GM allows, at a TN of 15 or whatever the GM assigns.

**EXPERT—PIRATE:** There's no such thing as a fair fight. When attacking a foe who is Prone or under the effects of any condition or personal circumstance that penalizes attack rolls or Defense, you may perform the Mighty Blow, Lethal Blow, or Lightning Attack stunts for 1 SP less than normal.

**MASTER—MARINER:** Together, you and your crew can overcome the sea's perils. You may use a minor action to grant an ally within 4 yards a +2 bonus to the Stunt Die of their next test or attack roll, as long as they attempt it before your next turn. Two mariners with this ability may grant it to each other, but multiple uses don't stack.

**MASTER—PIRATE:** Landlubbers are your natural prey. When fighting anyone aboard a ship who has a lower Dexterity + Sailing focus bonus than you, you inflict an extra 1d6 damage.

## MARKED

You have tattoos, scars, or other body modifications which have been enchanted to provide exceptional abilities. Many marked find work as monster-hunters and bodyguards, their arcane protections making them ideal candidates to face threats others avoid.

### MARKED TALENT

**CLASSES:** Envoy, Rogue, or Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Constitution 3, Willpower 3, the Willpower (Self-Discipline) focus. If you belong to the Warrior class you do not need to meet these requirements.

Your body is host to numerous enchanted markings, scars, or tattoos.

**NOVICE:** Gain one Mark from the following list:

- **BEASTMARK:** You have a mark that looks like or symbolizes a dangerous creature, such as a snake, panther, or dragon. If you hit with a melee attack and have stunt points to spend, you can use the Lightning Attack Stunt for just 1 SP as the creature animates and strikes, using Accuracy (Brawling), but regardless of what your mark represents it inflicts 1d6 + Strength damage.



- **FISHMARK:** You can breathe underwater, suffer no penalties to operate underwater, and move at your normal speed while swimming.
- **MARK OF THE ARCANE:** You gain the ability to use one Novice degree spell from any Arcana the GM allows, and 4 + Willpower magic points. The MP cost to cast the spell cannot be higher than the magic points you initially gain from this mark, though you may use other sources of magic points to cast the granted spell, or use the magic points granted by this mark to cast other spells, though this is an uncommon situation since Mages cannot become Marked.
- **MARK OF MIGHT:** You gain +2 damage to melee attacks and +1 bonus to all Strength (Might) tests.
- **MARK OF SPEED:** +2 to Speed and +1 bonus to all Dexterity (Initiative) tests.
- **MARK OF WAR:** You can magically store two one-handed weapons, one two-handed weapon, or a weapon and shield inside a mystical pocket dimension accessed through your mark. You can summon these weapons to your hands as a minor action.
- **SPIDERMARK:** You can move along walls and ceilings at your normal Speed, and otherwise take actions as if you were on the ground, though this does not truly eliminate the effects of gravity. Dropped objects fall as they should, and if you're knocked Prone, you fall in the same direction as everyone else.
- **WARDING MARK:** Reduce the Spellpower of any spell targeting you by 2.

You may take other marks of similar power level that the Game Master has devised, or that you propose to the GM if they approve it.

**EXPERT:** Gain another Mark.

**MASTER:** Gain another Mark. Furthermore, your body is now infused with mystic energies, granting you a natural Armor Rating of 2. This stacks with worn armor.

## MIRACLE WORKER

While magic can indeed work wonders, the mysteries of life and death ultimately lie in the hands of the gods themselves. Still, some Mages become so skilled in the arts of medicine, herbalism, and healing that they become known as true miracle workers when it comes to fanning the fragile embers of damaged life back into a full and healthy flame. Some miracle workers serve as doctors or healers in great cities or feudal courts, while others are lone hermits, preferring solitude, save for when someone in need comes to the door. A few are less empathetic, and their talents come from a dispassionate, scientific study of life.

### MIRACLE WORKER TALENT

**CLASSES:** Mage

**REQUIREMENTS:** Intelligence 2, Willpower 2, Healing Arcana (Expert)

You have an affinity for healing magic.

**NOVICE:** Your magic teems with a life energy you've become sensitive to. When you cast Healing Arcana spells, targets regain extra Health equal to your Willpower, and you become aware of any ongoing impediments to their physical health, such as toxins or diseases.

**EXPERT:** You can expel distortions of life within life. When you cast the Healing Touch spell, you can spend an extra 5 MP to cure the target of a single disease or remove a single non-permanent condition caused by physical injury such as Blinded, Deafened, and Maimed.

**MASTER:** You learn the apex of the healing arts. You can cast a more powerful version of the Revival spell for 25 MP on any creature which has died during an action encounter, or within five minutes of narrative time, as long as the body has not, in the GM's opinion, been too severely damaged to revive. You can also spend an extra 10 MP on any Healing Arcana spell and take a level of the Fatigued condition to remove a Scar from a single target.

## MYSTIC NAVIGATOR

A mystic navigator learns to guide ships to the Wyrd Tides and the dangerous Deep. Even when they're not helping a vessel sail between worlds, they guide it with supernatural skill. Their powers also grant them unparalleled control of any vessel they board, making a mystic navigator a valuable ally during storms and shipboard battles, or a potentially serious threat when they assert control of an enemy ship. In some settings, mystic navigators might serve on flying ships, or on massive land-crawling vessels, or some comparable vehicle, and the Game Master should feel free to adjust this specialization to suit them.

### MYSTIC NAVIGATOR TALENT

**CLASSES:** Any

**REQUIREMENTS:** Dexterity 1, Intelligence 2, the Intelligence (Navigation) focus

You can plot and pilot courses through seas both mystic and mundane, and your ship becomes an extension of yourself.

**NOVICE:** You know the Deep, and you can find your way under the most difficult conditions. First, only mystic navigators like yourselves can find the world-crossing currents of the Deep without using magical assistance. This may require an Intelligence (Navigation) test but attempts by anyone who does not possess this specialization automatically fail. Fortunately, you may also reroll any Intelligence (Navigation) test, including for mundane voyages, but you must keep the results of the second roll. You also instantly know if you've been transported from one world to another, though you do not intuit any information beyond that fact.

In addition, you help keep your crew safe, as the ship and its contents move to protect them, mystically responding to your will. Once per round, if you're aboard a ship (defined as a floating craft that uses sails, oars, or an engine) and perceive that someone else aboard is about to fail a test to avoid or mitigate a hazard (see **Hazards** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE



RULES), you can roll a Dexterity (Sailing) test as a reaction at the same TN as the test they failed as an additional chance to resist the hazard's effects.

**EXPERT:** You can find your way even in alien waters. When rolling Intelligence (Navigation) tests to find your way at sea add +1 to the Stunt Die, increasing your chance of success and degree of success. You do not count this bonus when checking for doubles, but it does add to the number of stunt points you might gain from doubles.

In addition, while you're aboard a ship (see the Novice degree for how "ship" is defined) you can mystically manipulate rigging, sails, and other loose shipboard items to hinder your foes. This takes the form of a Stunt Attack major action you can employ against a target within 30 yards, using Dexterity (Sailing) for your attack roll. This may take the form of bad luck tripping the target up, or blatantly animated ropes and other objects depending on the situation and how this ability manifests in the campaign.

**MASTER:** You always have some sense where familiar ports lie. Even if you do not know your current location, or even the world you're on, you can read the mystical currents of fate to help find the way to any fixed point (such as a port, island, or permanently anchored floating city) you've been to before—or where it was, in the bizarre event the "fixed point" has moved. When rolling to navigate to such destinations, you treat any result of less than 10 on the die as 10, though if your actual roll was lower, doubles can't generate stunt points.

You can also entrust your vessel to fate, and if the Game Master agrees you automatically succeed at all tests (though you can't gain or use SP if you do) to navigate to any location destiny—that is, the GM—directs your vessel to. You don't necessarily know anything about your destination; you navigate intuitively. Such locations are always significant to the campaign or adventure's ongoing story.

Finally, your ability to manipulate shipboard phenomena becomes second nature, and you can use the Expert ability to perform a Stunt Attack as a minor action, though if you do, rolling doubles doesn't change the number of SP you can spend if you succeed.

## NECROMANCER

You are particularly skilled with magic relating to death, the dying, and the undead. This ability is rooted in the Death Arcana, but it pushes the Mage's mastery beyond that potent and terrifying arcana. Their reputation for sinister practices is not entirely unearned, but some are scholars of death who engage in macabre acts only in pursuit of truth. Naturally, these academics are rarely remembered, while death worshipers and power-hungry mages eager to shatter the wall between life and death become the stuff of legends.

### NECROMANCER TALENT

**CLASSES:** Mage

**REQUIREMENTS:** Intelligence 2, Willpower 2, the Expert degree in Death Arcana

**NOVICE:** You can nudge the fallen back to life or commit them to eternity. By using a minor action to touch a target with 0 Health and spending 1 MP, you can silently kill them, or stabilize them if they have the Dying condition. In the unlikely case your target is still moving around, you must use a major action and make an Accuracy (Brawling) attack roll instead.

**EXPERT:** Your necromantic abilities are unparalleled. Each time you spend magic points to gain an additional effect with a Death Arcana spell, such as to animate another corpse or ask another question of the deceased, you gain double the normal benefit. Furthermore, any walking corpse you animate are Elite examples, and you determine which of their game traits are increased under the guidelines of the Elite template (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES for information).

**MASTER:** Death sustains you, but in you, even death may die. When a living creature dies within 6 yards of you, you regain 1d6 Health and 1d6 magic points. Furthermore, if a number of creatures with a combined Health equal to or greater than your maximum total die in this vicinity, you may use this ability to return to life if you've been killed yourself. Upon awakening from death, you automatically fail a TN 17 Revelatory horror test. (The target number is listed because you must make the test again to see if you acquire a distortion, as per **Horror** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES.) After 24 hours dead, decomposition manifests as a Scar condition of the GM's choice. After a number of days equal to your Willpower, you either cannot return, or return as an undead creature of the GM's choice, under the GM's control.

## RAZOR

Street toughs, sailors, and many other sneaky fighters favor the dagger and knife, but none pursue the art of the short blade the way the razor does. Up close or ranged, you devote yourself to proficiency with the knife. You may have a particular style of dagger or knife you prefer, but in truth you are deadly with everything from a fighting dirk to a sharp stick.

### RAZOR TALENT

**CLASSES:** Rogue

**REQUIREMENTS:** Accuracy 2, the Accuracy (Light Blades) focus

You have mastered the art of fighting with short blades.

**NOVICE:** In your hands, daggers, knives, and other small, bladed weapons are far more dangerous than their size and reach suggest. Treat any light blade you wield, including improvised ones, as doing 1d6 + 2 base damage both in melee combat and when thrown. If you use a light blade that already does this much damage, it does +1 damage.

**EXPERT:** Attacks with short blades are incredibly fast—and you know how to counter them as well as use them. You can perform the Lightning Attack stunt for 1 SP less than its normal cost when using knives, daggers, and other light blades that benefit from the Novice degree of this talent, and you can perform the Disarm stunt for 1 SP less when



attempting to deprive an enemy of any weapon that uses the Accuracy (Light Blades) focus.

**MASTER:** Every outstretched limb is a target, and every heavy-footed step is an opportunity to strike. Once per round, if an adjacent enemy misses you with an attack and you have a weapon that benefits from the Novice degree of this talent in hand, you immediately attack them out of initiative order, though this is a simple test that can't generate or use stunt points.

## SHARPSHOOTER

Sharpshooters are crack shots who can take down enemies at a distance. Other than their extraordinary skill with missile weapons, most sharpshooters have little in common. They might be soldiers bound to an army, mercenaries for hire, or wanderers in search of a worthy purpose for their deadly skills. While sharpshooters use any ranged weapon with lethal accuracy, each has a favorite type and often a signature example that they have customized to their liking. To steal such a weapon is to ask for terrible retribution.

### SHARPSHOOTER TALENT

**CLASSES:** Rogue or Warrior

**REQUIREMENTS:** Dexterity 2, Perception 2, one Fighting Style talent that uses a ranged weapon

You are an expert shot.

**NOVICE:** Your ranged attacks hit with enough precision, force, and ferocity to drive your targets back. When you hit a target with a ranged attack and score doubles, you push them back a number of yards equal to your weapon's focus bonus + 1.

**EXPERT:** Patience is a sharpshooter's friend. If you take the Aim minor action with a ranged weapon twice in a row (in the same round or across two different rounds), add your focus bonus with the weapon to your attack roll on top of the usual +1 bonus. This is in addition to adding your focus bonus to your attack roll as usual.

**MASTER:** You can find the vulnerable spot on any opponent. When you hit with a ranged attack, reduce your opponent's Armor Rating by your focus bonus.

## SKALD

Skalds are battlefield poets who sing and write about heroes and war—those of ancient times, and those before them—during the heat of battle. They fulfil a dual role, urging heroes on to greatness, then immortalizing their deeds in verse. These chronicles can feature skalds themselves, who plunge into the thick of the fight to witness bravery and horror, and participate as earnestly as their companions, adding inspirational words to the clash of steel and roars of beasts.



### SKALD TALENT

**CLASSES:** Envoy

**REQUIREMENTS:** Communication 2, the Communication (Performance) focus, the Intelligence (Military Lore) focus

You're a fighting poet who draws upon legends of heroism and tactical brilliance to achieve victory.

**NOVICE:** You spout improvised and memorized poetry that guide your friends and intimidate your foes. When using the Coordinate Envoy ability, you can use the Stunt Attack option as a minor action, but instead of an attack roll you make an opposed Communication (Performance) test vs. your foe's reaction Willpower (Morale) roll. If you use this and the ordinary Coordinate ability in the same turn, you must pass on the SP you gained from each to a different ally. Your ally must be able to understand you.

In addition, to survive the battles you'll sing about, you receive training in one additional weapon group of your choice.

**EXPERT:** Your knowledge of great battles gives you tactical wisdom that supplements your fighting ability. Once per encounter, you may add your Intelligence (Military Lore) focus bonus to your attack roll, as an applicable bit of lore occurs to you. You may instead grant this bonus to an ally (they get your focus bonus, not theirs), who must use it on



their next turn. Neither option uses up an additional action, but you can only use one of these options once per encounter. If you affect an ally, they must be able to understand you.

**MASTER:** Your lore-backed verses can wound your enemies' spirits as powerfully as a blade might cut their bodies. As a major action, you can make a Communication (Performance) test vs. your foe's reaction Willpower (Morale) roll. Your foe must be able to feel fear, understand you, and be within 10 yards. If you succeed, you inflict 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage, and you can attach combat and Envoy stunts to the result if you have the SP and they're appropriate to an attack based on frightening and demoralizing a foe. You may not, however, use this attack to perform a coup de grace—no matter how artfully you tell someone they're going to die, you can't just kill them that way.

## SPY

Your espionage skills go beyond that of a mere informer or a courtier with pretensions of importance. In fact, seeming important is exactly what you want to avoid as someone trained to pluck valuable secrets from those who know them. Some spies are formally trained in special academies, while others started trading secrets on the streets and eventually set their aspirations higher.

### SPY TALENT

**Class:** Envoy or Rogue

**REQUIREMENTS:** Perception, 2, Communication 2, either Intrigue (Novice) or Observation (Novice)

You steal secrets, and lies are your art.

**NOVICE:** You are adept at assuming identities, impersonating others, and telling bald-faced lies. You may reroll failed Communication (Disguise) and Communication (Deception) tests, but you must accept the result of the second roll.

**EXPERT:** You are trained to gather information quickly and accurately without being discovered. You can perform the Efficiency and Cover Your Tracks stunts for 1 SP less than normal.

**MASTER:** You are incredibly hard to capture and keep imprisoned. If you are captured while Helpless, you may still take actions to escape while at 0 Health. When attempting an exploration or social test to escape capture or avoid enemies who have an idea that you exist and are a current threat to their interests, add +1 to the Stunt Die, increasing your chance of success, degree of success, and the number of SP you might gain from doubles. Do not count the Stunt Die bonus when checking for doubles—use the numbers on the die faces as usual.

## SWORD MAGE

While few Mages have the time to divert from their studies to take up arms, you are among those who understand the magic of swordsmanship alongside the power of a well-placed spell. Indeed, you find the two arts quite complimentary, as a blade never exhausts its power, while a spell can often overcome a foe immune to mere steel—or enhance said steel to overcome that foe. Sword mages are most common in cultures that balance the magical and the martial, particularly for elves, whose long lives and magical natures give them time and talent to hone both skills.

### SWORD MAGE TALENT

**CLASSES:** Mage

**REQUIREMENTS:** Willpower 2, either Accuracy 2 or Fighting 2

You meld the arts of magic and close combat, traditionally sword fighting.

**NOVICE:** Pick a type of one-handed melee weapon, such as a battleaxe or long sword. You are now considered trained in that weapon in addition to the weapon training granted by your class (see **Weapon Groups** in the **Mage** class description in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**) and when using your chosen weapon, it is considered your arcane device as well as a magical weapon—an arcane weapon.

**EXPERT:** Magic flows through your blade. You can add your Willpower to the damage your arcane weapon inflicts if it's higher than your Perception for an Accuracy-based arcane weapon, or higher than your Strength for a Fighting-based arcane weapon. In addition, the eldritch energy your arcane weapon contains burns through armor, so that when you use it with the Pierce Armor stunt instead of reducing your foe's Armor Rating by half for the purposes of damage reduction, you ignore it completely, inflicting penetrating damage.

**MASTER:** You train to fight with both sword and spell. When wielding your arcane weapon, a successful attack roll allows you to perform Mage Stunts and Spell Stunts that do not require you to cast a spell, as if they were combat stunts.

Furthermore, you can perform Eldritch Assault, a special combat stunt.

SP	STUNT
3	<b>ELDRITCH ASSAULT:</b> You can immediately cast a spell after a successful melee attack with your arcane weapon. This does not use up an action. The spell's casting time must take no longer than a major action or minor action, and when casting it using this stunt, you cannot generate stunt points.





## 4: EQUIPMENT

Your character has many types of equipment to choose from, all of which can be found in this chapter. Starting characters choose from equipment packages (see **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**) to make getting started easy. During the course of play, though, your character will have the chance to earn (or steal!) money, and they may buy or gain access to additional equipment.

In this chapter you'll find details on armor, weapons, clothing, foodstuffs, and miscellaneous goods and services. The prices presented are typical, but they can vary widely depending on the game's setting.

### CURRENCY

*Fantasy AGE* uses a silver standard for its economy. This means that silver is the day-to-day currency for most people, with gold being more rarely seen. The game uses the following abbreviations: gold piece (gp), silver piece (sp), and copper piece (cp). 10 copper pieces equals 1 silver piece, and 10 silver pieces equals 1 gold piece.

#### STANDARD CURRENCY CONVERSION



Currency and equipment prices can vary greatly in different campaign settings. When in doubt, ask your GM.

### WEAPONS

"Adventurer" is not a safe occupation. Eventually, you'll find yourself set upon by bandits or cornered by rampaging monsters. When that happens, you'll want a good weapon in your hand. It's also important that you be trained in the weapon's use. If you're not, you'd be better off trying harsh language.

### WEAPON TRAINING

As discussed in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**, weapons are broken down into weapon groups, in which you receive training through your class. If you are trained in a weapon group, you can use any weapon in that group that you are strong enough to wield (see **Weapon Details**, following). If you are untrained in a weapon group, however, you take a -2 penalty on attack rolls and inflict half damage (rounded down) when using a weapon from that group. If it's a missile weapon, the range is cut in half as well. Add any damage bonuses before halving damage.

### WEAPON DETAILS

The accompanying table summarizes the game statistics for the most common weapons. They are broken down by weapon group and the governing ability is noted in parentheses. The first entry, for example, is Axes Group (Fighting). When you attack with a weapon from this group, your attack roll is a Fighting (Axes) test.



The following details are provided for each weapon:

- **COST:** The weapon's price in silver pieces.
- **DAMAGE:** This is the weapon's damage. When you hit an enemy, you inflict this amount of damage plus your Strength (for Fighting-based attacks) or Perception (for Accuracy-based attacks) if you are trained in the weapon group.
- **MINIMUM STRENGTH:** Some weapons are heavy and/or difficult to wield. You must have the minimum Strength listed to use a weapon effectively. If you don't, the weapon only inflicts 1d6 - 1 damage.
- **TWO-HANDED:** Some weapons are noted as being two-handed, either in the weapon category or the name of the weapon. You need both hands free to use a two-handed weapon.

## MISSILE WEAPONS

You can make ranged attacks with missile weapons. These are weapons you either shoot or throw. Due to the nature of ranged combat, these weapons require a few more details. They are summarized on the **Missile Weapon Ranges** table. The following details are provided for each weapon:

- **SHORT RANGE:** If your target is within this range, you attack normally.
- **LONG RANGE:** If your target is within this range, but farther away than short range, your ranged attack suffers a -2 penalty.
- **RELOAD:** After you make a ranged attack, you must reload before you can fire again. Reload is an action (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES); this can be a major, minor, or free action depending on the weapon and your talents. This entry on the table indicates the type of action required to reload each weapon. Talents may change this.

## WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

Descriptions of the various weapons follow. Sometimes a weapon may represent a category of similar weapons. This is noted in the text. Black powder weapons are included for settings with a Renaissance level of technology but should be considered optional. Ask your GM if your setting includes black powder weapons.

### AXES GROUP

**BATTLEAXE:** A wicked, broad-headed axe that is larger than a hand axe, used to cleave through armor and shields. Some battleaxes are double-bladed.

**THROWING AXE:** A warrior's version of a hatchet, smaller than a battle axe and balanced to be thrown.

**TWO-HANDED AXE:** A greater cousin to the battleaxe, this imposing weapon may end in a double-bladed axe head or may have a spike opposite the axe blade.

### BLACK POWDER GROUP

**ARQUEBUS:** A muzzle-loaded firearm with a matchlock or wheellock firing mechanism. It requires two hands to use.

**BLUNDERBUSS:** This short-barreled firearm shoots a spray of small lead balls from its flared muzzle, potentially damaging several opponents. The blast is 6 yards long and 2 yards wide. You make one attack roll when firing a blunderbuss and compare it to the Defense of each target in the blast area. Stunts affect targets individually. A Mighty Blow, for example, would apply to one target of your choice, not all targets in the blast. A blunderbuss requires two hands to use.

**MUSKET:** A sophisticated evolution of the arquebus, the musket is a longer matchlock weapon that fires ammunition at higher velocities and at a longer range.

**PISTOL:** Similar to the arquebus, but smaller and designed to be fired with one hand. It takes two hands to reload, however, so many users carry several loaded pistols into combat.

### BLUDGEONS GROUP

**MACE:** A blunt crushing weapon designed to smash armor, a mace consists of a heavy head of stone or metal set upon a wooden or metal shaft. The head is often flanged or knobbed to better penetrate armor.

**MAUL:** Normally a blacksmith's or woodsman's tool, this long-handled hammer may be used in warfare as a bludgeon to smash foes.

**TWO-HANDED MAUL:** A stout wooden shaft about four feet in length topped with a brutal metal hammerhead.

### BOWS GROUP

**CROSSBOW:** A type of mechanized bow where the bow is mounted to a wooden stock and drawn with a lever or similar mechanism.

**LONG BOW:** A tall bow, roughly the height of a man, made from a single piece of wood and with a long draw.

**SHORT BOW:** Sometimes called a horseman's bow, this weapon is smaller than a long bow but handier to use.

### BRAWLING GROUP

**FIST:** The favored weapon in barrooms everywhere.

**GAUNTLET:** A heavy glove made of leather and sometimes reinforced with metal. This category also includes weapons like brass knuckles.

**IMPROVISED WEAPON:** When you try to bash someone with whatever's at hand, it's an improvised weapon. This can be nearly anything.

### DUELING GROUP

**MAIN GAUCHE:** This is a long dagger specifically designed for use in the off hand, as a parrying weapon.

**RAPIER:** A rapier is a narrow-bladed thrusting weapon favored by duelists. Longer rapiers favor thrusting over



## WEAPONS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	MIN. STR.	COST
<i>Axes Group (Fighting)</i>			
Battleaxe	2d6	1	14 sp
Throwing Axe	1d6 + 2	1	10 sp
Two-handed Axe	3d6	3	20 sp
<i>Black Powder Group (Accuracy)</i>			
Arquebus	2d6 + 3	—	40 sp
Blunderbuss	1d6 + 2	—	35 sp
Musket	3d6 + 1	1	100 sp
Pistol	1d6 + 3	—	25 sp
<i>Bludgeons Group (Fighting)</i>			
Mace	2d6	1	12 sp
Maul	1d6 + 3	1	14 sp
Two-handed Maul	2d6 + 3	3	19 sp
<i>Bows Group (Accuracy)</i>			
Crossbow	2d6 + 1	1	20 sp
Short Bow	1d6 + 1	-1	9 sp
Long Bow	1d6 + 3	1	15 sp
<i>Brawling Group (Accuracy)</i>			
Fist	1d3	—	-
Gauntlet	1d3 + 1	—	4 sp
Improvised Weapon	1d6 - 1	—	-
<i>Dueling Group (Accuracy)</i>			
Main Gauche	1d6 + 1	—	11 sp
Rapier	1d6 + 3	0	18 sp
Spiked Buckler**	1d6 - 1	-1	15 sp
<i>Heavy Blades Group (Fighting)</i>			
Bastard Sword	2d6 + 1	2	20 sp
Long Sword	2d6	1	18 sp
Two-handed Sword	3d6	3	23 sp

WEAPON	DAMAGE	MIN. STR.	COST
<i>Lances Group (Fighting)</i>			
Heavy Lance	3d6 + 1	3	20 sp
Jousting Lance	2d6 + 1	0	6 sp
Light Lance	1d6 + 1	1	16 sp
<i>Light Blades Group (Accuracy)</i>			
Dagger	1d6 + 1	—	9 sp
Short Sword	1d6 + 2	-1	14 sp
Throwing Knife	1d6	—	10 sp
<i>Polearms Group (Fighting)</i>			
Glaive	2d6 + 1	1	23 sp
Halberd	2d6 + 4	3	25 sp
Military Fork	2d6 + 1	2	18 sp
<i>Slings Group (Accuracy)</i>			
Fustibale	1d6 + 1	0	8 sp
Hunting Sling	1d6	-1	5 sp
Slingshot	1d3 + 1	-2	3 sp
<i>Spears Group (Fighting)</i>			
Spear	2d6	0	12 sp
Throwing Spear	1d6 + 3	0	12 sp
Two-handed Spear*	2d6 + 3	1	16 sp
<i>Staves Group (Accuracy)</i>			
Club	1d6	—	1 sp
Morningstar	1d6 + 3	1	11 sp
Quarterstaff	1d6 + 1	—	3 sp

\* The light lance and two-handed spear are the same weapon, with different traits depending on whether they're used mounted (light lance) or on foot (two-handed spear).

\*\*The spiked buckler gives the wielder a +1 Defense vs. melee attacks.

## MISSILE WEAPON RANGES

WEAPON	SHORT RANGE	LONG RANGE	RELOAD
Arquebus	12 yards	24 yards	Major Action
Blunderbuss	6 yards*	—	Major Action
Crossbow	30 yards	60 yards	Major Action
Fustibale	14 yards	28 yards	Minor Action
Grenade**	4 yards	8 yards	Minor Action
Hunting Sling	12 yards	24 yards	Minor Action
Long Bow	26 yards	52 yards	Minor Action
WEAPON	SHORT RANGE	LONG RANGE	RELOAD
Musket	24 yards	48 yards	Major Action
Pistol	8 yards	16 yards	Major Action
Short Bow	16 yards	32 yards	Minor Action
Slingshot	10 yards	20 yards	Minor Action
Throwing Axe	4 yards	8 yards	Minor Action
Throwing Knife	6 yards	12 yards	Minor Action
Throwing Spear	8 yards	16 yards	Minor Action

\* Shot is 2 yards wide; see weapon description for details. \*\* Terminates in a blast; see weapon description for details.

## WEAPON FOCUSES, ATTACKS, & DAMAGE

Normally, all Fighting-based attacks add the user's Strength to damage, and all Accuracy-based attacks (except grenades) add Perception to damage. Some unusual or magic weapons may not, and they are an exception to this rule.

This is true regardless of whether a weapon (including an unarmed attack) is a melee or ranged attack. Furthermore, a thrown weapon that has a Fighting-based focus, such as Fighting (Spears) still makes attack rolls using Fighting + the Spears focus bonus. The fact that it is a ranged attack doesn't make a difference.





cutting, and shorter ones are often called “side swords” and used to cut or thrust. Rapiers typically have a steel cup or network of bars on their guard to better protect a duelist’s hand.

**SPIKED BUCKLER:** This is a small shield with one or more extruding spikes. It can be used to block blows or punch opponents. It is a weapon but also gives the user +1 Defense vs. melee attacks.

### HEAVY BLADES GROUP

**BASTARD SWORD:** Also known as a hand-and-a-half sword, a bastard sword has a longer blade and hilt than a long sword so it can be used in one or two hands, allowing the use of fighting style talents that require either, though not at the same time. Variations may be single or double-edged.

**LONG SWORD:** This represents a variety of one-handed swords, from knightly double-edged arming swords to basket-hilted broadswords and cutlasses.

**TWO-HANDED SWORD:** A large, powerful blade that requires both hands to wield effectively. Two-handed swords can reach five or six feet in length. These are often carried by bodyguards for fending off multiple attackers, or by troops wishing to counter other long weapons.

### LANCES GROUP

Lance weapons are meant to be used while mounted. When used on foot, all lances except light lances count as impro-

vised weapons, as their length balance make them unsuitable infantry weapons.

**HEAVY LANCE:** This is a long spear used while couched under the arm of a rider.

**JOUSTING LANCE:** Also known as a tourney lance, this weapon lacks the sharp metal tips of other lances. It is meant for competition instead of battle. Once you make a successful attack with a jousting lance, it splinters and is destroyed.

**LIGHT LANCE:** Similar to the heavy lance, but the light lance can be used overhand or underarm. On foot, a light lance becomes a two-handed spear, and must be used in both hands to fight with it effectively, using two-handed spear game statistics.

### LIGHT BLADES GROUP

**DAGGER:** A long knife used for stabbing attacks, often carried as a tool as much as a weapon. Long daggers are sometimes called dirks. Some daggers have blades suitable for cutting, while others are spikes optimized for dispatching armored foes.

**SHORT SWORD:** Shorter than a long sword but longer than a dagger, the short sword category covers everything from exceptionally long and heavy knives to weapons designed for close-quarters thrusting.

**THROWING KNIFE:** Similar to a dagger, but shorter and balanced for throwing.



## POLEARMS GROUP

All polearms are two-handed weapons.

**GLAIVE:** A glaive is a pole weapon with a long, curved blade on the business end.

**HALBERD:** This weapon features an axe head and spike mounted at the end of a long pole. Some weapons with identical game traits possess a spiked hammerhead instead of a broad blade.

**MILITARY FORK:** Descended from the farmer's pitchfork, the military version is designed to punch through armor.

## SLINGS GROUP

**FUSTIBALE:** Also called a staff sling, the fustibale is an extra-long sling attached to a pole 3' or longer. The fustibale's standard ammunition consists of ordinary stones. But like the hunting sling the fustibale can be loaded with grenades, which do no more damage but are aimed using Accuracy (Slings) and use the fustibale's range, or purpose-built lead bullets which do 1d6 + 2 damage instead of 1d6 + 1.

**HUNTING SLING:** A classic leather or fiber thong used to throw ammunition at high velocity. The hunting sling's standard ammunition consists of ordinary stones. But like the fustibale, the hunting sling can be loaded with grenades, which do no more damage but are aimed using Accuracy (Slings) and use the hunting sling's range, or purpose-built lead bullets which do 1d6 + 1 damage instead of 1d6.

**SLINGSHOT:** A favored weapon of street urchins and people who hunt rodents and small birds, a slingshot is a Y-shaped wooden frame that holds an elastic hide or fiber thong. Unlike other slings, slingshots cannot fire anything other than small stones or equivalent pellets.

## SPEARS GROUP

**SHORT SPEAR:** A simple weapon used for hunting and battle, a short spear is made of a shaft of wood with a sharpened steel head.

**THROWING SPEAR:** A light spear that is thrown as a ranged weapon. This category also includes weapons like javelins.

**TWO-HANDED SPEAR:** Also called a long spear or pike, a two-handed spear has a wide head of steel at the end of a long wooden shaft. On horseback, a two-handed spear becomes a light lance, and may be used in one hand with the game statistics for that weapon.

## STAVES GROUP

**CLUB:** A short cudgel fashioned of hard wood or sometimes metal. This category also includes weapons like saps.

**MORNINGSTAR:** A short-hafted weapon with a spiked or studded head on the business end.

**QUARTERSTAFF:** A simple weapon made from a length of hardwood, sometimes reinforced with metal tips.

# ARMOR & SHIELDS

Armor and shields protect you from harm, but in different ways. Shields make you harder to hit, while armor reduces the damage you take when you are struck. Depending on your class and your talents, you may use neither, one or the other, or both armor and shield. Warriors and Rogues start with some training in armor use, and Warriors usually wear the best armor they can afford. Using a shield properly requires the Weapon and Shield Style talent; this is most common among Warriors. Those who prefer two-handed weapons or archery, however, usually forgo shields. You'll find more information on the role of armor and shields in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**.

## ARMOR & SHIELD RULES

The two accompanying tables provide game system information for armor and shields. Here's how they work in *Fantasy AGE*.

### ARMOR

While there are no firm restrictions on who can wear what armor, in practice characters tend to wear armor they've been trained to wear. Thus, Mages rarely wear armor at all, while some Warriors wear the heaviest armor available.

#### ARMOR RATING

Each armor type has a numeric rating. When you take damage in combat, you subtract the Armor Rating before losing Health. This applies each time you are hit, so over time even poor armor can prevent you from taking a lot of damage. Certain attacks, however, can bypass the effects of armor. They inflict what is called penetrating damage, which ignores your Armor Rating altogether.

#### ARMOR PENALTY

Each armor type also has a penalty that represents its weight and bulk. Characters trained to wear it are less affected. You

ARMOR			
ARMOR	ARMOR RATING	ARMOR PENALTY	COST
Light Leather	3	0	15 sp
Heavy Leather	4	-1	30 sp
Light Mail	5	-2	50 sp
Heavy Mail	7	-3	75 sp
Light Plate	8	-4	100 sp
Heavy Plate	10	-5	150 sp

SHIELDS		
SHIELD	SHIELD BONUS	COST
Light Shield	+1	15 sp
Medium Shield	+2	30 sp
Heavy Shield	+3	60 sp





learn to wear armor based on your class and through the Armor Training talent in **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**.

#### IF YOU'RE UNTRAINED IN THE ARMOR

The listed armor penalty applies to your Speed and Dexterity-based tests.

#### IF YOU'RE TRAINED IN THE ARMOR

The listed armor penalty only applies to your Speed.

## SHIELDS

Shields have a **shield bonus**. This adds to your Defense. Again, your character's training factors in. Learning to get full advantage out of a shield requires the Weapon and Shield Style talent described in **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**. Otherwise, your shield bonus to Defense is never higher than +1, regardless of the shield you carry. In other words, you must have the talent to get any benefit from using a medium or heavy shield.

Some situations deprive you of your shield bonus. These include surprise attacks, attacks from behind, and being attacked while suffering the Defenseless condition. **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES** and **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES** provide further detail. Some adversaries may also have attacks that bypass your shield. Those are detailed in **CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES**.

## OTHER DETAILS

- **Cost:** The item's price in silver pieces.

## ARMOR & SHIELD DESCRIPTIONS

Descriptions of the various armors and shields follow. They are classed into broad categories for ease of play. It is not important to know every little piece of armor your character wears. For game purposes you just need to know the overall level of protection. Light mail, for example, could indicate a mail shirt and a helmet, a full suit of scale armor, or a mix of heavy leather and chainmail with a coif. You can decide the specifics if you like, using these categories as a guideline.

**HEAVY LEATHER ARMOR:** Boiling leather in water or wax hardens it. These pieces are fashioned into breast and back plates, pauldrons, and other protective pieces. More flexible leather is used for the leggings, gauntlets, and so forth. Often used by pirates because it floats, heavy leather also lends itself to elaborate decorative designs since hardened leather can be carved and molded into a variety of shapes.

**HEAVY MAIL ARMOR:** Also called chainmail, heavy mail is armor made by interlocking small metal rings to form a mesh. These rings are riveted together for extra reinforcement. Heavy mail is normally worn over a layer of quilted cloth to make it more comfortable, reduce chafing, and absorb some of the force from blows.

**HEAVY PLATE ARMOR:** A full suit of armor favored by knights and lords, plate armor is composed of shaped steel plates fitted over most of the body. The plate is strapped and buckled on



over a padded doublet, evenly distributing the weight over the entire body, so it is less restrictive than it might seem.

**HEAVY SHIELD:** This is the large shield of heavy infantry or lance-bearing mounted troops. It is most common on the battlefield, as its use requires the kind of training usually provided only to professional soldiers. Heavy shields can be many different shapes, with those designed for mounted use often tending to taper at one end to stay out of the mount's way.

**LIGHT LEATHER ARMOR:** Light leather is the most common armor. Treated for resistance against blows and ordinary wear, it is supple enough to be worn like regular clothing and is sometimes considered fashionable in and of itself when made into a doublet or jacket. This category also includes hide, quilted, or padded armor.

**LIGHT MAIL ARMOR:** This mail is of lesser quality compared to heavy mail or provides less coverage. If its quality is lower, that's because its rings are larger, or not riveted shut, so blows can penetrate it more easily. If it has less coverage this may be because it is sewn into a garment such as a doublet. "Ring mail" consisting of non-overlapping rings sewn onto leather or padded armor also exists.

**LIGHT PLATE ARMOR:** Light plate, also known as half-plate, may be a full suit of heavy mail with select pieces of plate armor (typically a breastplate and greaves) layered on top, or consist of small interlocking plates attached to a leather or padded garment. The latter form is sometimes called brigandine.

**LIGHT SHIELD:** A small shield, sometimes called a target, usually made of wood but sometimes of metal. Light shields are usually round.

**MEDIUM SHIELD:** The most popular shield among Warriors, this provides good protection without being ungainly. Medium shields can be rectangular, round, or kite shaped.

## GRENADES

Grenades are unusual weapons that are not available in all campaign settings. The grenades described here are alchemical concoctions stored in easily thrown vials. They can be purchased from alchemists or made by a character with the Alchemical Explosives talent (see CHAPTER 3). They have two prices: one to buy a ready vial and one to buy the ingredients to make one. Rules for attacking with grenades are in CHAPTER 2.

Note that grenades do not add your Perception to damage.

**ACID VIAL:** On impact this grenade sprays acid in all directions. Any target wearing armor must reduce its Armor Rating by 1 (before damage is calculated) and hits from multiple acid vials can continue to degrade it. Armor remains damaged until repaired with a TN 11 Strength (Smithing) test for metal armor or Dexterity (Crafting) for leather armor.

**BLAST VIAL:** This grenade creates a small explosion, damaging opponents with shards of glass and concussive force.

**FIRE VIAL:** On impact this grenade sprays liquid fire. As with any fire-based attack, the fire vial may ignite flammable items in the area of effect at the GM's option.

## CONSERVING AMMUNITION

If you have free access to where any arrows, crossbow bolts, or sling bullets that missed landed, you may recover half of them; the rest are assumed to have been too damaged to reclaim or to have flown or rolled off beyond where you can grab them. You can reclaim a thrown spear, knife, axe, or similar weapon to reuse, as long as you can get to it. Firearms ammunition is not reusable, and neither are grenades.

GRENADES			
GEAR	DAMAGE	BUY COST	MAKE COST
Acid Vial	3d6*	24 sp	8 sp
Blast Vial	2d6	9 sp	3 sp
Fire Vial	3d6*	18 sp	6 sp
Ice Vial	3d6*	18 sp	6 sp
Lightning Vial	2d6*	24 sp	8 sp
Thunder Vial	1d6*	9 sp	3 sp

\* See description for special rules.

**ICE VIAL:** This grenade creates a haze of frost that hardens to ice on contact. Targets reduce their Speed by half (rounded down) for the rest of the encounter.

**LIGHTNING VIAL:** On impact this grenade creates arcs of lightning in all directions. Damage from a lightning vial is penetrating.

**THUNDER VIAL:** This grenade creates a thunderous boom and great concussive force. Targets must make a successful TN 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) test or be knocked Prone.

## TRAVELING & ADVENTURING

This section includes common equipment favored by adventurers, and those who live their lives traveling.

**ARROWS:** Ammunition for bows.

**BEDROLL:** More than just a blanket, a bedroll includes a piece of attached waxed canvas to give some protection from the damp ground. More expensive versions include pockets into which leaves or other material can be stuffed for additional insulation and warmth, and straps and buckles that make for tighter packing and easier attachment to a pack or mount.

**BLANKET:** A simple wool blanket, but it can be all that stands between an adventurer and death (or at least discomfort) on a cold night.

**BOLTS:** Ammunition for crossbows.

**BULLETS, LEAD:** Ammunition for the fustibale and hunting sling that is superior to simple stones. Bullets are too heavy to help the lighter slingshot inflict extra damage.

**CANDLE:** A simple wax candle that illuminates a small (2-yard) radius and burns for 1 hour.

**CANDLE CLOCK:** Expertly made to burn at a very particular rate marked on the candle itself or on a rod that stands alongside



it. An adventurer will be able to tell within 10 minutes how much time has passed since the candle clock was lit, provided it burned continuously. Will burn for up to 12 hours, but only illuminates a tiny (1-foot) radius around it.

**CHAIN:** A length of iron links. A blacksmith can attach multiple short lengths together, or attach a chain to other items, such as shackles.

**CHALK:** A finger-length piece of white chalk.

**COMPASS:** A delicate piece of equipment with a needle floating in oil or water, reliably pointing north.

**CORD:** Thin line that comes in both a cheap quality useful for tying up parcels, as well as a more expensive version that can withstand the stress of fishing.

**CUP:** A simple tin cup that can, in a pinch, be used to heat a liquid over a fire.

**DICE:** Six-sided cubes made of polished wood or bone inscribed with runes and used to play games of chance. Cheaper versions may be misshapen and will not roll all results with equal probability; more expensive versions are shaped (or loaded with internal weights) to increase the frequency of a particular outcome.

**DINING UTENSILS:** Small pieces of tin shaped into a spoon and fork, for those travelers who can't make do with just their knife and their fingers.

**FISHING TACKLE:** A small selection of hooks, weights, and corks to make fishing an easier task.

**FLINT AND STEEL:** A set of flint and steel is used to start a fire; striking the pieces together causes sparks, which are shed on tinder to begin a blaze.

**FLOATER:** A large piece of cork with an attached cord typically used to bind it to cargo being carried over open water to keep it from getting lost to the depths. Some adventurers who can't swim cling to a floater in the same situations. A single floater is the size of a large book and provides enough buoyancy to keep an unarmored adventurer from sinking below the surface.

**HOOK:** A length of metal with a ring on one end allowing a rope to be attached. The hook is then flung up to a ledge or branch to secure the rope and allow for easier climbing. A climbing hook is a simple J-shaped piece of metal, easy to carry and throw, but often difficult to get to "stick." A grapnel hook has multiple prongs and a greater chance of finding purchase but is heavier and more difficult to throw properly.

**HUNTER'S SNARE:** A short length of wire that can be looped and used as a snare for small animals.

**INCENSE:** A small stick of slow-burning, pleasant-smelling material. Incense comes in a variety of scents. A single piece of incense burns for 1 hour.

**LANTERN:** A lantern is like a lamp but is enclosed in glass. It may have shuttered or hinged sides to control how much light it emits. A lantern will burn for about the same amount of time as a lamp (6 hours), but it normally illuminates a wider area (a 10-yard radius). (See "Lamp" under **Home and Hearth**.)

**LOCKPICKS:** A set of tools used to manipulate locks.

**MIRROR:** A small, palm-sized piece of metal polished until it is highly reflective on one side. More expensive versions come in a metal or wooden frame with a small handle.

**PAN:** A heavy iron skillet, about 10 inches in diameter.

**PLATE:** A simple tin platter.

**PLAYING CARDS:** A deck of pasteboard cards, identical on one side and woodcut-printed on the other with a variety of pictures and symbols that allow for playing a variety of games.

**POLE:** A straight, 10-foot shaft of cleaned and smoothed wood that can be put to a variety of uses.

**POT:** A heavy iron pot with a lid and a looped handle that allows it to be suspended over a fire.

**POWDER AND SHOT:** Propellant and ammunition for black powder weapons.

**ROPE:** A length of twisted fibers normally made from hemp, but more expensive varieties are made from lighter, stronger silken cords woven into a rope.

**SHACKLES:** With the use of a hammer, these shackles can be riveted shut around the wrists or ankles of any normal-sized humanoid. The two bracelets are usually connected by a

## TRAVELING AND ADVENTURING

GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Arrows (20)	2 sp	Lockpicks	12 sp
Bedroll	10 sp	Mirror (hand, metal)	3 sp
Blanket (wool)	6 sp	Pan (frying, iron)	5 sp
Bolts (20)	3 sp	Plate (tin)	7 cp
Bullets, Lead (20)	4 sp	Playing cards	35 sp
Candle (2)	5 cp	Pole, (10 foot)	3 cp
Candle clock	10 sp	Pot (iron)	10 sp
Chain (5 yards)	1 gp	Powder and shot (10)	5 sp
Chalk	2 cp	Rope (20 yards)	2 sp
Compass	5 gp	Rope (silk, 20 yards)	1 gp
Cord (fishing, 50 yds)	2 sp	Shackles	3 gp
Cord (twine, 50 yds)	1 sp	Smoke bomb	15 sp
Cup (tin)	10 cp	Spark tube	8 sp
Dice	20 sp	Spike	5 cp
Dining utensils	2 sp	Spyglass	15 gp
Fishing tackle	10 sp	Stinker	6 sp
Flint and steel	10 cp	Tarp (canvas)	20 sp
Floater (cork)	30 sp	Tarp (canvas, waxed)	35 sp
Hook (climbing)	25 sp	Tent, small	10 sp
Hook (grapnel)	4 gp	Tent, large	35 sp
Hunter's snare	8 sp	Torch	10 cp
Incense	2 sp	Whetstone	10 cp
Lantern	5 sp	Whistle	22 sp



## ESCAPING BONDS

Shackles and rope are often used to secure prisoners—and Player Characters often *are* prisoners. The basic outline for how capture works is in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES** under the **Capture** coup de grace effect.

Restraints can be secured by the captor directly, using a knot, hammering a bolt into place, and so on, or by using a lock. The captor rolls Dexterity (Crafting) but can also use Accuracy (Brawling) if using rope, since it can be more easily employed while grappling with someone. Success binds the captive's arms, legs, neck, or torso (other options may be available for exotic captives). Typical rope imposes a -2 to the roll, while typical shackles add +2, reflecting differences in material strength. The total becomes the roll to beat with a Strength (Might) or Dexterity (Legerdemain) test; success frees one set of limbs (arms, legs), or one other body part (such as your neck).

If restraints are secured with a lock instead, characters may attempt escape using Dexterity (Lock Picking) as well, but must beat the TN of the lock, not the captor's roll. The TN depends on the lock's quality (see **Lock** in this chapter).

Escaping using Strength (Might) or Dexterity (Lock Picking) is obvious to observers, but using Dexterity (Legerdemain) to escape isn't, though it might be detected by an opposed Perception-based test. The GM should limit repeated escape attempts, allowing them in dramatic moments or when the situation changes.

one-foot length of chain, but more expensive versions are separated by a stiff iron rod to further restrict the prisoner's movements. A skilled blacksmith given a length of chain can connect two sets of shackles such that a prisoner's ankles and wrists can be simultaneously restrained, or to connect multiple sets of shackles so that prisoners can be moved as a group. A set of shackles secured by a lock cost twice as much as those secured by more primitive means.

**SMOKE BOMB:** One round after the fuse on a smoke bomb is lit, it will begin spewing a thick cloud that will spread outward at a rate of 1 yard per round for 5 rounds until an area 10 yards in diameter is filled with smoke that obscures normal vision.

**SPARK TUBE:** Immediately when lit, this 8-inch tube shoots a 5-foot funnel of bright sparks out one end. The sparks cause no damage but can be used as a distraction or as a way to signal at a distance.

**SPIKE:** A sharp stake of metal, often with an eyelet on the end. The spike is driven into a rock or ice face, or a castle wall, and a rope can be passed through the eyelet or tied off to assist in climbing a difficult surface.

**SPYGLASS:** Two carefully crafted lenses placed at the ends of a sheet of leather, rolled, and held in place to create a tube that magnifies distant objects for whomever looks through it. More expensive versions come in fixed, wooden cylinders with caps that can be fitted over the ends to better protect the lenses, and the costliest come in brass tubes that collapse down for easier carrying.

**STINKER:** A small clay bottle of extremely potent and noxious liquid that can be spread in a 5-yard radius in an attempt to slow or confuse any pursuers who might be tracking an adventurer by scent.

**TARP:** A square of canvas 10 feet on an edge that can be put to a multitude of uses; some adventurers and travelers use it to provide partial shelter from the wind. More expensive versions are waxed to provide a further degree of waterproofing and have holes around their edges reinforced with brass grommets making the tarp easier to tie down over cargo or stake out as shelter.

**TENT:** A small tent is intended for one person, with arms and armor. Two would find it cramped. A large tent can fit up to four adventurers.

**TORCH:** A short piece of wood or length of flax or hemp, with an end soaked in tallow to make it easier to light. A torch illuminates about a 6-yard radius and burns for approximately 1 hour.

**WHETSTONE:** A small, palm-sized stone used to keep weapons sharp.

**WHISTLE:** A hollow, wooden tube notched so that it makes a shrill sound when someone blows into it.

## CARRYING & STORAGE

Those who live a life of travel and adventure sometimes bring a significant number of items along on their journeys. Just as often, they return with even more belongings and want to stow them away securely. This section includes a multitude of ways that items can be transported or stored.

**BACKPACK:** Many adventurers prefer a small, standard backpack. This simple canvas sack won't get in the way in a fight and can carry up to 25 pounds of cargo. Those with more belongings or who want more organization will use a traveler's backpack: a larger backpack separated into several compartments, each secured behind its own tie-down flap, and with a total capacity of 75 pounds.

**BARREL:** A large wooden vessel bound with iron hoops, a barrel can carry up to 35 gallons of liquid or 175 pounds of a solid material (such as flour). Barrels are typically made of whatever wood is native to the area of its construction, but more expensive barrels are made of rarer materials or wood chosen for how it will flavor or affect what's stored inside.

**BASKET:** A simple, open container woven of dried reeds.

**BOTTLE:** A small, fragile container available in a variety of sizes that can contain anything from a few ounces of liquid up to 3 pints. Typically made of baked clay, more expensive versions are made of colored glass, but all come with a clay or cork stopper to seal it shut.



## CARRYING AND STORAGE

GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Backpack	9 sp	Crate	20 cp
Backpack (traveler's)	15 sp	Flask, metal	50 cp
Barrel	9 sp	Lock (cylinder)	2 gp
Basket (reed)	7 cp	Lock (keyed)	6 gp
Bottle (clay)	3 cp	Pouch (belt)	1 sp
Bottle (glass)	8 cp	Pouch	8 cp
Bucket (wooden)	11 cp	Sack	5 cp
Cask	3 sp	Sawdust (1 cu. foot)	1 cp
Chest (large)	5 gp	Skin, water/wine	40 cp
Chest (small)	1 gp		

**BUCKET:** Whether you're fighting a fire, carrying up to 5 gallons of fresh water, or just flipping it over to make an improvised stool, this wooden bucket is what you need.

**CASK:** A smaller barrel, a cask holds between 9 and 10 gallons of liquid or 50 pounds of solid material.

**CHEST:** A sturdy, wooden box with a hinged lid and a hasp that allows it to be locked shut using a separate lock. Small chests have up to 3 cubic feet of internal storage, while large chests can contain up to 12 cubic feet of material.

**CRATE:** A reinforced wooden box, crates can be constructed anywhere from 1 to 3 feet on an edge in order to contain a wide variety of objects and materials.

**FLASK:** A small, flat metal container designed to carry up to one pint of liquid in a pocket.

**LOCK:** Intricate clockwork mechanisms designed to keep something closed or sealed. Cylinder locks are opened by twisting dials that move the tumblers inside its casing, slowing thieves but able to be opened by those with enough persistence to attempt enough possibilities. Keyed locks are more secure, opening only to those who carry a unique, matching key, but are vulnerable to thieves skilled in using lockpicks. The average TN required to defeat a purchased lock with a Dexterity (Lock Picking) test is 13 for cylinder locks, and 15 for keyed locks, but those encountered during adventures can have any target number to pick.

**POUCH:** A small bag held shut by a button or drawstring. More expensive pouches have leather tabs that allow them to be threaded onto a belt for easier carrying and access.

**SACK:** A simple bag of rough material that can carry up to 40 pounds of cargo, but is very prone to ripping open if overloaded, and can be difficult to seal shut if near to full.

**SAWDUST:** Clean, fresh sawdust is sold cheaply in quantity to those who wish to fill in the loose space in a container with packing material to protect its contents from damage in transit.

**SKIN:** Water is a necessity, and a prepared adventurer ensures a ready supply. Wine is a luxury, but many adventurers try to bring some of it along as well.

## TOOLS

An adventurer without tools may be stuck without a way to open a sealed tomb or forced into trying to chop down trees with a longsword to make a raft in a flood. This section includes items adventurers might carry to be better prepared for specialized or heavier tasks, or items that might be found in a professional crafter's workshop.

Tools such as axes or hammers are similar to some weapons, but are typically ill-weighted for use in combat, or made with materials that might quickly break, splinter, or shatter in the heat of battle. They count as improvised weapons.

**ANVIL:** Similar to the enormous chunk of iron next to a blacksmith's forge, this smaller version still weighs 40 pounds but can be moved around and used on the road for emergency repairs of weapons, armor, horseshoes, and more.

**AWL:** A short wooden handle attached to a metal spike, used to punch holes in heavy materials such as leather.

**AXE:** A heavy axe on a three-foot shaft, appropriate for felling and trimming trees.

**BELLOWS:** An air bladder with a nozzle on one end and a pair of handles that allow the air inside to be quickly expelled in a strong gust to keep coals burning as hot as possible.

**CHISEL:** A short bar of iron sharpened into a blade at one end, used with a hammer to shape or cut wood or stone.

**CROWBAR:** A two-foot length of iron flattened on one end, allowing an adventurer to wedge it into a gap and lever upon the surrounding material.

**DRILL:** With one end bent into a handle that allows the adventurer to spin the other, sharpened end in place, a drill can bore a hole the size of the sharpened end (the bit) into wood or stone. More expensive drills allow for the bit to be removed and replaced with a new one when it becomes dull, while the bits on cheaper drills are simply sharpened in place.

**GLUE:** A viscous material sold in airtight pots. When spread between two surfaces that are pressed together and left to dry, glue creates a strong bond—though one that can be easily broken if enough force is applied.

**HAMMER:** A wide variety of hammers are available for the similar variety of tasks that can be accomplished by banging on something as hard as possible. A simple, one-handed iron hammer can handle most simple tasks. A forge hammer, specially tempered and shaped for metalworking, is often found in the hands of a blacksmith. Those dealing out large amounts of brute force often carry a sledgehammer, a heavy hammerhead mounted at the end of a three-foot shaft.

**HATCHET:** A small, one-handed version of an axe. It's hard to fell a tree with a hatchet, but it's the perfect tool for trimming branches from a fallen log or chopping firewood down to size.

**HOE:** A simple tool with a flat, metal blade at one end, used by farmers and fieldworkers to break up hard earth.

**KNIFE, SKINNING:** A small knife with a specially shaped blade for separating a creature's pelt from its carcass.





**LADDER, ROPE OR WOODEN:** For those willing to carry its bulk where it's needed, a ladder allows nearly anyone to make an easy, stable climb. Wooden ladders are sturdy but long and inflexible. A rope ladder is bulky and harder to climb but easier to move in enclosed spaces.

**MALLET:** Unlike a hammer, a mallet has a wooden head, making it usable for light work but easy to break if used on sharp edges or metal materials.

**NAILS:** Short pieces of metal, sharpened at one end and flattened at the other for easy pounding.

**PITCHFORK:** A long, wooden shaft with three to five sharpened tines attached to one end, perfect for separating and turning hay or other materials.

**RAKE:** A broom, but with the bristles replaced with metal nails or tines, used to loosen soil or separate dead grass or plants from the still-living.

**SAW:** A piece of metal edged with sharpened teeth and a handle or two, used to cut apart pieces of wood.

**SCYTHE:** A long, curving handle with a similarly long and curving blade attached perpendicularly at one end, used for mowing grass or reaping crops.

**SHOVEL:** With a wide, flat blade on one end, a shovel is perfect for moving around earth or other loose materials.

**SICKLE:** A hand-held tool with a crescent-shaped blade designed for harvesting grain or chopping apart loose vegetation.

TOOLS			
GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Anvil (portable)	40 sp	Ladder, Rope (4 yards)	3 sp
Awl	3 sp	Ladder, Wooden (4 yds)	3 sp
Axe (woods)	8 sp	Mallet (wooden)	6 cp
Bellows	12 cp	Nails (25)	20 cp
Chisel	1 sp	Pitchfork	5 sp
Crowbar	3 sp	Rake	3 sp
Drill	5 sp	Saw	4 sp
Glue (small pot)	7 cp	Scythe	35 cp
Hammer (forge)	8 sp	Shovel	3 sp
Hammer (iron)	5 sp	Sickle	5 sp
Hammer (sledge)	20 sp	Spade	4 sp
Hatchet	5 sp	Tongs (forge)	4 sp
Hoe	2 sp	Tongs (hand)	1 sp
Knife (skinning)	5 sp		

**SPADE:** Similar to a shovel, but with a narrower, longer blade allowing for easier digging and breaking apart of hard-packed earth.

**TONGS:** Pincers that allow materials to be grasped and moved about at a distance, hand tongs are made of two pieces of wood connected by a pivot. Forge tongs are made of iron allowing for the handling of heavier and hotter materials such as those found in a blacksmith's workshop.



# CLOTHES & FASHION

Few adventurers go about naked. Once someone decides to wear clothing the options they have are limited only by fashion, imagination, and necessity.

More so than nearly any other table in this section, the items in this table are only broad guidelines as to what an adventurer may be able to purchase. Prices on the table are indicative of quality but common versions of the item, made of standard materials. Adventurers might pay less for a version made of lesser material, or for one that has been heavily (and usually badly) used, but they might also be able to pay more for any of the following options:

- *Better materials*, such as a wool or silk shirt rather than a cotton one.
- *Sturdier construction*, for clothing that will better withstand the rigors of adventuring and travel.
- *Adornment*, such as embroidery or fur trim on a cloak or a fancier buckle on a belt.
- *Careful fitting*, for clothes especially well-designed to fit an individual's shape.
- *Fashion*, for items in a style favorable to the fashion-sensitive portions of an area or culture.
- *Coloring*, when an object is desired in particular shade rather than that of the raw materials or what's available.



- *Season*, for clothing better suited to a particular time of year or climate, such as heavier and warmer, winter-weight gloves as opposed to thinner, summer-weight ones.

The more of these options desired for the same item, the more expensive it may be. Similarly, the more specialized the clothing the more difficult it may be to find, and it may require the buyer to instead find a tailor or other professional who can make the item.

**BELT:** A length of leather cinched through a simple buckle.

**BOOTS:** Heavy foot coverings that extend up to near the knees.

**CLOAK:** A sleeveless, cape-like garment that clasps around the neck, often with an attached hood.

**DRESS:** A one-piece garment with a shirt that billows into an attached skirt around the legs.

**GLOVES:** Hand coverings with separate parts for each finger and the thumb.

**GOWN:** Similar to a dress, but longer, bulkier, and more formal.

**HAT:** A covering which perches atop the head and comes in many forms.

**HOOD:** A covering which drapes loosely over the entire head.

**HOSE:** Tight leg coverings that either resemble hip length socks tied to a belt, jacket, or underclothes, or joined and extended after the fashion of modern tights.

**JACKET:** A garment worn over the torso and arms to provide additional protection, warmth, or style. Also called a doublet. In some places, it is fashionable to wear a jacket designed to serve as a support garment for armor, and very padded, heavy examples cost and have the same effects as light leather armor.

**JERKIN:** A sleeveless jacket that extends down over the hips.

**MASK:** Used to disguise or cover the face, a mask can be a simple strip of cloth or can be a shaped piece of plaster covered in decoration or designed to look like something else (such as the stylized face of a monster).

**ROBE:** A simple item of sleeved clothing that drapes down the full length of the body but hangs open in the front unless held shut with buttons or a sash. Dressing robes are worn around the home as simple and comfortable clothing, while some wizards wear heavier robes as their everyday garments.

**SANDALS:** A leather or wooden sole held onto the foot with small thongs to provide the foot with basic protection from the ground.

**SASH:** A short length of cloth worn as a decorative item, wrapped around the head or waist, or used in any of dozens of ways.

**SHOES:** Sturdy soles attached to upper pieces of leather that cover and protect the foot.

**SHIRT:** A light piece of clothing covering the entire upper body except the head and hands.



**SKIRT:** A loose garment worn around the waist and draping down to billow around the legs.

**SLIPPERS:** Shoes that provide limited protection, but some comfort and style.

**TABARD:** A full-height piece of cloth, sleeveless and worn via a hole for the head, typically emblazoned with a symbol or a coat of arms.

**TROUSERS:** Loose pants that fall anywhere from the knees (breeches) to the ankles (pants).

**UNDERCLOTHES:** Simple garments worn beneath other clothing. They are also known as smallclothes.

**VEST:** A tight, sleeveless piece of clothing that buttons closed over the lower torso.

## TRADE GOODS & RAW MATERIALS

Not every item is carried because of its utility. Some are carried because of their value. The table in this section provides a base value for the listed items, but even before haggling begins there may be wild swings in an item's value based on the availability of that particular commodity, whether it is in season, if it's of particularly high (or low) quality in that area, or based on the reputation of its producer.

Similarly, this list is only the beginning of what items a traveler might carry from one place to another in hopes of making a profit. Many items on the table (such as food, pelts, and spices) come in a wide variety of types, and some items that are nearly worthless in one area may be incredibly valuable in another. Making a profit requires intelligence, nerve, money, and the ability to move items safely from one place to another. Adventurers might be able to make some easy money if they have empty room in their packs—but they may also decide that it's easier to hunt monsters and collect bounties than it is to try and win big profits away from established traders.

**BEADS:** Small pieces of glass, stone, or other material with a hole drilled through them so that they might be strung together or otherwise incorporated into jewelry, clothing, or artwork.

**BEESWAX:** The raw wax produced by bees when they make their honeycombs. Used to make candles and for other purposes.

**COTTON:** A simple fiber that can be put to a variety of purposes. Often spun into thread and then woven into fabric.

**DYE:** A liquid used to add color to fabrics and other materials.

**FEATHERS:** Gathered from a variety of birds, with rarer or more attractive feathers used for decorative purposes and cheaper and more common feathers used to stuff mattresses and pillows.

**FLOUR:** Ground grain used to make a variety of foodstuffs.

**FOOD:** Dried or otherwise preserved food lasts much longer before becoming inedible, which is important when moving

### CLOTHES AND FASHION

GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Belt	7 cp	Robe (dressing)	11 cp
Boots	5 sp	Robe (wizard's)	6 sp
Cloak	3 sp	Sandals	6 cp
Dress	12 cp	Sash	5 cp
Gloves	4 sp	Shirt	1 sp
Gown	40 sp	Shoes	1 sp
Hat	1 sp	Skirt	7 cp
Hood	5 cp	Slippers	8 cp
Hose	6 cp	Stockings	16 cp
Jacket	2 sp	Tabard	7 cp
Jerkin	9 cp	Trousers	1 sp
Mask (cloth)	8 cp	Underclothes	3 cp
Mask (plaster)	3 sp	Vest	6 cp

### TRADE GOODS AND RAW MATERIALS

GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Beads (10)	15 cp	Leather (1 pound)	8 sp
Beeswax (1 pound)	10 sp	Linen (10-yard bolt)	15 sp
Cotton (10-yard bolt)	20 sp	Pelt (large)	40 sp
Dye (1 pint)	25 sp	Pelt (small)	15 sp
Feathers (1 pound)	45 sp	Salt (1 pound)	25 sp
Flour (1 pound)	2 sp	Silk (1 square yard)	35 sp
Food (1 pound, dried)	4 sp	Spices (1 ounce)	5 gp
Food (1 pound, fresh)	3 sp	Wool (1 pound)	35 cp
Honey (1 ounce)	2 sp		

it between distant markets. Fresh food spoils faster but commands a higher price (and a higher profit) if still edible and salable at its destination.

**HONEY:** Sweet, long-lasting, and highly portable, honey is valued for its sweetness.

**LEATHER:** Tanned and ready for use, leather comes in as wide a variety of shapes as the creatures it initially belonged to, requiring it to be sold by the pound.

**LINEN:** A light, simple textile woven from fibers of flax.

**PELT:** The skin of an animal or other creature, with the fur, hair, scales, or wool still attached.

**SALT:** Used as a flavoring for food, but also as a preservative and to cure meats.

**SILK:** The most luxurious of fabrics.

**SPICES:** Seeds and other plant substances typically used in small quantities to bring flavor to food.

**WOOL:** As a trade good, wool is usually transported in loose bundles of material recently shorn from sheep, cleaned but not yet made into yarn or fabric.



## PROFESSIONAL GEAR

GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Book (blank, 30 pages)	10 gp	Ink (red, one vial)	25 cp	Paper (page)	3 cp
Book lock	2 gp	Musical instrument (horn)	15 sp	Pencil	1 cp
Canvas	5 sp	Musical instrument (drum)	8 sp	Quill	3 cp
Healer's kit	25 sp	Musical instrument (stringed)	20 sp	Scroll	1 gp
Horn (hunting)	8 sp	Musical instrument (wind)	10 sp	Sealing ring (custom)	6 gp
Illuminating kit	5 gp	Paint (pot)	3 sp	Sealing ring (standard)	5 sp
Ink (black, one vial)	20 cp	Painter's kit	1 gp	Sealing wax	5 cp
		Paper (map sheet)	1 sp		

## PROFESSIONAL GEAR

Some items are typically only acquired and used by members of a profession that requires them. Many of the items on the following table are expensive, but they are also of high quality and extremely well suited for their intended purpose.

**BOOK:** Blank pages bound between sturdy covers, ready for whatever the author chooses to inscribe on them.

**BOOK LOCK:** Attached to the covers of a book with small nails, the parts of a book lock fold together, latch, and require a simple key to open. A book lock will provide little or no barrier to those with lock picks or those willing to use brute strength to pry the book open, but it will slow those hoping to peek within casually or surreptitiously.

**CANVAS:** Stretched across a sturdy framework, a canvas provides a smooth clean surface for a painter to work upon. A standard canvas is square and about two feet on an edge; the prices of larger and smaller canvases vary proportionally. (Note that the price of a canvas does not include that of a frame, often crafted or purchased after the artwork is complete.)

**HEALER'S KIT:** This kit contains bandages, herbs, salves, small knives, thread and needle, and other tools used to treat injuries. Having a healer's kit gives you a +2 bonus to Intelligence (Healing) tests.

**HORN:** A tapered, rigid tube made from a hollow animal horn or shaped from metal. It can be used to blow a few loud, clear tones, and is used to sound warnings or coordinate hunters across long distances.

**ILLUMINATING KIT:** This kit contains the variety of intricate tools needed to decorate a page (but not any raw materials, such as inks or gold leaf).

**INK:** A fluid used for writing, drawing, and printing. Ink comes most commonly in black, but ink in red (and sometimes other colors) is available for a higher price.

**MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:** Nearly anything can become an instrument in the hands of a skilled musician, but well-crafted instruments can help that skilled musician perform something akin to magic.

**PAINT:** Many artists produce their own paint, but often also jump at the chance to use high-quality paint or paint in unique colors produced in faraway places. Transported and sold in pots sealed with wax to prevent the paint from drying before use.

**PAINTER'S KIT:** This kit includes a variety of brushes, a small palette, and other tools a painter can use to produce their art.

**PAPER:** Paper comes in as wide a variety of forms as the materials used to make it, but the larger a piece of paper the more expensive it is, up to and including broad sheets used to craft large maps.

**PENCIL:** A short piece of charcoal or graphite used for sketching or writing.

**QUILL:** A carefully selected feather that when properly prepared is particularly well suited for writing or drawing using ink.

**SCROLL:** A length of paper or vellum three feet long and one foot wide, affixed at both ends to a wooden or metal rod allowing the paper to be rolled around them for storage and transport.

**SEALING RING:** A ring that can be pressed into hot wax sealing a letter or parcel that leaves a particular impression. Sealing rings are often available with a standard variety of basic (and reused) shapes on them, but custom sealing rings featuring a unique sigil, or a coat of arms can be fashioned for a higher price.

**SEALING WAX:** Small blocks of wax that can be heated with a candle and dripped onto a surface, ready to be impressed with a sealing ring.

## HOME & HEARTH

Some (but not all) of the following items are of little use to adventurers on the road but are often part of what makes a comfortable home to come back to after their journeys.

**BED FRAME:** A wooden framework with a net of rope woven among them to provide support for a mattress.

**BLANKET:** Though it wouldn't stand up long under the rigors of travel, this cotton blanket will provide considerable comfort at home.



**BOWL:** A simple dish for serving or eating food, available in a variety of materials.

**BROOM:** A collection of straw bristles bound at the end of a long handle, used to clean floors.

**BRUSH:** A bound collection of bristles and a handle, used to detangle and style hair.

**CAULDRON:** A large, heavy iron pot used to prepare stews and large quantities of food.

**CHAIR:** A basic piece of furniture, available as a simple wooden chair or as a more expensive (and more comfortable) version with upholstered cushions.

**COMB:** A simple piece of carved wood or bone used for hair styling.

**CUP:** Simple drinking vessels found around the house, available in a variety of materials.

**LAMP:** An oil lamp will burn for about 6 hours on a pint of oil. It illuminates a 6-yard radius. It burns more steadily than a torch, but the flaming oil can spill easily.

**LOOKING GLASS:** A large piece of glass affixed to a similarly large piece of polished metal to provide a clear reflection. A small looking glass is often propped atop a table or other piece of furniture, while a full looking glass is as tall as a human and set in a freestanding wooden frame.

**MATTRESS:** After a time on the road, adventurers may fall into a deep and dreamless sleep on a good mattress. Decent mattresses are stuffed with clean straw, and the better ones are stuffed with feathers.

**MUG:** Taller than a cup, often with a hefty handle and thicker walls, mugs are typically used for drinking heated or chilled beverages, as well as ale since it can contain a full pint.

**OIL:** Burned for light in lamps and lanterns. A pint's worth can burn for about 6 hours.

**PILLOW:** A small square stuffed with feathers, used to provide additional comfort in bed and elsewhere around the home.

**QUILT:** A heavy blanket pieced together from numerous pieces of fabric.

**SOAP:** A cake of material that can be combined with water to clean people or objects.

**STOOL:** A short, knee-high seat.

**TABLE:** Tables come in small versions that can be used by a single person as a desk, or larger versions that can seat up to six for a meal.

**WINEGLASS:** A delicate vessel carefully crafted and shaped by an expert glassblower, perfect for drinking similarly subtle and delicate wines or liquors.

## FOOD & LODGING

As you'll find on the table in this section, when on the road an adventurer can sometimes purchase the comforts of a home.

**ALE:** Alcoholic drink made using water, malted grain such as barley, bitter herbs, or flowers such as hops, and yeast.

**BATH:** A full basin of hot water, soap, and sponges and brushes that can be used to scrub away the grime of adventure.

**LODGING:** The price of lodging varies not just as shown in the table, but also with the quality of the lodging, its furnishing, and its location.

**MEAD:** Alcoholic beverage made from fermented honey. Stronger than ale.

HOME AND HEARTH			
GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Bed frame	30 sp	Looking glass (full)	70 gp
Blanket (cotton)	4 sp	Looking glass (small)	5 gp
Bowl (clay)	3 cp	Mattress (feather)	45 sp
Bowl (metal)	20 cp	Mattress (straw)	20 sp
Bowl (wooden)	6 cp	Mug (clay)	8 cp
Broom	7 cp	Mug (metal)	15 cp
Brush	12 cp	Oil (pint)	8 cp
Cauldron	35 sp	Pillow	3 sp
Chair (upholstered)	25 sp	Quilt	10 sp
Chair (wooden)	10 sp	Soap (1 pound)	15 cp
Comb	6 cp	Stool	25 cp
Cup (clay)	5 cp	Table (large)	45 sp
Cup (tin)	10 cp	Table (small)	10 sp
Cup (wooden)	8 cp	Wineglass	3 gp
Lamp	2 sp		

FOOD AND LODGING					
GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Ale (pint)	10 cp	Fruit (basket, fresh)	20 sp	Pickled vegetables (1 serving)	3 cp
Ale (pitcher)	25 cp	Lodging (1 week, private apartment)	5 gp	Rations (1 week, travel)	2 sp
Bath	1 sp	Lodging (1 week, private house)	20 gp	Tea (1 pound)	6 sp
Bread (1 loaf)	5 cp	Lodging (1 night, inn, common room)	5 cp	Vegetables (basket, fresh)	25 cp
Candy (1 pound)	8 sp	Lodging (1 night, inn, private room)	2 sp	Wash	2 cp
Cheese (1 pound)	25 cp	Mead (pint)	15 cp	Wine (bottle, cheap)	20 cp
Dried meat (1 pound)	35 cp	Meal (inn; full)	25 cp	Wine (bottle, fine)	3 sp
		Meal (inn; bowl stew)	5 cp		



**MEAL:** A full meal includes fresh bread, cooked meat, and whatever stew, cheese, porridge, or pastry the innkeeper has prepared for the day.

**RATIONS:** Dried meats, nuts, and other simple foodstuffs that provide (pleasant) sustenance while traveling.

**WASH:** A small basin of clean water and a rag, suitable for basic (but not full) cleansing.

**WINE:** Fermented beverage made using grapes or other fruit.

## BEASTS, TACK, & HARNESS

Without magic or clever machines, muscles must do the work, and where human (or elven) flesh lacks the strength and steadiness, animals must take their place. Beyond beasts of burden, animals provide companionship, their hunting skills and, sometimes, their meat. Many cultures do not look at animals in so utilitarian a fashion, however, and consider them friends and equals—and in magical places, animals are not always as dull-witted as one might assume.

In some cases, animals require equipment to perform the tasks for which they're known, so this section includes such necessities, along with entries for creatures themselves.

**BARDING:** All the types of armor worn by humans can also be worn by horses, though only a small number are trained to wear it. This armor is called barding. Barding provides the same protection as equivalent human armor but weighs one and a half times what it does—and costs five times as much. Barding also imposes twice the penalty to Speed as human armor, but the same Dexterity penalty. A trained warhorse doesn't suffer the Dexterity penalty, and the Speed penalty is halved—that is, reduced to the base armor penalty, not double.

**CART:** A squarish, four-wheeled transport that can be comfortably pulled by one or two horses or oxen. A sturdy cart can hold up to 2000 pounds, though when pulling for distance, heavier loads require two animals.

**CAT:** Found wherever rodents or sympathetic humans are, cats come in a variety of appearances and tempera-

ments. Cats are rumored to be able to see ghosts, frighten certain dark spirits, and emerge unscathed from events that massacre their "owners." Beyond killing vermin, a cat's utility is debatable—but not to people that like cats.

**CHARIOT:** This two-wheeled vehicle is often used for ceremonial purposes or racing, but in some cultures, it still serves as a weapon of war from which the rider (and perhaps a passenger) attack with arrows and spears.

**COACH:** This covered four-wheeled carriage is essentially a cart optimized for transporting people in comfort. Pulled by one or two horses, a coach can carry up to four people besides the driver (who sits on an exterior seat) and limited cargo in comfort.

**DOG:** Coming in numerous beloved or fearsome breeds, dogs are famed for their intelligence, loyalty, and skill at the tasks they've been bred or trained for. Dogs who are combatants can be found in **CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES**. Other dogs can help characters with various tasks, often providing a +2 bonus to tests where their breed and training is helpful.

**FALCON:** Horse nomads, high aristocrats, and woodland elves all practice falconry. A trained falcon (or other raptor) helps its master hunt, adding +2 to tests to find food in the wild, but falconry is also a sport, and in some cases certain birds of prey are restricted to the aristocracy.

**HARNESS:** One of the essential pieces of equipment to hitch a horse to anything you want it to pull. Different harnesses are optimized for pulling different burdens and adapting one to a different function may lead to penalties to the horse or driver's tests.

**HAY:** Horses eat 15 to 20 pounds of hay a day. The listed price is for 20 pounds. Horses can also eat grass, but its nutritional value and availability varies greatly from place to place.

**HORSE:** Horses belong to numerous breeds, each with particular talents. The listed price is for a medium-weight farm horse that can also be ridden, statistics for which can be found in **CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES**. Warhorses, swift riding horses, and heavy draft horses all have distinct characteristics, and depending on their lineage and function may be correspondingly more expensive.

**SADDLE, PADDED:** A primitive form of saddle that only provides limited relief for the mount from the rider's weight. Padded saddles can't be effectively used with stirrups to provide a stable platform for mounted fighting, so using one imposes a -2 penalty to mounted melee attack rolls.

**SADDLE, TREED:** A treed saddle consists of leather and padding over a wooden base that evenly distributes the rider's weight. This is more comfortable for the mount, and can support stirrups, which are necessary for heavy cavalry.

**TACK:** While tack refers to all a horse's riding or driving gear, including the saddle, for the purposes of this equipment list it refers to headgear, stirrups, reins, and anything else required to properly mount or hitch a horse beyond a harness or saddle.

### BEASTS, TACK, AND HARNESS

GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Barding	Armor price × 5*	Falcon	25 gp
Cart	10 gp	Harness	20 sp
Cat	Free	Hay	1 cp
Chariot	20 gp	Horse	30 gp
Coach	25 gp	Saddle, Padded	8 sp
Dog	5 sp	Saddle, Treed	5 gp
Dog, Combatant	10 gp	Tack	15 sp

\*This is for a typical steed, such as a horse. Barding for particularly large or unusually shaped steeds, such as a giant serpent or an elephant, may cost up to × 10 the normal cost, while barding for flying or swimming steeds may cost up to × 20 the normal cost, all at the GM's discretion.





## 5: MAGIC

**M**agic is a powerful force in *Fantasy AGE* and a key element of the game, powering the abilities of Mages, supernatural friends and foes, and other practitioners of sorcery, thaumaturgy, or whatever else your campaign calls magic.

This chapter does not dwell on metaphysics. That's something for individual campaign settings to delve into. For the purposes of the game, the world possesses some form of magical energy and with the right combination of natural talent and training, spellcasters can shape that power into spells. Spells belong to families called *arcana*. Learning a magical *arcana* provides access to some of its spells, and the potential to learn others. Beyond that, it depends on the campaign's world-building. Magic might come from gods and spirits, elemental forces, or some kind of all-encompassing cosmic energy—or it might be a mix of those.

*Fantasy AGE* refers to anyone who devotes the heart of their potential to magic as a **Mage**—not just those who *use* magic—and they belong to the Mage character class in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**. Certain talents and specializations can also confer magical ability. The default names for such characters are listed alongside the rules for these powers, though that nomenclature shifts depending on the campaign setting's history and the nature of its magic. So in a campaign where magic is fueled by gods a Mage might be called a cleric, while an order of sinister Mages who break oaths and perform vile sacrifices for their patrons might be called warlocks.

A Mage or other worker of magic can cast many spells, one after the other (or the same spell, repeatedly), but there are

limits. A Mage can run out of power, and in such cases, they must rest before being able to cast spells again.

### ARCANA & SPELL TALENTS

Magic in *Fantasy AGE* is divided up into **arcana**, which are thematic groups of spells. Mages gain their spells by learning spell talents, with each talent corresponding to one *arcana*. A Mage that wanted to learn shadow magic, for example, would take the Shadow Arcana spell talent. The talent automatically teaches two Novice spells at Novice rank, one Expert spell at Expert rank, and one Master spell at Master rank. In addition, the *arcana* talent is a prerequisite for learning additional spells in the same *arcana*, as detailed in **Learning New Spells**.

In the core *Fantasy AGE* rules, only members of the Mage class can learn spell talents. Members of other classes who learn to use spells use different rules, listed with the other rules for such situations, by talent, specialization, or other circumstances.

The *Fantasy AGE Core Rulebook* includes 19 spell talents:

*Air Arcana, Beast Arcana, Cold Arcana, Death Arcana, Divination Arcana, Earth Arcana, Enchantment Arcana, Fate Arcana, Fire Arcana, Healing Arcana, Heroic Arcana, Illusion Arcana, Lightning Arcana, Power Arcana, Protection Arcana, Mind Arcana, Shadow Arcana, Water Arcana, Wood Arcana*



## ARCANA FOCUSES

There is an Intelligence focus that corresponds to each arcana. They act like other focuses, but also apply to a particularly important secondary statistic for Mages: Spellpower (see **Spellpower** later in this chapter). While it is possible to take an arcana focus as a focus gained by level advancement, Mages automatically gain the focus upon reaching Expert degree in the matching spell talent without using up a focus advancement, so this is usually unnecessary. Arcana focuses can increase from +2 to +3, and can be double-focused to +4, using the rules in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION** and **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**, with the only difference being that your Mage may get the initial focus “for free” as part of a spell talent.

## LEARNING SPELLS

A level 1 Mage begins the game with the Novice degree in two spell talents. Each of these Arcana gives the Mage two spells, so a starting character will begin with four spells total. Healing Arcana spells keep your allies alive in dire circumstances, so in games where you don’t receive frequent opportunities to rest between adventures it can often spell the difference between life and death, and is thus a recommended spell talent in those situations.

### SPELLS AND ARMOR

Although not trained in its use, Mages can wear armor. However, this makes it more difficult for most workers of magic to cast spells.

Unless a rule specifically provides an exception (such as the Arcane Disciple specialization’s ability to reduce this strain), when casting spells from the arcana you must pay an additional amount of MP equal to the **strain** rating of the armor. This applies to each spell you cast, and understandably discourages most spellcasters from wearing armor. The **Casting in Armor** table lists the cost.

#### CASTING IN ARMOR

ARMOR WORN	STRAIN (+ MP TO CAST)
Light Leather	1
Heavy Leather	2
Light Mail	3
Heavy Mail	4
Light Plate	5
Heavy Plate	6

#### EXAMPLE

*The Mage Varuker wears a suit of light mail as part of a disguise while infiltrating a castle. He had hoped to find somewhere to remove the armor before the action started, but he is discovered and must defend himself. He casts a lightning bolt spell at an approaching guard. This would normally cost 8 MP, but light mail has a strain of 3, so it costs him 11 MP (8+3=11) to cast the spell instead. He will continue adding the strain to the MP cost of each spell he casts until he can remove the armor.*

## LEARNING NEW SPELLS

When your Mage gains a new degree in a spell talent they gain new spells based on the degree they just attained, as follows:

- **NOVICE:** Two Novice rank spells.
- **EXPERT:** One Expert rank spell. In addition, most Arcana provide a free Intelligence focus in themselves, such as Intelligence (Fire Arcana).
- **MASTER:** One Master rank spell. In addition, most Arcana provide a –1 SP discount on the cost of one specific stunt, chosen when attaining this degree in the talent, which could be used with the arcana.

To learn additional spells within a spell talent degree they already know (such as a second Expert rank Fire Arcana spell), a Mage needs the **Arcane Training** talent, described in **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**, along with the corresponding spell talent at a degree equal to or greater than that of the new spell they wish to learn.

Non-Mages gain spells according to the rules listed for them, but they cannot possess the Arcane Training talent in any event.

## MAGIC POINTS

A Mage uses magical energy to cast spells. The amount of arcane power a Mage has available at any given time is measured in **magic points** (abbreviated **MP**). The more you have, the more spells you can cast. If you run out of magic points, you can’t cast spells until you get some back.

Level 1 Mages start the game with magic points equal to 10 + Willpower + 1d6. They add Willpower + 1d6 more every time they gain a level, up to level 10. From levels 11 to 20, Mages gain magic points equal to their Willpower + 1. Powerful Mages can cast spells for a long time without running out of magic points. That said, magic points are a finite resource; a smart Mage knows when to spend them and when to hoard them.

Each spell has a **cost** in magic points, payable when you take the Cast a Spell action and the casting roll is successful. You cannot even attempt to cast a spell unless you have the MP to pay the full listed cost.

If you fail the casting roll, you must pay half the MP cost (rounded up, if an odd number) and either allow the spell to fail, or push for success despite the failed roll by spending more MP. See **Casting Spells** for detailed information.

### REGAINING MAGIC POINTS

A Mage can regain spent magic points by resting. For each full hour of rest and/or meditation, you get back 1d6 + Willpower magic points. If you manage a Total Rest (see **Rest** in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**) you regain all your magic points.

## CASTING SPELLS

You can cast any spell you know by making a successful casting roll and spending the required number of magic points. A casting roll is simply a basic Intelligence ability test as defined in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**. There is an Intelligence focus that



corresponds to each arcana, so add these to casting rolls as appropriate. A level 3 Mage with the Intelligence (Fire Arcana) focus, for example, would add +2 to casting rolls when using spells from the Fire Arcana. In short, it follows this formula:

$$\text{CASTING ROLL} = 3\text{D}6 + \text{INTELLIGENCE} + \text{ARCANA FOCUS (IF APPLICABLE)}$$

## SPELLCASTING IN DETAIL

The general breakdown for spellcasting is as follows, though individual spells or special rules may occasionally provide exceptions. If none are listed, follow these steps:

1. You must know the spell and possess remaining MP equal to the full cost of the spell, even if you end up paying less.
2. Casting takes up the action (minor, major, or whatever else is listed) listed for the spell, encompassed by the Cast a Spell variable action. On your turn, take this action and make your casting roll (a basic test).
3. Based on the results of your casting roll, one of the following things happens.
  - **THE CASTING ROLL SUCCEEDS:** You successfully cast the spell. You pay the spell's listed price in magic points, though this may be modified by stunts and other special circumstances. The spell has its listed effect.
  - **THE CASTING ROLL FAILS:** You can choose to either let the spell fail, as per **Spell Failure**, or push it to success as per **Pushing the Spell**. If you let it fail, pay half its magic point cost—the failure has a price. If you push it, you pay the full price plus the additional cost for pushing the spell.
4. Resolve the effects of the spell, if any, and any related situations. Some spells make use of the Stunt Die, so it's a good idea to leave the dice as they fall until the spell is totally resolved.

### SPELL FAILURE

If you fail a casting roll, you can conserve magic points by letting the spell fail, though it still has a magic point cost equal to half that listed for the spell (round fractions up).

### PUSHING THE SPELL

If you have magic points to burn, you can still cast a spell even when your casting roll fails. This is known as **pushing** a spell. You must not only pay the spell's full MP cost, but spend a number of additional magic points equal to the difference between your failed casting roll and the spell's TN. This doesn't take up an additional action, but in some campaigns pushing a spell is distinct from normal casting, as the caster grits their teeth to fully control slippery magical energy.

If you cast a spell by pushing it, you cannot earn stunt points from rolling doubles, as technically, you never succeeded at the test.

## SPELLPOWER

For many spells, casting is all you need to worry about. Sometimes, however, you must overcome the natural resistance of the target before the spell takes effect. Spellpower is the measure of how your arcane might compares to any opposition. Certain spells allow targets to test against Spellpower to resist or at least offset the spells' effects.

Calculate Spellpower as follows:

$$\text{SPELLPOWER} = 10 + \text{WILLPOWER} + \text{ARCANA FOCUS (IF APPLICABLE)}$$

#### EXAMPLE

*The Mage Varuker has a Willpower 3 and the Intelligence (Lightning Arcana) focus. When casting most spells, his Spellpower would be 13 (10 + 3). When casting Lightning Arcana spells, however, his focus would apply, so the Spellpower would be 15 (10 + 3 + 2).*





# SPELL STUNTS

Each spell has a standard effect, but if you do an exceptional job casting it you can manipulate it to get even more impressive results. This is known as a spell stunt.

If you make a successful casting roll and get doubles on any of the dice, you can perform one or more spell stunts in addition to the spell's normal effect. You receive a number of stunt points (SP) equal to the Stunt Die and must use them right away to perform stunts.

Once you have decided on what spell stunts you want to use, you can narrate their effects. You can perform the stunts in any order you choose. You can only perform a given spell stunt once in a round. You can learn more about spell stunts in **CHAPTER 6: STUNTS**, but the table is included in this chapter for reference as well.

## BASIC SPELL STUNTS

SP	STUNT
1-3	<b>POWERFUL CASTING:</b> Increase the Spellpower of your spell by 1 per stunt point spent, to a maximum of 3.
2	<b>SKILLFUL CASTING:</b> Reduce the magic point cost of the spell by 1. This can reduce the MP cost to 0.
2	<b>MIGHTY SPELL:</b> If the spell does damage, one target of the spell of your choice takes an extra d6 damage.
3	<b>LASTING SPELL:</b> If the spell has a duration beyond instantaneous, it remains in effect twice as long with no additional MP cost. Stone Cloak would last two hours instead of one, for example. Spells that last until the end of the encounter are extended by 1d6 minutes instead.
3	<b>MAGIC SHIELD:</b> You use the residual magic of the spell casting to set up a temporary protective shield. You gain a +2 bonus to Defense until the beginning of your next turn.
4	<b>FAST CASTING:</b> After you resolve this spell, you can immediately cast another spell. The second spell must have a casting time of a major action or a minor action. If you roll doubles on this casting roll, you do not get any more stunt points.
4	<b>IMPOSING SPELL:</b> The effect of the spell is much more dramatic than usual. Until the beginning of your next turn, anyone attempting to make a melee attack against you must make a successful Willpower (Courage) test. The target number (TN) is 10 + your Willpower ability. Those who fail must take a Move or Defend action instead.
4	<b>SPLIT SPELL:</b> If the spell affects only one target, you can have it affect two, so long as the second target is within the spell's range and no more than 6 yards from the original target. There is no additional MP cost. Targets test against the spell separately.
5	<b>DISRUPT MAGIC:</b> In addition to its normal effects, your spell is so powerful that it may disrupt another magical effect (such as a spell) on the target. Roll an opposed Intelligence (Power Arcana) test vs. the Spellpower of any one effect on the target. Success removes the effect.
5	<b>LETHAL SPELL:</b> If the spell does damage, either one target of the spell takes an extra 2d6 damage, alternately you can have all targets of the spell take an additional 1d6 damage.

## OPTION

## DIVINE MAGIC

The game rules of *Fantasy AGE* make no real distinction as to the *source* of a character's arcana or spells: It may be their inner enlightenment (or corruption), the manipulation of unseen forces or energies, knowledge of the occult secrets of the world, the blessings of higher powers like spirits or deities, or the strength of personal faith in the same, to name a few possibilities. Indeed, *all* of those theories might be true for different spellcasters, without creating any difference in how their magic works.

Religious Mages will naturally tend to learn and use arcana related to the particular spheres of influence for their faiths. So a priestess of the moon goddess who weaves the threads of fate and rules over the beasts of the wild, for example, is most likely to wield arcana like Beast, Divination, Fate, and Shadow, and perhaps Water (given the moon's influence on the tides). Likewise, the priest of a fiery war god most likely learns the Fire, Heroic, and Power or Protection arcana before any others. Still, the default assumption of *Fantasy AGE* is that "priesthood" and similar roles are *social* rather than specifically invested with magical power. A priest, cleric, or other religious functionary could be a Mage, but they might just as easily be an Envoy, or not belong to a class at all as a Non-Player Character.

If you want divine magic to be a bit different, mechanically, from regular arcana—what would then be called "arcane magic" to distinguish it—you can apply the options here: Divine spellcasters gain the ability to perform **Divine Stunts**, but at the cost of having to have the Willpower (Faith) focus and being subject to a possible **Crisis of Faith**. Some divine casters may not be subject to these rules, especially if their power isn't tied up in faith or service to the divine, but rather just some talent a higher power gifted them to do with as they wish. It's up to the player to choose, and that choice is permanent. If you want divine magic to be even *more* different, apply additional options from the **Divine is Different** sidebar.

## DIVINE DISCIPLES

The guidelines presented here for divine magic can apply equally to any character able to use magic, both through their class (Mages) or through talents like Arcane Disciple—or in this case, Divine Disciple. This talent may represent a character with just a touch of divine power, a novice spell or two granted by their faith in a higher power, perhaps an acolyte who later took up training in a different class but who still has just a spark of divine magic. Likewise, the Mark of the Arcane option from the Marked talent might be a Mark of the Divine indicating divine favor: maybe a tattoo or scar or perhaps an unusual birthmark that the character has always had, an omen of their future potential.

## DIVINE STUNTS

Those favored by the divine may perform divine stunts, essentially minor miracles. These stunts work just like other stunts, except the character must be a divine spellcaster in order to



## OPTION: DIVINE IS DIFFERENT

In some *Fantasy AGE* settings, the GM may wish to separate divine and “arcane” or regular magic, saying that drawing on different sources of power also means those arcana interact differently. If so, some or all of the following may be true, as the Game Master chooses:

- One type of magic cannot detect or directly affect the other. An arcane awareness spell cannot detect divine magic and vice versa, and arcane abatement cannot end divine magical effects (and vice versa).
- The physical manifestations of spells interact normally: A divinely-sparked fire is still fire, and water can still put it out, whether it is conjured by arcane or divine means or not.
- Magic items are also either arcane or divine in nature and are affected by the same guidelines as spells. Some divine magic items may only work for characters with the proper Faith focus.
- Some arcana are restricted and only available as arcane or divine magic, and not both. Common examples include Fate, Healing, and Heroic arcana as solely divine, and Elemental (Air, Earth, Fire, and Water), Enchantment, or Illusion arcana as strictly arcane, with the rest available to both, but there are many other possibilities.
- Even if all arcana are available to them, some divine spellcasters may be restricted from learning or using some of them due to the tenets of their faith. For example, a deity of life and healing may forbid the use of Death arcana among the faithful while a god of striving and victory might consider Fate arcana “cheating” and forbidden.
- While arcane spellcasters use Spellpower as the resistance TN for their spells, divine spellcasters use Piety, which equals 10 + Willpower + Faith focus, rather than using a specific arcana focus.

perform them, much like ordinary spell stunts require the ability to cast spells. Unlike spell stunts, divine stunts do not require the character to be casting spells in order to use them; a divine stunt can accompany other tests like an attack or other action. Divine spellcasters can also perform regular spell stunts from CHAPTER 6: STUNTS when they are casting spells.

To have access to divine stunts, a character must be a wielder of divine magic, however that’s defined in the setting. The Game Master may also require membership in a particular religious organization or hierarchy. That may depend on whether apostates or upstart prophets and holy folk can also access these stunts in the setting, as well as priests and religious functionaries in good standing. Generally, it is divine favor that matters more than worldly position.

## CRISIS OF FAITH

Faith is ultimately the source of a divine spellcaster’s magic, so a character must have the Willpower (Faith) focus in order to be a divine spellcaster. Faith can be a challenge to maintain, especially in the face of failure, when it is most tested. To

## DIVINE STUNTS

SP

STUNT

1+ **ARMOR OF FAITH:** Divine fortune turns aside harm; you gain a bonus to your Armor Rating equal to the SP spent until the end of your next turn.

1 **DIVINE SACRIFICE:** You may suffer up to 5 points of Health damage to grant an ally of your choice twice that amount in restored Health.

1 **RENEWED FAITH:** You shake off the effects of a crisis of faith, restoring your full abilities. This is the *only* divine stunt you can perform during a crisis of faith.

2 **DIVINE INSPIRATION:** You and all your allies gain a +2 bonus on Willpower tests until the end of your next turn.

2 **OVERCOME RESISTANCE:** You ignore a target’s normal resistance to your attack. For example, you can miraculously strike a creature immune to physical weapons and inflict normal damage, or use a fire attack against a creature resistant or even immune to fire.

3 **DIVINE MERCY:** The effect of one malign spell or creature ability affecting you or an ally of your choice immediately ends. This only removes ongoing effects; it does not cure damage or other permanent conditions.

3 **SHIELD OF FAITH:** Your faith protects you as surely as any armor. You gain a +2 bonus to Defense until the beginning of your next turn.

4 **DIVINE MANTLE:** You are so clearly favored by the divine that one foe of your choice hesitates to oppose you, taking only a minor action on their next turn.

4 **DIVINE AWE:** You are so clearly favored by higher powers that any foe suffers a –2 penalty to all tests against you until the start of your next turn.

7 **DIVINE INTERVENTION:** The divine directly intervenes to aid you! You (the player) may ask the GM (playing the role of your divine patron) for any single favor within your patron’s power to grant. The GM chooses the degree to which the divine fulfills your need, based on your character’s faithfulness and the demands of the story. Once you’ve used this stunt, you cannot use it again for at least 2d6 days.

reflect this, when a divine spellcaster fails a casting roll with divine magic and chooses not to push the spell to succeed (see **Pushing the Spell** earlier in this chapter) the character suffers a minor crisis of faith. The caster becomes unable to cast divine spells or perform divine stunts for a number of rounds equal to the result of the Stunt Die of the failed casting roll.

### EXAMPLE

*Brother Amox is a faithful servant of the gods. When his attempt to cast ward off the dead against the Shambler of the Cold Barrows fails, he experiences a crisis of faith. He cannot cast any divine spells, or perform any divine stunts, for the next three rounds (the result of the Stunt Die on his failed test).*

If the faithful character generates stunt points during the crisis of faith, the player may spend 1 SP on the Renewed Faith stunt, casting off any doubts and restoring the charac-



ter's normal spellcasting and divine stunt abilities. This is the only divine stunt a character can perform while experiencing a crisis of faith.

#### EXAMPLE

*Standing shoulder-to-shoulder with his companions, Brother Amox strikes the shambler with his heavy mace, rolling doubles and generating 2 SP. His player chooses to spend 1 SP on Renewed Faith and the other on a Skirmish stunt; the powerful strike sends the shambler staggering back. "I said back, foul creature!" Brother Amox roars, his faith and confidence restored. The shambler will feel his divine power now!*

A character facing a crisis of faith can use a variation of the Stunt Attack (from CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) to generate the necessary Stunt Point for Renewed Faith: Take a major action and roll a Willpower (Faith) test against a TN of their own Spellpower. If they succeed, they may perform the Renewed Faith stunt. If they fail the test, however, they extend the length of their crisis of faith by the result of the Stunt Die and cannot attempt another Willpower test for Renewed Faith during this crisis. They have to rely on stunt points generated by their actions instead, or wait until the time has elapsed and they recover their faith.

## SPELL FORMAT

Spells in *Fantasy AGE* have the following format.

### SPELL NAME

What the spell is called. Individual wizards might call a certain effect something different to make their spells more personal or for psychological effect.

**REQUIREMENTS:** You must meet the requirements listed here to learn the spell. For most spells, this is simply the right degree in the appropriate spell talent. Healing Arcana (Expert), for example.

**SPELL TYPE:** There are four types of spells: Attack, Defense, Enhancement, and Utility. Each spell falls into at least one of these categories.

**MP COST:** This tells you how many magic points (MP) it takes to cast the spell.

**CASTING TIME:** It can take anywhere from a few moments to a few hours to cast a spell. This entry tells you how long it takes to cast this one.

**TARGET NUMBER:** Your casting roll must meet or beat this number for you to successfully cast the spell.

**TEST:** Some spells require tests from the target, often against your Spellpower. This entry details the type of test the spell requires, if any. Any effects of the test beyond what is listed in **Casting Spells**, previously in this chapter, are specified in the description.

**Description:** This entry explains what the spell does in detail. Armor protects against any damage inflicted as normal unless it is noted as penetrating damage (in which case it ignores armor altogether).

## ARCANA & SPELLS

The rest of this chapter is devoted to the arcana and their spells. They are organized alphabetically by arcana, with the spell talent given first and then the associated spells following. This grouping should make it easy to find the spells you need during play.

### AIR ARCANA

The wind obeys your commands.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Air Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Air Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Air Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Air Arcana spells.



#### AIR BUBBLE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Air Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You create a bubble of fresh, clean, breathable air within a 3-yard radius around you, which moves with you as you move.

When it comes into being, the bubble pushes away any smoke, mist, dust, toxic gases, or even water (forming a bubble of air underwater) and slight positive air pressure keeps out all such things for up to an hour. You can renew an existing *air bubble* before it expires by recasting the spell, extending its duration for another hour.

#### PROTECTIVE WINDS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Air Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

You summon a whipping wind that circles about you and protects you from harm.

You gain a +2 to your Defense vs. ranged attacks. Anyone adjacent to you (friend or foe) suffers a -1 penalty when making melee attacks. *Protective winds* last until the end of the encounter.

#### VOICES ON THE WIND

**REQUIREMENTS:** Air Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4+

**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

You can focus in on any conversation happening within 100 yards of you, as long as you can see it taking place.



The wind carries the conversation to your ears, and you can hear it as clearly as if you were sitting next to the participants. You can switch to a different conversation as a major action. *Voices on the wind* lasts for 10 minutes, and you can extend it for 10 minutes for each 2 MP you spend.

### WIND NET

**REQUIREMENTS:** Air Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Free Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

At your command, the winds form an invisible net to slow and cushion a fall, allowing you to drop from any height and land on the ground without harm.

You can also cast *wind net* to catch a falling object or creature so long as you can see them, and their landing point is within 30 yards of you. *Wind net* does not affect direct missile weapon attacks, except for things like large falling objects. Each target object requires a new casting of the spell.

### WALL OF MIST

**REQUIREMENTS:** Air Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You summon up a wall of thick swirling mist within 30 yards of you.

The wall is up to 10 yards long, 4 yards tall, and 2 yards thick, following whatever path you wish. The mist does not impede movement but does block all sight through and within it. Those moving through the mist lose half (rounded down) of any move distance remaining to them in this action. The *wall of mist* lasts for up to 1 minute. You can pay the spell's MP cost again to extend its duration an additional minute.

### WIND BLAST

**REQUIREMENTS:** Air Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 14

**TEST:** Strength (Might) vs. Spellpower

You send a powerful gust of wind from your outstretched hands or arcane device.

The *wind blast* is 6 yards long and 4 yards wide. Anyone caught inside it must make a Strength (Might) test vs. your Spellpower or be knocked Prone after sliding away from you a number of yards equal to the spell's degrees of success. The wind will also send light objects flying, blow out candles, etc.

### WHIRLWIND

**REQUIREMENTS:** Air Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower

A powerful vortex of air with a 4-yard radius springs into being at a point you choose within 50 yards of you.

## BENEFICIAL SPELLS AND CONSENT

Some spells, such as those from the Healing Arcana, provide beneficial effects to their targets and thus do not require a test against Spellpower to resist, as few people would resist being healed, protected, or enhanced. If, for some reason, you don't want the beneficial effects of a spell, you can refuse them. The spell still goes off, however, and others affected by it get the help the spell provides.

Anyone caught in the area of the *whirlwind* takes 3d6 + Willpower damage and may be knocked Prone. Those who succeed on a Dexterity (Acrobatics) test vs. your Spellpower are able to remain standing.

### WINDS OF FLIGHT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Air Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 10+

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

You summon winds that bear you aloft. You gain a flying Speed of 8 + Willpower. You must use the rules for flying found in CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES, though you retain your land Speed while on the ground. *Winds of flight* lasts for 1 hour and you can extend it for up to 5 hours for a cost of 2 MP per hour.

## BEAST ARCANA

The creatures of the wild and their abilities are yours. Game Masters will find entries on natural animals in CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES and books such as the *Fantasy AGE Bestiary*.

**NOVICE:** You learn two Novice degree Beast Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Expert or Novice degree Beast Arcana spell of your choice. You gain the focus Intelligence (Beast Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn one Beast Arcana spell of your choice from any degree. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Beast Arcana Spells.



### BEAST SENSES

**REQUIREMENTS:** Beast Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You can access the senses of a creature, using them as if they were your own.

Choose a beast within 20 yards of you that you can perceive or that you know well. You may either gain one of that beast's Perception focuses or sensory special qualities or perceive the environment through the beast's senses as if you were that beast. Either effect lasts for the remainder of the encounter, even if the beast moves more than the initial 20 yards away



from you. If you are perceiving through the beast's senses, your own are shut down and you are unaware of what is happening around you. You can pay the spell's MP cost again to extend its duration for another encounter, even if the beast is some distance from you. At Expert degree, you can cast *beast senses* on any beast you have summoned with *beast summoning* or charmed with *charm beasts* automatically for half MP cost.

### BEAST SPEECH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Beast Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You can channel your magic to communicate with members of the beast world.

For the remainder of the encounter your speech becomes intelligible to all beasts and you can likewise understand their vocalizations as if they were speaking to you. Most natural beasts aren't really great conversationalists and cannot understand or convey complex concepts, but any beast that is not hostile toward you may at least be persuaded to tell you things it has recently seen or experienced, or things it knows about the local area. Communication tests may be required, and social stunts involving beasts are possible as a result of these tests.

### BEAST SUMMONING

**REQUIREMENTS:** Beast Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

You send out a mystic call that summons a nearby beast or group of beasts.

A successful casting roll means the beasts hear your call from up to your level in miles away and come to you as quickly as they can under their own power. Summoned beasts are not under your control and behave normally according to their nature when they arrive at your location. You can use other spells to communicate with the beasts or convince them to do as you wish. You may limit your summons to a particular type of beast (such as only birds of prey, horses, or wolves, for example) or even to a particular beast known to you, such as a pet or mount.

### POWER OF THE WILD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Beast Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You magically "borrow" an aspect of a beast to improve your own abilities.

Choose a type of beast with an ability rating greater than one of your abilities. For the duration, you gain a +2 bonus to that ability, up to a maximum equal to the beast's ability rating. You also gain one focus the beast possesses for that ability. If you already have that focus, then your bonus with it increases from +2 to +3. If you are level 11 or higher, your +1 bonus to all focuses applies to the focus you gained with this spell.

### EXAMPLE

*Harrald the Beastmaster calls upon the Constitution of the Bear. Harrald has a Constitution rating of 2, lower than the bear, so he gains a +2 bonus, increasing his Constitution to 4. He could go up to a maximum of 6, the same as a bear. He also gains the Stamina focus of Constitution, since that's the only focus bears have for that ability. If Harrald already had that focus (he doesn't), his focus bonus would increase to +3. If his level were 11 or higher, a further +1 bonus would increase the bonus to +3 if he didn't have the focus before, or +4 if he did.*

*Power of the wild* normally lasts for one minute, but you can pay an additional 5 MP upon casting it for it to last two minutes instead.

At Expert degree, you can cast *power of the wild* on a subject other than yourself by touching them. The spell's effects are the same otherwise.

### CHARM BEASTS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Beast Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

**TEST:** Willpower (Morale) vs. Spellpower

You magically charm a beast within 6 yards merely by making eye contact with it.

The beast must make a Willpower (Morale) test against your Spellpower. If it fails, its attitude toward you for the remainder of the encounter becomes friendly and agreeable, as if you had trained it with the Novice degree of the Animal Training talent (see CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS).

At Master degree, you can influence a charmed beast as if you had trained it to the Expert degree of Animal Training. You can also cast *charm beasts* on multiple beasts at once by paying an additional +2 MP per additional beast, up to a maximum of your Willpower.

### LESSER BEAST FORM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Beast Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You take on the physical form of a beast, gaining all its physical abilities.

For the rest of the encounter, or until you choose to reassume your normal form, you transform into a natural animal of your choice that is rated as a Minor Threat (See CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES). Examples include a bat, a boar, a cat, a dog, an eagle, or a horse. While in beast form, you retain your own Intelligence and Willpower (and focuses) and gain all of the beast's other abilities and focuses. You gain the higher of the beast's Perception and Health or your own. You cannot use your own physical or class abilities while in beast form, including casting spells and any carried or held equipment either drops to the ground where you transform or else disappears, melding into your own form and is unusable until you assume your normal form again.





## CURSE OF THE BEAST

**REQUIREMENTS:** Beast Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 12

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

Your sorcery transforms a foe into a humble beast.

Choose a target within 6 yards of you, who must immediately roll a Willpower (Self-Discipline) test against your Spellpower. If the test fails, the target is transformed into a Minor Threat beast of your choice (See CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES). The target loses all their previous abilities, focuses, talents, and qualities, except for Willpower and Health. Replace them with those of the beast's abilities instead.

Each round, the victim of *curse of the beast* may roll a new Willpower (Self-Discipline) test at the start of each of their turns as a free action. Success ends the spell, but four total failures mean the victim is permanently trapped in beast form until you either choose to end the spell or it is removed, such as by *arcane abatement*.

## GREATER BEAST FORM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Beast Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 15

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You take on the physical form of a more powerful beast.

Like *lesser beast form*, except you can transform into a Moderate Threat beast of your choice (See CHAPTER 9: ADVER-

SARIES). At the Game Master's option, you can also transform into a Moderate Threat version of a Minor Threat beast by adding 1 to any three of the beast's abilities, two focuses, and increasing its Health by 5.

## COLD ARCANA

The powers of Winter, the freezing forces of ice and cold, are yours to command.

**NOVICE:** You learn two Novice degree Cold Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Expert or Novice degree Cold Arcana spell of your choice. You gain the focus Intelligence (Cold Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn one Cold Arcana spell of your choice from any degree. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Cold Arcana spells.



## ICY GRIP

**REQUIREMENTS:** Cold Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

A cloud of frost and ice swirls forth to envelop a target of your choice.

The target must be within 20 yards, and the cloud lasts for rounds equal to your Willpower. The target takes 1d6



penetrating damage from the cold. Each additional round, at the start of your turn, the target must make a Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower. If successful, the icy grip spell ends. If the test fails, the target takes another 1d6 penetrating damage and a -2 cumulative penalty to Speed. The caster decides whether a target reduced to 0 Health by *icy grip* is frozen solid, in which case they are Dying, or substantially encased in ice, in which case they are Helpless.

### ICE KNIVES

**REQUIREMENTS:** Cold Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower

You fling a shower of razor-sharp icicles at your foes.

These *ice knives* manifest in an arc from the caster 5 yards long and up to 2 yards wide. Any creature in the area must make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) test against your Spellpower. On a failure, the creature suffers 1d6 + Willpower damage. A successful test results only in damage equal to your Willpower (minimum of 1).

### ICE SHEET

**REQUIREMENTS:** Cold Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower

You mystically create a slippery layer of frozen water on the ground beneath your opponents.

The *ice sheet* can be up to 10 yards in diameter, anywhere within 30 yards of you. Anyone in the area at the time of casting, entering the area subsequently, or moving within the area must make a successful Dexterity (Acrobatics) test vs. your Spellpower or fall Prone. Prone characters can crawl but standing up requires another test to avoid falling. If you cast *ice sheet* on a body of water, it freezes the surface, creating ice thick enough for a person to walk on, free-floating unless it can touch and anchor to where the water meets land. A 10-yard or smaller diameter area is completely frozen over. The *ice sheet* persists as long as the local temperature allows, melting normally if it is above freezing.

### WINTER'S WALK

**REQUIREMENTS:** Cold Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

Icy arcane power speeds your passage through areas of frozen terrain.

Choose any creatures within 6 yards of you (including yourself). For the remainder of the encounter, the subjects can all move across ice and snow without any reduction in Speed or any chance of sinking, slipping, or falling. Subjects leave no footprints, even on soft or powdery snow, and are immune to the effects of the *ice sheet* spell.

### IMMUNITY TO COLD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Cold Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

Your magics protect you or others from cold-based damage.

You, or the subject touched, become immune to the effects of cold and freezing temperatures for the rest of the encounter. This includes damage inflicted solely by cold temperatures including other Cold Arcana spells, but not by physical weapons made of ice.

### FROST WEAPONS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Cold Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

Damaging cold energy radiates from the weapons of your allies.

The readied melee weapons of all allies within 10 yards of you exude freezing cold, inflicting an additional 2 points of penetrating damage with each successful attack. The spell lasts for one minute; you can extend the duration by spending an additional 2 MP per additional minute. *Frost weapons* does not harm the weapons themselves or their wielders.

### WINTER BLAST

**REQUIREMENTS:** Cold Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 15

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 17

**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

Freezing mists numb and chill your foes.

You project a blast of freezing mist from your outstretched hands that is 2 yards wide and 8 yards long. Anyone in the area suffers 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage and a -10 penalty to Speed for a number of rounds equal to half your Willpower, rounded down (minimum of 1). Subjects who succeed on the Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower only take 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage and a -5 penalty to Speed.

### BLIZZARD BURST

**REQUIREMENTS:** Cold Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 20

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 17

**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower

The force of a blizzard strikes at your command.

You conjure a roaring blizzard of swirling ice and snow in a 5-yard radius, centered anywhere within 50 yards of you. Anyone in the affected area takes 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage and must succeed on a Dexterity (Acrobatics) test vs. your Spellpower or fall Prone. Targets that start their turn in the area of the *blizzard burst* take an additional 1d6 penetrating damage and must make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) test to avoid falling Prone. All melee attacks made into or out



of the area of the *blizzard burst* suffer a -2 penalty, while all ranged attacks suffer a -5 penalty. The spell normally lasts for only one round but, for 10 MP, you can extend its duration another round at the start of your turn as a free action.

## DEATH ARCANA

Your magic feeds on—and creates—death. Using the Death Arcana often carries significant social stigma. Deal in these magics at your peril.

**NOVICE:** You learn two Novice degree Death Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Expert or Novice degree Death Arcana spell of your choice. You gain the focus Intelligence (Death Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn one Death Arcana spell of your choice from any degree. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Death Arcana spells.



### DRAW UPON DEATH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Death Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

You draw upon the fading life force of the dying to replenish and heal yourself.

For the rest of the encounter, whenever a living creature dies within 6 yards of you while the spell is in effect, you can choose to regain either 1d6 Health or 1d6 Magic Points. This replenishment cannot increase either score above its normal maximum.

### GHOST STRIKE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Death Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

You empower your allies to combat incorporeal spirits.

Choose allies within 6 yards of you equal to your Willpower (including yourself). For the remainder of the encounter, those allies' melee attacks can affect incorporeal spirits of the dead, such as spectres (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES), as if they were solid. Allies affected by the spell can also otherwise touch such creatures, but don't gain the benefit of this spell for ranged attacks.

### SPEAK WITH THE DEAD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Death Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

You touch a corpse and gain the ability to speak with the spirit of the deceased who once inhabited that body.

You may ask questions which the spirit is compelled to answer truthfully, although it cannot relate information it did

not know in life. The initial casting of *speak with the dead* gets you one question, but you can spend an additional 5 MP per additional question, up to a maximum number equal to your Willpower + 1 (minimum 1).

### WARD OFF THE DEAD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Death Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

**TEST:** Willpower (Morale) vs. Spellpower

You speak powerful words of command to compel the obedience of the unliving.

Any undead creature able to perceive you when you cast *ward off the dead* must roll a Willpower (Morale) test against your Spellpower. If it fails, the creature cannot approach within 3 yards of you, and must retreat to that distance if it is already closer. Furthermore, the creature cannot use any Special Qualities on you or anyone within 3 yards of you. If the undead creature succeeds on the Willpower (Morale) test, it is unaffected. You can maintain the effects of *ward off the dead* by taking an Activate action on each of your turns, and so long as you maintain it, the effects persist. If you or your allies attack an affected undead creature, the effect of the spell ends for that creature.

### ANIMATE DEAD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Death Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** One Minute

**TARGET NUMBER:** 17

You touch a corpse, infusing it with arcane power and causing it to rise as a walking corpse (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES).

The walking corpse created by this spell obeys your verbal commands while it exists. The corpse remains animated for 1 minute, but you can extend the spell's effect by an additional minute by spending 2 MP.

At Master degree, you can spend an additional 5 MP when casting this spell for each of the following effects:

- Shorten the casting time of *animate dead* to a major action.
- Raise an additional corpse.
- Raise one or more corpses within 5 yards of you without touching them.

You can apply the second and third effects multiple times. The additional MP costs are cumulative.

### PESTILENCE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Death Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

You inflict a terrible, sorcerous wasting disease on a target of your choice.

The victim must be within 10 yards of you and makes a Constitution (Stamina) test against your Spellpower. If the





test succeeds, there is no effect. If it fails, the victim immediately falls ill, and they have a -2 penalty on all physical ability tests. Each hour after the *pestilence* takes hold, the victim must make another Constitution (Stamina) test against your Spellpower to avoid taking 1d6 penetrating damage, which cannot be healed so long as the disease persists. Victims reduced to half their Health or less have their Speed halved. The pestilence lasts until the victim succeeds two consecutive Constitution (Stamina) tests against it or the disease is cured by a *cure* spell or an Intelligence (Healing) test against the caster's Spellpower.

### DEATH CURSE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Death Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 20

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 21

**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

You invoke a deadly curse upon your enemies.

Choose either a single target or a 5-yard radius area within 50 yards of you. If you target a single enemy, they suffer 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage immediately and 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage at the start of each of their turns. Additionally, they cannot regain Health by any means while the spell lasts. If the target makes a successful Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower, they suffer only 1d6 penetrating damage per turn and can regain Health as usual.

If you target an area, any living creature that enters or starts its turn in that area takes 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage. If the creature makes a successful Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower, they suffer only 1d6 penetrating damage.

The *death curse* lasts for a number of rounds equal to your Willpower, but for 10 MP you can extend its duration for one additional round at the start of your turn as a free action.

### STEAL LIFE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Death Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 12

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

You can replenish your life force by mystically stealing it from others.

The *steal life* spell has two possible effects, as follows.

- The target must make a Constitution (Stamina) test against your Spellpower or take 3d6 + Willpower penetrating damage. If you have lost Health, then *steal life* allows you to regain it by taking it from a target you touch on a 1-to-1 basis; for each point of Health you regain, the target loses one. When the target is reduced to Health 0, they die.
- If you are at full Health, you can steal actual years of life from your target and reduce your physical age accordingly. In this case the damage rolled is the number of years that can be stolen. The target physically ages while you grow younger and more vital. This is a 1-to-1 transfer



if the caster and subject belong to creatures with the same biological lifespan, otherwise it is adjusted relative to the caster's lifespan. If you drain a target with a biological lifespan that is half of yours, you gain a year of life for each six months they lose. If you drain a target with ten times your biological lifespan, you gain a year for every 10 they lose, and so forth. A subject aged to their biological maximum lifespan dies. A *rejuvenate body* spell can restore years lost to *steal life*.

Stealing Health occurs instantly when you touch the subject. Stealing years of life is more gradual, at a rate of one year granted to you per round of contact. This usually means your subject must be restrained or helpless to drain them fully. In either case, if the target succeeds on the initial Constitution (Stamina) test against your Spellpower, there is no effect.

## DIVINATION ARCANA

You can see what others cannot.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Divination Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Divination Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Divination Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Divination Arcana spells.



### BLOOD MARK

**REQUIREMENTS:** Divination Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 4+  
**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute **TARGET NUMBER:** 11  
**TEST:** Perception (Touching) vs. Spellpower

You inscribe an object or creature with an arcane mark unique to you that remains until you dismiss it. It requires a drop of your blood, although the mark itself is invisible to the naked eye. Some variations of this spell take the form of a whisper emanating from the mark which only you can hear.

Once an object or creature has a *blood mark* on it, you automatically know if it is within a mile of you. You can also "burn" the *blood mark* so that for 10 minutes you will know the direction of a target with your mark even if you cannot otherwise perceive them — this erases the mark on the target when the duration expires. You may, however, sustain the spell's effect longer, for 10 more minutes per 2 MP, decided when the effect would otherwise end. In any event, when you stop sustaining a "burned" *blood mark* it expires. Unless burned, a *blood mark* lasts indefinitely.

You can keep a number of active *blood marks* equal to your Willpower. A living creature can find and remove a *blood mark* on them by making a successful Perception (Touching) test

vs. Spellpower. The creature can make this test again every 10 minutes. You can dismiss a *blood mark* as a free action.

### DIVINE SPEECH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Divination Arcana (Novice)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 4  
**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute **TARGET NUMBER:** 9

Divine glibness directs your speech, allowing you to say exactly the right things to someone to improve their attitude toward you and achieve your desired ends.

Select one subject you are capable of communicating with. For the remainder of the encounter, you gain a +2 bonus to the Stunt Die of Communication tests to change that individual's attitude (see **Impressions and Attitudes** in CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES). This bonus increases your total test result and degree of success and, if you score doubles, the number of stunt points you gain, but don't count it when determining if you've scored doubles.

### FOREWARNING

**REQUIREMENTS:** Divination Arcana (Novice)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 2  
**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 9  
**TEST:** Dexterity (Stealth) vs. Spellpower

An arcanelly-invoked "sixth-sense" warns you of imminent danger or threats.

After successfully casting this spell, you, or another subject you've touched cannot be surprised (see **Surprise** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES) except by attackers who are themselves magically concealed, in which case they must succeed on a Dexterity (Stealth) test against your Spellpower in order to surprise you. Also, you gain a +2 bonus on all tests to avoid hazards where a moment's forewarning can aid you (see **Hazards** in CHAPTER 8). Both effects last for the rest of the encounter.

### SENTINEL

**REQUIREMENTS:** Divination Arcana (Novice)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 3  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 9  
**TEST:** Dexterity (Stealth) vs. Spellpower

You weave together arcane energies to place a location under surveillance.

When you cast this spell, you place an invisible, intangible arcane watcher to monitor an area no larger than a 3-yard radius. The spell cannot be placed on an object or creature, only to observe a place. If any circumstance you specify when casting the *sentinel* occurs in that area, you receive a vision of it as if you were standing where the *sentinel* is placed. Examples include when any humanoid creature enters the area, when a particular door or container opens, or when light enters the area. You can maintain the vision by taking a minor action each round to do so, but your ordinary senses are overridden, so you are unaware of what is



happening near you while you are observing events elsewhere. You can maintain a number of active *sentinel* spells at any one time equal to your Willpower, although you can only perceive through one of them at a time.

At Expert degree, you can spend an additional 2 MP to allow your sentinel to deliver a short message (just a sentence or two) in the voice of your choosing when it is activated.

At Master degree, you can cast a single spell you know while perceiving through your sentinel as if you were present at that point, but doing so ends the sentinel spell.

## ILL OMENS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Divination Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute

**TARGET NUMBER:** 14

**TEST:** Willpower (Faith) vs. Spellpower

Your knowledge of the future makes one target vulnerable.

When you meet the target in any type of encounter during the 24 hours after you cast *ill omens*, you can activate its effects as a free action. For the remainder of the encounter, the target suffers a -2 penalty on ability tests based on one ability of your choice (Communication, Dexterity, etc.). Stunts based on that ability also generate -2 stunt points. If the target makes a successful Willpower (Faith) test vs. your Spellpower, the ability test and stunt point penalties are only -1. *Ill omens* is only effective for a single encounter, and it cannot be cast on the same target more than once every 24 hours, though you may cast it again to affect a different target without this restriction. Each target requires a separate *ill omens* casting.

## SCRYING

**REQUIREMENTS:** Divination Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13+

**TEST:** Perception (Empathy) vs. Spellpower

You can perceive distant events as if you were physically present using a medium such as a crystal, flame, mirror, cloud of smoke, or liquid surface.

You can use *scrying* to sense a particular place, creature, or thing known to you using the TN from the **Scrying** table. If the casting roll is successful, you can observe the subject as if you were present. The vision lasts for as long as you concentrate, taking a minor action each round to do so, but your ordinary

senses are overridden so you are unaware of what is happening near you while you are observing events elsewhere.

*Scrying* creates an arcane disturbance, which creatures with Intelligence 1 or greater can sense. Any such creature under observation can make a Perception (Empathy) test against your Spellpower to recognize they are being mystically observed. Creatures with no arcane abilities get the intense feeling of being watched. Those with spell talents see a glowing or shadowy image of you observing them. At Master degree, you can deliberately allow this image to appear to others, if you wish, and speak to them through it as if you were present.

## GOOD OMENS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Divination Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

Your knowledge of the future provides good fortune to your party.

In the next combat encounter, you and your allies gain two benefits. First, each of you can reroll your Initiative tests and take the better result. Second, you and up to ten of your allies gain a +1 to your Defense for the whole encounter. In addition, once per round, without using another action, you can give yourself or any one ally a free Prepare action (see p. 49), allowing the recipient to delay their action and interrupt another participant's action on the fly, as luck provides ideal timing.

## UNVEIL

**REQUIREMENTS:** Divination Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

Your sorcery reveals all, casting aside magic that would shroud the truth from your senses.

Upon casting this powerful divination and for the rest of the encounter, you can perceive through all forms of magical deception or illusion. Invisible things are visible to you, illusions revealed as unreal, and even magically created darkness or mist cannot hamper your sight. You remain aware of the presence of such things, but they have no effect on you and you can see them for what they really are. Magically transformed or shape-shifted beings show a ghostly overlay of their true form or appearance.

## SCRYING

TN

SUBJECT IS

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 13 | <b>VERY FAMILIAR:</b> Close friend or relative, personal possession for at least a year, or has a currently active spell cast by you on them, such as <i>blood mark</i> or <i>sentinel</i> .              |
| 15 | <b>FAMILIAR:</b> A subject the caster has been acquainted with for at least three months, such as a casual friend or well-known landmark.   |
| 17 | <b>SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR:</b> A subject the caster has been acquainted with for at least a week.  |
| 19 | <b>CASUALLY FAMILIAR:</b> A subject the caster has been acquainted with only briefly (such as an encounter), or incidentally (such as a person they've never paid attention to but have seen repeatedly). |
| 21 | <b>SLIGHTLY FAMILIAR:</b> A subject the caster has only seen briefly or had described to them in detail.  |



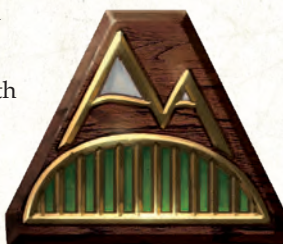
## EARTH ARCANA

You are deeply connected to earth and stone.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Earth Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Earth Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Earth Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Earth Arcana spells.



### EARTH PASSAGE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Earth Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

Your connection to the earth allows you to use your magic to open a mystic passage through it.

You touch an earthen or stone surface and open an unseen magical passageway through it. The passage is up to 50 square feet (sufficient to be 7-by-7 feet or 10-by-5 feet) in diameter and extends up to 10 feet per degree of Earth Arcana through stone, or twice that distance through soil and sand. Both ends of the passage must touch open air or water or the spell does not work (and the caster knows why). Creatures can move through the earthen material in the passage as if it were empty air. The *earth passage* lasts for 1 minute or until the last creature within it emerges, whichever comes last.

### ROCK BLAST

**REQUIREMENTS:** Earth Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

You summon the power of earth to assault your enemies.

A blast of rock and stone bursts from your hand or arcane device at a visible enemy within 20 yards. They inflict 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage and the target is knocked Prone. If the target makes a successful Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower, *rock blast* does not inflict penetrating damage and the target remains standing.

### STONE CLOAK

**REQUIREMENTS:** Earth Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 3

**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

Your clothing takes on the toughness of stone while remaining pliable.

*Stone cloak* gives you an Armor Rating equal to your Willpower ability for 1 hour. If you are wearing regular armor, *stone cloak* has no effect. You can only cast this on yourself.

### STONE PORTER

**REQUIREMENTS:** Earth Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

This spell forms a slightly concave floating disk of stone between one and two yards across out of available earth and stone.

The *stone porter* levitates at the caster's command, carrying up to 200 pounds in weight per degree of Earth Arcana (to a maximum of 600 pounds for a Master). The *stone porter* can follow its caster at the same Speed (going wherever the caster goes), or the caster can take a minor action to direct the disk to move independently at a Speed of 10 + Willpower (in which case it is limited to moving 1 foot above ground firm and stable enough to support it and its contents). The *stone porter* lasts for the duration of the encounter, but the caster can spend the spell's MP cost again to extend its duration for another encounter.

### EARTH SPEED

**REQUIREMENTS:** Earth Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

You let the earth swallow and transport you, re-emerging anywhere within 30 yards that you can see. You must be standing on dirt when you cast the spell and you must emerge from the dirt as well.

### SHAPE EARTH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Earth Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 8+

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11+

You use your sorcery to move dirt (soil, clay, loam, sand), possibly collapsing embankments, moving hillocks, shifting sand dunes, and so forth.

With a successful casting roll, you can move a 150 square foot area of earth, with a depth of up to 10 feet. Each additional 150 square foot area you want to move at once increases the TN and MP Cost by +2, up to 900 feet by 900 feet at TN 21, costing 18 MP. Moving the earth like this takes 10 minutes.

*Shape earth* does not violently break the surface of the ground. Instead, it creates wavelike crests and troughs, with the earth reacting like a fluid until the desired result is achieved. Trees, structures, and such are mostly unaffected except for changes in elevation and topography. Rock formations cannot be collapsed or moved. This effect cannot be used for tunneling and is too slow to trap or bury creatures unless they are Helpless the entire time the earth is moved.

### EARTHQUAKE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Earth Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 10+

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 17

**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower



The ground bucks and rolls in an area with a 6-yard radius anywhere you choose within 30 yards.

Anyone caught in the area suffers the Defenseless and

Slowed conditions for one round (or as long as the spell lasts if extended). They must also succeed on a Dexterity (Acrobatics) test vs. your Spellpower or fall Prone. This spell normally lasts for one round but for 5 MP, paid at the start of your subsequent turns as a free action, you may extend the duration by an additional round.

### QUAGMIRE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Earth Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11+

All natural, undressed earth or stone in the affected area softens. Wet earth becomes thick mud, dry earth becomes loose sand or dirt, and stone becomes soft clay that is easily molded.

You affect an area of 10 square feet to a depth of 1 to 4 feet, depending on the toughness or resilience of the ground at that spot. Each +2 increase in TN affects another 10-foot square area. Dressed or worked stone cannot be affected. Earth and stone creatures are not affected, either. A creature in deep mud must succeed on a TN 13 Strength (Might) test or be unable to move and Defenseless (as the condition) for one round. A creature that succeeds on the test, or one which fails, but spends two minor actions freeing themselves to move in subsequent rounds, does not experience this and can move, but suffers the Slowed condition instead.

Loose dirt is not as troublesome as mud, but all creatures in the area move at only half their normal Speed.

Stone softened into clay does not hinder movement, but does allow characters to cut, shape, or excavate areas they may not have been able to affect before.

While *quagmire* does not affect dressed or worked stone, cavern ceilings or vertical surfaces such as cliff faces can be affected. Usually, this causes a collapse or landslide as the loosened material peels away from the face of the wall or roof and falls. A moderate amount of damage can be dealt to a structure by softening the ground beneath it, causing it to settle suddenly. However, most well-built structures are only damaged by this, not destroyed.

## ENCHANTMENT ARCANA

Your magic is invested into objects, and you can create temporary and permanent magic items.

**NOVICE:** You learn two Novice degree Enchantment Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Expert or Novice degree Enchantment Arcana spell of your choice. You gain the focus Intelligence (Enchantment Arcana).



**MASTER:** You learn one Enchantment Arcana spell of your choice from any degree. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Enchantment Arcana spells.

### ENCHANT ARMOR

**REQUIREMENTS:** Enchantment Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

You touch a suit of armor or article of clothing and temporarily imbue it with arcane protection.

Until the end of the encounter, the item grants a +1 Armor Rating or a -1 reduction to Armor Penalty over its usual amount. *Enchant armor* can be cast twice on the same item to provide both the AR bonus and the reduction in Armor Penalty, but the bonuses do not stack otherwise. An ordinary item of clothing like a cloak or tunic can be enchanted to provide AR 1.

At higher degrees, you can increase the bonus by spending additional MP: at Expert you can provide a +2 bonus or -2 reduction in penalty for 6 MP, and at Master degree you can provide a +3 bonus or -3 reduction in penalty for 12 MP.

### ENCHANT WEAPON

**REQUIREMENTS:** Enchantment Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

You touch a weapon and channel your magic to temporarily imbue it with arcane power.

Until the end of the encounter, the affected item grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls. Such enchanted weapons count as magical against creatures harmed or otherwise affected by magic weapons.

At higher degrees, you can increase the bonus by spending additional MP: at Expert you can provide a +2 bonus for 6 MP, and at Master degree you can provide a +3 bonus for 12 MP.

### IDENTIFY ENCHANTMENT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Enchantment Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

You cast this spell and touch an item. If the spell is successful you immediately know if the item is enchanted, whether it is a temporary or permanent item, and have a general sense of the nature of its enchantment. If the casting test fails you do not gain any information about the item. The GM may wish to make the test secretly, so you don't know whether the item is not enchanted or you simply failed to obtain any information.

At higher degrees, you gain additional information about an enchanted item. At Expert you learn the item's rarity as a measure of its power and you can also make an additional TN 11 Perception test to determine if the item is cursed, adding



your Enchantment Arcana focus, if any. At Master degree you learn everything about the item's enchantment, including whether or not it is cursed, with no additional test required.

You can extend the duration of this spell to identify additional items, taking a minute of examination and another 1 MP per item identified after the first.

### SPELL GLYPH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Enchantment Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility      **MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute    **TARGET NUMBER:** 11

When you successfully cast this spell, you can “store” another spell you know in an item by drawing an invisible arcane symbol on it.

Spend the MP for both *spell glyph* and the spell you are storing in the glyph and combine their casting times. You must succeed on the casting roll for the second spell to store it. Another Mage using *arcane awareness* (from the Power Arcana) can perceive the *spell glyph* and make an Intelligence (Arcane Lore) test against your Spellpower to know what spell it contains. The stored spell can be released from the item by touching it and taking the Activate action, or by a preset trigger, chosen when you store it, such as “Whenever anyone crosses this threshold,” or “Whenever anyone other than me touches this item.”

When released, the stored spell has its usual effect and makes any necessary tests using your abilities at the time it was stored. If the spell is targeted and is activated by trigger, it automatically targets whatever triggered it. You can have two active stored *spell glyphs* per degree you have in Enchantment Arcana. To create an additional *glyph*, you must allow one of your prior ones to expire. An expired *glyph* dissipates harmlessly and without effect.

### SUSPEND ENCHANTMENT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Enchantment Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility      **MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action    **TARGET NUMBER:** 13

You can manipulate mystic energy to suppress both the positive and negative effects of an enchanted item.

With a touch and a successful casting roll you temporarily suspend any enchantments on a common magic item (see CHAPTER 10: REWARDS), rendering it mundane, its magic inoperable, for the remainder of an encounter. After the *suspend enchantment* spell ends, the item regains its normal properties. Among other things, this spell makes cursed items safe to handle while their enchantment is suspended. Any effect triggered by touching or handling the item does not take effect due to touching it to cast this spell so long as the spell is successful. If the spell fails, the item and all its effects (both positive and negative) function as normal.

At Expert degree, you can cast *suspend enchantment* at TN 15 to affect common and uncommon items. At Master degree, you can cast it at TN 17 to affect common, uncommon, and rare items. This spell does not affect legendary magic items.





## IMBUE ITEM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Enchantment Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility      **MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** 4 hours      **TARGET NUMBER:** N/A

You can make temporary magic items such as those listed under **Temporary Magic Items** in CHAPTER 10: REWARDS.

No casting roll is required, but before casting *imbue item*, you must prepare the item at a cost of 10 sp for a common item, 20 for an uncommon item, and 50 for a rare item. *Imbue item* can't create legendary temporary items or any form of permanent item. You must cast *imbue item* ten times within the span of a week, spending 10 MP each time. If you run out of time, you lose all previous castings and money spent on preparation.

## DRAIN ENCHANTMENT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Enchantment Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility      **MP COST:** 0

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action      **TARGET NUMBER:** 13+

You can drain some of the magic from a magic item to replenish your own power.

When casting *drain enchantment* you must be touching or holding the item and make a successful casting roll: TN 13 for a common item, 15 for uncommon, 17 for rare, and 19 for legendary. If the test is successful, the magic item's enchantment is suspended for 4 rounds (as the *suspend enchantment* spell) and you gain MP. The amount gained is equal to your degree of success + 1d6 per rank. If you successfully cast *drain enchantment* on an item five times in the same encounter, its enchantment is permanently destroyed, and it is no longer a magic item.

## EMPOWER ITEM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Enchantment Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility      **MP COST:** 20

**CASTING TIME:** 12 hours      **TARGET NUMBER:** N/A

You can make permanent magic items such as those listed under **Permanent Magic Items** in CHAPTER 10: REWARDS.

No casting roll is required, but before casting *empower item*, you must prepare the item at a cost of 250 sp for a common item, 500 for an uncommon item, and 1000 for a rare item. *Imbue item* can't be used to make legendary permanent items. You must cast *empower item* ten times within the span of a week, spending 20 MP each time. If you run out of time, you lose all previous castings and money spent on preparation.

## FATE ARCANA

You can see the web of fate.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Fate Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Fate Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Fate Arcana).



**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Fate Arcana spells.

## AGENT OF FATE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fate Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

You grasp the skein of fate and manipulate the odds for the benefit of yourself or another.

Choose a subject within 10 yards (you may choose yourself). If you successfully cast *agent of fate*, record the result of the Stunt Die. For the remainder of the encounter, whenever the subject of the spell makes a test that can generate stunt points, they can choose to use either the rolled Stunt Die result or your Stunt Die result from the spellcasting. This affects the chances of success, the chances of generating stunt points, and the number of SP gained.

At Expert degree you can affect a second subject within 10 yards when you cast *agent of fate*. This increases the MP cost of the spell to 7.

## FATE'S GAMBLE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fate Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

You tug the strands of fate in ways that may benefit you and your allies, but that can be fickle.

Until the end of your next turn, you and any allies within 10 yards, when generating stunt points on a test, can choose to immediately "wager" those SP. Reroll the test, and, if the second result is successful, you gain additional SP equal to the result of the Stunt Die on top of the SP you already gained. However, if the second test fails, you lose SP equal to the result of the Stunt Die, which can reduce your SP to 0. The second test doesn't affect the actual test outcome other than determining how many SP you have to spend.

## HANDS OF FATE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fate Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You can manipulate fate to help your allies.

When you cast this spell, you get a total bonus equal to your Stunt Die +1. For the remainder of the encounter you can give part or all of this bonus to an ally within 20 yards of you if it would make one of their failed ability tests into a success. If an ally failed a test by 2, for example, you could give them 2 of your total bonus to make that test into a success. The GM must tell you the cost and you can then decide if you want to apply any of your bonus to the test.

*Hands of fate* lasts until you've spent your total bonus or the encounter ends. If your total bonus from casting the spell was 5, for example, you might give 3 of it to one ally and later give



2 to another. You can only have one *hands of fate* spell active at any time.

### PUPPETS OF FATE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fate Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

You manipulate fate to discomfort your enemies.

Choose a number of enemies within 10 yards of you equal to the result of the Stunt Die result of your casting roll. Until the start of your next turn, the chosen enemies must reroll successful ability tests and take the worse result. Each target can make a Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower test to resist *puppets of fate*. A target that succeeds is not affected by the spell.

### MANIPULATE FATE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fate Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

You manipulate the weave of fate to change the outcome of your foe's actions.

Choose one target within 10 yards of you. For the remainder of the encounter, when they generate stunt points, you can choose how those points are spent. Your choices must still be valid uses of those stunt points and cannot result in forcing the subject to take an action against their will (such as attacking an ally). The target can resist *manipulate fate* with a successful Willpower (Self-Discipline) test against your Spellpower (test for each attempt). If the test succeeds, the subject can spend their stunt points as they wish.

### STRINGS OF FATE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fate Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 14

You pull the web of fate to favor your party.

You and your allies within 10 yards of you may each choose one stunt. Characters can perform their chosen stunt for -1 SP (minimum 1) for the rest of the encounter. A character can only benefit from one *strings of fate* spell at a time.

### CHOSEN OF FATE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fate Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 12

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 16

You weave the web of fate to favor you at a critical time.

For the remainder of the encounter, both you and allies within 10 yards of you may reroll your Stunt Die when generating stunt points and take the better result of the original test result's Stunt Die or the reroll provided by this spell. *Chosen*

*of fate* only takes effect if the original die roll generated stunt points by scoring doubles—simple tests, non-doubles results, and other rolls which don't generate SP with doubles can't be augmented by the spell.

### FATE'S FAVORED

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fate Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 12

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 16

You brashly bend the warp and weft of fate to favor the efforts of you and your allies. There is strength in unity of action.

Choose an ability and one of its focuses. For the remainder of the encounter, you and allies within 10 yards of you generate stunt points on successful basic tests using the specified ability and focus, even if doubles are not rolled. These stunt points are then spent as normal. A character must have the chosen focus to gain the spell's benefits.

## FIRE ARCANA

Fire is an old friend.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Fire Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Fire Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Fire Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Fire Arcana spells.



### ARCANE LANTERN

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fire Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 2 per hour

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 8

You illuminate the area around you with a steady light similar to that of a lantern.

The spell illuminates a 10 yard radius centered on you. *Arcane lantern* lasts for one hour but can be extended for 2 MP per additional hour.

### FLAME BLAST

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fire Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower

Gouts of blazing fire erupt from your outstretched hands or arcane device, burning nearby targets.

The *flame blast* is 8 yards long and 2 yards wide. Anyone hit by the blast takes 2d6 + 1 damage. Targets that make a successful Dexterity (Acrobatics) test vs. your Spellpower only take 1d6 + 1 damage.





## FLAMING WEAPON

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fire Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

A melee weapon you touch bursts into flames which do not harm the wielder but will inflict additional damage.

When the weapon makes a successful attack, add 1d6 to its damage. The *flaming weapon* spell lasts for a minute, but you can spend half the original MP cost to extend the duration another minute.

At Expert degree, you can cast *flaming weapon* on the weapon of an ally within 10 yards without having to touch the weapon. You can also spend an additional +1 MP and increase the spell's TN by +1 to affect an additional weapon within 10 yards. So, casting *flaming weapon* on five weapons requires a TN 15 casting roll and costs 8 MP.

## SHAPE FIRE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fire Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11+

You can increase the size and intensity of an existing fire.

The base TN is 10 (+ 1 per square foot of increase). Every two square feet increases the fire's damage potential by 1d6. The fire maintains its increased size and damage as long as you concentrate, taking a minor action each turn to do so, and

can even burn in the absence of fuel, but not air; smothering still puts it out. So, a caster who succeeds on a TN 16 casting roll can spread a fire over an additional 6 square feet and it does +3d6 damage.

This spell can also be used to control and suppress fire. Simply use the results of the casting roll to determine how the size and damage of the fire can be reduced rather than increased.

## BURNING SHIELD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fire Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You surround yourself with an aura of fire.

Any adjacent enemy that makes a melee attack against you takes 1d6 penetrating damage. Burning shield lasts for a number of minutes equal to your Willpower.

## IMMUNITY TO FIRE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fire Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

Your magic protects you from the damaging effects of your arcana's element.

You or the subject touched become immune to the effects of heat and fire for the rest of the encounter. This includes damage inflicted solely by high temperatures, not other side-effects of fire such as suffocation, smoke, or toxic gases.



## FIRESTORM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fire Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 11

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 15

**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower

You create an explosive rain of fire with a 4-yard radius anywhere within 50 yards of you.

Anyone caught in the area takes 3d6 + Willpower damage (targets' Armor Ratings reduce it) and may be knocked Prone. Those who make a successful Dexterity (Acrobatics) test vs. your Spellpower remain standing.

## WALL OF FIRE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Fire Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 16

**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower

You conjure a wall of roaring flames to block and burn your enemies.

This wall can be up to 10 yards long, 3 yards high, and 1 yard deep, starting at a point within 30 yards of you. You can shape the line of the wall however you wish, including forming a circle or arc. The *wall of fire* blocks sight and inflicts 3d6 + Willpower damage upon any creature crossing or starting its turn within it; those succeeding on a Dexterity (Acrobatics) test vs. your Spellpower take only 1d6 + Willpower damage. A *wall of fire* lasts for one minute, and you can pay an additional 10 MP to extend the spell's duration another minute.

## HEALING ARCANA

Your channel your magic to heal and restore with a touch.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Healing Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Healing Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Healing Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Healing Arcana spells.

Healing arcana has a special spell stunt available to it:



### SP Cost

### STUNT

#### Variable

**HEALING POWER (HEALING ARCANA):** Your healing is especially potent. You heal an additional 2 Health per SP, beyond the healing provided by the spell itself, for the individual affected by the spell this stunt is linked to.

## BALM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Healing Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 9

You perform the Heal action (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) on a target within 20 yards, without needing to have bandages in hand, be adjacent to the target, or needing to succeed at an Intelligence (Healing) check. This otherwise works as the Heal action.

## CURE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Healing Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You touch a subject and immediately cure any one disease or poison affecting them.

Any ongoing effects of the disease or poison end, but *cure* does not heal damage the disease previously caused. At the GM's discretion, curing certain exotic, unusual, or magical diseases and poisons may have a higher TN and/or MP Cost.

## HEALING TOUCH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Healing Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 1-3

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 10

Your touch seals wounds and restores vigor to one wounded target.

You can choose to spend up to 3 MPs when you cast the spell. For each MP spent, the target gets back 1d6 Health. You can cast this on yourself.

## REVIVAL

**REQUIREMENTS:** Healing Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 14

Your touch helps restore the grievously wounded or fallen.

A character adjacent to you at 0 Health who is suffering the Dying, Helpless, or Unconscious Defeat Conditions immediately regains 10 + their Constitution + your Willpower in Health. Since such characters cannot take actions, you cannot cast this spell on yourself.

## HEALING AURA

**REQUIREMENTS:** Healing Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 2-8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 15

Waves of healing energy radiate from you and aid your nearby allies.

You can pick a number of targets up to twice your Willpower, all of whom must be within 10 yards of you. All targets regain 1d6 Health for 2 MP, 2d6 Health for 4 MP, or 3d6 Health for 8 MP, which is the maximum effect the spell is capable of. You can designate yourself as one of the targets.



## REGENERATE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Healing Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

With a touch, you bestow the power of regeneration upon a subject.

For the rest of the encounter, the subject has the *regenerate* special quality, allowing them to heal as a stunt attached to any action by spending 2 SP to recover Health equal to their Constitution (minimum 2). Unlike creatures with the *regenerate* quality, targets of the spell can only use this benefit once per round, and they cannot spend additional SP to increase the effect. Wounds inflicted by acid or fire do not regenerate and Health lost to them cannot be regained this way. You may cast this on yourself.

## REJUVENATE BODY

**REQUIREMENTS:** Healing Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 20

**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute

**TARGET NUMBER:** 17

You heal your patient of a persistent injury, including limbs and other body parts lost to wounds, heavy scarring, or anything that is a longstanding hindrance, even after you recover full Health.

Each casting of *rejuvenate body* eliminates one such injury. This spell can therefore remove one instance of the Scarred condition (including when it imposes a lasting version of conditions such as Blinded, Deafened, and others) related to such an injury each time it is cast.

## RESTORATION

**REQUIREMENTS:** Healing Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 16

**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute

**TARGET NUMBER:** 17

Given some time, your presence and power allow others to recover quickly from harm.

You can restore a gravely injured character to health, though this spell takes 1 minute to cast and is thus most useful outside of combat encounters. You must remain adjacent to the target throughout the casting. If the casting is interrupted or you move away from the subject during that time, the spell automatically fails, but you do not have to spend the MP. If successful, the target regains Health equal to your Willpower  $\times$  10.

## HEROIC ARCANA

Your magic inspires heroism and great deeds.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Heroic Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Heroic Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Heroic Arcana).



**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Heroic Arcana spells.

## HERO'S ARMOR

**REQUIREMENTS:** Heroic Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 1-5

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

Your arcane energies provide magical protection to you or your allies.

You touch a subject (including yourself) who gains an Armor Rating equal to the number of MP you spent on the *hero's armor* spell (up to 5). The benefits of *hero's armor* do not stack with worn armor. Only the highest AR applies. The spell lasts for 1 minute, but you can extend its duration for another minute by spending half of its MP cost (rounded up) as a free action.

## HERO'S COURAGE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Heroic Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You bolster the nerve of your allies with your power.

*Hero's courage* infuses a number of allies equal to your Willpower within 6 yards of you with greater courage and determination. You and the affected allies gain a +2 bonus on all Willpower tests for the remainder of the encounter.

## HERO'S INSPIRATION

**REQUIREMENTS:** Heroic Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 3

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

You inspire skill and competence in those around you.

Your arcane power gives confidence to a number of targets equal to your Willpower. They must be within 6 yards of you when the spell is cast but may then move freely and still enjoy its effects. Those with *hero's inspiration* gain a +2 bonus on the next ability test they take (whatever it is). If they have not used this bonus by the end of the encounter, the benefit is lost. You can designate yourself as one of the targets.

## HERO'S MIGHT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Heroic Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You inspire strength and power in those around you.

Your arcane power infuses a number of targets equal to your Willpower. They must be within 6 yards of you when the spell is cast but may then move freely and still enjoy its effects. Until the end of the encounter those enhanced with *hero's might* gain a +1 bonus to damage when making melee and ranged attacks. You can designate yourself as one of the targets.



## HERO'S AEGIS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Heroic Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

Magical power protects against attacks.

Your power protects a number of targets equal to your Willpower. They must be within 6 yards of you when the spell is cast, but may then move freely and still enjoy its effects. Until the end of the encounter those under the *hero's aegis* gain a +1 bonus to Defense. You can designate yourself as one of the targets.

## HERO'S SPEED

**REQUIREMENTS:** Heroic Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

Magical swiftness infuses the subjects of this spell.

Choose a number of allies equal to your Willpower within 6 yards of you; you may include yourself among this number. If the spell is successful, those affected increase their Speed by your Willpower (minimum of 1) for the remainder of the encounter.

## CHOSEN CHAMPION

**REQUIREMENTS:** Heroic Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

Your sorcery bolsters an ally's strength and lethality when battling a certain enemy.

You can designate a single ally within 6 yards of you as a chosen champion against a particular foe, also specified when you cast this spell. The champion gains the following benefits:

- +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls against the designated foe.
- +1 SP on any test against the designated foe that generates stunt points.
- The ability to take the Heal action to benefit themselves; the champion rolls a TN 11 Willpower (Courage) test and, if successful, gains Health equal to the Stunt Die + Willpower.
- If the designated foe attacks anyone other than the champion, the target gains +2 Defense.

The *chosen champion* spell lasts until the designated foe is defeated or for the remainder of the encounter, whichever comes first.

## HERO'S SPIRIT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Heroic Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 14

You bolster yourself and nearby allies with arcane power.

You and your allies within 10 yards of you get +1 SP when generating stunt points. Hero's Spirit lasts until the end of the encounter.

## ILLUSION ARCANA

Deception and illusion are your purview, and your magic is rarely ever what it appears to be.

**NOVICE:** You learn two Novice degree Illusion Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Expert or Novice degree Illusion Arcana spell of your choice. You gain the focus Intelligence (Illusion Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn one Illusion Arcana spell of your choice from any degree. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Illusion Arcana spells.



## DISORIENT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Illusion Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

You distort the senses of one visible character.

A target within 10 yards of you makes a Willpower (Self-Discipline) test against your Spellpower. If the test fails, the target experiences the Slowed condition (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) and takes a -2 penalty to tests other than those affected by being Slowed. The target of *disorient* can make a new Willpower test at the start of each of your turns to shake off the spell; a successful test ends the spell. Otherwise, it persists for the remainder of the encounter.

## DISPLACEMENT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Illusion Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

**TEST:** Perception (Seeing) vs. Spellpower

You create the illusion that you—or another subject you touch when casting—are about a yard away from your real position.

For the remainder of the encounter, you gain +2 Defense against melee attacks and +5 Defense against ranged attacks. Attacks targeting an area are unaffected so long as you are actually in the area. Any attacker who has missed the subject at least once while *displacement* is in effect can make a Perception (Seeing) test against your Spellpower as a free action on the start of their turn. Success means they perceive your true position, although the spell remains in effect for others.

## FIGMENT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Illusion Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

**TEST:** Perception (Seeing) vs. Spellpower

You conjure a single simple visual illusion.



## ALTERNATE FIGMENTS AND OTHER ILLUSIONS

Some creatures, including Player Characters and ordinary people alike, do not primarily rely on vision to experience things around them. Alternate versions of the *figment* spell prioritizing other senses are sometimes used by both Mages with these backgrounds and those exploring the arcane properties of various senses. Thus, a *figment* founded in sound makes an illusory noise as its basic effect, then adds easy mobility and visual phenomena later. Similar variations may exist for other Illusion Arcana spells that affect visual perception first, at the GM's discretion.

The *figment* can look like anything you've seen or can describe (in the GM's judgment) but can be no larger than 2 cubic yards in size. It has no substance and makes no sound. Anyone with a reason to believe the *figment* might not be real can roll a Perception (Seeing) test against your Spellpower to see through it. You can impart motion to the illusion by taking a minor action each round to manipulate it, and the *figment* lasts for a minute; spend an additional 2 MP to extend its duration for another minute when it expires.

At Expert degree, you can conjure a *figment* up to 4 cubic yards in size and cause it to move without you taking an action make it do so, for +2 MP. At Master degree, you can conjure a *figment* up to 8 cubic yards in size that moves according to your will without you having to take an action, and you can make any sounds associated with that thing or creature as well for +4 MP.

### ILLUSORY GUISE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Illusion Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 4  
**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 10  
**TEST:** Perception (Seeing) vs. Spellpower

You transform the appearance of a touched object or creature (including yourself) into that of someone else, including anything the subject is wearing or carrying.

The subject can look like anything of roughly (+/-20%) of their size. After an hour, the subject's appearance reverts to normal, unless you spend an additional 3 MP to maintain the spell. Anyone with reason to suspect the subject of your *illusory guise* is not what they appear to be can roll a Perception (Seeing) test against your Spellpower to see through the disguise.

At Expert degree, this spell can create disguises of roughly +/-50% of the subject's original size; at Master degree +/-75%, and it can also change how the subject sounds as well as appears.

### ILLUSORY SCENE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Illusion Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 6  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 12  
**TEST:** Perception (Seeing) vs. Spellpower

You transform the appearance of an area, filling the scene with whatever images you wish.

This affects an area up to 10 yards across in any direction and includes changing the appearance of any creatures or objects within the area to look like something else, from other creatures to a copse of trees or shambling monsters, as you see fit. You can move the affected area at a Speed up to

your Spellpower as a minor action each round (to keep pace with moving subjects, for example). Anyone with a reason to believe the *illusory scene* might not be real can roll a Perception (Seeing) test against your Spellpower to see through it. After one hour the area affected reverts to normal, unless you spend an additional 5 MP to maintain the spell for another hour.

At Master degree, you affect an area up to 15 yards across and can cause the illusion to make any sounds associated with the scene it depicts as well.

### INVISIBILITY

**REQUIREMENTS:** Illusion Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 8  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 14  
**TEST:** Perception (Seeing) vs. Spellpower

You or a subject you touch becomes invisible for the remainder of the encounter.

While invisible, the subject can still be detected using other senses. The invisible character can only be targeted by attackers with some idea where the creature is and, even then, gains a +5 bonus to Defense. An invisible character that makes an attack or casts an attack spell becomes visible until the start of the creature's next turn, whereupon they become invisible again.

### HALLUCINATION

**REQUIREMENTS:** Illusion Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 10  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 17  
**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

You seize control of the senses of a visible character within 20 yards of you.

If the target fails the Willpower (Self-Discipline) test against your Spellpower, you control everything they sense for as long as you concentrate, taking a minor action each round to do so. You can make the subject perceive anything and the illusions can range from extremely minor to changing the entire environment, since the hallucination exists entirely in the subject's mind and perceptions. If a target of *hallucination* is given any reason to believe what they are experiencing is an illusion they can make another Willpower test against your Spellpower on their turn, with success ending the spell.

### PHANTASM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Illusion Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 12  
**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 15  
**TEST:** Perception (Empathy) vs. Spellpower



You conjure an illusory creature that is a manifestation of your chosen target's worst fears.

Each round on your turn you can use a major action to cause the phantasm to attack your chosen target: roll a test of the target's Perception (Empathy) vs. your Spellpower. If the test succeeds, the attack from the *phantasm* "misses." If the target's test fails, they take 2d6 + your Willpower penetrating damage. A *phantasm* can only attack one target (chosen when you cast the spell) and its target must be an aware creature. Completely mindless creatures and objects are immune. The *phantasm* lasts until its target is slain, you dismiss it, or you are no longer capable of taking actions.

## LIGHTNING ARCANA

You are able to tap into and manipulate the storm's fury.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Lightning Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Lightning Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Lightning Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Lightning Arcana spells.



### JOLT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Lightning Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

A spark of power leaps from your fingertips to strike one of your foes.

You *jolt* one creature you can perceive within 10 yards of you. The target takes 2 penetrating damage and must succeed in a Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower or become Stunned (as the condition, losing their major action, described in CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) on their next turn. The target recovers from being Stunned after the end of that turn.

### LIGHTNING FLASH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Lightning Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower

You invoke an arc of lightning that flashes between your hands with blinding brightness.

Anyone within 4 yards and looking directly at you when you cast *lightning flash* must make a successful Dexterity (Acrobatics) test against your Spellpower or be Blinded (as the condition in CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) on their next turn. The target recovers from being Blinded after the end of that turn.





## SHOCK BLAST

**REQUIREMENTS:** Lightning Arcana (Novice)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 4  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 13  
**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

Electricity arcs from your hands or your arcane device, shocking targets in an area adjacent to you.

Anyone in a 6-yard by 6-yard area adjacent to you takes 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage. Targets that make a successful Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower only take 1d6 penetrating damage.

## THUNDER BLAST

**REQUIREMENTS:** Lightning Arcana (Novice)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 6  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 12  
**TEST:** Strength (Might) vs. Spellpower

You unleash a rolling blast of violent thunder in an arc in front of you.

The arc of the *thunder blast* is 6 yards long and 4 yards wide at its end when it manifests. Any creature within the area takes 1d6 + Willpower damage and must succeed on a Strength (Might) test vs. your Spellpower or be pushed up to 2 yards away from you and knocked Prone. If the test succeeds, the target takes the damage, but is not pushed away from you or knocked Prone.

## LIGHTNING BOLT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Lightning Arcana (Expert)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 8  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 15  
**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

A bolt of electricity leaps from your outstretched hand or arcane device to strike a single visible target within 30 yards of you.

The *lightning bolt* inflicts 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage. A target that makes a successful Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower only takes 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage.

## SHOCKING SHIELD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Lightning Arcana (Expert)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 6  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 12  
**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

You charge your body with arcane lightning, shocking any enemy with the audacity to touch you.

For the remainder of the encounter, any foe who strikes or grabs you in melee suffers 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage in the form of a powerful electric shock. A foe who makes a successful Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower takes only 1d6 penetrating damage.

## CHAIN LIGHTNING

**REQUIREMENTS:** Lightning Arcana (Master)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 12  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 17  
**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

The coruscating power of your lightning jumps from target to target.

This spell is similar to *lightning bolt*, but it can affect multiple targets, arcing from one to the next. Pick a single visible target within 20 yards of you, and an additional number of targets equal to the result of the casting roll's Stunt Die. They must all be within 10 yards of the original target. *Chain lightning* inflicts 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage. Targets that make a successful Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower only take 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage.

## LIGHTNING STORM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Lightning Arcana (Master)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 12  
**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 17  
**TEST:** Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Spellpower

You conjure a roiling mass of storm clouds overhead, flickering with lightning.

For the next minute after casting *lightning storm*, you can take a minor action during your turn to call down a bolt of lightning from the storm clouds to strike any target within 20 yards of you. The target takes 3d6 + Willpower penetrating damage. A target that makes a successful Dexterity (Acrobatics) test vs. your Spellpower to avoid the bolt takes only 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage. *Lightning storm* lasts for 1 minute, but you can spend the spell's MP cost again to extend its duration for another minute.

## MIND ARCANA

Your magic touches upon the subtleties of the mind.

**NOVICE:** You learn two Novice degree Mind Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Expert or Novice degree Mind Arcana spell of your choice. You gain the focus Intelligence (Mind Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn one Mind Arcana spell of your choice from any degree. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Mind Arcana spells.



## EMPATHY

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mind Arcana (Novice)  
**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 2  
**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 9  
**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower



You can sense the emotions of others.

If you succeed, you know the feelings and mood of one subject you can see. This grants you a +2 bonus on Communication tests with that subject. Additionally, you know when the subject directly lies to you, although you do not detect half-truths or lies of omission. A use of *empathy* lasts for the encounter of interacting with one subject.

At Expert degree, you can affect a number of subjects equal to your Perception rating (or 2, whichever is more) with one casting of this spell. Each subject resists separately.

### MIND CONTACT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mind Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 9

**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

You can establish contact between your mind and another.

If you are unable to perceive the subject in the immediate vicinity, they must be well-known to you personally. If the subject is unwilling to receive contact, they may make a Willpower (Self-Discipline) test against your Spellpower: if they succeed, they're able to shut you out of their mind. While in *mind contact*, you and your subject can communicate silently at the rate of normal speech, "hearing" each other's thoughts. You can also send a single sensory impression rather than speaking. Both of you can choose to lie or omit information; you're "speaking" and not reading each other's thoughts (see *mind reading* for that ability).

*Mind contact* lasts for up to 1 minute; you can spend the spell's MP cost again to extend its duration for another minute. This also requires a new casting roll if the target is unwilling.

At Expert degree, you can affect a number of subjects equal to your Perception rating (or 2, whichever is more) with one casting of this spell. Each subject resists separately.

### MIND SHIELD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mind Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Reaction

**TARGET NUMBER:** None (see description)

You shield your mind from unwanted mental influence.

When you are the target of any Mind Arcana spell, or any effect that requires a Willpower (Morale) or Willpower (Self-Discipline) test to resist its effects, you can make a Willpower test using the applicable focus as a reaction, in addition to any other test to which you are entitled. If you have the Intelligence (Mind Arcana) focus, you can add its bonus to this extra test.

If your Willpower test exceeds the caster's Spellpower (or 10 + their Communication + relevant focus if the effect does not have Spellpower but the GM decides *mind shield* would protect against it), the effect fails. If you fail the Willpower test, you still get the usual test against the effect, if any. So, for example, if your *mind shield* fails to resist a *mind contact* spell, you still get the usual Willpower (Self-Discipline) test to resist it.

You may invoke *mind shield* as a reaction whenever you wish to resist a spell or effect against which it would protect, paying the MP cost each time. When an unknown spell or power targets you, you may ask the GM whether *mind shield* would apply to it, and the GM must give you an honest answer. If it does, you are entitled to employ it.

### SENSE MINDS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mind Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

You stretch out your awareness to sense the presence of other minds.

If the casting roll succeeds, you sense the presence (or absence) of other minds—creatures with an Intelligence rating—within 100 yards, as well as their approximate number, general type (animal, person, etc.), and approximate location. A *mind shield* test result greater than your casting roll allows that creature to go undetected.

### MIND READING

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mind Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 13

**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

You can read a subject's surface thoughts, "hearing" them within your own mind.

You must see, touch, or be in mind-to-mind contact with your subject. *Mind reading* transcends language; you comprehend the subject's thoughts whether or not you share a common language. If your target succeeds on the Willpower (Self-Discipline) test to resist, you cannot read the subject's mind. Each successful resistance gives the target a +1 cumulative bonus to resist your mind reading for the rest of the encounter.

If you can interact with your subject, a successful opposed Communication (Deception) test against the target's Willpower (Self-Discipline) causes the subject to think consciously about a particular piece of information—such as a password, name, or location—allowing you to read it from the subject's surface thoughts.

### MIND ATTACK

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mind Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

You psychically assault the mind of a target within 30 yards or in *mind contact* with you.

The target of a *mind attack* takes 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage. Targets that make a successful Willpower (Self-Discipline) test vs. your Spellpower take 1d6 penetrating damage instead.



## MIND PROBE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mind Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 13

**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

You can probe another creature's mind for information.

You must see, touch, or be in *mind contact* with your subject. If you win the opposed test, you can ask any one question and receive the answer from the subject's mind. If the subject doesn't know the answer, then you know they don't know instead. Especially personal or guarded information grants the target a +1 or +2 bonus on the Willpower test. Information the target doesn't consciously know, because it is subconscious or has been forgotten, grants a +3 to +5 bonus, at the GM's discretion. You can maintain the *mind probe* and continue asking questions, one per round, so long as you take a major action each round to maintain the spell. If the subject wins the opposed test twice in a row, the spell ends.

## MIND DOMINATION

**REQUIREMENTS:** Mind Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack **MP COST:** 14

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 15

**TEST:** Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower

Your mind can seize control of another's body, controlling their actions completely, or causing them pain and helplessness should they refuse.

You override the will of another creature within 30 yards or in *mind contact* with you. If you succeed, your target can either submit to your total control of their actions on their next turn or take 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage and be Stunned (as the condition, losing their major action), unless they make the Willpower (Self-Discipline) test vs. Spellpower noted above.

You can maintain the spell on subsequent rounds without spending additional MP, by using a minor action each round. The creature must make another Willpower (Self-Discipline) vs. Spellpower test to resist it, or again suffer the effects outlined above. If your target succeeds at the test, you force them to choose between the Influenced condition (you control their minor action) and taking 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage, but after that the spell ends, freeing the subject of your domination.

## POWER ARCANA

You work with the raw stuff of magic itself — power in its essential form.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Power Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Power Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Power Arcana).



**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Power Arcana spells.

## ARCANE AWARENESS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Power Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 9

You attune your senses to the flow of arcane power.

For 1 minute, you can sense active arcana or spells (but not magic items) within 10 yards of you and make Perception tests to detect details about them (usually with a TN equal to the effect's Spellpower or equivalent). The information you can perceive includes the arcana, spell type, and affected area or point of origin. If you have the Power Arcana focus, you may add it to the Perception test.

## DRAW POWER

**REQUIREMENTS:** Power Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement **MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 11

You draw additional arcane power into your aura, which glows softly in a color associated with you (and may show faint, shifting arcane symbols).

For the remainder of the encounter after casting *draw power*, your Spellpower is increased by +1.

## FALSE AURA

**REQUIREMENTS:** Power Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 10

**TEST:** Intelligence (Arcane Lore) vs. Spellpower

You place a deceptive magical aura upon a subject (this could be an object or a being), intended to deceive arcane forms of detection and divination.

The *false aura* is a genuine field of magical energy, not an illusion, but it has false characteristics and overlays the subject's natural aura.

For the next day, the *false aura* projects one or more of the following at the caster's option:

- The subject appears either magical or non-magical.
- The subject appears to be under the influence of certain spells or arcane forces.
- The subject appears to be either a mundane or supernatural creature.

The *false aura* can be used to conceal some things, while giving fake information about others. Anyone examining the subject with spells like *arcane awareness* perceives the *false aura* instead of the subject's normal aura. The examiner must succeed on an Intelligence (Arcane Lore) test against your Spellpower to see the aura as false and perceive the subject's actual aura.





### SPELL SHIELD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Power Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense **MP COST:** 4+

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action **TARGET NUMBER:** 10

You can weave mystic energies together for magical protection from the effects of arcane workings.

You give yourself or one target within 4 yards of you a +2 bonus on all tests to resist spells until the end of the encounter. By expending additional MP, you can extend this benefit to more targets: 2 MP per additional target, up to a number of targets equal to your Willpower. If you have the Power Arcana focus, you can extend this benefit to two more creatures, or alternately increase the spell's bonus to +3.

### ARCANE ABATEMENT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Power Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility **MP COST:** Special

**CASTING TIME:** Major action

**TARGET NUMBER:** Target spell's Spellpower

You attempt to end an ongoing spell or magical effect within 20 yards of you.

Make a casting test against the Spellpower of the target spell. If it is successful, you can spend MP equal to the original cost of the spell (not counting any extra MP spent on pushing it to mitigate a failed casting roll) or effect to negate it. If either the casting test fails or you do not have sufficient MP to cover the cost, then you cannot cancel the target effect.

### COUNTER-SPELL

**REQUIREMENTS:** Power Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense **MP COST:** 1+

**CASTING TIME:** Reaction

**TARGET NUMBER:** Target's spellcasting roll

You can use your knowledge of arcane forces to counteract the spells of your foes, unmaking them before they take effect.

When a foe within 20 yards of you casts a spell, you can make a casting roll against the casting roll of the target spell-caster and spend MP equal to the cost of the spell they are casting. You apply the ability focus for the arcana of the target spell, if you have it, to the casting roll. If you cannot cast the spell your foe is casting, you have a -2 penalty on your casting roll.

If you win the test, your foe's casting roll is considered to have failed. If they win the test, the spell is cast normally. If you do not have sufficient MP to cast a *counter-spell*, then the effort automatically fails, and you cannot counter your foe's casting.

### ARCANE CIRCLE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Power Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense **MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** 1 Minute **TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You conjure a circle of power that blocks the effects of spells of lesser strength.

You create a glowing magical circle, up to 4 yards in diameter, on the ground where you cast the spell. It is etched with symbols of power and lasts for 1 hour. During that time,



you and any allies inside the *arcane circle* have protection against spells cast from outside its confines. The casting roll of any such spells trying to affect the occupants must exceed the *arcane circle's* Spellpower to take effect. This does not cancel the spell entirely, just prevents it from affecting those inside the circle. Those outside the circle would be affected normally if in the spell's area of effect. You can be inside or outside of the circle when it is created and can cross it at will. An *arcane circle* is no barrier to your own spells.

### ARCANE VOID

**REQUIREMENTS:** Power Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 18

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 17

You create an area of null-magic, draining and suppressing magical effects.

Choose an area with a 6-yard radius within 20 yards of you. If your casting roll succeeds, that area becomes an *arcane void*, deadened to any use of magic. For the remainder of the encounter, any magical talent or ability used in the *arcane void* automatically fails. Ongoing magical effects, including magic items, are suppressed as long as they remain within the *void*. The power of artifacts is such that suppressing one with *arcane void* requires a successful TN 18 Intelligence (Power Arcana) test. Summoned creatures in the area are banished to their place of origin. Purely magical beings that enter or start their turn in the *arcane void* take 1d6 penetrating damage as their magic "bleeds" away. The creator of the *arcane void* can dispel it—ending the effect—at any time, as a minor action.

## PROTECTION ARCANA

Your magic skills can shield and ward yourself and others against dangers of both the physical and mystical kind.

**NOVICE:** You learn two Novice degree Protection Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Expert or Novice degree Protection Arcana spell of your choice. You gain the focus Intelligence (Protection Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn one Protection Arcana spell of your choice from any degree. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Protection Arcana spells.



### ARCANE SHIELD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Protection Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 2+

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You create an arcane aura of protection against physical harm around you.

For one round, your magic wraps you in a protective field, and your Defense becomes equal to your Spellpower (10 +

Willpower + Protection Arcana Focus). You can extend the duration of your *arcane shield* effect by spending 1 MP per additional round you want it to last.

### ARCANE TENT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Protection Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4+

**CASTING TIME:** One Minute

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

You conjure a magical shelter from the elements.

You invoke an invisible dome 4 yards high at the center and 4 yards in radius around the point on the ground that you touch while casting the spell. The dome keeps out precipitation, wind, and small insects or other vermin. It also sheds light and warmth equal to that of a campfire, although not capable of setting fires, and its light is not visible outside of the dome. The dome provides shade from any outside light source while remaining invisible. Lastly, if any creature larger than a cat comes within 50 feet of the dome, you are aware of its presence. The *arcane tent* lasts for eight hours, but you can extend its existence another eight hours by spending the MP cost again.

### MAGE LOCK

**REQUIREMENTS:** Protection Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You magically seal a door, shutter, lid, or other closure shut.

Your *mage lock* is as strong as the material it holds closed, so it cannot be opened without breaking the sealed closure by force or removing the spell. You can open anything you have *mage locked* at will, and you can create a password that allows others to do so if they speak it aloud upon touching the closure. Otherwise, your *mage lock* lasts until it is broken, or you choose to remove it.

### SPELL WARD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Protection Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 3

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

**TEST:** Intelligence (selected Arcana) vs. Spellpower

Your power protects you and another from the magical effects of a certain arcana.

Touch a subject and choose an arcana, such as Cold, Fire, Power, etc. For the rest of the encounter, if the subject is targeted by a hostile spell from that arcana, the spellcaster must win a test of Spellcasting ability and focus (typically Intelligence + arcana focus bonus) vs. your Spellpower. Otherwise, the spell fails. If the spellcaster wins the test, the spell works normally, although the subject still gets any regular test allowed against the spell.

### CREATURE WARD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Protection Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 5

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

**TEST:** Willpower (Courage or Morale) vs. Spellpower



You can ward off supernatural creatures, including demons, elementals, spirits, and undead (the exact types of creatures affected may vary depending on your campaign setting).

So long as you use an Activate action each round to maintain your concentration, any such creatures must succeed on a Willpower (Courage or Morale) test vs. your Spellpower to approach closer than 5 yards to you or to directly attack you or any ally within 5 yards of you. Anyone (including yourself) who attacks a warded creature loses the benefit of the ward's protection. The *creature ward* ends once you stop concentrating on it.

### MISSILE SHIELD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Protection Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 14

An invisible aura of arcane protection envelops a subject you choose.

You or a chosen ally within 6 yards of you are the subject of this spell. For the remainder of the encounter, whenever the subject is the target of a ranged attack with a physical missile weapon you can spend 1 MP per missile to harmlessly turn the attack aside, subtly deflecting the missile so that it misses the target. This affects all physical missile weapons, regardless of size, and including magical attacks involving physical missiles, such as the *ice knives* spell, but not pure energy attacks like Fire or Lightning Arcana. If you cannot perceive the subject of your *missile shield* or take a free action at the time, you cannot deflect an attack.

### ARCANE BARRIER

**REQUIREMENTS:** Protection Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 10+

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 18

A barrier of magical force around you blocks all damage.

You surround a subject within 25 yards (which may be yourself) with a protective field of magical force. The barrier lasts for one round. During that time, the subject is completely immune to damage, but also cannot move from the spot (as the barrier is immobile), make melee or ranged attacks, or give or receive items. Any spell or magical phenomenon that does not cause direct damage affects the subject normally, and spells of all kinds, damage-inflicting or otherwise, can pass out of the barrier. You can extend the barrier by spending 5 MP for each additional round you would like it to last.

### ARCANE WARD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Protection Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 18

**TEST:** Intelligence (selected Arcana) vs. Spellpower

You power protects a subject against all magic of lesser strength than yours.

This spell works like the Novice level *spell ward*, except it affects all hostile spells or magical abilities used against the subject for the remainder of the encounter, not just those of one arcana.

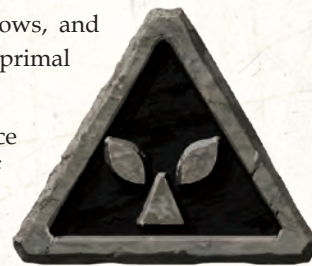
## SHADOW ARCANA

Your magic lives in the shadows, and you weave the magic of primal darkness.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Shadow Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Shadow Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Shadow Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Shadow Arcana spells.



### DARK SIGHT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Shadow Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 3 per subject

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

You imbue a person or group with the capacity to see in low light and even complete darkness.

Choose a number of subjects, including yourself, no greater than your Willpower, within 6 yards of you. For the remainder of the encounter, those subjects gain the benefits of the *dark sight* special quality, able to see in complete darkness as if it were normal daylight out to 20 yards. Subjects who already have Dark Sight add 20 yards to their range and gain +1 on visual Perception tests (usually Seeing and Searching) in low-light to completely dark environments.

The only darkness the spell doesn't penetrate is that generated by magic, but at Master degree in the Shadow Arcana, you can even accomplish this.

### SHADOW DAGGER

**REQUIREMENTS:** Shadow Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

A shard of darkness bursts from your hand and solidifies into a lethal weapon.

This weapon is treated as a dagger (see **Weapons** in CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT), except that it counts as a magical weapon when relevant, and if you throw it or let it go, it appears back in your hand an instant later. This means you can throw it repeatedly without losing it, but you also can't give it to someone else to use. It can also function as a normal knife, allowing it to carve wood, cut ropes, and so on. The *shadow dagger* lasts for the encounter.



## SHADOW'S EMBRACE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Shadow Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

Darkness surrounds and conceals you.

You deepen the shadows in a 6-by-6 yard area within 30 yards of you for 5 minutes. Anyone in the area receives a +2 bonus on Dexterity (Stealth) tests. This area moves with you. Natural shadows must already be present, or the spell will not work. If you enter an area with no natural shadows, the spell ends.

## SHADOW'S HOOD

**REQUIREMENTS:** Shadow Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

**TEST:** Perception (Seeing) vs. Spellpower

Your mystical darkness robs a foe of the sense of sight.

Choose a target within 6 yards of you. If the target fails a Perception (Seeing) test against your Spellpower, they are Blinded (as the condition) until the end of their next turn.

## SHADOW TENDRILS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Shadow Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 10

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

**TEST:** Willpower (Courage) vs. Spellpower

Tendrils of pure darkness spring up from the ground or floor in an area that you choose.

The *shadow tendrils* appear in a 4-by-4 yard space within 20 yards of you that lasts for a number of rounds equal to your Willpower (minimum 1). Anyone inside or entering the affected area must make a Willpower (Courage) test against your Spellpower or take 1d6 + Willpower penetrating damage and be unable to move from the spot on their next turn, though they can take actions other than moving freely. Once a creature is immobilized by the spell once, they can no longer be immobilized by that casting of it, though they still take damage if they enter the affected zone.

## VEIL OF DARKNESS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Shadow Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 12

You can weave magical darkness into a barrier that obscures all sight.

You create a wall of impenetrable darkness within 30 yards of you that is 10 yards long, 2 yards wide, and 4 yards tall. The wall does not impede movement in any way, but it does block all sight (even Dark Sight). Entering such total darkness is disconcerting, so those moving through it halve their Speed (rounded down) for the round.

## SHADOW FORM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Shadow Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 12

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

You transform, appearing to merge with and disappear into your own shadow.

For the remainder of the encounter, you have the *shadow* special quality: You take half damage from all non-magical attacks and can use the *regenerate* and *blending* powers in darkness or dim light. See CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES for more information. In sunlight or other bright light, you take damage normally, and all light-based magical attacks do an extra 1d6 penetrating damage. You also gain the *incorporeal form* quality: you ignore the effects of terrain and can walk through solids and liquids as if they aren't there, as long as you begin and end each turn in an open space. If you are somehow stuck inside a solid or liquid at the end of a turn, you are ejected to the point where you entered it at the beginning of your next turn.

## SHADOW SLIP

**REQUIREMENTS:** Shadow Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 14

You step into one shadow and emerge from another.

Using this spell, you can transport instantly from one area of shadow to another that you can perceive within 50 yards of you. To others, it looks like you disappear into the shadows and re-emerge elsewhere.

## WATER ARCANA

Your magic surges and flows like water itself.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Water Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Water Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Water Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Water Arcana spells.



## ARCANE SPRING

**REQUIREMENTS:** Water Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

**TEST:** Strength (Might) vs. Spellpower

Water pours forth at your command.

You cause a number of gallons of water equal to your Willpower + Water Arcana focus bonus (if any; minimum 1 gallon in any event) to pour out of nowhere. This water can pour





into a container (and is clean and safe to drink), onto a small fire to quench it, or even onto a target. Such a target must make a Strength (Might) test vs. your Spellpower to avoid being knocked Prone, in addition to being wet for some time thereafter.

### HEALING WATERS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Water Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

You infuse a small amount of pure water (about a cupful) with healing energy.

Any subject who consumes the *healing waters* or applies them directly to an injury within a minute of their infusion regains 3d6 Health.

### WATER BREATHING

**REQUIREMENTS:** Water Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

Touch a subject (this can be you). For the remainder of the encounter, the subject can breathe and move underwater as easily as they do in air.

At Expert degree in Water Arcana, you can extend *water breathing* to multiple subjects within 10 yards of you by paying an additional 1 MP per extra subject.

### WATER WHIP

**REQUIREMENTS:** Water Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

You create a whip of water that appears in your empty hand.

You can wield the water whip as a weapon, using your Intelligence (Water Arcana) to make attack rolls. You can attack targets up to 4 yards away and the *water whip* inflicts 1d6 + Willpower damage. You can also perform the Disarm stunt for 1 SP instead of 2 when wielding it, and you use Willpower instead of Strength to modify how far away the disarmed weapon flies. The *water whip* lasts until the end of the encounter, although you can end it earlier as a free action if you so choose.

### SWIFT AND SLOW WATERS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Water Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 6+

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11+

**TEST:** Special (see description)

You can shape and direct the flow of large bodies of water—even the ocean—to double or halve the Speed of one vessel within 100 yards, for the duration of the encounter. If the spell runs contrary to what the target vessel's crew prefer, the best sailor aboard may make a Dexterity (Sailing) test vs. Spellpower to nullify the effects. If you are aboard the vessel and



the crew is not opposed, you may extend the duration of the spell to a full day for an additional 6 MP. This is typically used to double a vessel's daily travel distance.

### WATER WALL

**REQUIREMENTS:** Water Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Defense

**MP COST:** 6

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

**TEST:** Strength (Might) vs. Spellpower

A watery curtain surges before you.

You conjure a cascade of water, up to 3 yards long, 1 yard wide, and 3 yards tall. It blocks all fire attacks from passing through it, and anyone trying to attack through it takes a -2 penalty on their attack rolls. Anyone attempting to cross through the *water wall* must make a Strength (Might) test vs. your Spellpower or be knocked Prone. If you cast this spell more than once in an encounter, you can link together the sections into one continuous wall. The *water wall* lasts until the end of the encounter, although you can end it earlier as a free action if you so choose.

### WATERY FLESH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Water Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 12

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

Your appearance doesn't change, but your body and possessions adopt the properties of a liquid that regains its shape after being displaced.

You can move through any non-watertight barrier and cannot be damaged by non-magical weapons and hazards, except for those based on fire and heat, which do double damage (before Armor Rating) instead, and you are immune to conditions that arise from injuries. Unfortunately, your liquid form means you cannot make attacks with weapons, use equipment, or pick up objects except through the use of spells or special powers such as Arcane Blast. You remain in this state until the end of the encounter or you dismiss this spell by spending a minor action.

### WATERY DOOM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Water Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 9

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

**TEST:** Constitution (Stamina) vs. Spellpower

You cause a target's lungs to fill with water, drowning them even in the open air.

The target must make a Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower. On a success, the spell has no effect. On a failure, the target takes 2d6 + your Willpower penetrating damage and cannot speak. At the start of each their turns, the target must make another Constitution (Stamina) test vs. your Spellpower, taking 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage on a failure. The spell continues until a successful test is made or 5 rounds pass. *Watery doom* has no effect on targets that do not breathe air (or do not breathe at all).

## WOOD ARCANA

Your magic draws upon the strength of nature and green, growing things.

**NOVICE:** You learn two novice Wood Arcana spells of your choice.

**EXPERT:** You learn one Novice or Expert Wood Arcana spell of your choice. You also gain the focus Intelligence (Wood Arcana).

**MASTER:** You learn any one spell from the arcana you wish. You can also choose one spell stunt you can perform for -1 SP when casting Wood Arcana spells.



### FOREST BLEND

**REQUIREMENTS:** Wood Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

**TEST:** Perception (Searching) vs. Spellpower

The natural world conceals you and your allies.

You and a number of creatures up to your Willpower within 6 yards of you blend into natural or wooded surroundings. For the duration of the encounter, a successful Perception (Searching) test vs. your Spellpower is required to spot anyone concealed by this spell. Making an attack gives away your position, negating the spell's benefits until the beginning of your next turn.

### REGROWTH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Wood Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 10

You infuse wood with a burst of life-force.

This causes a piece of dead wood to return to life, sprouting branches, roots, and even leaves. It twists and warps wooden objects like furniture, doors, chests, or even weapons or shields, making them unusable. Used on a seed, it matures into a hearty sapling in an instant, while a mature tree enjoys a year's growth, immediately giving forth fruit or seeds as appropriate. Used on a wooden tool or weapon (generally, a weapon with a wooden haft such as a bludgeon, axe, spear, or pole arm; wooden sword grips and the like are too small to be affected by the spell), it imposes a -5 penalty to relevant tests, including attack rolls. Used on a wooden shield, *regrowth* makes it impossible to use to add to the holder's Defense.

*Regrowth* affects non-magical wood permanently. Against magical wood, including magical items that include wood, the spell's effects vanish at the end of the encounter. Against creatures made of wood with a Threat rating, *regrowth* heals 3d6 Health and removes one condition imposed by an injury or disease, and is considered a beneficial spell, requiring the target's consent (see **Beneficial Spells and Consent**).



## WOOD SPEECH

**REQUIREMENTS:** Wood Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 4

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

You can converse with living plants, speaking aloud to them and “hearing” their answers in your mind, for the duration of the encounter.

Small and simple plants provide only rudimentary information while larger, older, and more complex ones—such as old-growth trees—can offer much more detail. In addition to any information the plant life can provide you, you gain stunt points equal to the result of the Stunt Die on the casting roll, which you can spend on an exploration stunt triggered by guidance or information from the plant world.

## WOOD WALK

**REQUIREMENTS:** Wood Arcana (Novice)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 2

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

Sorcery speeds your passage through even the thickest forest and jungle.

You and a number of creatures equal to your Willpower, within 6 yards of you, can move through natural and wooded surroundings freely at your normal Speed for the duration of the encounter, regardless of terrain, weather, or similar conditions. Your movement is not impeded by plant growth, brambles, vines, or similar obstacles and (at the GM’s discretion) you may avoid certain natural hazards automatically (see **Hazards** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES).

## DRYAD’S DOOR

**REQUIREMENTS:** Wood Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Minor Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 14

The trees themselves can transport and conceal you.

You can “step into” a mature tree of any size, disappearing entirely, emerging from any other tree within 50 yards of where you vanished. If you wish, you can remain “inside” a tree for up to a minute per level before re-emerging, but you are unaware of anything happening in the outside world during that time.

## ENSNARING ROOTS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Wood Arcana (Expert)

**SPELL TYPE:** Attack

**MP COST:** 8

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 11

**TEST:** Strength (Might) vs. Spellpower

Roots from the earth ensnare your foes.

Tough, gnarled roots spring up from the ground to grab and entangle targets in a 4-yard by 4-yard area within 20 yards of you that you designate for a number of rounds equal to your Willpower (minimum 1). Anyone in or entering the

affected area must make a Strength (Might) vs. Spellpower test or be unable to move from the spot until they use a minor action to make a Strength (Might) vs. Spellpower test, the caster lets them go as a free action, or the spell ends.

## AWAKEN TREE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Wood Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Utility

**MP COST:** 14

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

You “awaken” a mature tree within 10 yards of you, giving it senses, awareness, and movement.

This tree becomes a gnarlwalker (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES). It is friendly to you and obedient to your commands for the duration of the encounter. At the end of the spell, it reverts to its normal form, putting down roots wherever it is standing.

## TREE FORM

**REQUIREMENTS:** Wood Arcana (Master)

**SPELL TYPE:** Enhancement

**MP COST:** 12

**CASTING TIME:** Major Action

**TARGET NUMBER:** 15

Your body transforms, taking on the form of an animated tree.

This transformation lasts for the remainder of the encounter or until you choose to end the spell (a free action). You gain





the following statistics as your body turns into that of a gnarl-walker (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES):

- **ABILITIES:** Constitution 6, Dexterity 0, Strength 6, even if this would reduce your ability ratings. All other abilities retain the caster's usual ratings.
- **FOCUSES:** Fighting (Branch Blows), Intelligence (Natural Lore).
- **OTHER STATISTICS:** You gain an Armor Rating of 8 from the *monstrously tough hide* special quality. This doesn't stack with worn armor, however.
- **SPECIAL QUALITIES:** You gain the gnarlwalker special qualities of *big, made of wood, many branches, mighty and lethal, monstrously tough hide, and voice of the green.*

Your new body doesn't impede your ability to cast other spells. However, your clothing and worn equipment are absorbed into your tree form, reappearing when you return to your usual form.

## MINOR ARCANA

While Mages learn to master powerful arcana and other wielders of magic pursue spells from such arcana, spellcasters often master various elementary applications of the arcane arts as apprentices or trainees. These sorts of things are useful when serving their teachers and performing otherwise mundane day-to-day tasks. While many experienced Mages disdain such minor arcana (called cantrips, signeri, petty charms, hedge magic, prestidigitation, and a host of other slang terms) they are still handy from time to time. They're useful from a story perspective as well, allowing spellcasters to display their magical ability with a comparatively small expenditure of effort.

## LEARNING MINOR ARCANA

Whenever a character capable of casting a standard spell can learn a new one, they may instead opt to learn three minor arcana. Some talents and specializations (in future publications) may provide the ability to learn minor arcana as well, and use the rules listed in their descriptions instead.

## CASTING MINOR ARCANA

Each minor arcana may be cast without a casting roll, by using a minor action and spending 1 MP. Minor arcana

without a given duration last up to 8 hours, but they can be dismissed earlier as a free action. A minor arcana cast on someone who doesn't want it, or on objects they wear or carry, automatically fails, but the caster regains the 1 MP they spent to cast it.

## SAMPLE MINOR ARCANA

There are numerous minor arcana. The following are common in many *Fantasy AGE* campaigns, but just about any magical effect that creates some kind of petty convenience might exist somewhere, practiced by spellcasters interested in comfort at least as much as adventure.

- **ARCANE CANDLE:** *Arcane candle* conjures a point of cold light about as bright as a single candle of whatever color the Mage wishes. Some Mages have personal "signature" colors. The *arcane candle* hovers near the Mage's head or shoulder but can move anywhere within 10 yards at the caster's direction.
- **ARCANE GLYPH:** *Arcane glyph* allows the Mage to trace a single glyph—usually a personal symbol—or pictogram onto a surface as if writing in indelible ink of whatever color the Mage wishes (again, some Mages have "signature" colors). The glyph lasts until the inscriber removes it with a touch or it is removed with a spell like *arcane abatement*.
- **ARCANE MANTLE:** *Arcane mantle* is an outward reflection of the caster's inner magical power, including such momentary effects as flashing or color-changing eyes, a shimmering or shadowy aura, or a hollow and menacing or melodious voice. Such displays can be useful in warning off those who wish to avoid crossing the caster.
- **ARCANE SERVANT:** *Arcane servant* can move small objects (up to about a pound in weight) and perform simple household chores like dusting, sweeping, making beds, or picking up.
- **MAGE'S CLOAK:** *Mage's cloak* protects the Mage from precipitation like an invisible cloak, allowing the caster to walk outside in rain or snow without getting wet. It provides no additional warmth, nor can it repel more moisture than a steady rain—a heavier soaking will still get the caster wet.
- **MAGE'S COMPASS:** *Mage's compass* tells the Mage unerringly where a cardinal direction (usually north) lies, and the time until the next sunrise or sunset. The direction cannot use, as its reference point, a specific geographical location beyond a cardinal direction or the equivalent in worlds that have unusual dimensions.
- **MAGE'S FLINT:** *Mage's flint* can light a small fire with a snap of the fingers like a highly skilled use of flint and steel. Alternately, it can create a small shower of colorful, but harmless, sparks from the Mage's fingertips of whatever color is desired. In the second case, the sparks are not hot enough to ignite fires—they flare brightly and then quickly vanish.

## MAGIC ITEMS VS. SPELLS

In *Fantasy AGE*, magic items aren't given powers by specific spells—you don't need enchant weapon to give a sword an attack roll bonus, for example. The Enchantment Arcana spells *imbue item* and *empower item* are sufficient. However, certain items might require the casting mage to have a specific focus, at the GM's discretion, such as Intelligence (Alchemical Explosives) to make *blasting gel*, or Intelligence (Death Arcana) to make a wand that animates a skeleton. In the latter case, knowing the Death Arcana grants the focus, but it's the knowledge of necromantic lore, not the ability to cast Death spells, that's important.





## 6: STUNTS

**N**ow that you know all the basic rules for playing the game, you can explore encounters and use the dice to help determine their outcomes. You're all set to brawl with enemies, solve mysteries, and sway hearts and minds. *This* chapter introduces a way to make those encounters more exciting and dynamic, called **stunts**. With stunts, a hero can win an argument or defeat a foe with style. You can perform maneuvers to give yourself or your teammates extra advantages to accomplish feats more complex than the basic rules cover. Most NPCs can also use stunts, so the GM can mix things up and make challenges more fun.

While **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES** covered combat stunts, you can use them in all forms of encounters. This chapter contains a full listing of the stunts you'll use in the game, with two exceptions. First, chase stunts, found in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES** along with the rules for chases, should be provided by the GM whenever relevant. Second, creature stunts, which are tailored to particular entities and can be found in their relevant game statistics.

### GENERATING STUNT POINTS

To use stunts, you must generate stunt points (SP), which you can spend to pull off stunts of varying potency. You generate stunt points in the following ways:

- **DOUBLES:** When you're successful on an ability test and you roll doubles on any two of the dice (rolling the same

number on all three dice has no extra benefit) you generate a number of SP equal to the value shown on the Stunt Die.

- **STUNT ATTACK:** The Stunt Attack action (see **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**) generates 2 SP on a success whether you roll doubles or not but does not cause damage or have other effects. If you roll doubles, you get these 2 SP or the number on the Stunt Die, whichever is higher.

Some optional rules, such as **Relationships** in **CHAPTER 7: THE GAME MASTER**, provide other ways to generate stunt points.

When the test is a simple test, as described in **CHAPTER 2**, it cannot generate stunt points with doubles, and it can't have stunt points spent to enhance its results. The test either achieves its base result or not, with no further complications. All tests prompted by stunt descriptions are simple tests as well, so a stunt that requires a roll cannot itself generate stunt points.

### SPENDING STUNT POINTS

You can buy one or more stunts with a total cost equal to or less than your available SP. The stunts activate immediately, according to the rules listed for each individual stunt. Some of the rules for spending stunt points were covered in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**, but we'll restate, clarify, and expand them as follows.

### KNOW THE STUNT

If your character doesn't have access to the stunt, you can't spend SP on it. Your character has access to stunts from the following sources.



## TRUST YOURSELF

This chapter goes over the rules for stunts in a great deal of detail to clarify anything that might seem ambiguous at first glance. This isn't because stunts are complicated, but so simple in execution you may suspect something's missing. In practice, simply spending SP and following the stunt's description works in the vast majority of cases.

### BASIC STUNTS

All characters and creatures can use basic stunts. Basic stunts exist for combat, exploration, and social actions.

### ADVANCED STUNTS

At each even-numbered level you can gain an advanced stunt (see **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION** for details). The most common advanced stunts are class stunts, available only to members of their character class. Class stunts are superior to basic stunts; they give members of each class distinct actions they can perform. In some campaigns there may also be other forms of advanced stunts available.

### SITUATIONAL STUNTS

Spell stunts and chase stunts are examples of situational stunts, which apply to a narrower group of actions than most other stunts. Spell stunts can only be used while casting spells, and chase stunts can only be used by participants in a chase using the rules in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES**. Some creatures in **CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES** have unique stunts reflecting their extraordinary abilities. Other situational stunts may come up in play as well, often tied to specific locations. For example, the GM might create a stunt to reflect swinging from place to place using vines, or ship's rigging, if these are nearby.

### USE SP OR LOSE THEM

You must spend all the stunt points you gain from doubles and the Stunt Attack action immediately. Any unused SP are lost. SP from other sources, such as the Envoy's coordinate ability, can be spent on your first turn after gaining them, but after you have had a chance to buy stunts with them, the remainder vanish as well.

### THE STUNT MUST FIT THE ACTION

Some stunts, such as spell stunts, are strictly linked to certain actions and situations. If a stunt has this characteristic it will either be noted in its stunt list or have brackets such as (Spells) to indicate such restrictions. Many stunts don't have these but are narrow in scope. For instance, you can't spend SP on Mighty Blow after a social action without a good explanation of how. The Game Master is the final judge of a stunt's restrictions.

### THE STUNTS MUST TELL A STORY

Your stunts must represent actions and events in the game world—in other words, they must tell part of the story. For

instance, you'd be hard-pressed to use Sabotage to represent a life-or-death wrestling match. On the other hand, using stunts creatively is part of the fun and the GM should allow inventive justifications for particular stunts.

### YOU CAN'T TAKE THE SAME STUNT TWICE

You can spend SP on multiple stunts, combining them to enhance a single action, but you can't spend SP on exactly the same stunt more than once. Some stunts have variable SP costs, and don't count as more than one stunt when you spend more SP for enhanced effects.

### NARRATING STUNTS

Once you've decided which stunts to perform, narrate how your character did it. If your character performed multiple stunts at the same time, describe them all as part of or resulting from the action that generated the SP. For instance, if you make an attack, then perform the Skirmish and Knock Prone stunts, you might say, "I slide down the banister to kick him squarely in the chest, sending him flying across the room. He slams into the wall and lands in a heap."

#### STUNTS IN THE STORY: AN EXAMPLE

*A baron hires the Rogue, Najah, to stop a local secret society from trying to oust him as their liege. Disguised as a wandering tinker, she infiltrates a meeting of the group at a local tavern, but she still doesn't know who, among those assembled, is the agitator behind the movement. The GM asks Najah's player to make a Communication (Investigation) test to try to figure it out as she talks to those present and observes their body language.*

*The GM secretly sets the target number for this test at 13. Najah has Communication 2 and possesses the Investigation focus. She rolls 4, 4, and 3, with the 3 being the Stunt Die result. Her total is thus 15, which exceeds the target number. The GM confirms that Najah was successful. Since doubles were rolled, the test generates stunt points equal to the Stunt Die result of 3.*

*Since this is out of action time, combat stunts are inappropriate. Najah can use social stunts, exploration stunts, or one of the Rogue stunts she knows, though many Rogue stunts don't necessarily apply to the task at hand. No matter the stunt she picks, she must explain how it works in the story, though the GM should be ready to provide suggestions if asked.*

*She considers using the Pay Attention basic social stunt to try to learn something else about the members of the secret society or the place where they are meeting, while also on the lookout for the ringleader. However, she needs to get back to the baron without being followed. Unfortunately, she's 1 SP short of Cover Your Tracks, which would be ideal.*

*In the end she spends 1 SP on the Impress basic social stunt targeting the person she convinced to let her into the meeting to make her subsequent actions easier, gaining a +1 bonus to her next social test directed at that individual, and 2 SP on the Wariness basic exploration stunt, providing +2 to rolls to avoid the negative consequences of her actions, such as shaking the tail of a suspicious rebel.*



Najah tells her contact she has to leave early to set up her wares for tomorrow's market, but that she agrees with and appreciates being brought into "the movement." Before she goes, however, she must know who their leader is—surely, her new friend can understand that a revolt is only as just as the person directing it? The GM calls for a new *Communication (Persuasion)* test, to which Najah's *Impress* bonus applies. It succeeds and her new friend points in the direction of a steel-haired woman sitting in the corner. As he does that, Najah deliberately reaches for her tankard to block the line of sight between her friend and the leader. The GM rolls the leader's *Perception (Empathy)* to see if she notices being pointed at; this test is opposed by Najah's *Dexterity (Stealth)* roll, to which Najah's player adds the +2 *Wariness* stunt bonus. The leader doesn't notice she's been identified by Najah's new friend in the movement, thinking nothing of the Rogue leaving the tavern.

## GENERAL STUNT SYSTEMS

The following additional rules apply to stunts.

### STUNT DURATION

Stunt durations are listed in each stunt's description. If a stunt has no duration listed, it takes place in a tiny moment—no longer than a free action would take—though long-term effects like damage persist. Otherwise, stunts are listed with the following durations:

- **FOR X TESTS, ROLLS, ROUNDS, OR ACTIONS:** Self-explanatory. When the requisite number of specified events passes, the stunt's duration expires.
- **FOR THE REST OF THE ENCOUNTER:** If a stunt says its effects last "for the rest of the encounter," or something similar, it means they last until the focus of play jumps forward in time or changes venue, or until the heroes definitively succeed or fail at their current goal within the scene. If the GM switches gameplay focus between groups acting simultaneously, that doesn't count as a time or venue change. The GM is the final arbiter of what constitutes the end of an encounter.
- **UNTIL YOUR/THEIR NEXT TURN:** A stunt with a duration that lasts "until your (or their) next turn," or something similarly phrased ends before your first action in a new round. And that stunt's duration remains in effect even as you take other actions throughout the current round, ending once you begin taking actions again *next* round.
- **UNTIL THE END OF YOUR/THEIR NEXT TURN:** Stunts with durations lasting until the *end* of your next turn, or someone else's, expire at the end of your actions in the round *after* the one in which you activated the stunt. This is usually so that you can benefit from the stunt on your next action, or an ally who has already acted on the turn where the stunt came into play can benefit from it. Again, even if you (or they) have yet to act in the round the stunt activates, it would still last until after you (or they) had taken all available actions in the *next* round.

## STUNT DIE BONUSES AND DOUBLES

Some talents and other special circumstances provide a bonus to the Stunt Die as you roll the test. This is a potent benefit since it increases your chance of success, your degree of success, and the number of stunt points you might score with doubles. Note, however, that you never count this bonus when checking for doubles—only matches on the die faces themselves matter. If that indicates doubles, then count the Stunt Die bonus to figure out how many SP you get. Otherwise, the bonus may create situations where doubles grow less likely.

## OTHER STUNT CONSIDERATIONS

The following additional rules apply to stunts.

### STORY AND GM SUPREMACY

Working together, you and the Game Master must be able to describe the effects of the stunt on a story basis. You don't have to figure out every individual sword thrust or biting word, but your stunts need to make sense as part of the campaign's ongoing story.

The GM not only decides whether stunts work in the story, but how to interpret their rules—or if the rules need to be changed to suit their campaign. This takes precedence over everything else in this chapter. Whenever possible, the GM should make sure players know about their opinions and rulings before they spend stunt points. Finally, if the GM decides a stunt isn't available for any reason, you can't waste your SP taking it—they have to offer you alternatives.

### STUNT TARGETS

Unless otherwise stated, a stunt affects whoever or whatever you targeted with the action your stunts enhance. For instance, *Mighty Blow* and *Lethal Blow* affect the target of your original attack. However, some stunts do state they can be used to affect other targets, or oneself.

### STUNT DESCRIPTIONS OVERRIDE OTHER RULES

A stunt's description overrides other rules, even the general rules for stunts here—but when a stunt doesn't say anything about rules found elsewhere, those remain in effect. For instance, a theoretical stunt may allow you to save stunt points for later even though that normally isn't allowed, but that's a specific exception noted in the stunt's text.

The only exceptions are rules that *are* rules for stunts, such as when a talent or class ability affects the costs of various stunts and what they do.

### STUNT-TRIGGERED TESTS ARE SIMPLE

When a stunt's description calls for a test, it's always a simple test. In other words, tests prompted by stunts can never generate or use stunt points.



# BASIC STUNTS

Basic stunts are available to all characters of any level, as well as all NPCs and creatures, though in some cases a creature's characteristics make it unlikely they'd use certain stunts—bears are not likely to engage in social intrigues.

## BASIC COMBAT STUNTS

Basic combat stunts represent various maneuvers, techniques, and tricks to seize the advantage in a fight. They're defined by what they do, not how they're done. Skirmish can move an enemy by shoving them in melee combat, or can force them back with the threat of an arrow in missile combat.

## BASIC SOCIAL STUNTS

Basic social stunts can accompany almost any social interaction, from attempts to ingratiate yourself with Non-Player Charac-

ters to CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULE's more detailed options. Social stunts usually occur outside of action encounters, but exceptions exist where a social gesture can be as effective as a blade.

## BASIC EXPLORATION STUNTS

Basic exploration stunts are used when you're interacting with the environment. These go with attempts to defeat challenges such as traps, examine evidence, and infiltrate places where you're not welcome, in narrative or action time.

## BASIC SPELL STUNTS

Basic spell stunts can only be generated when casting a spell. Thus, they can occur both in and out of combat, depending on when you cast a spell. If you generate stunt points while spell-casting you may spend them on spell stunts, basic exploration and social stunts, and the following basic combat stunts: Boost, Skirmish, Disarm, Knock Prone, Crushing Blow, and Seize the Initiative.

### BASIC COMBAT STUNTS

SP Cost	STUNT
1-3	<b>BOOST:</b> You gain a +1 bonus per SP spent on your first test on your next turn.
1	<b>RAPID RELOAD (RANGED):</b> You can immediately reload a missile weapon as a free action.
1-3	<b>SKIRMISH:</b> You can move yourself or the target of your attack 2 yards in any direction for each 1 SP you spend.
1	<b>STAY AWARE:</b> Make a simple TN 11 Perception test with the focus of your choice. If you succeed, the GM either gives you a new piece of information you noticed, or you gain a +1 bonus to the next test you make (as long as it is before the end of your next turn).
2	<b>DISARM:</b> You and your opponent must make an opposed attack roll. If you win the test, you can knock your enemy's weapon to the ground, sending it 1d6 + Strength yards away in a direction you choose.
2	<b>GRAB (MELEE):</b> You grapple with your enemy. You and your target make opposed Accuracy (Brawling) tests. If you win, you grab your target and they can't move out of your reach until after your next turn. On subsequent turns, you may use a minor action to maintain the grab, preventing them from moving away from you as long as you make another successful opposed simple Accuracy (Brawling) test with your target, though your target rolls this test as a reaction—they don't need to use an action to try to break free. Grabbing a foe doesn't prevent them from attacking, casting spells, or taking other actions—they just have to stay adjacent to you while doing it.
2	<b>KNOCK PRONE:</b> You and your opponent must make an opposed attack roll. If you win the test, you can knock your enemy Prone, as the condition.
2	<b>MIGHTY BLOW:</b> You inflict an extra 1d6 damage with your attack.
2	<b>PIERCE ARMOR:</b> You find a weakness in your enemy's armor. The target's Armor Rating is halved (rounded down) versus your attack.
2	<b>PIN (GRABBED):</b> If you currently hold a target by using the Grab stunt and use this stunt as well (this doesn't have to be from the same attack as the grab), they also acquire the Defenseless condition (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES). If you release the grab or they break free from it, they stop being Defenseless.
3	<b>DEFENSIVE STANCE:</b> Gain a +4 bonus to Defense until the beginning of your next turn.
3	<b>LIGHTNING ATTACK:</b> You can make a second attack (against the same enemy or a different one within range and sight). You must have a loaded missile weapon to make a ranged attack with this stunt.
4	<b>CRUSHING BLOW:</b> Your attack is strong or well-placed enough to compromise your enemy's armor or tough skin. You reduce your target's Armor Rating by 2 or damage their shield so it provides no Defense bonus. Against natural Armor Ratings, this represents a wound that makes the foe more vulnerable, and if the GM decides this stunt doesn't work on them, they should offer you a chance to spend SP on a different stunt. The penalty can be removed with an hour of repair work for worn armor, or an hour of rest for a natural AR. You can use this stunt multiple times to further reduce a target's Armor Rating.
4	<b>SEIZE THE INITIATIVE:</b> Your attack changes the tempo of the battle. You move to the top of the initiative order—your new rating becomes the previous highest initiative roll + 1. This means you may get to take another turn before some of the combatants get to act again. You remain at the top of the order until someone else seizes the initiative or otherwise increases their rating above yours.
5	<b>LETHAL BLOW:</b> You inflict an extra 2d6 damage with your attack.





## BASIC SOCIAL STUNTS

SP Cost	STUNT
1-3	<b>IMPRESS:</b> You gain +1 per SP spent to your next social test involving the same target during the same encounter.
1+	<b>READ THE SITUATION:</b> Unless others are trying to hide their feelings, you can tell what they are. Each SP spent tells you the Attitude of one person in the vicinity unless they are actively trying to hide it from you.
2+	<b>CROWD APPEAL:</b> Your social action also affects one additional person per 2 SP spent, as long as their Willpower is equal to or less than your Communication. This doesn't allow the effects of other stunts to affect more than one person, however.
2	<b>HIDDEN MESSAGE:</b> Your social action conveys a simple, secret message to one other person, which might be your target or a bystander. Others can detect this subterfuge with a Communication (Empathy) test with a TN equal to or greater than your successful roll.
2	<b>TAUNT:</b> You insult or distract one opponent of your choice within 10 yards of you. You must make an opposed test of your Communication (Deception) vs. the target's Willpower (Self-Discipline). If you win, the target suffers a -1 penalty to all opposed tests until the end of the current social encounter, or until they successfully taunt or undermine you. If used in combat, the target suffers a -1 penalty on attack rolls and casting rolls on their next turn.
3	<b>SPOT TELLS:</b> Your interaction gives you a sense of how your target might deceive you. The TN for their next test to lie or otherwise trick you is the standard TN or opposed roll, or the successful social roll, whichever is higher. This benefit lasts until the target fails in an attempt to lie or the encounter ends, whichever comes first.
3	<b>PAY ATTENTION:</b> Your interaction reveals information about your target beyond even what you might have been looking for. If you're pursuing an investigation, you gain an additional lead.
4	<b>SWAY:</b> Your social gesture is especially potent. You shift your target's Attitude an additional step in the direction of your choice.
4	<b>INSPIRE:</b> Your behavior inspires allies who witness it. Each of them gets +1 to tests until your next turn.
5	<b>MANIPULATE:</b> Your outrageous or insidious manner prompts your target to take a rash action. They must use their next major action (or a brief moment of narrative time) to attack, leave your presence, or do something else agreed upon by you and the GM. This action cannot be blatantly suicidal or nonsensical—you can't Manipulate someone into jumping off a cliff, for example.
5	<b>UNDERMINE:</b> Your social gesture gets under your target's skin. They suffer a -2 penalty to all tests except attack rolls while in your presence, for the remainder of the encounter or until the GM decides otherwise.



## BASIC EXPLORATION STUNTS

SP Cost	STUNT
1-3	<b>ASSIST:</b> Your action helps one of your allies. That ally gets +1 to their next test per SP spent.
1-3	<b>WARINESS:</b> You remain alert for the possible consequences of your action. You gain a +1 bonus per SP spent to the next test to avoid any negative results from your actions. For example, if you used this stunt when breaking into a building, it would apply to hiding from guards you may encounter.
2	<b>EFFICIENCY:</b> Your action only takes half as much time or resources (choose one) as normal. In action time, you gain +2 to your initiative rating for the rest of the encounter. You can't stack this bonus across multiple rounds.
2	<b>INSIGHT:</b> When performing an action that logically proceeds from this one (such as in an investigation) you gain a +1 bonus to the test, and if specialized knowledge is required (including having a certain focus in order to attempt the next task at all), you can muddle or bluff your way through, as long as it is not something extremely specific such as a password.
3	<b>COMPENSATE:</b> While performing the task you learn how to work with your surroundings. You ignore environmental penalties to future tests in the same location for the remainder of the encounter, as long as they remain the same as when you performed the action and events do not shift to action or combat.
3	<b>EXTRA INFORMATION:</b> You gain an additional piece of information related to your action. If you are examining a clue, you get an additional lead from it.
4	<b>COVER YOUR TRACKS:</b> You leave no evidence you performed the action—or if possible, that the action was performed at all. Your successful roll becomes the TN of tests to uncover what happened.
4	<b>READY FOR ACTION:</b> If combat or another action scene breaks out in the location where you acted, you gain an extra minor action you can use before anyone else acts, regardless of your initiative. You can also take your usual actions when your turn comes around.
5	<b>SWIFTNESS:</b> You act with supreme quickness—it's done in moments. In action time, you do not use up the action you would have normally devoted to this task. In advanced or challenge tests, you do not use up a time increment and may roll again to contribute toward the Success Threshold.
5	<b>SABOTAGE:</b> Anyone who tries to undo your action or follow in your footsteps will regret it. Anyone trying to undo or duplicate your action must make an appropriate test with a TN equal to your successful roll. If they fail, their actions are hindered in a way determined by you and the GM working together. This can be anything from an embarrassing or inconvenient situation up to the equivalent of a Moderate Hazard (2d6 damage). If you were attempting to set up a hazard or other hindrance in the first place, its intensity is increased by one degree (Moderate to Major, for example) or adds an equivalent problem approved by the GM.

## BASIC SPELL STUNTS

SP Cost	STUNT
1-3	<b>POWERFUL CASTING:</b> Increase the Spellpower of your spell by 1 per stunt point spent, to a maximum of 3.
2	<b>SKILLFUL CASTING:</b> Reduce the magic point cost of the spell by 1. This can reduce the MP cost to 0.
2	<b>MIGHTY SPELL:</b> If the spell does damage, one target of the spell of your choice takes an extra 1d6 damage.
3	<b>LASTING SPELL:</b> If the spell has a duration beyond instantaneous, it remains in effect twice as long with no additional MP cost. <i>Stone Cloak</i> would last two hours instead of one, for example. Spells that last until the end of the encounter are extended by 1d6 minutes instead.
3	<b>MAGIC SHIELD:</b> You use the residual magic of the spell casting to set up a temporary protective shield. You gain a +2 bonus to Defense until the beginning of your next turn.
4	<b>FAST CASTING:</b> After you resolve this spell, you can immediately cast another spell. The second spell must have a casting time of a major action or a minor action. If you roll doubles on this casting roll you do not get any more stunt points.
4	<b>IMPOSING SPELL:</b> The effect of the spell is much more dramatic than usual. Until the beginning of your next turn, anyone attempting to make a melee attack against you must make a successful Willpower (Courage) test. The target number (TN) is 10 + your Willpower ability. Those who fail must take a Move or Defend action instead.
4	<b>SPLIT SPELL:</b> If the spell affects only one target, you can have it affect two, so long as the second target is within the spell's range and no more than 6 yards from the original target. There is no additional MP cost. Targets test against the spell separately.
5	<b>DISRUPT MAGIC:</b> In addition to its normal effects, your spell is so powerful that it may disrupt another magical effect (such as a spell) on the target. Make an Intelligence (Power Arcana) test vs. the Spellpower of any one effect on the target as a free action. Success removes the effect.
5	<b>LETHAL SPELL:</b> If the spell does damage, one target of the spell takes an extra 2d6 damage. Alternately, all targets of the spell take an additional 1d6 damage.



# CLASS STUNTS

Player Characters gain class stunts at each even-numbered level. They must choose a stunt from their own class's list at level 2, 4, 8, 10, 14, 16, and 20. At level 6, 12, and 18, they can choose a stunt from any class's list, not just their own, though they cannot select a stunt that requires a capability the character doesn't possess, such as the ability to cast spells.

Class stunts represent your growing skill, experience, and instincts as an adventurer performing the tasks associated with your class. They're slightly superior to basic stunts in that, roughly speaking, a class stunt is either equivalent to a basic stunt worth 1 stunt point more or provides a benefit or combination of benefits not found in basic stunts. Consequently, one of the options listed with each class stunt list is Favored (Type) Stunt, which allows you to use a basic stunt for 1 SP less.

## ENVOY STUNTS

Envoys are sensitive and adaptable, and as they gain experience develop an almost supernatural sensitivity to intrigue, emotions, and the general situation around them. Envoy stunts concentrate on information gathering, social maneuvering, and helping others.

### FAVORED SOCIAL STUNT

SPECIAL

You can use a basic social stunt for 1 SP less than usual. This applies to a single stunt normally worth 2 SP or more, whether it has a fixed or variable cost. You may select a new Favored Social Stunt multiple times, but you can't select the same stunt multiple times to reduce its cost by more than 1.

### EXAMINE

1–3 SP

#### INVESTIGATIONS

Your intuition and reason work together to guide your investigation. You gain a bonus equal to the SP spent on your next test to unlock a clue or discover related information.

### ENCOURAGE

1 + SP

Your presence spurs others to excellence. You can divide SP spent on this stunt among one or more allies, though no single ally can gain more than 3 SP. If these allies succeed at a basic test before your next turn, they can use these stunt points as if they had earned them, even if they don't roll doubles. SP gained by Encourage stack with SP from other sources, such as doubles.

### RESURGENCE

1–3 SP

Select an ally within sight. That ally temporarily gains 3 bonus Health per SP spent. Any damage the ally suffers between now and the end of your next turn is removed from this bonus Health first. Any bonus Health remaining at the end of your next turn fades.

### AND ANOTHER THING

2 SP

#### EXPLORATION OR SOCIAL

Your insight and social acumen allow you to immediately make a second test related to your successful test. In action time, this

occurs as a free action, but it cannot be an attack roll. In an advanced test, you may make the bonus test during the time increment in which you made the initial test.

### EXEMPLIFY

2 SP

You show your allies how it's done. Pick one ally who witnessed what you just did. When they perform the same general type of task as you just did, such as examining an area or attacking a foe, you may, with their permission, reroll their test for them, using your ability and focus ratings. This is a reaction that represents your counsel or inspiring presence. The results of the second roll are final, and don't generate SP. In action time, your ally must take the action to benefit from this stunt before your next turn.

### EMBOLDEN

3 SP

Your presence enhances a comrade's will to survive. One ally who you can communicate with gains 2 + your Communication temporary Health. This lasts until the end of the encounter. If the ally takes damage during this time, it reduces their temporary Health first. This stunt can only be used once per ally per encounter and can't be used on characters with 0 Health.

### THE GOOD WORD

3 SP

#### SOCIAL

You not only achieve your social aims, but make your compatriots appear more trustworthy, appealing—or if necessary, uncompromising, or even frightening. For the rest of the encounter, your allies gain +1 to all social tests, including opposed tests to resist others' attempts to influence or elicit information from them.

### DOMINATE FOE

4 SP

You compel an enemy to feel intense fear, confusion, or distraction. Select one target who can perceive you and has a Willpower no higher than your Communication. You impose one of the following conditions on them: Confused, Defenseless, or Frightened. You choose which condition affects your target. It lasts until the end of your next turn.

### FOLLOW THE PATTERN

4 SP

#### EXPLORATION OR SOCIAL

You divine the common thread connecting your success to a series of tasks. You gain a +2 bonus to a number of subsequent exploration or social tests (but not those related to combat, chases, or other dynamic physical tasks in action time) equal to your Willpower. The disadvantage is all such tests become simple tests, incapable of generating or using SP themselves. You can choose to forego this benefit for the chance to gain SP, but it still counts as one of your uses of it.

### BOON COMPANION

5 SP

You can focus your intuitive abilities on a single ally per encounter. They gain a +2 bonus to all tests for the remainder of that encounter.

### CREATE OPPORTUNITY

5 SP

Your attack opens up your enemy to an additional strike from an ally. Pick one ally. They gain a single attack against your target as



a free action at a +2 bonus to the attack roll, but they must have a weapon immediately ready to use, and must be within range, since the opportunity is too sudden to allow them to move.

## ROUSE

5 SP

Your actions raise the spirits of a fallen ally. Select one ally at 0 Health who can perceive your words or actions. (This rules out characters with the Unconscious condition.) They gain Health equal to your Communication and lose their Defeat Condition. You may only Rouse an ally once per encounter.

## MAGE STUNTS

Mage stunts manipulate magic, harness secret knowledge, and allow Mages to use the energies that permeate their bodies for helpful or sinister ends. As a Mage learns these stunts, they transition from someone who practices magic, to someone who *is* magic. Note that some Mage stunts are restricted to casting spells or using the Mage's Arcane Blast power.

### FAVORED SPELL STUNT

SPECIAL

#### SPELL

You can use a basic spell stunt for 1 SP less than usual. This applies to a single stunt normally worth 2 SP or more, whether

it has a fixed or variable cost. You may select a new Favored spell stunt multiple times, but you can't select the same stunt multiple times to reduce its cost by more than 1.

## ARCANE ADVANTAGE

1–3 SP

### SPELL OR ARCANE BLAST

The target of your spell or Arcane Blast suffers a –1 penalty to rolls to resist your next spell per SP spent. In action time, this benefit expires at the end of your next turn.

## SAGACITY

1–3 SP

Your actions reflect your mystic discipline and secret knowledge, granting you a +1 bonus per SP spent on your next Intelligence or Willpower-based roll, including casting rolls. In action time, you must use this advantage before the end of your next turn.

## MYSTIC ARMOR

2 SP

You generate an aura of power around you that grants an Armor Rating equal to your Willpower ability, but it does not stack with armor you might be wearing. This lasts until your next turn.

## BATTLE MAGIC

2 SP

### SPELL

You may follow up your spell with an Arcane Blast as an immediate free action, though the blast becomes a simple test that can't generate or use SP.

## COMPLEX ARCANA

3 SP

### SPELL

You use the ambient energy of your spell to craft another one. If the next spell you cast comes from the same arcana, deduct the base magic point cost of your last spell (before stunts or any extra expenditures to mitigate failed rolls, etc.) from your new spell. In action time, this benefit expires at the end of your next turn.

## OMEN

3 SP

Visions or subtle signs provide a mystic insight relevant to your situation. The GM can provide a useful piece of information, unlocks the clue to a lead you're aware of, or provides a new lead. If the GM has no relevant information, your SP do not go to waste, though you must spend them on a different stunt.

## HORRIFIC MAGIC

4 SP

### SPELL

Your magic reveals terrifying visions and insights. Your spell is also Revelatory Horror (see CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES) affecting your target, with a resistance TN equal to your Spellpower.

## MAGE'S AWE

4 SP

Your glorious or ominous power marks you as not to be trifled with. You gain a +2 bonus to social tests for the remainder of the encounter, and when you roll doubles on them, you gain +1 SP.





**MYSTIC INSIGHT****5 SP**

Your action triggers a moment of inspiration, allowing you to cast a spell you don't know. This can either be a Novice-degree spell from an arcana you're untrained in, or another spell up to one degree higher than the highest degree spell you know in an arcana you are trained in. You may cast this spell once during the encounter, after which the moment of inspiration passes. You may, however, now learn the spell without a teacher or other source of information. When casting the spell, you must make a casting roll and pay the cost in magic points as usual.

**PENETRATING MAGIC****5 SP****DAMAGING SPELL OR ARCANE BLAST**

Your spell or Arcane Blast inflicts penetrating damage.

## ROGUE STUNTS

Rogue stunts focus on stealth, trickery, problem-solving, and swashbuckling agility. As Rogues acclimate to the challenges of adventuring, they strike their own balance between combative skill and the subtler abilities demanded from a scout or thief.

**FAVORED EXPLORATION STUNT****SPECIAL**

You can use a basic exploration stunt for 1 SP less than usual. This applies to a single stunt normally worth 2 SP or more, whether it has a fixed or variable cost. You may select a new Favored Exploration Stunt multiple times, but you can't select the same stunt multiple times to reduce its cost by more than 1.

**FINESSE COMBAT STUNT****SPECIAL**

You can use a basic combat stunt for 1 SP less than usual. This applies to a single stunt normally worth 2 SP or more (whether it has a fixed or variable cost) from the following list: Boost, Stay Aware, Disarm, Pierce Armor, Defensive Stance, Lightning Attack. You may select a new Finesse Combat Stunt multiple times, but you can't select the same stunt multiple times to reduce its cost by more than 1.

**MISDIRECT****1 + SP****DEXTERITY-BASED TEST**

Using clever distractions and sleight of hand, you can disappear from plain sight or otherwise perform another immediate additional task that most people would consider impossible to do while under direct observation, such as freeing yourself from manacles without being noticed by the guard looking right at you—or stealing the sword right out of their hand. Such direct witnesses get an opposed roll as if you were performing the act under the proper, unseen conditions. You can nullify the direct observation of one person per SP spent.

**SPRING****1–3 SP**

You position yourself to react with agility. You gain a bonus equal to SP spent on any single Dexterity-based test, as long as it happens immediately after the act that triggered this stunt. In action time, this test must take place before the end

of your next turn. In advanced and challenge tests, it must take place during the next time increment.

**IMPROVED DISARM****2 SP**

Make opposed attack rolls with your enemy. If you win you disarm them, knocking their weapon 1d6 + Strength yards away in a direction you choose, and unlike the standard Disarm, if your roll to Disarm scores doubles, you gain SP as if it was a normal attack roll, which you can spend on additional effects, with the exception of Improved Disarm and any other rare stunt that might generate SP itself.

**SNATCH****2 SP**

You come away from your action having lifted an object of your choice from a person or place within reach, without having used another action. This can be an object you've observed, or it can be "the first thing in the box," or something similar. To snatch something being held by another person requires an opposed test; you and the object's holder choose whether to use Dexterity (Legerdemain) or Strength (Might). The GM may allow you to conceal that you've taken something with a Dexterity (Legerdemain) test opposed by the Perception-based tests of relevant witnesses. If this is taking place in blatant plain sight, you may have to combine this stunt with Misdirect, above. You may also use this stunt to place an item, as well as take one.

**EVADE****2 SP**

You slip past your foes. Until your next turn, you gain +2 to Defense, and each time an attack misses you, you may move 4 yards without using an action.

**FLOURISH****3 SP**

You impress others with your grace—or confuse them with your wily ways. You gain a +1 bonus to tests targeting anyone who saw what you just did. This benefit lasts until you are hit in combat, otherwise injured, take a condition, or fail a test, as these setbacks crack your impressive façade.

**REDIRECT BLOW****3 SP****MELEE**

You guide your opponent off balance, making it hard for them to follow up. Make opposed attack rolls with your opponent. If you win, their next attack (during the next round) against you automatically misses.

**REED IN THE WIND****3 SP**

You step lightly and are well prepared to deal with incoming danger. Add your Dexterity rating to your Armor Rating until your next turn. You cannot use this stunt if you are suffering an Armor Penalty.

**ESCAPE****4 SP**

They who live and run away...well, in any event, you may move half your Speed immediately, without using an action, and gain +2 to all Dexterity and Perception-based tests, and all chase tests, until the end of your next turn.



**PERFORATE****4 SP**

Make an additional attack as a free action. If this attack hits, and your Dexterity is greater than your opponent's, you inflict an additional 1d6 damage on top of the attack's usual damage. This stunt can be used on top of the Pinpoint Attack ability.

**CRUEL STRIKE****5 SP**

Your blow inflicts an awful, demoralizing injury. You leave a visually prominent wound on the target. Your opponent must succeed at a Willpower (Morale) test opposed by your successful attack roll or gain one of the following conditions, chosen by the GM: Confused, Frightened, or Defenseless. That condition remains for the rest of the encounter or until they regain Health, whichever comes first.

**GET AWAY****5 SP**

You set yourself up to exercise the better part of valor. You can immediately move your Speed without using an action.

**STEADY HAND****5 SP**

Your triumph is just the beginning of a cycle of calm, graceful action. You gain a +3 bonus to a number of subsequent Dexterity or Accuracy-based tests equal to your Willpower, or until you fail one of them. The disadvantage is all such tests become simple tests, incapable of generating or using SP themselves. You can choose to forego this benefit for the chance to gain SP, but it still counts as one of your uses of it.

## WARRIOR STUNTS

Whether they concentrate on raw strength, mastery of the martial arts, or bravery and instincts, every Warrior has a common goal: Defeat the enemy. Some Warriors learn stunts in a methodical way, according to the traditions of a fencing academy, military cadre, or Warrior cult. Mercenaries, street toughs, and wandering adventurers usually learn new tricks as needed, or when they're exposed to friends and enemies with novel techniques.

**FAVORED COMBAT STUNT****SPECIAL**

You can use a basic combat stunt for 1 SP less than usual. This applies to a single stunt normally worth 2 SP or more, whether it has a fixed or variable cost. You may select a new Favored Combat Stunt multiple times, but you can't select the same stunt multiple times to reduce its cost by more than 1.

**BLOCK****1–3 SP**

You intercept oncoming attacks with your shield, weapon, or the thickest piece of your armor. You gain a bonus to your AR equal to SP spent + 1 until your next turn.

**COUNTER****1 SP**

You're ready to counter your enemy's tricks. Until your next turn, any foe using a basic combat stunt or Warrior stunt against you must pay 1 SP to affect you before spending other SP on those stunts.

**PROTECT****2 SP**

You position yourself to intercept attacks targeting your allies (an arrow wings you before impacting your ally, you grab at a sword blade to prevent it from striking firmly...). If an attack hits an ally within 4 yards before your next turn, you can choose to take the damage instead, but you get only half your AR against it.

**THREATEN****2 SP**

Choose an enemy who can see or hear you. Make an opposed Strength (Intimidation) test versus their Willpower (Morale). If you win, the enemy cannot use their next major action to attack or otherwise try to harm anyone *except* you (though they can choose not to attack anyone).

**LIMB STRIKE****3 SP**

Your blow injures one of your foe's appendages, and they take a -3 penalty to tests that use it until your next turn. Furthermore, a blow to a humanoid leg or equivalent levies a -5 penalty to Speed, while one inflicted on a shield arm deprives your opponent of its Defense bonus.

**UNBALANCE****3 SP**

Your attack disrupts your opponent's balance and momentum. Choose whether they suffer the Defenseless or Stunned condition; they keep the condition until your next turn.

**FAVORED FOE****4 SP**

You've learned something of the enemy's tactics. You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls targeting that foe (and all foes with identical game statistics) for the rest of the encounter. You only gain the benefits of this stunt once per enemy.

**DUAL STRIKE****4 SP**

Your attack's momentum carries through to strike another foe—or perhaps it's powerful enough to skewer or slam two at once. Choose another enemy within 6 yards of your initial attack. Apply the same weapon and attack roll of the original attack to the new target, rolling for damage if you hit. Furthermore, if you have other SP to spend you can use them on both the original and new target.

**STORM OF STRIKES****5 SP**

You unleash swift blows in every direction where a foe can be found. Apply your attack roll to a number of additional targets equal to your Dexterity. If you are using a missile weapon, you must have sufficient ammunition to attack all targets, but reloading is part of this stunt and doesn't use up actions as usual, unless reloading your weapon requires a major action or multiple minor actions per reload, in which case you can't use this stunt.

**WOUNDING BLOW****5 SP**

Your precise yet devastating blow inflicts the Blinded, Deafened, or Scarred condition (with the specifics for the last arranged with the GM) on your target, lasting until they recover at least half their maximum Health or heal any damage, whichever comes last.





# GAME MASTER'S SECTION





## 7: THE GAME MASTER

What tabletop roleplaying games like *Fantasy AGE* refer to as “the Game Master” – or “GM” for short – is a single role with a number of different responsibilities. The Game Master is simultaneously the person who plans out the adventures for the game, serves as host for the game, runs the actual gameplay, and moderates the game using and interpreting the rules as needed. It’s a big job, but also a rewarding one, as the Game Master has a lot of creative influence on how a *Fantasy AGE* game is planned and run, much like the director of a play or a movie.

This chapter looks at three of the four primary responsibilities of the Game Master’s role—Game Planner, Game Host, and Game Runner—with an eye toward showing you how to take up that role if you’re so inclined. It touches on the Game Moderator role as well, but **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES** provides more detailed tools and tips for that role. The chapters that follow provide additional resources useful to Game Masters.

### GAME PLANNER

Like an event or a trip planner, the Game Master plans out the game, from the setting to the initial plot elements, adversaries, and challenges the characters will face. As you will see, this is a collaborative process between the Game Master and the players, who create and portray the protagonists of the story. The best game planning involves the whole group, getting everyone on-board, in agreement, and excited about the game.

### THE GAME PITCH

Once the group has decided who will be Game Master, planning starts off with a game pitch. This is just like the pitch for a show or a series: a quick summary of what the proposed campaign is about, where it will take place, and (roughly) where it is headed, such as:

- **SAILORS TO STRANGER SHORES:** The characters start out investigating strange happenings on their home island of Kassa before eventually acquiring a ship of their own and setting off for adventures traveling the currents of the Deep to strange and distant shores.
- **THE STARS ARE RIGHT:** In the city of Freeport, the characters are targeted by a mysterious cult. Banding together for their own safety, they investigate the cult while also taking on odd jobs and adventures for patrons in the city. Along the way, they learn they are all part of some prophecy concerning the events that appear to be unfolding.
- **KNIGHTS OF BOOKHAVEN:** The characters all belong to the scholarly Bookhaven Academy, but their particular talents and abilities make them suitable to leave the bookish cloister from time to time to carry out important errands, and to help protect Bookhaven’s wealth of arcane lore (and items) from outside threats.

While the Game Master most often comes up with a pitch for the adventures they are excited to run, players may offer



their own ideas or chime in on ways to modify a game pitch so everyone at the table is excited about the possibilities. In particular, players may want to suggest ways to customize the pitch to fit the sorts of characters they would like to play in that game.

In some cases, a game pitch doesn't find any traction. If the whole group can't agree that they want to play a particular game and they can't come up with modifications that get everyone interested, then it is best to move on to a different idea. There is no end to the possible games you can run with *Fantasy AGE*, and you can always return to an old game pitch later, either with the same group or with a different group of players.

## GAME STYLE

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A key part of the game pitch is the style of campaign it's going to be. Is it a dark fantasy game where unicorns and rainbows don't exist, and the best option is rarely the most moral one? Is it a swashbuckling adventure where as long as they face danger with a laugh and a quip the heroes are likely to pull through? The style of a campaign helps determine the tone of its adventures, the kinds of characters likely to work, and what the players' expectations are.

There are scores of different potential game styles, and *Fantasy AGE* can handle most of them easily. A few common and popular styles are briefly detailed below, but don't feel limited to these. You can model a game on a favorite show or novel series, see what your players are most interested in, or strike out and create a new style unique to your game.

### DARK FANTASY

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A dark fantasy setting avoids clear-cut answers, and the shades of gray it delves into are often very dark indeed. This is a setting where the strong often oppress and exploit the weak, many groups are feared and mistrusted, and even the heroes often have dark secrets. The biggest threats may be disasters brought on by hubris, and not the master plan of some mad overlord. Evil comes from the hearts of people, and it can be checked but not defeated forever.

### HIGH FANTASY

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In high fantasy, magic is plentiful and often used for the greater good. Elves ride unicorns, knights take to the air on winged mounts to castles in the clouds, and wise rulers with good hearts do what's best for their people all the time. Threats are often external forces from outside of a good and peaceful society that wish to destroy or corrupt everything decent and pure, often for no other reason than that.

### HORROR

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A horror game is designed to frighten both players and their characters. Threats are often unspeakable monsters from beyond mortal experience and may well be beyond the ability of any player character to truly overcome. Action often revolves around discovering just what the threat is and how to prevent it from coming about, or how to overcome it

once it has. Horror games may include gruesome details and disturbing descriptions of bloody events, or they may try to heighten fear by keeping details off-stage to allow the players' imaginations to fill in any details. Proper use of veils and lines (see **Managing Expectations**, following) is *very* important in a horror game. See **Horror** in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES** for much more on this, along with mechanics to support it.

### LOW FANTASY

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In low fantasy magic is rare (although still quite real), threats tend to be personal, and life is often nasty, brutish, and short. There isn't the broad range of magical creatures found in many fantasy worlds, with just a few well-known exceptions. Even these may be handled a bit more realistically in terms of their biology and ecological niches. In some low fantasy the stakes are also kept low, focusing on a single town or the tribulations of one mercenary company, though it can also include anything that happened in real-world history which includes crusades, plagues, and continent-sweeping religious schisms.

### SWASHBUCKLING

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Swashbuckling games focus on daring deeds and dashing protagonists, often favoring bold action over realistic consequences. They are often inspired by the style of pirate films and *Three Musketeers* stories, though that isn't necessary. The protagonists are generally scoundrels with hearts of gold, the villains prone to mustache-twirling monologues, and the plots as likely to center on saving the honor of a noble ally or defending a beloved tavern as fighting monsters. The important thing is to act fast, try wild stunts, and keep your wits (and your tongue) as sharp as your blade.

## MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

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An important part of the game pitch and getting group agreement on it is managing everyone's expectations of the game. Certainly, in a *Fantasy AGE* game, players can expect a mix of encounters and challenges and opportunities to fight, solve puzzles, explore, and interact with a wide range of characters, but different games offer these things in different measures and to different degrees. It's good to establish up-front the sorts of things everyone expects and wants from the game in order to ensure it is fun for all and no one ends up disappointed.

If expectations about the game are not clear, different assumptions about it may clash. If a GM describes a campaign as "swords-and-sorcery" in style, players may envision a game in which powerful spellcasters are common, and most towns have a Mage to cast spells for them. If you were actually thinking in terms of classic pulp fantasy stories, you may have decided spellcasters are quite rare, and that most of them are evil. Players who have designed their characters around the idea that Mages are common may be surprised and irritated when they find their concepts don't fit your expectations of the game.

There's no perfect way to manage expectations. Provide examples whenever possible and check-in to see if your



players understand. You can do things like rephrase things for the players, such as “In other words, what I’m saying is...” or ask them to explain back to you their understanding of what you have told them. Be patient with players as they work to grasp exactly what you’re explaining. Also, be open to adjusting your own expectations about the game to help match what the players want and expect out of it. For example, if Mages don’t *have* to be rare (or particularly evil) in your swords-and-sorcery campaign, perhaps you can adjust things to fit what the players would like to see.

## VEILS AND LINES

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Veils and lines refer to boundaries agreed upon in advance by the group as part of the game. They contribute to making the game table a safe and welcoming space for everyone to enjoy themselves (see **A Safe and Welcoming Game** under **Game Host** for more on this).

A “veil” is some topic or thing the game should only refer to in veiled terms, obliquely or “off-camera.” So, for example, if a player would prefer for spiders to be veiled in the game, then the characters might encounter evidence of spiders—rooms filled with webs, for example, or the remains of a monstrous spider’s victims—but no actual spiders will appear in encounters, nor should any plots or important elements focus on them.

A “line” is an absolute ban on some topic or thing that should not appear in the game at all. If a player wants to draw a line in front of spiders, for example, then there shouldn’t even be references to webs or tiny, harmless spiders, no statues of spider-creatures, no spider-gods, and so forth. The topic should just not come up.

While the spider example is a bit frivolous (but valid for someone uncomfortable with spiders), lines and veils can be used for a wide range of things, from certain forms of violence, prejudice, social ills, sexually explicit descriptions, and so forth. In managing the expectations for the game, encourage the players to be completely honest about their lines and veils, and allow them to convey them to you privately, if they prefer. Make all of these boundaries clear to the whole group and make sure to enforce them at your game table. A simple, “That’s a line, so we’re not going to cross it,” should be sufficient.

Players do not need to justify or explain their lines or veils, to you or to the rest of the group. It should be sufficient that they have made their expectations clear, and everyone should respect them. The Game Master should also have a say in terms of their own lines and veils for the game. If you are uncomfortable roleplaying romantic encounters between player characters and NPCs, for example, you can declare such things veiled; there is a reference to “some romancing” going on and then the scene switches, allowing the romance to take place “off-camera” and in the players’ imaginations.

## SESSION ZERO

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After settling on a game concept and getting agreement within the group on everyone’s expectations of the game, including veils and lines, it is a good idea to schedule what is commonly known as a “session zero.” This is a planning and prepara-

tion session where the players and the GM work together to create the player characters, ensure they fit together as a group, and find ways to incorporate them into the opening of the campaign.

Some will incorporate managing expectations and veils and lines discussions (previously) into a session zero. If you do so, you should address them *first* before going on to the other steps detailed here. The group’s expectations and boundaries have a strong influence on character creation decisions.

## CHARACTER CREATION

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The bulk of session zero focuses on creating the player characters, who are the protagonists of the game’s story and the players’ roles within that story. As such, time and care should be devoted to coming up with the characters and describing who they are. Follow the steps and guidelines provided in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION** when it comes to creating the characters. As Game Master, you should pay particular attention to the following areas when the players are creating their characters.

### FITTING EXPECTATIONS

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Help ensure the characters fit the previously agreed-upon expectations. If there is a clash of expectations in the process, work with the group to make sure everything is clear and to come up with a suitable solution. For example, if the group has agreed upon a dark fantasy game where the characters are all reluctant heroes, and one player’s proposed character is an earnest champion of the Goddess of Light, you may want to work with that player to ensure their character fits the game’s expectations. Is their heroic champion not all that they seem? Is there a dark twist to their apparently innocent heroism?

Similarly, ensure the player characters fit the agreed-upon veils and lines in the game. If someone has drawn a veil over spiders, for example, then a spider-themed Mage who summons spider monsters would be an inappropriate character concept, and the player should be asked to come up with something else. If necessary, revisit the veils and lines discussion to ensure they are clear to everyone.

### GROUP ROLES

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Roleplaying games like *Fantasy AGE* tend to rely on a fairly diverse group of characters with different abilities. No one class (or specialty) in the game “does it all,” and characters are encouraged to have a particular theme or focus. The Game Master’s job is to ensure each character fits into an overall group and that the group fits with the game’s chosen concept.

That’s not to say you have to have an exactly balanced number of Envoys, Mages, Rogues, and Warriors in the group, but be aware of any deficiencies and the challenges they will cause for the characters, or any overabundance of abilities. You can certainly have a *Fantasy AGE* campaign where the characters are all Warriors, for example, or all Rogues, but that will be a different kind of game than a more diverse





group that includes other classes. If you see a trend where all or most of the players want to play the same class, you might want to consider reworking the game pitch to accommodate it, such as a high fantasy game focused on members of the Thieves Guild in a major city, allowing most of the player characters to be Rogues, for example.

### GOALS, TIES, AND HOOKS

At the end of the character creation process, where the players are coming up with Goals, Ties, and Hooks for their characters, work closely with the players to create ones that work in concert with the game concept. You might even want to come up with some lists of suitable options for those traits in advance of session zero, making the lists available to the players to choose from or to help inspire them.

Remind players to choose both long- and short-term Goals, and that Ties do not necessarily have to be just with other player characters. Let the players supply you with Hooks that interest them, but offer suggestions on how to modify them, if need be, to fit into the game as a whole. For example, if one player has a long-term Goal for their character to own or manage a business of some sort, but the game concept calls for the characters to be highly mobile and on the road, you might suggest aiming the character's ambitions toward being a caravan merchant or traveling tinkerer, something that fits what the group will likely be doing.

## ADVENTURE PLANNING

An adventure is a single story in an ongoing campaign. Think of an adventure as a single chapter in a novel, or even a single novel in a grand series (for especially long adventures). Sometimes adventures stand alone, with a clear beginning, middle, and end all in the same game session. Other times adventures span several game sessions before the entire story is wrapped up.

Creating a *Fantasy AGE* adventure is a fairly simple process. First, define the challenge around which the adventure revolves. Then outline the overall plot and describe the encounters the heroes are likely to have during the adventure. Finally, sketch out how the adventure is likely to end.

### HANGING THREADS

If you are not planning your first adventure in a *Fantasy AGE* campaign, you may want to start by going over your notes from the game's previous adventures, looking for any dangling plot threads or unresolved elements to carry forward into your next game. You can also look at the trends in your previous adventures with an eye toward what comes next. Have you just finished up a long, continued series of adventures? Perhaps a brief change of pace is in order. Have the characters encountered a lot of a particular type of challenge? Maybe it's time for something new. Has a particular player been waiting for one of their character's Goals to take



the spotlight? This kind of reflection can help when you plan out what comes next for the campaign.

## DEFINING THE CHALLENGE

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*Fantasy AGE* adventures typically focus on a particular challenge. It might be anything from an incursion of raiders into a border region, to a sensitive diplomatic mission to a nearby kingdom, or a quest for a mysterious artifact with the power to save (or destroy) the world. When the challenge presents itself, the heroes must figure out how to overcome it.

The threat in a *Fantasy AGE* adventure is often a villain with a scheme the heroes must thwart. It can also be a non-player character with an agenda the characters can aid, such as protecting a border region, clearing a notorious group of bandits from the forest, or arranging an alliance. Fantasy novels, comics, movies, and television shows offer plenty of inspiration for adventures, as do published *Fantasy AGE* adventures. You'll find many suitable villains in **CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES**.

## OUTLINING THE PLOT

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Once you have an idea for a challenge in mind, give some thought as to how it manifests. Outline a series of events surrounding that challenge. This gives you the overall plot of your adventure, a sort of roadmap you can follow while you're running the game to know what is likely to happen next.

For example, you decide the challenge in your adventure focuses on a group of bandits attacking travelers along a major trade route. Not only are they a threat to commerce, but they have also inflamed political tensions as the neighboring communities have accused each other of backing the bandits. If left unchecked their depredations will lead to a bloody skirmish, perhaps even a small war in the region, costing many lives.

Now, that's what would happen if the heroes weren't around. Odds are the players aren't going to just allow the bandits to get away with their crimes. They might have a friend who was the victim of a raid, or a small nearby village could ask them to deal with the problem. Their liege-lord might order them to investigate, perhaps even all of the above! The heroes can begin investigating, trying to learn about the bandits, who they are and what they'll do next. The characters might set a trap to lure the bandits out into the open, or try and follow them back to their hideout, or capture one for interrogation. Exactly how things go depends on what the players choose to do.

Try to focus your plot on the actions of the characters you control as Game Master, letting the player characters react to things as they happen. It's hard to base the plot on what the heroes will do because you don't decide what that is. By focusing on the challenge, you give the heroes the freedom to do what they want in response, and you can then modify the opposition's plans accordingly.

## SUBPLOTS

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As you gain experience as a GM, you may want to weave various subplots into your campaign. They can be related or unrelated to the adventure and serve to mix things up and

keep players guessing. Subplots are a great way to use the Goals and Ties of the PCs and you should keep your eye out for opportunities to do so. Let's say a Goal of one of the PCs is to find her missing brother. When investigating the bandit menace, she discovers her brother is one of these outlaws! Worse yet, he has embraced the bandit life and does not want to give it up. Now the group as a whole must deal with the bandits, but that player must try to figure out what to do about her character's sibling. This makes the story more complicated and has the potential for great drama.

Sometimes, subplots may be unconnected to the main plot of the adventure but will provide some contrast in theme or feel. For example, along with their mission to deal with the bandits, one of the characters is trying to come up with the perfect way to ask their paramour to attend a local festival and looking for a gift to give them. This is cause for discussion among the group, but the character wants it kept quiet, so not everyone knows. What do the other characters think is going on? Will the character perhaps find the perfect gift amongst the bandits' ill-gotten gains?

## ENCOUNTERS

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Your plot outline gives you a number of potential encounters the heroes may have during the adventure. An encounter is a single challenge, interaction, or activity, such as a fight, the investigation of an area, a chase through the city, and so forth. Using your outline, you can get a good idea of the possible encounters during your adventure. In the previous example, the heroes may have encounters with the bandits on the road, at a settlement, or at their hideout. They may investigate the sites of previous bandit raids, or they might interact with survivors who have useful information.

Outline the possible encounters and take note of the important details in each. For example, when and where will the bandits' next raid take place, and can the heroes figure it out in time to be there and stop it, or will they only learn of it after the fact? Who is the target of the raid and how do they react to the characters? Where can the survivors be found and what do they think of outsiders investigating? Can word find its way back to the bandits somehow? And so forth.

Then decide if the encounter is primarily about combat, exploration, or roleplaying, and note this accordingly. Try and set up a good mix of the three types of encounters, since they provide a variety of challenges and styles of play to keep the players involved in the game. Also, give some thought to the pacing of your encounters. Try to ensure the heroes get some opportunities for breaks here and there, where they can take a breather, rest, and recover, and treat their lost Health and injuries, if need be.

## THE FINALE

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Then there's the big finish to the adventure, the grand finale. This is when the heroes finally confront the main challenge of the adventure and have a real chance to deal with it. It may be a final showdown with the main villain, averting disaster, accusing a murderer in the throne room, or confronting an



army in a climactic battle. Whatever the case, this is when events in the adventure come to a head and it's time for the heroes to step up and save the day.

The finale is the big payoff, what the players have been working toward, so try to make it as exciting and fun as possible. That means the finale should be challenging. On the other hand, the finale shouldn't be so tough the heroes can't possibly win, or the adventure just ends in frustration. Give the characters a solid challenge, but you can tip the odds slightly in their favor by setting them up with a special resource or "ace in the hole" during an earlier encounter.

For example, perhaps the party is dealing with a demon about to be unleashed from a nearby ruin. They have dealt with most of the creature's cult of minions and are ready to finish off the evil wizard who is trying to free the monster. Along the way, they have learned the demon has a weakness: a particular spot where its otherwise near-impenetrable armor does not protect it. In other words, the creature is vulnerable to the Pierce Armor stunt, which in this instance ignores *all* of its armor, rather than halving it! If the heroes exploit this information, it makes the fight against the creature that much easier. Note, however, they should still have a chance even without this knowledge, since you cannot count on them learning it. The players might miss a vital clue along the way, despite your best efforts, and you don't want your adventure spoiled because of it.

## THE WRAP-UP

The wrap-up or epilogue is where you finish up anything after the finale of the adventure. It's where the heroes find out any remaining information, resolve the adventure's mysteries, claim their rewards, and so forth. There may still be some dangling plot threads left over—which you can spin out into later adventures—but generally things should be tied up and resolved by the end, just like the ending of any satisfying story.

You can play out the wrap-up, allowing the players to describe what their heroes do, or just sum things up for them in narration. For example, "After you slay the bandit chieftain you're able to loot their lair, claiming what property cannot be restored to its owner. The village welcomes you back with a feast in your honor and your guild master is well pleased with your work in keeping the peace."

If you plan to run more adventures with the same characters it's a good idea to make notes right after the session as to how events played out, and what plot threads you could pick up for further adventures. See the **Information Management** section of this chapter for more on this topic.

## CAMPAIGN PLANNING

Beyond individual adventures comes the process of planning out a campaign. This is a whole series of adventures that can span characters' entire "careers" as they advance in level. A campaign can run for just a few adventures, a sort of "mini-series," or it can go on for many, many adventures, carrying a group of adventurers from 1st level all the way to 20th, or even beyond!

## THE CAMPAIGN ARC

Once you have an idea of what interests you and your players, consider the broad "arc" of the campaign—that is, the overarching story defining it. Is the campaign about a struggle against the rising darkness in the small valley the PCs call home? Is it a story of heroes seeking an ancient artifact able to bind an arch-demon? Is it a story of political ambition and king-making—the battle for power and dominion?

Try and summarize the overall story in a paragraph or two, like: "The heroes are drawn into the political ambitions of a rising war-chieftain, become his trusted lieutenants, then must choose whether to support his plans to unite the nearby lands under his banner to resist the rising darkness or oppose his ambitions and support another candidate, perhaps even one of their own."

Often, the campaign arc is a part of the overall game pitch (see **The Game Pitch**, previously) or at least implied by it. The game pitch tends to be more about what the characters do in the game, whereas the campaign arc is what the game's story is about. So, the "Sailors to Stranger Shores" game pitch, for example, makes it clear the heroes will be sailing and visiting unusual places, but it doesn't really look at the overall story. Different campaign arcs could fit into that same pitch, from following a purloined mystical map to hidden treasures in order to reassemble an ancient artifact to rallying disparate ports to unite against a threatening naval power.

## CAMPAIGN OUTLINE

Once you have defined the arc of the campaign, start breaking it down into individual adventures, roughly game-session long chunks you can plan out.

In the beginning of a campaign, your adventures should have more detail and offer more hooks to get characters involved. Early on, the player characters are still developing their personalities and histories. They're not great heroes, and the players may need opportunities to "get their feet wet" and try out different things, getting a feel for the game and how it is played and a sense of who their characters are. It's a good idea to provide variety and try out different encounters to see what works best and provides the most fun. You may even decide to modify later parts of the campaign based on it.

Once you have outlined at least the first part of the campaign, you can start looking at planning out the first adventure in detail (see **Creating Adventures**, previously). Many GMs like to use published adventures, and these can save you a lot of time and prep work. Even when using published adventures, though, it's worth taking some time to customize them for your campaign and your group. By changing or adding even a few details, you can make these adventures better fit your planned campaign and the specific PCs in your group.

## CAMPAIGN FINALE

While a *Fantasy AGE* campaign can go on for many game sessions, all good stories eventually come to an end. It is a good idea to have at least a general ending in mind for the



arc of the campaign's story, so you can begin moving events toward it as it becomes clear the characters are reaching the end of their game careers, or the players are getting restive and want to wrap things up, and do not just want the game to go "on hiatus" for a while.

Do not become too attached to a particular ending for your campaign, as you might find things change quite a bit over the course of the game. One of the great things about role-playing games is they are a co-creative process; rather than just playing out a pre-determined story, you and your players are creating a story about their characters you'll be able to tell when it is all over and done. Sometimes that story goes off in unexpected directions, so you have to remain flexible and open to the possibility of different outcomes and endings.

Note also that the ending of a campaign does not necessarily mean the end for a group of characters. It is always possible to start a new *Fantasy AGE* campaign with existing characters, a further story of their adventures, with a fresh new focus and an all-new campaign arc.

## GAME HOST

The Game Master serves as "host" for the game, much like the host or master of ceremonies for a show, or the host of a party or get-together, tabletop game sessions having elements of both. This means the Game Master is responsible for arranging the game (its time and location), managing the environment, and setting the tone for the game both as an event and a social get-together. As with planning the game, this is a cooperative effort on the part of the entire group, with the Game Master willing to take the lead in ensuring it all gets done.

## GAME SCHEDULING

Generally speaking, a solid game session of a tabletop role-playing game like *Fantasy AGE* is somewhere between three and five hours, averaging around four. This is enough time for a recap of the previous game's events, playing through a few encounters at a rate of roughly one encounter per hour, and a wrap-up of the game session, including any necessary book-keeping and planning for the next game.

Given the length of the game session it will typically take up a full morning, afternoon, or evening, so the group should plan and agree upon a suitable time in advance. It can be useful to have a consistent day and time, such as a weekend afternoon or a weekday evening, and the group should also decide how often to schedule the game. Generally, once a month is the minimum to maintain the game's momentum, while once per week is the maximum to allow the Game Master some preparation and down-time between game sessions. The group should find a frequency that suits everyone's schedule, adjusting as needed. It may be possible to have more frequent game sessions if the group is not playing the *same* game every session. For example, two Game Masters might alternate two different campaigns, allowing for weekly games where each GM is only responsible for running a game every two weeks.

## PLAYER ABSENCES

If a player can't make a scheduled game session (and the group can't reschedule for a time that suits everyone) the Game Master controls that character as a non-player character for the session. In some cases, the GM will simply run the absent player's character like any other NPC. In others, the GM may prefer to come up with some plot device to incapacitate the character or otherwise remove them from the session. Maybe the character suffers an illness or is poisoned, and the other player characters have to look for aid or a cure, or the character suffers a minor injury and must be left behind in the care of NPCs. The missing player's character might be abducted or enchanted by a foe, or sent on another errand or mission, taking them away from the group for a time. If possible, discuss any such options with the absent player in advance.

In general, anything is fair game so long as the character suffers no permanent harm, and the GM respects the player's ability to decide their character's actions, while observing all the restrictions of the game's veils and lines. In short, the Game Master should never kill or permanently harm a character whose player is absent or cause that character to do something outside their established personality. When in doubt, it is often better to find some way to remove the character from play for the session.

If the GM and players are comfortable with such a break in continuity, the missing character can also simply not be present with no explanation given. The character takes no actions, runs no risks, and is simply ignored for the game session. This is an acknowledgment that the game is just that, a game, and that it may be easiest for the fun of everyone to just not try to find an in-world explanation of an out-of-game problem of a missing player. When the player returns in a future session, their character similarly returns, with no explanation. Not everyone is comfortable with this method, but for groups that are it can offer a low-effort way to just move forward with the fun of playing the game even when real-world scheduling causes problems.

## A SAFE AND WELCOMING GAME

Gaming is for everyone, and all Game Masters should endeavor to make their game table a safe and welcoming one where players of all kinds, from all backgrounds, can come and enjoy themselves.

### ESTABLISH A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AT THE TABLE

First and foremost, in creating a safe and welcoming game you need to create a safe environment at the game table as the game host. Things like **Veils and Lines** and a **Session Zero** can go a long way toward establishing this environment, but it also involves being willing to call out inappropriate behavior on the part of players just as you would guests at an event. Examples include discouraging "trash talk," especially that disparages people, and inappropriately lewd or aggres-





sive behavior. Make it clear that “we don’t say or do those things” at your game table. If a player is unable to moderate their behavior after a warning, be willing to ask them to leave the game and the group, either temporarily until they are able to follow the group’s rules, or permanently if it is clear they cannot or will not.

In addition to limiting inappropriate talk and behavior at the game table, look for opportunities to address unbalanced social dynamics. In particular, some players may be more socially aggressive or outgoing, to the point where they talk over other players or interrupt them. You may need to establish table rules (following) for who speaks when, if asking players to be respectful and allow each other to speak in turn isn’t sufficient.

## PLAYER DIVERSITY

Encourage a diversity of players at your table. Ideally, you have a diverse circle of friends who may be interested in playing in your game. Be sure to invite people you think might be interested, even if they haven’t played before, especially if they don’t necessarily fit your default view of a “gamer.” They may surprise you, and themselves!

If you are setting up a game in a public space make it clear that “everyone is welcome” and that “players of every gender, orientation, ethnicity, and background are encouraged to apply.” If your game has specific accommodations for people with disabilities, cite them in your description.

Ideally, also offer a private means to contact you to inquire about the game and ask any questions, should a potential player have concerns.

If you are presenting a short-term public game like a demo or running a game at a convention or game-day event, make sure your pre-generated characters offer a diversity of genders, appearances, and backgrounds, along with some flexibility for players to change those things to suit their preferences.

## MAKE YOUR GAME ACCESSIBLE

As much as you can, make your game table accessible to players. In particular, this may mean looking to invite players to join your game who might not otherwise be able to do so. Find a play space that is handicap accessible (see **The Play Environment**) and look for means to accommodate players with disabilities, such as closed captioning for an online game.

Beyond the actual game table, also make your game’s setting and story accessible to a wide variety of characters, so players can see themselves in the story. Ensure a diverse range of people as potential player characters, and consider each NPC you create: Is there some way you can challenge expectations to make them more diverse and therefore more interesting? What are the roles of people of different ethnicities and appearances in your setting? What about different genders and orientations? What about disabled or non-neurotypical people? Find ways to say, “You have a place in



this world,” to everyone who might potentially sit at your game table.

## MANAGE PLAYER EXPECTATIONS & NEEDS IN PLANNING

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Again, things like **Veils and Lines** and a **Session Zero** are useful in getting to understand what your players need and expect from your game. Be sensitive to your players’ needs and learn what they want and don’t want from the game. If a player asks to play a specific type of character you hadn’t previously considered, make sure to consider it rather than rejecting the idea out of hand. Beware of treating your own preconceptions as “realistic” and other people’s wants as “fantasy” — after all, you’re running a fantasy game! Anything is possible. Rather than shutting down players, find ways to work with and accommodate them. If you truly feel a particular concept is unworkable, negotiate with the player to find something that does work.

Remember that you and the players are collaboratively creating the story of your game so treat your players as creative partners. If they make it clear they are excited about an aspect of the game, help bring that out. If they don’t like something about the game, try to eliminate or deemphasize it as much as possible.

## MAKE USE OF SAFETY TOOLS IN PLAY

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Make it clear to your players that their safety, comfort, and enjoyment are the only things that matter at your game table. Empower the players to alert you — and the rest of the group, if possible — when they are feeling unsafe, uncomfortable, or are not enjoying themselves so you can adjust as needed. This can be as simple as a “safe signal” of some type, such as a card or token that is green (for “go”) on one side and red (for “stop”) on the other. If a player flips their token over to red, the game stops and addresses the player’s concern. Similar safe signals can include a “time-out” gesture or phrase, or a sign or token the player raises to indicate a pause to address a concern.

As Game Master, you may also want to provide players with a means for giving you discreet feedback or expressing any concerns they may have. If your table rules allow for it (see **Table Rules**, following) let players text or message you to indicate they need a pause or a side conversation. Check in with players regularly outside of game sessions to make sure there are no unaddressed concerns.

## THE PLAY ENVIRONMENT

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The success or failure of a game session can hinge on factors completely outside the scope of the game itself. When a good mood is established and players are enjoying themselves, things go more smoothly. Bad rules calls get ignored, poor rolls are laughed off, and conflicts between characters are viewed as heroic drama. When a bad mood is in place, the slightest setback can lead to complaints and annoyance. Similarly, a group of players may begin a game happy and

excited but grow bored and disinterested before the game is over. Where a game happens affects its mood, and often its longevity. Roleplaying games are a leisure activity, and players are more likely to stick with a game if doing so doesn’t feel like a chore.

These are problems of environment, mood, and pacing, and are some of the trickiest elements to manage during a game session. A few tools can be used to encourage players to be relaxed and happy or to jog a group out of a bad mood, but for the most part the best you can do is create a good play environment and hope the players take advantage of it.

## IN-PERSON

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A good in-person gaming space should be large enough to accommodate all players comfortably, with enough table space for books and die rolling, a place for maps and miniatures if the group uses them, and space for you to hide things you don’t want players to see. It should also be conveniently located for everyone to get to and preferably have room for food and drink to be kept separate from gamebooks and character sheets.

While many groups don’t have access to a perfect play space, some things can be done to enhance what is available. First, don’t assume you have to play at someone’s home or in a game shop (the two most common options). Libraries, community centers, apartment clubhouses, and other public facilities often have rooms available either free or for a reasonable fee. The main limitation with such spaces is hours of operation, but a game played on a Saturday afternoon may be perfect for a public room. The things to look out for are accessibility, privacy, and noise restrictions. Games don’t go as well if a group is constantly interrupted by passers-by, and an area with bad sound baffling can result in a rowdy group of players being asked to leave.

If you do play at someone’s home, consider periodically changing who hosts the game. A group of players can make a mess, and it’s a bit much to ask one host to deal with that all the time. Even if the group does its best to clean up before it leaves (always a good idea), chairs get moved, stacks of paperwork stowed away, trash bins filled, and dishes used. A group that shares this burden is less likely to have stress or conflict over it. Likewise, share responsibility for refreshments and snacks for the game, with everyone chipping in or bringing something.

## ONLINE

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More and more gamers are playing tabletop games like RPGs online, using audio-video chat and conference software, and sometimes “virtual tabletop” applications as well. Online game-play addresses many of the challenges involved in finding a space to meet in person, and it allows game groups to recruit and include members who don’t necessarily live close together, but the online venue comes with its own challenges.

First, everyone in the game has to have access to a high-speed internet connection and the necessary hardware and



software, which is by no means a foregone conclusion. Some players may need to learn how to use the necessary applications, which poses a greater learning curve than simply showing up and rolling some dice! The Game Master is also usually responsible for deciding how the group will communicate, what applications it will use, and managing virtual tabletops and the like. This involves an additional investment of time and often money.

Online play can also feel more socially restricted than getting together in person. There may be less social chit-chat and general hangout time, so the Game Master may want to specifically set aside some time before or after the game session for members of the group to talk and catch up. There may be a need to establish separate (virtual) table rules concerning muting microphones, when to talk versus using text chat, and so forth to ensure the game runs as smoothly as possible.

## TABLE RULES

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While games like *Fantasy AGE* have rules, there are also the “table rules,” guidelines a game group agrees to when they sit down at the table together to help everyone get along and to help the game to run smoothly. As Game Master, you may want to establish a set of table rules for your games. Exactly what your table rules consist of depends entirely on your group, but some things to consider include the following:

- **COURTESY:** First and foremost, common courtesy and respect are expected of all at the game table. While this might seem to go without saying, it can be the most important guideline to establish.
- **DISTRACTIONS:** Some Game Masters prefer to limit potential distractions at the game table, notably mobile devices. This can range from (at least) silencing non-vital calls and notifications to asking that devices be turned off or set aside during the game. The same may go for other distractions, such as having music or media on in the background unrelated to the game.
- **ETIQUETTE:** This is a catch-all for things expected of players during a game. For example, the GM might ask players to prepare their character’s actions so when their turn in the initiative order comes up, they know what they plan to do. Likewise, the GM might have table rules asking players to declare, “I’m done,” or the like when their turn is complete, so the next player knows they can go.
- **GAME PLAY:** The GM can set certain table rules where the game rules don’t specifically cover something, such as declaring that a die that falls off the table doesn’t count and should be rerolled (while the remaining dice are left in place).

Like all group guidelines, table rules should be discussed and agreed upon by the whole group, and you should walk players through them during **Session Zero** (under **Game Planner**). The fewer table rules you have to institute, the better, but don’t shy away from using them as needed.

## GAME RUNNER

Once the game is prepared and the stage is set, the Game Master takes the responsibility of running the game. A good tabletop roleplaying game is a back-and-forth between Game Master and players, where the GM sets up the initial situation or encounter, describes things to the players and then the players decide what their characters do and how they respond. Based on that, the GM tells the players what happens next, and back and forth it goes, with the game group collaboratively describing the story of the game, guided by the rules and a roll of the dice whenever the outcome is uncertain.

A “game session” is one meeting of the game group getting together to play. Generally, a game session lasts between three and five hours, depending on the activities and the flow of the game. You’ll want to find the ideal length of time for your group’s own game sessions and adjust accordingly.

## STARTING THE SESSION

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Allow some time for everyone to arrive, greet everyone else, and settle in. The group might want to socialize a bit while things are set up at the game table (or on a virtual tabletop). You may need to decide how long to wait for late-arriving players before getting started, generally 15 minutes or so is reasonable. You might also need to discuss or account for players who are unable to attend at the last minute (see **Player Absences**, previously).

Once you feel things have settled, ask the players if they are ready to begin. Deal with any questions or needs to get an affirmative, and then get started with the game with a signal that can be as simple as, “All right, let’s begin.” If the game is part of an ongoing campaign, you may want to start off with a quick recap of the previous adventure to set the stage before launching into the session’s first encounter.

## BREAKS AND INTERRUPTIONS

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It’s a good idea to build-in short 10–15 minute breaks in your game session every hour or two to allow players to get up, stretch, and attend to their needs. Encourage players who need to step away from the game for whatever reason outside of a break to do so quietly and with as little disruption as possible, although that may also be your signal that it’s time for everyone to take a short break.

Likewise, you can also benefit from the occasional break in the game, not only to attend to your own needs, but occasionally to pause and gather your thoughts. Running an RPG takes a fair amount of mental effort and juggling a lot of things, and a pause can be helpful, just like taking a rest during exercise. If you run into an unexpected situation or players introduce a twist into the game that throws you for a loop, don’t panic. Take a short break and use the time to collect yourself and consider what comes next.

Breaks should be long enough to be refreshing, but not so long that the game loses momentum and stalls. If it is clear during or after a break that the group is losing the thread of



the adventure or is just too tired or unfocused to continue, it may be best to call an end to the game session there and look to pick things up again next time when everyone is fresher and more focused.

If your game sessions have consistent problems with low energy and focus, discuss the matter with your players. They may be unsatisfied with the game or their characters' roles and reluctant to talk about it. Some specific themes or elements of the game may bother one or more players, in which case discuss making changes. Other events in their lives may be preventing them from enjoying the game to its fullest, and they might need to postpone gaming for a while to deal with them.

## SIDE CONVERSATIONS

Gaming is a social activity, and many players like to talk, make jokes, insert commentary, and the like during the game. It's unreasonable to expect players to stay "in character" at all times and to treat the game like a theatrical performance. At the same time, you want to ensure that cross-talk and side conversations are not disruptive or disrespectful of the other players, affecting everyone's enjoyment of the game.

Generally, so long as in-game chatter and side conversations are not distracting or disruptive, they're fine. Sometimes the terrible jokes and puns at the game table are some of the most memorable parts of a game session! If players become so involved in a side conversation that they are no longer paying attention to the game, however, or if they are talking over another player's turn or the like, you may need to step in and politely, but firmly, ask the players to be quiet and to bring their attention back to the game.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

One of the challenges of Game Mastering is keeping track of everything. While players manage a single character and possibly a companion or two, the Game Master has to keep track of everything else. It's not hard to discover you've lost track of treasure the party has won, information known to a friendly sage, the name of a leader of a small country, or even just whose turn it is in combat. Managing information takes work, but usually saves you headaches in the long run.

The most important advice for GMs is to do as much as possible outside of normal game time. In between games, you don't need to worry about the other responsibilities of Game Mastering while you organize your notes. Keeping one or more notebooks with tabs for different sections of information or using a database or organizational app you are comfortable with can be extremely helpful. You can make quick notes during a game and then transcribe them in more detail after the game session is over.

Spread out the bookkeeping work as much as possible, rather than trying to do it all at once. If you're writing an adventure and deciding what treasure will be found, mark that information as you come up with it. Then you can note what treasure the heroes actually got after the adventure runs. You can also ask one or more detail-oriented players to

serve as note-taking assistants during a game (see **Assistant Roles**, following).

If possible, take notes during each game session. Whenever anything significant happens, make a quick note about it. Don't describe the whole event—just jot down who, where, and what in the simplest terms. Try to note both the real-world date and the game world date of events. Doing so acts as a reminder when you update your bookkeeping after the game. It also serves as a reminder of what occurred in the past, which is especially helpful if your campaign lasts a while. Being able to look back and see when the group met a pregnant NPC is great when you're trying to decide if the child has been born yet when the characters return for another visit!

## QUICK REFERENCES

As Game Master, you have to reference a lot of information during play: Defense values, Health values, ability modifiers, and so forth, along with key rules references. Rather than shuffling through papers or flipping pages in a book, it's a good idea to compile a quick reference sheet or two for the essential information you need. A sheet can list characters and creatures, their combat values, and other key ratings, allowing you to see them at a glance.

Make sure to update your reference sheet at the start of each new session and on any occasion when the characters' abilities or ratings may have changed.

<b>NAME</b>			
<b>CLASS/LEVEL</b>			<b>HEALTH</b>
<b>SPECIALIZATION</b>			
<b>ACCURACY</b>			
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>			
<b>CONSTITUTION</b>			
<b>DEXTERITY</b>			
<b>FIGHTING</b>			
<b>INTELLIGENCE</b>			
<b>PERCEPTION</b>			
<b>STRENGTH</b>			
<b>WILLPOWER</b>			
<b>WEAPON</b>	<b>ATTACK ROLL</b>	<b>DAMAGE</b>	<b>SPEED</b>
			<b>DEFENSE</b>
<b>POWERS</b>			<b>ARMOR</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>			<b>MAGIC POINTS/ SPELLPOWER</b>

You can find a reproducible version of this quick reference card on page 285 of this rulebook.



## INITIATIVE TRACKERS

An important piece of information to track during play is initiative order in action scenes. You can jot initiative orders down on a piece of note-paper or a whiteboard or use an erasable initiative tracker. You can also prepare an index card for each character, including NPCs and monsters in the adventure. When a combat begins, sort the cards in initiative order. Then simply start with the character on top of the stack. When that turn is done, flip to the next card, cycling through the cards until you reach the end of the round. You may want to note each character's current initiative value (and place in the order) in pencil on the corner of the card for reference in case those values change.

Initiative cards are also a good place to put basic character information, since you usually use this information when that character's turn comes up. Defensive information, such as Defense and Health, should be kept on the separate quick reference sheet, since it's normally used when other characters or monsters act, so you don't have to shuffle through the initiative cards looking for it.

The same cards can also be used to keep track of things like spell durations. If a character casts a spell that lasts 5 rounds, you can give the spell its own card. The card lists the name of the spell and its duration, and every time it comes up, mark off one round. Not only does this keep spells from being forgotten, but it also allows the spell's duration to end on the initiative it was cast, even if the caster has changed initiative. You can put sticky notes or erasable notes in pencil on character cards to note spell effects, conditions, and other temporary things as well.

NAME / CLASS / LEVEL		
CONDITIONS		SPEED
		INITIATIVE
ACCURACY	COMMUNICATION	CONSTITUTION
DEXTERITY	FIGHTING	INTELLIGENCE
PERCEPTION	STRENGTH	WILLPOWER

You can find a reproducible version of this initiative card on page 284 of this rulebook.

## STUNT SHEETS

Stunts are an important element of *Fantasy AGE*, and an effective way of creating memorable foes is to give them fun and interesting stunts. Try and assign each major character or opponent in your game one unique or "signature" stunt and make note of it so you can easily reference it during

play. In **CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES** you'll note many monsters have such unique stunts. You can use these for inspiration when coming up with your own. You may also find ideas for new stunts coming up during the game. Jot them down in your notes and add them to your Stunt Sheet later on so you can use them in your next game!

You may want a general reference sheet of different stunts with a range of stunt point costs you can use during the game. You tend to lose the freewheeling feel of stunts when you have to stop the game to flip through the rules looking for inspiration for how to spend a character's stunt points. Having a signature stunt helps alleviate this. Even if the character rolled more points than the stunt costs, just use it anyway; the players don't necessarily have to know a few stunt points were "wasted."

## CAMPAIGN JOURNAL

It's a good idea to keep a "campaign journal" (or campaign log) as a record of the games you have run in the campaign. A good campaign journal should have the following information, organized so you can find it fairly easily:

- **ADVENTURE SUMMARIES:** A summary of each adventure: the date(s) on which you ran it, and when and where it took place in the setting. It should include a brief description of the events, characters involved, and any victories or setbacks for the heroes, including experience point awards, treasures won, and so forth. It is easiest to write this summary in-between game sessions, ideally right afterward while the events are still fresh in your mind.
- **IMPORTANT CHARACTERS:** A list of important characters in the setting and campaign to date, primarily just names and brief notes, so if the players want to know the name of that bandit chief who got away a couple of adventures ago you can find it at a glance. Also consider highlighting (or otherwise calling out) the names of important characters and details in your adventure summaries, so you can find them quickly.
- **ONGOING PLOTS:** Information on any ongoing plots, sub-plots, and developments in the game. With several main characters there can be a lot going on in terms of individual stories. Keeping notes on their progress can help you keep track of them and ensure you don't lose a particular plot thread somewhere along the way.

"Bullet journaling" practices for organizing writing information may be useful to Game Masters keeping a campaign journal. Check out books and sites describing the techniques to see if they work for you.

## GAME NOTES

In addition to your campaign journal, have a place where you can write notes to yourself during play. You can use these notes later to put together a more detailed summary for your campaign journal. You can use a dedicated notebook, loose



## ESSENTIAL NOTES

Not everyone wants to take detailed notes, and not everyone has time to take them. No matter how detailed you get, you should have the following written down after each game session:

- The last thing that happened to the characters.
- The physical location of the characters.
- The time and day in the campaign world.
- Any changes to game statistics arising from encounters. This usually just measures whether characters have lost Health and magic points, since they'll need to do various things to get them back, but it also refers to persistent conditions and other special circumstances.
- XP awarded
- Significant changes in equipment, such as losing or using up items, or acquiring new ones.

Get these basics down, and you should be organized enough for the next session.

pieces of lined or scratch paper, or an app on a mobile device or a laptop, depending on your preferences, although it's best if you can easily keep your notes organized and accessible. So, you might note, for example, that the heroes met with a guard sergeant named Harrigan and left him with a poor impression, an unplanned event that might come up later, should they happen to pass through Sergeant Harrigan's jurisdiction again.

Speaking of random characters, a useful item for your game notes is a list of possible character names. When the player characters encounter some random NPC and ask their name, you can glance at the list, choose the first suitable name, and mark it off, making note of that character and their new name for future reference. It's far easier than having to think up a character name on-the-spot.

## ERASABLE BOARDS

A chalkboard or dry-erase board can be an excellent way to keep track of information for everyone at the table. The bigger a board you have room for, the better, and white dry-erase boards tend to be cheaper, easier to read, and less messy. Place the board off to the side or behind the GM, where the most people can easily see it and the GM can easily reach it. When there's no fight, list all the PCs and major NPCs, along with the players running them and noteworthy features. Doing so helps players and the GM keep track of who's who, especially early in a campaign.

An erasable board can also be used to keep track of things in action scenes. Laid flat, it can have a map drawn out and miniatures or counters placed on it. If upright, you can draw out a map and mark character positions on it.

## MINIATURES, MAPS, AND PROPS

Roleplaying games are games of the imagination, so a "game board" is never required. However, having a map of a partic-

ular scene laid out, and counters or miniature figures to move around on the map can help players visualize what is going on and track information like the relative positions of different characters, the placement of obstacles, and so forth. You'll find more info about using miniatures and other accessories in the **Miniatures and Battle Maps** section of **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**.

Another handy prop for your game table might be "place cards" for the players, folded standees that show the name of that player's character and perhaps a bit of additional information like a short description ("draak axe-fighter") or even a head-shot illustration. This helps players recall who is playing who, especially in the first games of a campaign. For a convention or demo game, it can also be a place to list each player's actual name until they all get to know each other.

## DEVICES

Electronic devices have all kinds of uses at the game table but can also create distractions. Game Masters should be aware of. You can keep a laptop or mobile device open on the game table to access documents, databases, or even an electronic copy of the *Fantasy AGE* rules or your written adventure notes.

A device can also be a simple way to record notes you would otherwise write down in a notebook. The important thing is to use what you're most comfortable with—there's no point in forcing yourself to type if you're better at organizing things with index cards or a spiral notebook. Likewise, if you're a quick touch typist or texter, you might find a device is faster and easier.

Beyond note-taking, devices can be useful for showing pictures of props you don't need to have in-person, looking up quick questions that arise during play, and playing background music. There are even soundtracks and sound effects specifically designed for fantasy RPG sessions. The important thing is to make sure the addition of such technology either makes the game easier for you or adds to everyone's enjoyment.

Players may want to use devices to track their characters, look up rules, or take notes. If this doesn't cause any disruptions that's fine, but some groups find players with access to their social media, search engines, and electronic games are more likely to be distracted, slowing down gameplay. There is also sometimes a concern about using devices to look up answers to challenges that come up during the game, rather than simply useful references. If everyone is having a good time, there's no reason to change things even if there are periodic breaks to post, tweet, or check notifications. However, if players using their devices at the game table makes it more difficult for everyone to enjoy themselves, the group should discuss it and try to find a solution that makes everyone happy.

## SPOTLIGHT TIME

An additional thing for the GM to manage during a game session is keeping an eye on the "spotlight time" provided to





different players and their characters. This means moments where that player and their character really get to take center stage and shine. It might be a challenge that perfectly fits their abilities, a subplot focusing on them and their Goals, or even the randomness of a fantastic stunt that wows everyone at the game table. Try and be aware of how much spotlight time everyone is getting and adjust as best you can to highlight the players who seem to be receiving less of it, so nobody feels ignored or overlooked.

Sometimes it is difficult to evenly manage spotlight time within a specific game session; the adventure may simply focus more on particular characters but try to even it out over the course of the next few sessions. If you have a combat-heavy adventure that provides a lot of spotlight time for the fighting characters, try for a more social- or intrigue-focused adventure next, or incorporate the subplots of the less combat-oriented characters into the combat-heavy adventure to swing the spotlight to them from time to time.

## ENDING THE SESSION

As mentioned previously, a good *Fantasy AGE* game session usually lasts between three to five hours. Try to plan potential break points in your adventure if you don't think you'll be wrapping up everything in one session. Similarly, look

for a suitable break point during play where you can stop the game and bring the session to a close. Usually, the best opportunities are when the characters themselves are taking a break, having just completed an encounter, or in the middle of a tense or exciting moment, creating a “cliff-hanger” that has players looking forward to picking things up in the next session.

If the end of the session is also the end of an adventure, this is the time to do important between-adventures things. Try and give the players a sense of how much downtime their characters will have before the next adventure and what sort of things they can do in the meantime. This becomes more important as characters pursue their own projects and Goals in their downtime. Check in and see if the players have any questions about anything that happened in the session, or anything they want to discuss, and make sure everyone is on the same page for the next session's plans in terms of scheduling and the like.

The end of a game session may involve handing out rewards to the players (see **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS** for details). This is particularly the case if it is the end of an adventure, but in some cases there may be rewards during adventures. You'll generally want to tell the players about their characters' rewards at the end of the session, although in some cases, you can save it for session follow-up.



## SESSION FOLLOW-UP

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You can use the time after and in-between game sessions to handle some of the bookkeeping and updating that supports the game. For example, in-between sessions is a good time for players to apply advancements from their characters leveling up, coming to the next game session with updated character sheets—and ideally providing the GM with copies beforehand. Between game sessions is also a good opportunity to handle downtime activities the characters might engage in between adventures.

You can handle post-session activities via channels like email or a messaging or chat server online, ideally something that provides a record you can reference in the future. Post-session is also a good time to check in with your players: Address any concerns from the previous game session that might have arisen, such as rules debates or something the players found disruptive or didn't enjoy. It is good to check in from time to time about how the players are enjoying the campaign: what they like and don't like, and things they might want to see included in the future.

If the prior session addressed or fulfilled one or more of the characters' Goals, talk with the players post-session about new Goals for their characters and how they will fit into the campaign. For example, now that Nicole's character Brigitte has found the political group her parents belonged to, does she intend to join them? If so, does she have a new Goal involving her Membership within the group?

## ASSISTANT ROLES

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The Game Master has a substantial job, as this chapter demonstrates. You don't have to do it all alone, however. Game Masters can "deputize" players in the game to take on different assistant roles, helping manage aspects of the game and easing the burden of responsibility on the GM. Consider asking players in your group to take up one or more of these roles in your games:

### CALLER

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Originally, the "caller" was the player who declared what each other player did on their turn. This is a holdover from the earliest days of roleplaying games, when they still took many cues from early wargames and miniatures games, when describing things as a character participating in a story was a new idea and not always the focus. However, a "caller" can still perform some relevant tasks. In action encounters, tracking initiative and who did what on their turn is useful thing to do, since it keeps that information in the hands of one person the GM can consult. If the GM misses a character, or folks have actions left over, the caller can point it out. The caller can also help work up "standard procedures" for Player Characters, such as how they arrange a campsite, who takes watch in which order, and how characters line themselves up. The caller doesn't control these things, but organizes the information for easy reference from the players and GM.

## NOTE-TAKER

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If a player is good at taking detailed and useful notes about the game, encourage them to do so and provide you with a copy of their notes after the session. Having a player note-taker not only reduces the amount of detailed note-taking you need to do during the game, but it also provides you with a useful "player's eye" view of the session, since the note-taking player doesn't have your insights into what is going on "behind the scenes" of the story. This can tell you if certain things are "landing" right with your players, if they are picking up on the right clues and cues, what things they consider important, and more.

## RULES ASSISTANT

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You can charge a player with the responsibility of looking up specific rules and other game information during play so you can keep the game running without having to pause to flip through a book or search an electronic document. A good rules assistant who knows a situation where a more detailed look at the rules is needed is coming up can even preemptively have those rules to hand in case there are questions. Usually, the rules assistant should simply hand the rules resource to the GM to look over, although there may be instances where the GM prefers that a rule be read out loud for everyone. This is useful if the group is getting the hang of a new game or aspect of a system. A good rules assistant doesn't preemptively look to offer rulings or weigh-in on the Game Master's decision, or quote rules in order to be disruptive. In-depth discussions of rulings should be handled outside of gameplay so as not to interrupt the flow of the game.

## SUPPORTING CHARACTER

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Game Masters have to manage a lot of NPCs and supporting characters, so it can be useful to hand off some of those roles to other players in an encounter, freeing the GM to focus on other things. This is a particularly useful option for when groups of player characters split up, or in an encounter focusing on just one or two player characters. It gives the other players something to do during that time. The same is true of things like flashback scenes, where one player is portraying a younger version of their character and the other players take the roles of supporting characters in the flashback. When players are running supporting characters, you have greater latitude as GM to overrule any out-of-character things they might say or do, but sometimes a touch of the unexpected can add a lot to an NPC!

## TABLE MANAGER

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A player can take over some of the "hosting" duties from the Game Master while the game is in session, taking responsibility for providing or refilling snacks and beverages, wiping up spills, moving things onto or off the table, arranging maps and other game pieces, and so forth. Usually, everyone can chip-in on these sorts of things, but it can be helpful to have someone designated to pay attention to them.



## GAME MODERATOR

As part of running the game, the Game Master serves as moderator, the person who not only enforces the agreed-upon rules of behavior, like table rules, but also interprets the game rules. The GM describes the outcomes of the characters' actions and makes on-the-spot rulings about how the rules are applied and what happens as a result. **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES** goes into much more detail about moderating the game during play. This section just looks at a few useful guidelines when serving as the game moderator:

### WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, TEST

Although *Fantasy AGE* has a fair number of rules, particularly when it comes to the various class powers and talents, the core of the game is quite simple: Almost everything in game play can be handled with an ability test.

So, when all else fails, if you need to come up with an immediate way of handling a situation and the game rules are not clear, choose the ability (and focus) that best apply, and call for a test using them. You can base the outcome on the result of the test or compare it against a target number, using the **Basic Test Difficulty** table (see **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**), to give you an idea. Then just continue on with the game.

So long as you remember this basic rule of thumb, you can handle almost any situation likely to come up during play.

### BE FAIR, BUT FIRM

When moderating the rules and making decisions, be fair in terms of how the rules apply to the player characters and the players' intended actions, but once you have decided on how to apply the rules, be firm, especially when the ruling isn't necessarily in the players' favor.

When you make a ruling that closes the door on a particular action or option for the story, try to open another if you can. The phrase "No, but..." is a useful tool for the Game Master, offering alternatives to the players on those occasions when you have to rule against them. "No, you can't simply push the rock over, but if you were to find a lever or something that allowed you to apply more force, maybe then you could," is an example of guiding the players toward a suitable course of action for their intended goals.

### THE GAME MASTER'S WORD IS FINAL

The Game Master moderates the rules, so GM rulings in-game are final, at least for that game session. Players should respect that and avoid arguing or debating with the GM during the game. Likewise, as GM, you should tell players "We're not going to discuss this any further right now, but we can talk about it after the game, if you want." Even then, while implementations of the game rules should be discussed and agreed upon by the group, the Game Master still has the final say.

## OPTIONAL

## PERSONAL CHALLENGES

As a last, optional, step of character creation during session zero, players may define one or more personal challenges for their characters. Let your players know about this possibility, and that it doesn't involve accepting fixed penalties and disadvantages, but it acts as a signal to the group about who the character is and tells you how they might want them to enter play, at the player's discretion.

A personal challenge is similar to the kinds of challenges the characters face and overcome in the course of their adventures, but this challenge is both specific to that character, and can show up in the course of the game, by player choice, to produce problems the character may have to deal with.

In some situations, personal challenges might appear later on in the campaign in response to ongoing events and stresses on the character. Again, this is entirely up to the player. Player control is critical to using personal challenges, with one limit: They can't cross the lines and veils in place for the campaign.

Examples of personal challenges may include (but are not limited to) the following ones.

### PHYSICAL CHALLENGE

The character has a physical disability that poses challenges in various situations. How often the physical challenge arises depends on the nature and extent of the disability along with how often the player wants it to pose a challenge.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

The character has a particular psychological or cognitive challenge, from a strong phobia to the cognitive effects of an injury or disability, to name a few. This might be perceived as a form of illness. In some situations, the character behaves in distressing ways, or might struggle with perceptions and ideas they would rather not have, though the player always retains ultimate control of the character.

### SOCIAL CHALLENGE

The character is faced with a challenge due to their place in society or certain societal attitudes toward them. This can include characters seen as second-class or less-than in some way or discriminated against within their society. These cases need to be worked out with the Game Master to reflect issues as they exist in the campaign world, though when those issues rise to the level of a social challenge is up to the player. A social challenge may also take the form of a rival or enemy who specifically has it out for the character.

## REWARDS

Encountering and dealing with a personal challenge in the context of the game provides a bonus experience award to the character, just like overcoming a regular challenge. See **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS** for guidelines on experience awards for overcoming challenges.



## CHALLENGES AND CONSENT

The key thing about personal challenges is that they arise as challenges *only when the player wants*. Otherwise, that aspect of the character still exists, it just doesn't pose a challenge. This allows players to portray characters who have particular challenges without feeling burdened by them if they don't want to be, or when they are not in the mood to deal with that particular challenge in gameplay.

Likewise, players portraying characters who have personal challenges different from their own should be mindful and respectful of the real people who deal with those challenges, *especially* if those people share the game table with them! Take the opportunity to learn about living with the particular challenges you have chosen and be aware that people in the real world *don't* get the option of having their challenges come up only when they want.

Nevertheless, veils and lines trump everything: If someone has placed a particular personal challenge off-limits in the game, then the Game Master should make that clear and ask players to choose something else for their characters.

## CHALLENGES IN PLAY

A challenge enters play when the player decides it does. In many cases, this is entirely narrative, where the player just describes it as part of their character. For social challenges, the player can ask the GM to bring it up within the parameters they request when suitable NPCs and situations exist to do so.

In some cases, the player may decide the challenge demands additional effort, and the GM helps them determine what might be required. For physical challenges, a test using focuses such as Strength (Might) or Perception (Touching) might be required for that character to perform a task that another character could perform without a test. Challenges may also cost time, money, or even Health points by inflicting damage.

The player has the final say on whether to take on any hardship. If they do, however, this should be considered part of the adventure worth the same potential rewards as challenges that come up in the larger story with its action, exploration, and social encounters. By default, this translates to additional experience points. This isn't "compensation for a disadvantage," as the reward should be comparable to one any other character might get from overcoming an obstacle that arises for any other reason.

If you use the **Instant Experience Awards** rules in **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**, you might give awards for dealing with these challenges using that system, even if you use per-session awards in other situations.

### EXAMPLE

*Jamak lost an eye in battle years ago. As his companions easily grab ropes from a moving ship to jump aboard it (and the Game Master doesn't require a test), Jamak's player decides his lack of depth perception might make this tricky. The GM agrees, and they decide Jamak needs to succeed at a TN 13 Perception (Seeing) test, moving his head to get a sense of where to reach and hoping for the best. Jamak succeeds, and the GM notes they overcame this extra obstacle.*

*Later, as their ship sinks, the heroes all have to climb the lurching main mast to jump to an adjacent ship. The GM decides a TN 13 Strength (Climbing) test is required. Jamak's player decides this isn't significantly affected by his vision, and the GM rightly decides succeeding at this test is as valuable for each Player Character as Jamak's success at jumping aboard earlier, as both have the same TN and roughly equivalent stakes. If the GM were using instant experience awards, they would award (to Jamak alone, and to each PC, including Jamak, respectively) the same amount in each case, assuming elements such as roleplaying and player innovation were about the same as well.*

### OPTIONAL

## RELATIONSHIPS

Player Characters rely on each other and NPC allies to find their places in the world. As their personal histories expand and deepen, so too do their connections with their comrades — and their grudges against rivals and hated foes. In *Fantasy AGE*, players define some of these in Step 9 of character creation (see **Goals and Ties** in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**).

However, you may wish to give these connections enhanced mechanical significance. That's where the following optional Relationships system comes in. Not all personal connections need to be defined by these rules, but the rules are appropriate for those ties players especially want to emphasize.

A Relationship consists of three parts: its **bond**, its description, and its **intensity**. Each character has a capacity for Relationships as well, defined by Relationship ranks. The following sections describe these in detail.

## RELATIONSHIP RANKS

All characters start with the capacity to form Relationships, but don't necessarily have any — they know people, but don't feel a sufficiently intense connection. By default, they acquire them over the course of the campaign, though the GM may allow some at 1st level.

This capacity is defined in numeric ranks of intensity (see **Relationship Intensity**) across any number of bonds (see **Relationship Bonds**, following). Thus, three ranks could represent one 3 intensity bond, three 1 intensity bonds, or two bonds at 1 and 2 intensity, respectively.

### RELATIONSHIP RANKS

LEVEL	NUMBER OF RELATIONSHIP RANKS
1	Number generated at character creation (CC): higher of 1 or Communication + 1.
4	CC +1
8	CC +2
12	CC +3
16	CC +4
20	CC +5





## STARTING RELATIONSHIP RANKS

1st level characters start with 1 + their Communication ability rating in Relationship ranks, with a minimum of 1. These ranks can stay undefined, or the GM can allow the character to fill them with people and bonds that fit the character's background, goals, and ties.

Characters acquire one new rank at level 4, and every 4 levels thereafter. These ranks are not filled unless events in the game create an opportunity to fill them. Each rank can be used to increase the intensity of an existing bond by 1, or it can be used to start a new Intensity 1 bond.

## RELATIONSHIP BOND

A **bond** is a description of the nature of the Relationship, in the form of a short phrase or title. Bonds exist between friends, lovers, enemies, family, lord and vassal, and members of the same club or secret society. Some Relationships are bitter rivalries, while others contain nothing but affection.

## SAMPLE BONDS

The following sample bonds act as a starting point for players and GMs. Like sample honorifics in **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**, these bonds are missing character and campaign world information, since these can only be filled in by your group.

### I WOULD RISK MY LIFE FOR THIS PERSON

This strong bond might push a PC to perform a foolish or heroic action to protect her loved one. Of course, this bond may imply a situation where a character is compelled to risk her life for another, such as for an oath-sworn warrior.

### I WILL NOT STOP UNTIL YOU ARE DEAD

This bond is a strong one, implying the PC's drive to end another character's life. The cause of such a bond could be a longstanding rivalry or a horrible betrayal. Weird variations might feature a bond with someone who is cursed, where the bond-holder vows to "end their suffering."

### WE HAVE SUFFERED EQUAL ADVERSITY TOGETHER

This bond may stem from soldiers fighting together, scholars who have witnessed the same horrors, or simply youths who grew up in the same dreadful part of town. This bond ties characters together through mutual hardship and often shared moral values as well.

### YOU INSPIRE ME TO GREATNESS EACH DAY

This bond may be directed at an artist's "muse" (often to the irritation of the muse), a religious leader, a civic hero, a parent, or a famed sage, but it might be directed at someone who serves as a negative example, so the hero believes, "There but for the grace of the gods go I."



Bonds can be complex, and multi-layered. The named example is one that would provoke loyalty in a character, as well as friendship and the pining for a love that cannot be. Alternatives include an enemy a PC secretly admires, or a fellow protagonist who, despite all the signs, cannot pick up on the PC's feelings.

## BOND OBJECT

When taking a new Relationship, decide on who the bond is about. This need not be a friend or lover. Relationships can reflect deadly hatred, grudging respect, or even a fatalistic sense of a shared connection.

In all cases, a bond is held by one person and directed at another: the object of the bond. The Relationship need not be mutual. A character can feel a powerful bond with someone who doesn't have a bond with them, or even has a bond representing enmity. Characters can sometimes even have bonds with the dead, as a form of inspiration to a grieving character, or a source of resentment that influences the character's actions.

One important rule applies to all bonds. While PCs are allowed and encouraged to form bonds with one another, players must gain the permission of whoever is playing the character to direct a Relationship bond their way. While one player might want a system to represent, say, an obsessive interest or rivalry with another PC, that PC's player may be uninterested or even upset at adding this element to the story. Respect everyone's boundaries.

For simplicity's sake, you can't have more than one bond directed at the same person.

## RELATIONSHIP INTENSITY

Each Relationship (that is, a single, discrete bond) has an **intensity** rating from 1 to 5, with 1 being a new but solid Relationship, and 5 being the kind of intensity a character will usually experience once in a lifetime. Filling one Relationship rank fills 1 degree of intensity.

## RELATIONSHIP STUNT POINTS

The core mechanical benefit of a Relationship is that it provides bonus stunt points that can be used when the character's action supports the bond.

For each rank of intensity, a character gets 1 free SP they can use only to spend on actions relating to the respective Relationship. Players can spend these SP only once per game session, and they may use them on such actions as engaging in combat where a loved one is threatened, social tests where a PC attempts to talk a friend out of doing something stupid, and so on.

Intensity SP are useable on any appropriate action, not just ones where a player rolls doubles. They can be combined with SP earned from rolling doubles if a player chooses.

Spent Intensity-based SP are available again at the next session's start, though if a game runs particularly long, the GM can choose to allow Intensity-related SP to recharge gradually throughout a single session.

## UNUSUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Some Relationships aren't with other, living characters, or exist under unusual circumstances. These should be rare situations, since Relationships are designed to encourage interacting with other characters.

## IDEOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS

A character might have a powerful Relationship with a political philosophy, religion, culture, or other way of life, or set of traditions. These operate like other Relationship bonds, except that the GM and player determine when a person or situation counts as something the Relationship can affect. Examples include *If Freeport doesn't give you liberty, leave!*, or *The Yellow Sign is a disease; cure it with fire and steel*. The GM determines when such Relationships apply.

## MEMORIAL RELATIONSHIPS

When the subject of a Bond dies, vanishes, or changes the nature of their connection with the character, it's still possible to use the Relationship. In such cases, the character may use the sentimental connection, even when the reality of the situation has changed. In time, the Relationship will probably change. See **Changing Relationships** for advice.

## SELF-CENTERED RELATIONSHIPS

Some egotistical, traumatized, or highly self-sufficient characters may have Relationships with themselves. Possible self-centered Bonds include *I love 'em and leave 'em; I am only strong when I don't need anyone else*; and *You can't trust anyone*. A character may harness a self-centered Relationship like any other, but this draws attention to their impaired ability to care about other people. When a character uses this Relationship, the GM may apply a penalty equal to the SP used to a future social test to influence or understand someone else's behavior.

## CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS

Whenever a character gains a new level, the player and GM may review the character's Relationships and adjust them, increasing or decreasing them, switching Intensity ranks around or even changing the nature of their Bonds. An increase might occur if a PC has spent time in a session fighting alongside the subject of their bond and has developed greater admiration for them. A decrease may occur if a bond dies, becomes more distant, or when a protagonist simply goes without them in her life for some time. A decrease may free up one or more Relationship ranks, which may be applied to existing bonds. Bonds can only increase when free ranks are available.

There are no set rules about how extensive a change can be made, but Relationships tend to persist. It's hard to let go of a fallen loved one or accept betrayal from a true friend. If, however, the player is truly unhappy with their current Relationships, the GM should allow any changes that would correct the problem.





## 8. MASTERING THE RULES

**N**ow that you've had a general overview of the GM's role in the game, it's time to give you some practical advice about using the rules, as well as present some game systems that go beyond the basics. This chapter builds on the material in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**, expanding it while delving more into the sorts of decisions you must make when running a game of *Fantasy AGE*.

### INVOKING THE RULES

In a typical adventure, the Player Characters tell you what they're going to do, and as GM you determine how the world reacts. When a character attempts to do something you can respond with four possible results: "Yes," "No," "Yes, if...," and "Roll the Dice."

#### YES

In many cases, the answer is simple: "Yes." The PC can walk across the street, talk to an NPC, and see things in broad daylight without asking you for permission unless there's some less than obvious reason they can't, at which point you have to step up and explain the situation. Some "yes" answers can even apply to difficult tasks which wouldn't add much drama or fun to the story. A weeklong trek through the woods might be arduous, but if nothing interesting will happen on the way then you're well within your rights to say, "A week later you arrive at your destination, tired and hungry for a proper meal."

#### NO

A "no" means the character can't perform the action at all. You should usually offer the player a chance to reconsider and pick a different thing to do. A GM should only say "no" if they have a sufficiently good reason. Good reasons include:

- **It's IMPOSSIBLE:** If the character doesn't have the gills or magic to breathe underwater, they just can't do it, period. Without magic or wings, they can't fly. Without money or some kind of social leverage, they can't rent the most expensive room in the inn. Many impossible things can invoke a **Yes, if...** alternative if characters come across the means to do them later on.
- **It RUINS THE FUN:** If an action would upset one of the other players (not the character in the game world, but a real person at the table) you're perfectly entitled to say you can't do it. Players *can* do things as their characters that would upset other *characters*, but not the people playing them.

Saying "no" should be relatively rare. Players usually have the common sense not to try blatantly impossible things or intentionally irritate each other. Beyond these reasons, the GM should only say no in rare circumstances. After all, stopping the action for no good reason isn't fun for anyone. In those instances when you do have to say "no" to a player, try to follow it up with an alternative, a "no, but..." approach that offers some options to keep things moving in the right direction, rather than the player simply feeling stonewalled.



## YES, IF...

A character might be able to do something automatically with the right tools, in the right environment, or with an ability focus, talent, or other character trait that provides the training or social connections to get things done. For example, if a character has the Communication (Performance) focus and a musical instrument, they can play it competently without rolling dice, though it won't have any special effect. This may seem underwhelming, but a simple tune might be required to open a magically locked door.

As GM, always ask yourself whether you want the PCs to solve a problem through pure planning or drawing on personal resources, or if you want there to be an element of chance. If you don't mean there to be an element of chance, then, "Yes, if you have what you need," is the right answer, and nobody needs to roll dice. But if chance *is* part of the equation, don't be afraid to ask players to roll.

A variant of, "Yes, if..." is, "Yes, if you are willing to deal with the consequences." When players ask to do something that may provoke fallout, as GM it's worth pointing that out. A PC wanting to set fire to a tavern may well be able to do so and won't ruin the fun or upset another player in the process... but is also *generally* going to be seen doing so by people hanging around in town, and the townsfolk won't take it kindly. Warning a player about noteworthy consequences their character can reasonably expect is part of describing the world to them, and a good way to avoid unpleasant surprises for players. (Unpleasant surprises for characters are fine, but you don't want a player to feel like the GM didn't describe a situation well enough for the player to come to an informed decision.)

## ROLL THE DICE

If the characters have a less than certain chance to succeed, but the task isn't impossible, it's time to roll the dice. This virtually always applies in action encounters, including combat. It also applies when the rules specify that rolling the dice accompanies a specific action, as it does to cast spells. It almost always applies when an opposing force is trying to prevent the heroes from succeeding, whether it's an enemy in a fight or a rival debating them for command of a pirate ship.

Rolling the dice is fun, and it's where we get to explore the rules of the game.

### SECRET TESTS

Sometimes it's a good idea to make a test for a character in secret. This is often the case when rolling to see if characters notice an ambush or hidden object, or if characters would not know how well they exercised stealth, or whether they truly disarmed a trap. In this case, you roll the test and keep the result secret, but apply the consequences when they'd logically arise. For instance, a character may *think* they disarmed a trap, but your secretly rolled tests indicate otherwise, and they only discover this when they spring the "disarmed" trap.

## MASTERING ABILITY TESTS

Most dice rolls during play are ability tests, so one of your main tasks as GM is to adjudicate them fairly while keeping the adventure moving along. Rather than provide you with huge lists of approved actions and modifiers for every occasion, *Fantasy AGE* gives you a simple but robust system that you can use as a tool when running the game. This means you'll be making judgments frequently, but the system is flexible enough to manage most situations easily.

You'll find a general overview of ability tests in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**, but to review: An ability test uses three six-sided dice (3d6). Two of the dice should be one color and the third a different color. The off-color die is known as the Stunt Die. The three dice are rolled and added together. To that sum are added the rating of the relevant ability and the focus bonus (typically +2) if the character has the appropriate focus. The final number is the test result.

$$\text{TEST RESULT} = 3\text{D}6 + \text{ABILITY} + \text{FOCUS}$$

The test result is compared to a target: a static target number (TN), the test result of another character in an opposed test. A character wins a simple or basic test by meeting or beating the target. The results of the Stunt Die can be used to determine the degree of success and to break ties.

When deciding on any ability test in *Fantasy AGE*, there are four key decisions that you have to make as GM:

- Which abilities and focuses apply?
- How much time does the test take?
- What are the stakes?
- What are the consequences of failure?

Let's take a look at these questions one by one.

### WHICH ABILITIES & FOCUSES APPLY?

When a player tries to do something where a roll is called for, have them describe it and select the ability and focus that best fit the task, such as a Strength (Might) test to force open a door.

There are only nine abilities, so picking the right one should be intuitive, but picking a focus may require more thought. Sometimes it's obvious. If a character is trying to sneak through an alley, that's a Dexterity (Stealth) test. Other times, the right focus is not as clear and indeed it may be that no focus applies. In that case, it's just a straight ability test. You should try to be open to player suggestions though. If a player can give a credible explanation for why a particular focus should apply to the test, you should allow its use.

The other important thing to remember is that participants in opposed tests might use different abilities and focuses from one another. For example, a merchant may try to convince an adventurer to spend more money than they should on a new shield. The merchant would make a Communication (Bargaining) test while the adventurer would make a Willpower (Self-Discipline) test.



Usually, any character can attempt to take an ability test. However, some tests require specialized knowledge or skills. When that's the case, you can make a specific focus a requirement to even attempt the test. You might call for an Intelligence (Arcane Lore required) test, for example. A character trying the test without the required focus automatically fails.

### HOW MUCH TIME DOES THE TEST TAKE?

An ability test can represent mere seconds or hours or even days depending on what the character is trying to achieve. During narrative time, the increments will tend to be longer. If the PCs try asking around town after a villain they are hunting, for example, you might decide that a test represents an hour of walking around and talking to different people. In action time, however, tracking exact time is more important. Remember, each round of action time is 15 seconds and within that time a character can take a major action and a minor action or two minor actions. When deciding on how long a test takes during action time, you should express it using these action types. A long task might take a major action and a minor action, or two of each for something that would stretch across two rounds.

Lastly, there are ability tests that are reactions. Many spells, for example, require their targets to make a test to resist certain effects. Such tests are considered to take no time, as they usually take place when it's not the testing character's turn. These are usually simple tests, generating no stunt points.

The advanced tests and challenge tests described later in this chapter are recommended when a task is a race against time, or where wasting time may have consequences.

### WHAT ARE THE STAKES?

If the character succeeds, what happens exactly? These are the stakes. Usually, the result is obvious. For example, a character trying to jump over a chasm will get across. So you'll find it easiest to make many tests binary: either a character succeeds or fails. Sometimes, however, more nuance is required. That's where the Stunt Die comes in. You can use the result of the Stunt Die to determine a character's degree of success. A 1 means the action was barely pulled off, a 6 means the results were spectacular, and a 7 or higher is the realm of heroes and specialists—that is, characters of Level 6 or higher who can add their focus to their degree of success, as per **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**. Going back to the chasm example, you could use the Stunt Die to determine how the character landed. A 1 could mean hanging from the opposite edge with the possibility of falling, a 2–3 could mean a crash landing that leaves the character prone, a 4–5 could mean the character landed on their feet, and a 6–7 could mean the character landed so skillfully they fly over the chasm and land on their feet two yards beyond the edge, while an 8 or higher may allow them to perform a full Move action even after taking time to jump.

### WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE?

What happens when a character fails? Sometimes there are no consequences but the obvious. A character trying to find information on an ancient king makes an Intelligence (Historical Lore) test and fails. There are no consequences to this other than not finding the information. A character that fails

to jump across a chasm, however, will be plummeting down and taking damage. You must decide how much and whether the character can do anything to mitigate the situation. You might allow, for example, a Dexterity (Acrobatics) test to land on a nearby ledge instead of falling into the river far below.

You may also have to decide if characters can try failed actions again. Similar to the guidelines for **Invoking the Rules**, previously, you can say yes, yes with conditions, or no, depending on the circumstances. If a character has time to spend and the action seems reasonable, another attempt can be made. You may say yes but require a new approach or assistance. Or you can rule that the character cannot try again because the failure means they simply lacked the competence, or because the conditions for success have come and gone. Try to be fair, but don't bog the game down with an endless series of rerolls.

## COMPLEX TESTS

Most of the time, simple and basic tests are all that are necessary, with basic tests being used for the majority of important tasks. Sometimes, however, you'll encounter situations where you want a task to take a variable amount of time, utilize the talents of multiple characters, or present new challenges partway through. Complex tests serve this function. The two basic types are advanced tests and challenge tests, which may or may not involve cooperation from multiple characters.

### ADVANCED TESTS

#### WHEN TIME IS A FACTOR

Advanced tests are used for tasks that take time and/or planning, when the amount of time required matters, or to compare who performs a task first. Navigating the wilderness to get to safety before a storm hits or decrypting a cursed text to discover its secrets before enemy cultists do are suitable occasions. If tracking time taken or who succeeds first doesn't matter, use a basic test instead.

Advanced tests require multiple rolls, each representing a time increment of effort until your character succeeds or runs out of time. For each time increment, the GM provides a TN or opposed roll. If the character succeeds, look at the number on the Stunt Die and add it to a running total. The character doesn't have to score doubles on the roll and the points they're accumulating aren't stunt points, but points from their degree of success as detailed in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**. If the character is 6th level or higher, they may add their focus bonus as they would to the degree of success for a basic test. When the accumulated points hit the **Success Threshold** number you set, the character accomplishes the task. If they fail a roll they waste that time increment, contributing 0 points to the running total, but they can try again for the next time increment.

Some advanced tests can be put "on hold," keeping accumulated totals while the character takes a break, but others cannot or may gradually lose accumulated points if the break takes too long. Decide if this happens based on what would be believable for the task.

The **Advanced Tests** table provides some basic benchmarks for Success Thresholds, though there is no theoretical limit on



how high they can get. Practically speaking, however, you don't want to roll dice forever, so the GM should almost never set Success Thresholds above 30.

Design advanced tests by going through the following steps.

### 1. SET DIFFICULTY

Figure out the Target Number or opposed roll (including modifiers) the character tests against, just as for basic tests.

### 2. SET A SUCCESS THRESHOLD

An advanced test's Success Threshold is the total number of accumulated degree-of-success points (usually the number on the Stunt Die) required to complete the task. Each success on a test adds its degree of success toward achieving the Success Threshold until the character reaches it or time runs out. Remember, these points generated are not stunt points and can't be spent on stunts, except in special circumstances, laid out in **4. Stunts or Not?**

### 3. SET A TIME INCREMENT

Each test requires an increment of time. Set it based on the type of activity the test represents. One way to do this is to figure out the typical amount of time the task should take and figure out the number of rolls required if each roll succeeded and generated 3 points toward the Success Threshold you've chosen. Divide the typical total time by the number of rolls, rounding the number of rolls up, and you will get a reasonable increment length. In most cases, you want at least three rolls as a baseline, or else there's not much point using an advanced test.

#### ADVANCED TESTS

TASK DIFFICULTY	SUCCESS THRESHOLD
Easy	9
Average	12
Challenging	18
Hard	24
Formidable	30

## MANDATORY AND OPTIONAL ABILITIES AND FOCUSES

In some advanced and challenge tests, the Game Master can ask for multiple abilities and their focuses to be used. Instead of the same ability and focus being used for each interval, these mandatory ability focuses must be successfully used for at least one interval's roll each. This represents tasks that require an array of skills. Multiple mandatory focuses are most common in challenge tests that represent complicated tasks performed by a team, like a heist or crewing a ship.

Conversely, the GM can decide that more than one ability and focus can apply to a test. For instance, if you're chasing someone on foot, one ally is chasing on horseback, and the person you're pursuing is negotiating the rooftops, you'd roll Constitution (Running), your ally would roll Dexterity (Riding), and your quarry would roll Dexterity (Acrobatics).

For example, let's say the task should take about an hour and have a Success Threshold of 10. At 3 points per roll, it would take four rolls—three rolls that generate 3 points, and one roll that generates 1. Four rolls over an hour would take 15 minutes per roll. Thus, each increment is 15 minutes long.

### 4. STUNTS OR NOT?

The GM should decide whether doubles generate stunt points. For many advanced tests, the process is designed solely to determine how long a task takes, and stunts are irrelevant. Stunt points gained must be used during the increment they were generated or immediately after, depending on the stunt.

#### EXAMPLE

*Verani must warn an ally in a distant country estate that in an hour the assassins the man's hiding from are going to strike. Verani can't find a horse or boat, so he starts running and the GM decides this is an advanced test requiring TN 11 Constitution (Running) rolls and a Success Threshold of 8. Verani has an hour to get there, and if the Stunt Die scores 3 points per roll, it would be accomplished in three rolls. Dividing it by the 1-hour deadline, which sets each roll interval at 20 minutes. Verani has a Constitution of 0 but has the Running focus for a +2 bonus. Verani's player rolls the dice. His first roll (including his +2 total modifier) is a 6—after making a bit of headway, Verani gets forced off the road by a coach going in the opposite direction. Fortunately, the player subsequently rolls a 12 (3 on the Stunt Die) and a 14 (6 on the Stunt Die), beating the Success Threshold. Verani dusts himself off, ignores the screaming pain in his legs, and runs up to the country house with minutes to spare.*

## CHALLENGE TESTS

### EXTENDED TASKS WHERE FAILURE HAS CONSEQUENCES

A challenge test is a special type of advanced test in which time isn't the only factor, but failures make further successes more difficult to achieve. Chases (see **Chases**) are a common form of challenge test in action-oriented adventures. Other examples include climbing a mountain or breaking into a well-guarded estate. Time may be a factor, but mistakes can be inconvenient at best, deadly at worst.

Many challenge tests apply to group efforts, such as a team of adventurers infiltrating a castle. See **Cooperation** for rules on how they can work together. A challenge test may use multiple focuses too, as per the sidebar **Mandatory and Optional Abilities and Focuses**.

As with an advanced test, the Game Master determines a difficulty (TN or opposed roll) and Success Threshold and how much time each roll represents. The GM also decides on the ability and focus for the ability test, and may vary them, or require different abilities or focuses in succession. Unlike an advanced test, a challenge test has consequences for each failed roll.

These consequences come in three levels—minor, moderate, and major—and you decide how many times characters can fail at a challenge test before escalating consequences to the next level.



## MINOR CONSEQUENCES

Minor consequences can:

- Make future tests more difficult, increasing the target number by +2 (one level of difficulty).
- Increase the amount of time needed for each ability test.
- Cause some minor complication like giving away the effort, if the challenge is covert.

Minor complications can generally be eliminated with a successful ability test that does *not* contribute to the Success Threshold. Examples include making noise that alerts guards or jamming a complex mechanism you must activate to open a door.

## MODERATE CONSEQUENCES

Moderate consequences can:

- Make future tests more difficult, as with a minor consequence, but lasting for the remainder of the challenge test without the ability to undo it.
- Eliminate half of your accumulated progress toward the Success Threshold.
- Close off a current avenue of progress, forcing you to adopt a new approach or acquire a new means of progressing toward your goal.

This may change the required ability or focus for future tests in the challenge. Examples include tripping a trap that closes a sliding door, forcing you to find a different infiltration route, or running your ship into ill winds that add time to your journey.

## MAJOR CONSEQUENCES

Major consequences potentially jeopardize the entire challenge test, essentially forcing characters to start the test over from the beginning, having lost any expended time, or requiring them to complete *another* advanced or challenge test in order to pick the previous challenge back up where they left off. Examples include getting caught by guards or springing a dangerous trap that inflicts damage.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

It's often easiest to set down the conditions of a challenge test in a standard format. Let's look at an example, where a dogged character tracks a band of orcs across water and land.

## FOLLOWING THE ORCS

Seeing a band of orc raiders piloting a skiff, you follow them in your own sailboat to where they land and track them through the forest.

**SUCCESS THRESHOLD:** 18

**INCREMENT TIME:** 1 hour

**ABILITY FOCUSES:** Dexterity (Sailing) TN 13, Dexterity (Stealth) TN 13, Perception (Tracking) TN 15. These are mandatory focuses as per **GM's Option: Mandatory and Optional Abilities and Focuses**, and the character must successfully use each of them at least once.

## SAILING TO STRANGER SHORES

Breakwater Bay and the larger Stranger Shores setting (see **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**) encourage sea travel, and all the *Fantasy AGE* test variations can be used, depending on your objective. A simple Intelligence (Navigation) test works fine to see if your trip runs into problems or not. A basic test would be appropriate if the navigator were performing another critical task that might benefit from stunt points. An advanced test is the standard for seeing how long a trip might take based on the number of intervals required. Pursuit at sea can be governed by chases. Challenge tests are there if you'd like there to be a chance the ship runs into trouble if it steers off course. Cooperation can add the skill of sailors to the mix.

There's one firm rule, however: While ships in the Stranger Shores setting might accidentally slip into other worlds by straying into the Deep, only characters with the Mystic Navigator specialization (see **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**) can intentionally direct a vessel into the Deep, and on planned routes between worlds, without the help of a magical device or other external aid.

## CONSEQUENCES

- **MINOR:** The orcs sense someone close and take steps to make themselves harder to follow. Increase test Target Numbers by 2.

### FAILURES BEFORE MODERATE CONSEQUENCES: 2

- **MODERATE:** The orcs double back and cover their tracks, leading you in the wrong direction for a time. Increase the Success Threshold by 3.

### FAILURES BEFORE MAJOR CONSEQUENCES: 3

- **MAJOR:** The orcs are sure you're following them and turn around to stage an ambush. Prepare for a chase or combat!

## COOPERATION

On many occasions, especially in advanced tests, characters will want to work together to work faster and achieve better results. This is not possible in action time, where each individual character's actions are closely tracked.

When characters cooperate on a test, you'll have to decide how helpful working together will be for the action they're attempting together. This leads to the following questions.

### 1. WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CHARACTERS WHO CAN COOPERATE?

If the answer is one, that means the task is suited to only one person at a time. It would be difficult for two people to make picking an ordinary lock easier, and when two people try to catch a falling object, they may want the same result but would make separate attempts. But solving a puzzle or pushing a wagon out of a ditch is something that multiple people can meaningfully cooperate on. Pick a maximum number of participants. Characters in excess of that number don't help and may even hinder the test.



## 2. ARE MULTIPLE FOCUSES POSSIBLE?

If more than one focus applies to a task, you can decide that each person cooperating uses whichever focus they are best at from among those available. Otherwise, all cooperating characters must use the same focus. Two characters rowing a boat must use Constitution (Rowing), but out of three characters trying to decipher a coded book of magic you might allow two to use Cryptography and one to use Arcane Lore, both Intelligence focuses. In some challenge tests, multiple focuses might be mandatory. See **Mandatory and Optional Abilities and Focuses** for more information.

## 3. IS COOPERATION A FORCE-MULTIPLIER, A FINE-TUNING MECHANISM, OR SPECIALIST COLLABORATION?

In some cases, two people work twice as well as one, but in others many people working together are simply more likely to do the same job as a person performing at peak ability. Depending on the answer to this question, use one of the following rules:

- If cooperation is a *force multiplier*, each participant in the test rolls. Note the highest result and add the Stunt Die from every other participant to get the final test result. When this is the case and you expect characters to cooperate, you should set a higher TN than you would for a task one character could finish with reasonable effort. You don't raise the TN *because* multiple people are doing it, but because it's tricky enough multiple people *should* be doing it—the TN would be the same if one person tries to take it on.
- If cooperation *fine-tunes* the result, each participant in the test rolls. Use the highest result from among all participants, but when it comes to measuring the quality of the test, use the highest Stunt Die result from among all rolls.
- If cooperation is *specialist collaboration*, then each participant must succeed at their own individual rolls at least once. This is usually only applied in advanced tests, where each character must succeed with at least one roll. Otherwise, they can trade off who rolls, with each contributing to a common Success Threshold, but they don't help each other with individual rolls.

### EXAMPLE

*Verani, Brigitte, and Najah must lift a collapsed support beam off Alaina, who is pinned. The GM decides the free PCs can all cooperate, and their efforts are a force multiplier. It's a TN 18 Strength (Might) test—it's a heavy pillar. All three players roll the test. Including attribute and focus bonuses, Verani's player scores 7, Brigitte's gets 15, and Najah's player scores 13. Brigitte got the highest result at 15, but then the GM adds Verani's Stunt Die roll of 4, and Najah's Stunt Die roll of 2.  $15 + 4 + 2 = 21$ , which beats the TN. The three heave the pillar out of the way.*

*After that, Verani and Najah work on setting and splinting Alaina's broken leg. The GM rules that only two people can cooperate on the task, so Brigitte doesn't participate, and instead spends the time looking for a safe way out of the collapsed building. The GM decides dealing with Alaina's leg*

*is a TN 12 Intelligence (Healing) test. Including ability and focus modifiers, Verani scores 13, while Najah scores 11. Verani's 13 means they succeed. Even though Najah didn't hit the TN with her result, her Stunt Die result was 5, while Verani's was only 2. The GM uses the 5 to rule how well the duo did. Instead of needing a stretcher, Alaina can hobble while resting on the shoulder of a friend.*

## USING THE RULES TOGETHER

Fantasy AGE rules are modular, building on top of each other. Most of the time, basic tests do everything you need the system to do. The more complicated options should be used to make play easier, not harder.

Consider the example of robbing a fortified tower, or donjon. The most complicated way to do it would be minute by minute or round by round, where the Game Master has to track every individual guard and character action.

Instead, the GM can combine the rules here by, for example, making the infiltration a challenge test that uses specialist collaboration (under **Cooperation**) and multiple mandatory focuses (under **Mandatory and Optional Abilities and Focuses**).

### THE DONJON HEIST

Your heroes infiltrate a tower surrounded by a fortified wall and staffed with guards, with the objective of making it to the chamber at its top.

**SUCCESS THRESHOLD:** 24

**INCREMENT TIME:** 10 minutes

**ABILITY FOCUSES:** Dexterity (Lockpicking) TN 15, Dexterity (Stealth) TN 13, Strength (Climbing) TN 15, Perception (Seeing) TN 13. These are mandatory focuses—at least one character must succeed with each focus, once.

**COOPERATION:** This is a specialist cooperation task. Each participant must succeed at least once and can trade off who rolls for each time increment.

### CONSEQUENCES

- **MINOR:** Someone makes some noise attracting guards or fails to notice guards nearby. Their proximity traps the group in an awkward spot. Someone must succeed at a TN 15 Dexterity (Stealth) test to lead the group to a safer spot, or they automatically waste 10 minutes waiting for a path to clear.

**FAILURES BEFORE MODERATE CONSEQUENCES: 2**

- **MODERATE:** The team has to scramble out of sight or otherwise move fast, and in a moment of clumsiness or inattention, either drop a piece of important equipment or leave someone behind. The person left behind can't aid in the challenge test until they reunite with their comrades.

**FAILURES BEFORE MAJOR CONSEQUENCES: 2**

- **MAJOR:** The guards are on high alert and actively searching for the characters. The donjon raises its defenses—mundane and, perhaps, magical—to repel intruders.





## SPECIAL SITUATIONS IN COMBAT

In most combat encounters a *Fantasy AGE* Game Master will invent a rule based on the ones here during an unusual situation, and that's fine—the Adventure Game Engine is designed for this easy improvisation. Some situations are common enough, or require enough detail, that they merit specific treatment. The following sections cover these.

### MAJOR AND MINOR NPCs

Non-Player Characters in *Fantasy AGE* are divided into two types: major NPCs and minor NPCs. **Major NPCs** are prominent characters in the story and often have a reoccurring role. **Minor NPCs** have a support role, be it as local color or spear carriers. Many minor NPCs won't even have names.

The rules treat major NPCs just like Player Characters. Minor NPCs use the following additional rules.

- **GROUP INITIATIVE:** In combat encounters, break up minor NPCs into groups by type (usually if they all have the same game statistics) and then make an initiative roll for each group instead of each individual. Each member of the group goes, one after the other, when their initiative comes up.
- **SIMPLE DEFEAT:** Upon being dropped to 0 Health, minor NPCs can be instantly killed, rendered Helpless, or rendered Unconscious, as noted under **Simple Defeat** in CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES.

### EXTRAS

Even among minor NPCs some foes are decidedly less important than others. These are **extras**: nameless cultists, less-than elite guards, and petty bandits who can be taken out in an instant by the heroes. Extras get their designation when the story demands it. It's not that they're less competent, but they are at best there to portray a numerous opposition the heroes press through on the way to glory.

Extras have the following characteristics.

- **MINOR NPC:** Extras use the Group Initiative and Simple Defeat rules of other minor NPCs.
- **EASILY DEFEATED:** A successful attack from a non-extra that does damage through an extra's Armor Rating automatically defeats them, dropping them to 0 Health, or demoralizes them so thoroughly that they flee, with effectively the same result. A somewhat less severe variation is that any single attack that inflicts more damage than an extra's Constitution + 1 (minimum 1) has the same effect.
- **HORDE:** A PC or major NPC can attack a number of extras equal to their Dexterity + 1 (minimum 1) with a single Attack action, Melee or Ranged, provided all of the targets are within range of the character's attack. Make one attack and damage roll and apply the results to each extra. Extra attacks gained from stunts and other sources can likewise affect a group of extras, as long as they're equivalent to the Melee Attack or Ranged Attack actions.
- **SIMPLE ATTACKERS:** An extra's attack rolls are simple tests (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) that do not generate stunt points.



## SURPRISE

In combat, attacking first is often the key to victory, which is why ambush is an age-old tactic. At the start of a combat encounter, you must determine if one side gets the drop on the other. Characters that are surprised will not get a chance to act in the first round of combat. Determining surprise is a three-part process:

- **CONSIDER THE SITUATION:** First, determine the basic situation. Is one side concealed or hidden in some way? Is the other side wary or oblivious? Did both sides just blunder into one another by accident?
- **TEST OR NO TEST:** Next, you must decide if one or both sides get a chance to detect the other before contact is made. In some situations, you may decide there is no test. In that case, one side automatically gets the drop on the other. If you decide there is a chance of detection, you can have characters make Perception tests with focuses as appropriate—though Perception (Seeing) is most common. This can be a basic test in which case you assign a TN based on circumstances, or you can make it an opposed test of Perception vs. Dexterity (Stealth). It is possible that some characters will be surprised while others on the same side will not.
- **COMBAT BEGINS:** Everyone rolls for initiative as action time begins and the combat starts. Any characters who were surprised do not get a turn during the first round of the fight. On the second round, everyone gets to function as normal.

The easiest way to deal with surprise is with simple or basic tests. If an enemy is trying to ambush the PCs, for example, choose a TN based on the site they picked and their level of concealment and let each player make a Perception (Seeing) test. Those that fail the test are surprised; those that make it are not. If the PCs are trying to ambush an enemy, roll a Perception (Seeing) test for each major NPC and group of minor NPCs.

### EXAMPLE

*The Warrior Brigitte, the Rogue Najah, and the Mage Varuker are trying to ambush an ogre and three orcs in a mountain pass. They have hidden themselves among the rocks at either side of the pass. The orcs are not expecting trouble here, so they have no one scouting ahead. The GM decides it will take a TN 13 Perception (Seeing) test to notice the ambush. The Game Master rolls once for the ogre and once for the orcs (since the three of them are a group). The ogre gets a 14 and the orcs a 10. Now everyone rolls initiative. During the first round of combat, Brigitte, Najah, and Varuker—and the surprisingly aware ogre—can take turns as normal, but the orcs are confounded by the ambush, and they do not get to act at all.*

## MORALE

Many fights end when the morale of one side breaks and they either flee or surrender. *Fantasy AGE* only rarely calls

for situations which control Player Character behavior, so the following rules are meant for Non-Player Characters. When something might cause a force of NPCs to flee, make a Willpower (Morale) test for them.

On a successful test, the NPCs fight on, but on a failed test, they gain the Frightened condition (see **Conditions**) with respect to the enemies who triggered the test.

When is it appropriate to test morale? That is for the GM to determine based on the circumstances of the combat and the perception of the combatants. The following situations might call for a test with the listed TNs.

- When the side's leader or champion is defeated, or a valued member is captured or held hostage: **TN 11**
- When more than half of the side's combatants are out of the fight (either dead, incapacitated, fleeing, or surrendering): **TN 11**
- When continuing the battle will mean being trapped or surrounded: **TN 15**

The GM can manage the situation one of two ways. They can make one Willpower (Morale) test for the side using the Willpower of its leader (or best available if there is no clear leader). This has the advantage of being simple and can end a combat with one die roll. They might roll once for each major NPC and group of minor NPCs instead. This can mean that some combatants flee while others stay and fight.

Note that for NPCs the characters may meet again, a morale test can also be a horror test against a Threatening phenomenon (see **Horror**). Over time, NPCs who have been shocked and humiliated by PCs may in fact lose control of themselves.

## CHASES

Some action scenes put characters on the move. It's time for a chase: an encounter where one or more characters are trying to get away or reach a specific destination while another character or group of characters try to catch or stop them. They might be leaping over obstacles on foot, tearing through narrow streets in a horse-drawn carriage, or piloting a ship in pursuit of a bandit's skiff.

## CHASE TESTS

When reliant on individual muscle power, chases begin when one character takes the Run action, and at least one other character follows in pursuit. When vehicles are involved, the Full Speed action is the equivalent of Run. Each round, all chase participants must take the Run or Full Speed action and make a chase test based on the method of movement, such as Constitution (Running or Swimming) or Dexterity (Riding). The GM decides on the appropriate ability and focus for a chase test, based on the situation. Characters operating ships would use Dexterity (Sailing).

A chase is a type of challenge test (see **Challenge Tests** in this chapter) where the accumulated degree of success totals from Stunt Die determine the order of the pursued and pursuers, with the highest accumulation in front, and the rest



falling behind. Chase Test rolls can generate stunt points, including for special stunts that apply to chases.

The TN for a chase test depends on the conditions and how difficult it is to maneuver in a given area. Use the **Chase Test Difficulties** table as a guideline. However, common sense, and the Game Master's interpretation of it, reign supreme. A nonmagical boat won't be able to join an overland chase, for instance. The GM can adjust the rules as they please to make sure chases stay plausible.

## TRACKING THE CHASE

First of all, chases do not directly employ Speed (though it does matter greatly) and don't use exact positions on maps. As in other advanced tests, characters keep a running total of the accumulated degrees of success from successful chase tests. This is known as the **Chase Total**. The highest Chase Total is in the lead, and other participants fall behind in order from highest to lowest.

The difference between totals provides an estimate of how far away participants are from each other, as follows:

- Participants with Chase Totals within 10 of each other can attack with ranged weapons at long range.
- Participants with Chase Totals within 5 of each other can make ranged attacks at short range or use spells that affect targets at range. This is usually close enough for participants to speak to each other as well.
- Characters with Chase Totals within 2 of each other may perform melee attacks or collision attacks. They can also physically interact in other ways.

The participants involved and common sense can always lead the Game Master to overrule some types of attacks.

While these relative totals determine whether characters are close enough to deliver these attacks, as Run and Full Speed both use a character's major action, participants can normally only attack using the Attack on the Move stunt (see **Chase Stunts**) or by colliding with an enemy (see **Collisions**, following). Passengers in a vehicle aren't concentrating on keeping it at top speed, so they may freely use their major actions to attack.

## RELATIVE SPEED

Faster chasers naturally have an advantage over slower ones. For every 2 points of Speed a chaser has over the *slowest* participant in the chase, they gain a +1 bonus to the Stunt Die when rolling for chase tests. This bonus is to the *rolled* Stunt Die, meaning it both increases the die roll and the total points that go toward the chaser's Success Threshold. This bonus isn't counted for determining doubles, however.

### EXAMPLE

*Characters with Speed 10, 11, and 13 are engaged in a chase. Najah, with Speed 13, has a +1 Stunt Die bonus to chase tests, having a 3-point Speed advantage over the slowest character. The character with Speed 11 has no modifier. Najah's player rolls Constitution (Running), for which he has a +4 bonus, and rolls 14, with the dice reading 1, 5, and 4 on the Stunt Die.*

## CHASE TEST DIFFICULTIES

CONDITIONS	TARGET NUMBER	EXAMPLE
Ideal	9	A clear, unobstructed path
Average	11	Occasional obstacles or maneuvering
Rough	13	Regular obstacles or maneuvering
Hard	15	Constant obstacles or maneuvering
Almost Impossible	18	Constant maneuvering to avoid dangerous obstacles

*Applying his bonus increases his total roll to 15 and increases his Stunt Die result to 5, giving him 5 points to add to his cumulative Chase Total. But even though he now has two dice with 5, he doesn't get stunt points from doubles.*

## COMPLICATIONS

Characters moving at high speeds during a chase have a chance of going out of control if they fail a chase test, and complications during the chase may impose other adverse conditions. See **Challenge Tests** for other examples.

- **MINOR:** The character, mount, or vehicle experiences some sort of problem, ranging from a pulled hamstring to a torn sail. Increase the chase test target number by +2 unless the character switches methods to get around the problem. For a ship, a TN 13 Intelligence (Engineering) test can eliminate this penalty for rounds equal to the result of the Stunt Die.
- **MODERATE:** The character suffers a serious stumble or spins out of control. This eliminates half of the character's accumulated Chase Total. Alternately, a wrong turn or vehicle trouble prompts a test determined by the GM (typically TN 13) that must be accomplished before the character can resume the chase.
- **MAJOR:** The character loses half their accumulated Chase Total and suffers a crash. See **Crashes**.

## PLANNING A CHASE

Chases work best if handled fairly abstractly. The respective Chase Totals provide the relative positions of the participants. Trying to track the precise distance of all involved just bogs things down. The important things players want to know are the general difficulty of maneuvering and whether their characters are close enough to interact with other participants in the chase. The GM may want to keep track of the types of conditions for the chase, modifying them according to how things unfold, such as if a character leads the chase through more difficult conditions, looking to lose pursuers.

## RESOLVING A CHASE

The Game Master decides when a chase ends, choosing from the following options:



- **SUCCESS THRESHOLD:** Characters who hit the Success Threshold first escape. In the case of multiple participants, characters continue to make chase tests until either all the pursued characters have gotten away, or the first pursuer reaches the Success Threshold, at which point any remaining pursued characters are caught.
- **TIME:** The chase runs for a set number of rounds. In that case, rank the final Chase Totals from highest to lowest (breaking ties with comparative speeds or die rolls). All the pursued characters with Chase Totals higher than all of the pursuers get away. All other pursued characters are caught.
- **CIRCUMSTANCES:** A chase can end for many other reasons, such as a crash, a character disappearing from sight, or attaining an unassailable lead in their Chase Total. This last circumstance occurs when the character with the lead can't be attacked or affected by any other participants and has a Chase Total 12 or more greater than the participant with the next highest total.

### CHASE STUNTS

SP	STUNT
1-3	<b>FASTER:</b> You gain a +1 bonus on your next chase test for each 1 SP you spend.
2	<b>EVASIVE MANEUVER:</b> Until your next turn, attacks against you and your vehicle (if any) suffer a -2 penalty.
2	<b>FOLLOW THE LEADER:</b> Make a test with a TN you choose, and an ability focus you work out with the GM, for pulling off a tricky maneuver, such as Dexterity (Acrobatics) to slip through a small opening on the run, or Dexterity (Riding) to urge your mount over a wall. If you fail, you crash. Anyone following you using the same method of transport must make the same test or crash.
3	<b>ATTACK ON THE MOVE:</b> You can make a bonus melee or ranged attack or make a bonus collision attack (see <b>Collisions</b> ) against an enemy whose Chase Total relative to yours indicates such an attack can be made.
3	<b>KEEP IT STEADY:</b> Until the beginning of your next turn, you and your passengers (if any) gain a +1 bonus when making attacks or making other ability tests that would benefit from a stable platform (leaping from vehicle to vehicle, for example).
4	<b>INTERFERENCE:</b> A character of your choice suffers a -2 penalty on their next chase test.
5	<b>SHORT CUT:</b> Increase your Chase Total by 2.

### CRASH EFFECTS

CURRENT MOVEMENT	DAMAGE	RESIST CRASH
1-10	0	TN 9
11-20	1d3/0	TN 11
21-30	1d6/1d3	TN 13
31-40	2d6/1d6	TN 15
41-50	4d6/2d6	TN 17
51+	6d6/3d6	TN 19

What happens when a chase ends? It depends on the situation. The lead characters escape, or the chase returns to a standard action encounter, such as a combat. The end of a chase may also end action time, leading into an exploration or social encounter. The GM can also decide if the end of a chase imposes any conditions on either the pursuers or the pursued, such as **Fatigued** after a long run.

## CHASE STUNTS

As noted, rolls during a chase that score doubles can generate stunt points, and characters can use SP from other sources to add stunts to the chase. These stunts are usually from the **Chase Stunts** table, though the GM may allow other stunts if they fit the situation.

## CRASHES

In a crash you lose control of yourself, your mount, or your vehicle. That wipes your Chase Total, resetting it to 0 and you must accumulate points once again. In a long chase, this means you might never catch up. You can only crash if you are taking the Full Speed, Run, or Dart actions, or being conveyed by something that is.

Losing control also means you might injure yourself or any passengers. See the **Crash Effects** table.

### CURRENT MOVEMENT

The character, mount, or vehicle's movement in yards per round (usually however fast they can go when using the Run or Full Speed actions) when the crash occurs.

### DAMAGE

Characters who are running, mounted, or passengers on land take this damage. The number before the slash applies to characters on foot, on a mount, or on the outside of a vehicle. The damage after the slash applies to characters inside a cabin. The GM may decide characters in large cabins take more damage. Running and mounted characters, along with their mounts, fall Prone as well. Mounts are usually unable to continue a chase until healed of crash damage.

Flying characters and mounts take falling damage instead, unless they collide with something, in which case they take the listed damage, then fall. If they succeed at their Resist Crash test, they make an immediate landing instead of falling.

Swimming characters and mounts only take the listed damage if they collide with something. Otherwise, the crash just wipes out their Chase Totals. In storm-tossed water or other challenging situations, the GM might ask for a Constitution (Swimming) test to avoid sinking and/or drowning.

Watercraft themselves only take damage from a collision, but in most cases list dangerously. Characters on the outside of the vessel must make a Resist Crash test to avoid falling into the water unless they're secured with a rope or too far from the edge. On a large vessel, characters not in danger of falling on the water tumble across the deck, taking crash damage.



## RESIST CRASH

A successful test to resist a crash at the listed TN halves the damage from a crash, and allows characters caught in one to avoid other ill effects, though it doesn't prevent the Chase Total from dropping to 0. The type of test depends on the means of travel.

- **RUNNING OR FLYING:** The test is a Dexterity (Acrobatics) test. Success halves damage. If you are flying under your own power, you immediately land instead of falling.
- **MOUNTED:** The test is a Dexterity (Riding) test. Success halves damage to you and your mount. If the mount is flying, it lands immediately instead of falling.
- **LAND VEHICLE:** The test is a Strength (Driving) test. Success halves damage to you, to your beasts of burden, and to your passengers. Your passengers may also make Dexterity (Acrobatics) tests to further reduce damage by half. Round down halved damage.
- **WATERCRAFT:** The test is a Dexterity (Sailing) test. Success halves damage to you and your passengers and removes any threat of being thrown overboard. Your passengers may also make Dexterity (Acrobatics) tests to reduce damage by half, cumulative with your test.

## COLLISIONS

A collision occurs when someone or something using the Full Speed, Run, or Dart actions crashes into something or someone else. If you collide with something moving toward you, both participants take damage based on the total Speed in yards of both, added together. Collision damage is usually folded into crash damage, but the GM can raise or lower the amount based on whatever you collide with. Hitting a steel pole might cause more damage while colliding with a cart full of pillows could lead to less.

If you weren't involved in a crash before a collision, a collision may cause one, at the GM's discretion.

You can intentionally collide with another creature or vehicle. This takes the form of the following actions.

### BUMP

### MINOR ACTION

A bump is designed to do little damage but force its target to crash. You must be close enough to deliver a melee attack (or vehicular equivalent). As a minor action, make a test related to your method of travel, such as Dexterity (Riding) for a mount or Constitution (Running) on foot. In a chase, this must succeed against the chase test TN. Your target must succeed at an opposed roll related to their method of travel, or crash.

### RAM

### MAJOR ACTION

In a Ram attack, you or your vehicle smash into a target with as much force as you can muster. You may intentionally collide with someone or something as a major action. You must be close enough to deliver a melee attack (or vehicular





equivalent). This is an attack roll against another character or creature, but a roll related to your method of travel, as with a Bump, against targets without Defense ratings. If you do not employ an attack roll, your target must succeed at an opposed roll related to their method of travel. If you succeed, you and your target crash, but you add half your Speed in yards to your target's to determine the crash's effects.

## HAZARDS

In both action and exploration scenes, characters may encounter all kinds of dangers other than blades, arrows, and spells. In most adventures traps, falling, fire, and other perils challenge heroes as well.

All of these things fall under the general header of "hazards."

*Fantasy AGE* handles hazards with a simple system that can be used to simulate everything from pit traps to drowning. Published adventures will define hazards for you, but when you need to adjudicate them answer the following questions.

### WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE HAZARD?

Describe the nature of the hazard in a general way. It could be a treacherous pathway leading up the side of a mountain, a raging forest fire, or a tripwire that triggers a dart attack.

### CAN IT BE AVOIDED?

A well-designed hazard can be avoided with a combination of caution and clever thinking. It's a good idea to avoid the safe-looking highly visible path toward a fortress whose masters are expecting infiltrators, for example. Some hazards can be spotted before they strike. This requires a Perception (Searching) test when characters actively seek out things like traps, or a Perception test related to whatever senses the hazard would stimulate.

Failing that, some hazards can be avoided just before they strike, through agility or quickness represented by a Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Dexterity (Initiative) test, respectively. Some hazards can be shrugged off through sheer muscle power or toughness, represented by Strength (Might) and Constitution (Stamina). Other ability tests might be used to evade a hazard as well. It all depends on what the hazard represents. Generally, rolls to avoid hazards are simple tests and generate no stunt points, though the GM can always make an exception. In all cases, the GM sets the Target Number for the test, though if the hazard is a trap set by someone else the TN is often whatever that person rolled to build it.

HAZARD CATEGORY		
CATEGORY	DAMAGE	EXAMPLE
Minor Hazard	1d6	Stepping on caltrops
Moderate Hazard	2d6	Falling 20 feet
Major Hazard	4d6	Covered in flaming oil
Arduous Hazard	6d6	Falling 40 feet
Harrowing Hazard	8d6	Cave-In
Murderous Hazard	10d6	Falling 100 feet

### HOW DANGEROUS IS THE HAZARD?

The **Hazard Category** table lists hazard damage based on intensity. This determines the base damage the hazard inflicts. You might decide, for example, that falling from the top of a guard tower is a major hazard, so that would inflict 4d6 damage. Hazards that inflict more than 10d6 damage should be exceedingly rare.

You can also allow an ability test to mitigate the damage from the hazard. A good standard is that a successful test means the character only suffered half damage (rounded down). The PC falling from the tower, for example, could be given a chance to make a TN 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) test to halve the damage.

You also need to decide if armor protects against the hazard. If it does not, the hazard inflicts penetrating damage. Common sense should dictate whether armor is a help in a given situation. You can see, for example, how armor could protect a character from a falling rock, but not from lightning.

### DOES IT HAVE ANY SPECIAL EFFECTS?

Some hazards do more than just inflicting damage. They might impose a temporary penalty to ability tests or to Speed. In many cases, special effects can be handled with conditions (see **Conditions** in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**). Try to remember that Health is fairly abstract in the first place, so many hazards require no special effects.

### HOW LONG DOES IT LAST?

Many hazards happen once and then end. A dart trap, for example, will fire once when triggered. Other hazards can be ongoing. Characters running through a blazing forest will take damage each round until they escape. Again, use common sense as your guide to determine whether the hazard is a single incident or reoccurring.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Here are three sample hazards. You'll find more in published *Fantasy AGE* adventures.

### PIT TRAP

A section of corridor falls away when enough pressure is put upon it, dropping the unlucky victim into a pit 15 feet deep. If the triggering character makes a successful TN 12 Perception (Touching) test, they feel the floor starting to give way and can step back before falling in. Otherwise, they fall and take 2d6 penetrating damage (a moderate hazard). A successful TN 11 Dexterity (Acrobatics) test halves the damage.

### THE BURNING INN

During the night, unknown villains pour oil all over the lower floor of the inn where the PCs are sleeping and set the place alight. The characters wake up to the smell of smoke as fire quickly engulfs the inn. They can try to escape down the stairs and through the common room. However, each round they take 4d6 damage (a major hazard), and their Speed is



halved because the smoke makes it hard to see where to go. They could also leap from the window of their room but the distance and the fire on the lower floors makes this another major hazard that inflicts 4d6 penetrating damage. A successful TN 11 Dexterity (Acrobatics) test halves the damage. Do the PCs dash through the inn, potentially taking damage over several rounds but enjoying the protection of their armor, or do they make the jump to freedom and hope the penetrating damage isn't too bad?

### THE RUSHING RIVER

A PC must swim across a rushing river to deliver a vital message. The river is swift and there are rocks beneath the surface that make the crossing more perilous. They must make an advanced test with a Success Threshold of 7 (see **Advanced Tests**). Each round the character must take a TN 13 Constitution (Swimming) test. If they succeed, the result of the Stunt Die counts toward the Success Threshold. If they fail, they take 2d6 damage from the rocks and/or inhaled water. They keep making tests until they make it across or are reduced to 0 Health.

### OPTIONAL

## HORROR

In some campaigns, fear and reality-distorting forces are as dangerous as physical wounds, if not more so. In Freeport, the pernicious influence of the Yellow Sign and the entities it represents start by breaking victims' perception of reality. Those who witness such terrors see afterimages of them, devise strange rituals to comfort themselves, or retreat into alternative realities of the mind. Mundane disturbances can also affect a character's relationship with reality. Grisly scenes, pursuit by slaving monsters—these can have persistent effects as well. All of these are sources of horror.

In game terms, horror is a type of hazard that affects the psyche more than the body. Horror causes fear or confusion, followed by the possibility of gaining **distortions**, depending on how well the character resists the shock of a horrific experience.

## THE HORROR TEST

When the Game Master decides a horrific event has occurred, they call for a horror test for all who witness it. A horror test is a Willpower test, with both the focus used and the result of success or failure, depending on the nature of the horror—whether it's Unnatural, Revelatory, Threatening, or Vile. A given source of horror usually fits into more than one category, but the GM should still pick one that cleaves closest to the horror's nature, even if only by a hair's breadth.

A horror test's TN is based on the intensity of the situation as measured by the **Horror Tests** table or decided upon by the GM. However, the GM can always decide whether something calls for a horror test or not, even if it appears here as an example of a horrific event, to properly fit the mood of the campaign.

## HORROR PARAMETERS

The horror rules in this section not only model the stresses of encountering bizarre creatures and phenomena, but the possible fallout from less exotic stresses, such as combat and disgusting environments. As GM, you must decide which phenomena triggers the horror rules, and which don't. For example, in a campaign where heroes take on the cults of unspeakable beings with swords in hand, you may rule that combat and scenes of carnage don't trigger these rules, but that foul beings from strange spheres and the reality twisting rites of certain mystics do.

The easiest way to customize this is to decide certain types of horrors from the four defined here—the Unnatural, the Revelatory, the Threatening, and the Vile—don't invoke these rules. In the example campaign above, where only the supernatural provokes horror, the Threatening and the Vile don't have any of the effects listed in this section, beyond ordinary fear and revulsion.

### HORROR TESTS

TN	INTENSITY	EXAMPLE
9	Startling	Blood pooled around where a corpse was. ( <i>Vile</i> )
11	Unnerving	The creaking walls appear to say, "Get Out." ( <i>Unnatural</i> )
13	Disturbing	Having killed your companion, enemies now outnumber you 2 to 1 ( <i>Threatening</i> )
15	Arduous	A shapeshifter has been impersonating someone you love ( <i>Revelatory</i> )
17	Harrowing	Trapped in a chamber full of mutilated corpses ( <i>Vile</i> )
19	Mind-Cracking	The archdemon that ends the world arrives ( <i>Unnatural</i> )
21	Annihilating	Looking into Void, the Master of the Yellow Sign looks back ( <i>Revelatory</i> )

### THE UNNATURAL

### WILLPOWER (COURAGE)

Disturbing supernatural phenomena such as dark magic and entities empowered by it.

**HORROR TEST FAILURE:** Confused

### THE REVELATORY

### WILLPOWER (FAITH)

Disturbing insights about oneself, one's society, the supernatural, or the nature of the cosmos itself.

**HORROR TEST FAILURE:** Confused

### THE THREATENING

### WILLPOWER (MORALE)

Situations that make characters feel powerless and in danger, such as disease, disaster, and overpowering enemies.

**HORROR TEST FAILURE:** Frightened

### THE VILE

### WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)

Scenes that evoke disgust or fear primarily due to their material forms. This is the category of charnel houses and torture chambers.

**HORROR TEST FAILURE:** Frightened





## HORROR TEST RESULTS

If you succeed at a horror test, you may be rattled, but don't suffer its full effects. If you fail, you gain the condition noted for the horror type: Confused or Frightened. The condition's duration lasts for 2d6 rounds.

When the condition expires, you must make a second horror test to see if there are any lasting effects. If the source of the horror is no longer present, you gain a +1 bonus to this second test. Other circumstances can increase this bonus, up to a +3 or higher (or even automatic success if the GM chooses) if you defeated or eradicated the source of the horror. If you fail the test, you gain a distortion: a view of reality that most people would consider inaccurate, or a compulsion that might cause problems.

### DISTORTIONS

Numerous forms of distortions exist. The **Sample Distortions** presented following provide a starting point. The Game Master picks a distortion to fit the horror that triggered it.

Distortions come in four degrees: transitory, short term, long term, and indefinite. This measures how long the distortion lasts, as follows:

- **1<sup>ST</sup> DEGREE—TRANSITORY DISTORTION:** The distortion's effects last for 1d6 hours.
- **2<sup>ND</sup> DEGREE—SHORT-TERM DISTORTION:** The distortion's effects last for 1d6 days.

- **3<sup>RD</sup> DEGREE—LONG TERM DISTORTION:** The distortion's effects last for 1d6 weeks.
- **4<sup>TH</sup> DEGREE—INDEFINITE DISTORTION:** The distortion lasts until removed.

When you first gain a distortion, it's transitory—1<sup>st</sup> degree. When the distortion finishes its duration, make a third horror test, this time with a flat +2 bonus. If you succeed the distortion passes. If you fail it merely becomes *permanent*, but dormant. It manifests again, for a duration based on its degree, whenever you encounter a horror of the same type or the GM feels a situation similar to the one which prompted the distortion comes up.

### SAMPLE DISTORTIONS

#### ECCENTRIC

Your personality has changed. The old you? Submerged, too difficult to deal with, and perhaps even a danger to others. The new you? Well, that may be rough around the edges and given to odd habits, but you'll take anything to get away from who you once were.

#### MARKED

Whatever's behind the incident knows all about you. It or its agents follow you. They're planning something, and your days are numbered. You've seen glimpses and heard whispers of the plot against you. Why hasn't anyone else? You might surrender to your doom or load up with everything you need to fight.



## OBSESSIVE

Something you saw just won't leave your head. It could be the missing person in a gruesome serial murder investigation or the toy piano in that haunted house. You make every effort to study your obsession. You collect mementos and follow people related to it.

## OMINOUS

You have a sense of doom, and the signs are all around you. You're fated to come across symbols of your disastrous future. Perhaps self-sabotage is better than letting *them* get to you.

## PESSIMISTIC

You failed to handle the reality in front of you and know you're not ready for the challenges ahead. You can argue for your own inferiority in detail, though you may not be alone but one of many worms writhing beneath the harsh light of a greater truth.

## PRESENCE

You see entities nobody else seems to notice. The phenomenon is consistent. You may be able to identify paranormal species or even specific individuals. Are they hiding from everyone else, or have you been granted the gift of being able to see them?

## QUIET

There's no way to relay what you've experienced and who you are now to anyone else. You're done with communicating unless it's an absolute emergency.

## RITUALISTIC

You came out of your experience knowing how to ward off the danger. You may need special equipment, words, gestures, or a sacred place, but once you organize the necessary forces your personal ritual works. It doesn't matter if other people are skeptical.

## SENSORY

You *know* things are present that nobody else can detect. You see, hear, and feel them. You have trouble telling the difference between the things only you sense and the reality shared by others.

## TRANSFORMATIVE

You are *changing*. Your body looks increasingly unnatural to you. New parts manifest, and familiar flesh warps or vanishes. Are other people seeing this? Are you frightened, or do you hail your glorious, hideous transformation? The GM decides.

## UTOPIAN

What you experienced must be an exception to the order of things. The world is destined to become a better place: a bright

future of the golden age, come again. You often fantasize about it. You might even think our shared reality is a dirty blanket concealing a true world of good people and Elysian splendor.

## ACCUMULATING DISTORTIONS

If failed horror tests lead to you gaining a distortion and you already have one that's active or permanent, the GM decides whether your existing distortion gains a degree or you gain a new distortion. If your prior distortion is permanent, but increased by a new horror, when you make a horror test at the end of its manifestation, this determines whether the new degree is permanent—if not, the distortion remains permanent at its previous degree, but becomes dormant. If the source of the increase is a different form of horror, this becomes the trigger for future manifestations.

If you gain a new distortion, it follows the rules for a new distortion as laid out previously.

## LOST TO HORROR

If a character accumulates five degrees of permanent distortions (across any number of distortions) they're lost to horror. They can no longer act according to consistent, meaningful motives—except, perhaps, for the motives of entities who seek out those with shattered minds to use as servants, heralds, and playthings.

## REMOVING DISTORTIONS

Since five degrees of permanent distortions ends a character, players will naturally want to know how to eliminate them. The Game Master decides if this is possible. We suggest the following options.

### MAGIC

Some spells and supernatural qualities may heal a character of distortions or reduce their severity.

### PEACE AND COUNSELING

A sufferer may perform an advanced Willpower (Self-Discipline) test with a time increment of 1 week to reduce their total permanent distortions by one degree. The Success Threshold is equal to their total distortion degrees  $\times 3$ . Once successful, the character may repeat the process for the next degree, attempting multiple advanced tests over many weeks. Each test requires a peaceful environment. Any week featuring stress is one where test rolls can't be performed, and any exposure to the source of the character's horror undoes any accumulated progress on a single test. Another character may provide spiritual counseling using Communication (Investigation) or Intelligence (Healing) to make this a cooperative advanced test where the therapist is a force multiplier.

### MEANINGFUL JOURNEYS

The GM may design adventures where a drop in horror rating is a reward. These are journeys to confront the horror, symbolically or literally. Each stage may reduce one of the character's distortions by 1 degree.





## OPTIONAL

# PERIL

In *Fantasy AGE* adventures, the player characters face ever-increasing challenges—more powerful enemies, more dangerous traps, and more perilous hazards. A well-crafted story provides just enough challenge to keep the players on their toes. However, sometimes no matter how well you do, things just go wrong. Peril introduces a new element where each success increases the risk to the characters. It's not exactly a rule of storytelling that every triumph should precede a new, greater barrier to success, but it makes for interesting problems, interesting solutions—and tragic failures.

The following Peril system provides a way to ratchet up challenges in response to character success and story progress.

## THE PERIL POOL

To use Peril in the game, the GM keeps track of what's called the *Peril Pool*. It represents a buildup of events occurring during an adventure, where every twist and turn adds weight to the story, filling a cauldron of fickle fate and hidden challenge, which eventually boils over.

At the beginning of each adventure, the Peril Pool starts at 0. Add 1 to the Peril Pool each time one of the following events occurs:

- A player succeeds on an ability test and rolls a 6 on the Stunt Die
- A player spends 4 or more stunt points to perform stunts in a single round
- The characters successfully defeat an encounter or hazard
- The group completes a section of the adventure



You can find a reproducible Peril Pool tracker sheet in the back of this book.

## ACTIVATING PERIL

As the Peril Pool hits 10, 20, and 30, Peril may *activate*. To see if it does, and what the effects are, roll 1d6 and consult the **Peril Activation** table.

Each Peril stage represents a progressively greater degree of adversity or the chance of an unfortunate reversal, ranging from Stage 1 (**Minor**) to Stage 3 (**Major**). The GM chooses an effect from the **Peril Effects** table when Peril activates for a given stage.

### EXAMPLE

*As GM, Amy has been tracking the characters' triumphs and good fortune, increasing the Peril Pool accordingly. When the pool hit 10, she rolled 1d6, but scored a 5, indicating nothing happened, and the pool would keep accumulating. After the characters defeat a pack of bandits who tried to waylay them on the way into town, Amy notes the pool has increased to 20, prompting another 1d6 roll, where she scores a 1, activating a Moderate Peril effect. Brandes starts investigating the bandits further. Where is their camp located? But when Brandes asks regular informant Tregor the Merchant about it, the man says, "I'm not supposed to talk to you," and stares straight ahead. Tregor's Open attitude has worsened to Standoffish. Amy decides this is because Dougan the Red, the bandit leader, has made it known that anyone who talks about them will be punished.*



PERIL ACTIVATION		
PERIL POOL	D6 ROLLS 1-3	D6 ROLLS 4-6
10	Stage 1 <b>Minor</b> Effect; Pool Resets to 0	No Effect; Pool Does Not Decrease
20	Stage 2 <b>Moderate</b> Effect; Pool Resets to 0	No Effect; Pool Does Not Decrease
30	Stage 3 <b>Major</b> Effect; Pool Resets to 0	

## DESIGNING YOUR OWN EFFECTS

The **Peril Effects** table serves as a guideline. Feel free to design other Peril effects which compare to those listed in the table. For example, instead of a hazard, you might decide the effect calls adversaries to confront the characters or makes existing adversaries more powerful—or even makes dire enemies out of people the characters don't know (e.g., "Didn't you kill my brother?").

One last thing, Peril effects never lead to automatic failure. They make existing tasks harder or add extra challenges, but they never totally shut the door to victory. The slimmest chance of success is still interesting, and in any event, the rules for Daring, the companion system for Peril, rely on success still being an option.

## PICKING & DESCRIBING EFFECTS

You should always be prepared to justify Peril effects in the game. Minor effects can usually be blamed on bad luck, but others should tie in to the ongoing story, even if they relate to elements the players may not be aware of. Justifying Peril gives you an opportunity to add more detail to scenes or develop your backstory. For example, suppose an additional hazard is generated in a cave. In that case, it could mean the passageway is unsafe—perhaps the walls are unstable, or there is a noxious gas present.

Some Peril effects arise due to deliberate actions from NPCs or precautions they've taken, which Peril triggers. For example, an effect which worsens a relationship with an NPC may represent blackmail material or an enemy's sway on that NPC. In combat, sudden bad weather could turn a mountain path treacherous or otherwise make combat more difficult.

Peril effects may require a bit of retroactive justification, but you should avoid contradicting any of the reliable information characters have on hand. It's fine to decide a dungeon had a secret room or an NPC was lying, but it's not such a good idea to say there were extra guards after the characters specifically scouted the area for them and solidly succeeded in doing so.

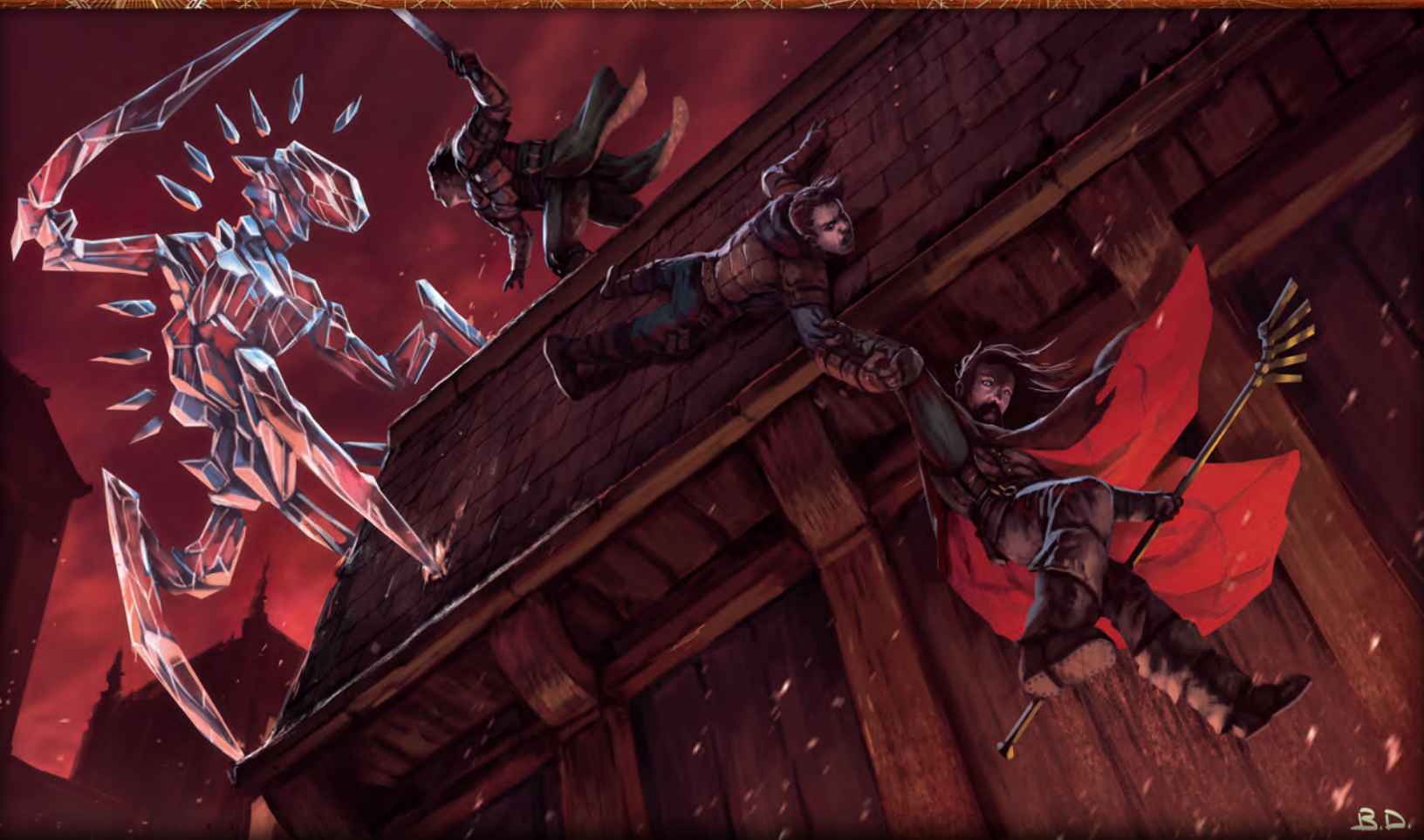
## THE STORY WITHIN THE PERIL

Another way to utilize Peril effects is to plan for when they may occur. You can even tailor your own effects directly to the story or game you're running, using the Peril Effects table as a guideline. These rules are meant primarily to add flavor, challenge, and additional story elements for the enjoyment of everyone at the table. You may even wish to

PERIL EFFECTS	
STAGE	EFFECT
1	<b>MINOR EFFECTS ARE POSSIBLE.</b> Pick one of the following: <b>TEST:</b> +2 to the next test's difficulty, or success requires an additional test using another ability. A failed test brings about a new minor hazard. <b>HAZARD:</b> A hazard's lethality increases by 1d6 damage or includes an additional ill effect. <b>INVESTIGATION:</b> It takes an additional test or special circumstance to unlock a clue. <b>SOCIAL:</b> An NPC's attitude drops one step out of the characters' favor or can only be maintained by satisfying some odd or awkward desire.
	<b>MODERATE EFFECTS ARE POSSIBLE.</b> Pick any two Minor effects or just one of the following: <b>TEST:</b> +4 to the next test's difficulty, or success requires an additional test using another ability at +2 to the difficulty. A failed test brings about a new moderate hazard. <b>HAZARD:</b> A hazard's lethality increases by 2d6 damage or includes an additional serious ill effect.
	<b>INVESTIGATION:</b> Opposing forces are alerted to the investigation and misdirect it so an additional lead/clue must be investigated to progress. <b>SOCIAL:</b> An NPC's attitude drops two steps out of the characters' favor or can only be maintained by performing a difficult task. An NPC learns a secret detrimental to the PCs. The PCs make a new minor enemy.
2	<b>MAJOR EFFECTS ARE POSSIBLE.</b> Pick any two Moderate effects or just one of the following: <b>TEST:</b> The test can only succeed at a significant price, sacrificing lives, Resources, or social standing. At its worst, the character attempting the test may be killed or captured. Note this is an additional risk, outside of the standard risks the test might normally impose, and failure must impose a different bad circumstance, so the test remains worth doing. For example, a character might need to hold a door closed against enemies or a wall of water, so allies can escape. <b>HAZARD:</b> Surviving the hazard leads to an even more dangerous situation, such as a worse hazard or an encounter with adversaries.
	<b>INVESTIGATION:</b> The investigation leads to a trap, where characters might be attacked by enemies who have prepared an ambush, framed for a crime or other violation, or otherwise seriously harmed.
	<b>SOCIAL:</b> An NPC with a favorable attitude becomes Hostile or one with an unfavorable attitude becomes Very Hostile. An NPC learns a secret which could lead to serious effects, such as being hunted by the authorities or rejected by loved ones (with a consequent modification to any Relationships, Memberships, and titles).
3	

provide additional rewards if heroes prevail in the face of a Peril. If you use the instant experience points option in **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**, each rank of Peril corresponds to the suggested instant reward.





## OPTIONAL

# DARING

Daring is the flip side of Peril. In the dramatic rhythm of the campaign, Daring represents the tendency for a situation to eventually come around in the characters' favor *because* they take risks, endure setbacks, and toss themselves into danger. They might stumble in a chase, or get staggered by a blow in combat, but when they recover, it's time for heroics.

## THE DARING POOL

Like Peril, Daring requires the GM to track an ongoing total called the *Daring Pool*. Insults, injuries, slipups, and bad luck increase the pool.

At the beginning of each adventure, the Daring Pool starts at 0. Add 1 to the Daring Pool each time one of the following events occurs:

- A player fails an ability test and rolls a 1 on the Stunt Die
- A player fails an ability test where they were entitled to reroll due to a beneficial circumstance such as a talent
- A character's Health drops below half its usual total
- A character's Health drops to 0 (if the cause of this also dropped the character's Health below half, add +1 to the pool for that circumstance as well)
- A character is incapacitated, captured, held hostage, or otherwise unable to act (if this happened due to any

of the other situations listed here, such as having their Health drop to 0, add +1 per applicable event)

- The group completes a section of the adventure
- A character suffers another significant indignity, such as a loss of Membership ranks, a Relationship gone sour, or a significant, permanent drop in Resources
- Finally, if a character dies or is otherwise permanently removed from play, add 6 to the Daring Pool.

As with the Peril system, you can find a reproducible Daring Pool tracker sheet in the back of this book.

## TRACKING DARING WITH DICE

Track the Daring Pool with six-sided dice. You don't roll these dice, and you should separate them from the dice you use for tests, damage, and other game functions. Instead, leave them on the table, visible to your players, and turn the face to the current number on the pool. Start with one die. Once you accumulate more than 6 points, add another die and turn its face to list the remainder. The Daring Pool can accumulate a maximum of 18 points, noted with three six-sided dice, each with its 6 face up.

Daring Pool dice should always be arranged by value, with the highest value on the left, the second highest in the middle, and the lowest on the right. As explained in **Active Dice and Using the Daring Pool**, players can only spend Daring from dice that have the 6 face up, always starting from the leftmost die and moving right. Afterward, if this changes which Daring



## RESTING AND RESETTING RHYTHM

You may not want to use Perils and Daring all the time, for a few good reasons. First, campaign pacing often requires neutral moments, so rising tension and exceptional action truly have a chance to shine. While you want every game session to be enjoyable, it's also true that when every session is special in some way, the charm of individual moments might be diminished. In other words, you might want to give these systems a rest, sometimes, to concentrate on core *Fantasy AGE* play.

In the case of Perils, you might decide a Minor effect doesn't justify a rest, while a Moderate effect neutralizes this system for a game session or two, and a Major effect may prompt a rest lasting three or four sessions. You simply set aside the progress of Peril for that period, leaving it fixed. In the case of Daring, you might set aside the rules for a period after every player has had a chance to spend points from the Daring Pool.

There are also times when, to keep things simple, you want to reset everything to a baseline. In addition, jumps in time, or the commencement of a new storyline, may prompt a reset of both systems to 0, and run a session or two where the rules are set aside, while you and your players ease into new events.

Beyond these guidelines, you can always use your best judgment. Assess how players feel and the current tone of the campaign. You might decide that you never want to rest or reset these systems and that they'll always influence the course of events. It's up to you.

Pool die is highest, rearrange the remaining dice in order of highest, then second highest, then lowest. If a die falls to 0, remove it and rearrange the rest.

When the group accumulates Daring, also start with the leftmost die, moving right as each die reaches its maximum of 6.

### OPTION: PLAYERS TRACK DARING

Since the Daring Pool is an advantage for Player Characters with no secret elements, the GM may wish to leave it to the players to point out occasions where a pool increase is warranted. If you go this route, explain, and perhaps display, the rules for pool increases, and when an opportunity for an increase comes up, a player must point this out. If you agree, apply the increase. This gives you one less thing to track, and while it adds something for players to manage, it is to their advantage to do it. In a game where you strongly trust your players to properly track the pool, you might eventually leave it for them to manage without asking for your approval—though you always have the right to reverse their decisions.

You may also decide that players may change the order in which they spend and “fill” Daring Pool dice, though only dice which are active, with the 6 face up, may be spent regardless. This doesn't break the system and lets players potentially strategize how to accumulate Daring.

### ACTIVE DICE AND USING THE DARING POOL

When a die in the Daring Pool is a 6, it's **active**. That means players can make use of it by spending up to 6 of its points—points we simply call Daring (as in, “I spend 5 Daring”). When a die has less than 6, its points cannot be spent. When players spend Daring, turn the die to the face equal to the remaining number of points. For instance, if a player spends 3 Daring, the die drops from 6 to 3. If this makes it lower than a die to the right of it, shuffle the order of dice so that the highest remaining die is on the left, the next highest is in the middle, and the lowest is on the right, as per **Tracking Daring with Dice** (see the previous section).

## THE RHYTHM OF ACTION

The Perils and Daring systems aren't for every campaign. Under their influence, events follow the rules of dramatic action. Success foreshadows greater challenges to come, and the greatest victories take place after a period of adversity. This doesn't fit the philosophy of every GM. If you would rather let the dice fall where they may and let them totally dictate story events or prefer to moderate the rules in a more free-form fashion to produce story arcs, these rules may not be for you.

Players can spend Daring on the following, but the number of points they can spend is often fixed, with a minimum and maximum. This is because Daring expenditures represent dramatic turns in the heroes' favor, not slight advantages to be doled out here and there, with a ceiling because coming back from an ill turn can only benefit heroes so much.

Consider, then, the following uses for Daring.

### DEGREES OF SUCCESS

Increase the character's degree of success on an action by the Daring spent. This must increase the degree of success by a minimum of 2 (by spending 2 Daring), and the maximum degree of success (equal to the total of the Stunt Die + Daring points + other bonuses) is 10.

### STUNT POINTS WITH DOUBLES

If the character gains stunt points from doubles, the player can increase the amount on a 1 for 1 basis, but they must spend a minimum of 2 Daring (for +2 SP) and can only increase the total of SP from doubles + SP from spent Daring to a maximum of 8 SP, total.

This stacks with other sources of SP besides doubles. Remember, however, that Stunt Attacks and doubles do not stack, per **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**.

### STUNT POINTS WITHOUT DOUBLES

The player can spend 3 or 6 Daring for an equal number of stunt points on a test that can make use of stunts, as long as



## DARING AND DIVINITY

If you use the optional rules for **Divine Magic** in CHAPTER 5: **MAGIC**, be aware that stunt points earned from Daring cannot be spent on Divine Stunts. The rules-based reason for this is that it would make the miracles represented by those stunts too common. The metaphysical reason is that Divine Stunts are ultimately inspired by faith, not a bounce back from bad luck. Belief in a divine patron is distinct from the gambler's belief that their luck will come around.

the test did *not* score doubles. This stacks with Stunt Attacks and other sources of SP besides doubles.

### SECOND WIND

The player can regain 6 Health by spending 6 Daring. This can revive a character at 0 Health who isn't dead.

### SHARING IS DARING

Finally, the Daring Pool is intended for every player in the group to use. For that reason, no player can spend points from the pool again until every other player has done so.

#### EXAMPLE

*The heroes have been finding their fight against the Cult of the Drowned Mariner an arduous one, experiencing several brushes with death and near-ruin along the way. In the process they've accumulated 10 Daring: one die at 6, and one die at 4. The die with the 6 is active because of its value and thus, can be spent.*

*They launch their final assault on the cult's secret temple, aiming to destroy them once and for all. When the cult summons a horror called the Bloated One, Farhan the Warrior charges in, scoring a 14 with his attack: a hit! He had a +4 bonus to the test, and his attack roll dice came up as 6, 1, and 4, so he didn't score doubles. Instead, Farhan draws upon 6 Daring to produce 6 SP to use on Lethal Blow (5 SP) and a 2-yard Skirmish (1 SP) to stay out of the Bloated One's reach. The Daring Pool is now 4, on a single die that isn't active, so it can't be spent yet.*

*The Bloated One reels from the blow – and stretches one of its waterlogged limbs, softened bones cracking, to strike Farhan anyway. This knocks him below half his total Health, so the Daring Pool increases by 1, to 5. When Farhan's companion, the Envoy Rissa, misses an attack with a 1 on the Stunt Die, the Daring Pool increases again, to 6. The die is active again and its Daring can be spent, but not by Farhan.*

*Fortunately, Rissa hasn't spent Daring in a while, and when her attack succeeds with a 13 (4, 4, and 4 on the Stunt Die, with a +1 bonus), she spends 4 Daring to gain +4 SP, for a total of 8 (the maximum she can gain). She opts for Mighty Blow (2 SP) and Lethal Blow (5 SP), finishing with Stay Aware (1 SP) to see if she can learn more about the Bloated One, even as her blade cleaves deeply into it, sending it crashing down. The Daring Pool drops to 2 and is inactive again.*

## OPTIONAL

## FORTUNE

**Fortune** is an alternative to the usual Health rules in *Fantasy AGE*. With Fortune, a character's "Health" represents how important they are *to the story* and therefore their likelihood to avoid significant injury and to succeed when they need to. Fortune makes characters a bit more heroic and actual injuries a bit more significant.

The first step to using Fortune in your game is simple: Rename your character's "Health" rating "Fortune." Assume all rules for Health instead apply to Fortune, except for what's laid out in this section.

### FORTUNE ADVANCEMENTS

If you use Fortune, it starts out equal to your character's Health, having been converted from it. For each level they gain past 1, your character gains an additional 4 + Constitution Fortune. If their Constitution changes, raise or lower past and current Fortune advancements accordingly.

### FORTUNE AND DAMAGE

When damage gets past your character's armor, it doesn't reduce their Fortune. Instead, characters can spend points from their Fortune total to eliminate damage on a 1-to-1 basis: 1 Fortune removes 1 point of damage. If the damage is reduced to 0, the attack has no effect beyond the merely cosmetic; it might rip the character's clothing or muss their hair, or perhaps even leave a slight bruise, but nothing more than that.

If any damage remains after you've had a chance to spend Fortune to reduce it, you can take the Injured or Wounded conditions to further reduce the remaining damage. These are new conditions, used with the Fortune rules and described in this section.

- If the character accepts an **Injured** condition, the remaining damage is reduced by 1d6. If any damage remains, or the character is already Injured, the character must accept a Wounded condition or be Defeated.
- If the character accepts a **Wounded** condition, any remaining damage is further reduced by 1d6. If any damage remains, the character is Defeated.

Once a character has the Wounded condition, any unreduced damage that gets past their Armor Rating Defeats them.

#### INJURED

You suffer a moderate physical injury.

**EFFECT:** An Injured character takes a -1 penalty to all tests and is unable to take the Charge or Run actions.

An Injured character who receives an additional Injured condition is Wounded. The effects of the Wounded condition replace those of the Injured condition. Once you lose the Wounded condition, the Injured condition resumes until it is successfully removed.



**RECOVERY:** A full day (24 hours) after gaining the Injured condition, you can begin an advanced Constitution (Stamina) test, with an additional roll every 24 hours that passes. When you reach Success Threshold 5, you remove the Injured condition.

## WOUNDED

You suffer a significant physical injury.

**EFFECT:** A Wounded character is severely injured. They have a -2 penalty to all tests. Their Speed is halved, and they're unable to take the Charge or Run actions.

A character can only gain this condition after suffering the Injured condition, and the effects of the Wounded condition replace those of the Injured condition. A Wounded character who takes additional damage or receives an additional Injured or Wounded condition takes a Defeat Condition instead.

**RECOVERY:** A full day (24 hours) after gaining the Wounded condition, you can begin an advanced Constitution (Stamina) test, with an additional roll every 24 hours that passes. When you reach Success Threshold 15, you replace the Wounded condition with the Injured condition, which you may continue to recover from, starting a new advanced Constitution (Stamina) test (see **Injured**, previously). However, you only make one recovery test every 24 hours. Any healing progress from a recovery test is lost if you take another damage-related condition.

## FORTUNE AND LUCK

You can also spend Fortune to improve your dice rolls. This may represent derring-do, experience, or insight, or just random chance or divine favor—ultimately, it's a measure of your character's importance and influence in the story.

After you have rolled dice for any test, you can spend Fortune points, decreasing your current rating, to improve the results of your test. Fortune points can be spent to make one die for the test show the value of the number of points spent, up to 6. For the Stunt Die, this costs twice the usual amount, so the die shows the value of *half* the Fortune points you spend, rounded down.

You may only change the result of one die on a test using Fortune. However, the new value on the die is treated as if you had rolled it, including for the purpose of counting doubles to generate stunt points on basic tests and rolls for certain advanced and challenge tests.

### EXAMPLE

*You roll the dice for a test and get 1, 3, and a 3 on the Stunt Die, which is a total of 7—not great, especially since you know you need at least a total of 10 to succeed. You tell the Game Master you are spending 4 Fortune points to make the “1” die into a “4” (the die now shows the value of the number of Fortune points you spent). Since you also have double 3s, your roll generates stunt points equal to the Stunt Die, or 3 SP. If, on the other hand, your initial roll was 3, 3, and a 1 on the Stunt Die, you would need to spend twice the number of Fortune points to increase the Stunt Die to a 4 (8 Fortune points total) but would also get 4 stunt points out of it rather than 3, since you still have double 3s, but the Stunt Die now shows a 4.*

## RECOVERING FORTUNE

You recover Fortune just as you would Health (see **Healing and Recovering** in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**) and any action or effect that restores Health restores an equal amount of Fortune. If an effect, such as healing magic, immediately restores Fortune and you are at or reach your maximum, additional points of healing are immediately added to your success total on the advanced test to recover from being Wounded or Injured.

### EXAMPLE

*You are Injured and down 3 Fortune. An ally casts healing touch and rolls 12 points of effect, 3 of which restore your Fortune to full, and 5 more fulfill the Success Threshold needed to remove the Injured condition as well. The remaining 4 points of healing have no additional effect.*

You can also designate one favored activity. This can be a hobby, overriding passion, or just a creature comfort you really enjoy, such as reading in bed. Devoting three hours to your favored activity recovers Fortune as if you completed a light rest, while devoting six hours to that activity counts as total rest for you.

## FORTUNE AND NPCs

It's up to the Game Master whether NPCs also use Fortune or just use Health as in the regular rules. You can split the difference, having some important NPCs use Fortune while the rest use Health. Generally, it's easiest if Fortune is a resource only available to the player characters, so the GM doesn't need to track Fortune use by a lot of NPCs.





## 9: ADVERSARIES

Conflict is the heart of drama, so every *Fantasy AGE* campaign needs its adversaries. Many of these will be monsters of various types, but a knight with the ear of the local duke can be just as much of a threat. This chapter contains a starting selection of adversaries for your campaign, and you'll find more in other *Fantasy AGE* products. Some are strange and dangerous creatures, but others are Non-Player Characters who may not be heroes in the way the PCs are, but still have lives and stories that may be important to the PCs or even the campaign world as a whole.

### STATISTICS FORMAT

Adversaries are presented in a common format. First, there is a description and then the game statistics, sometimes referred to as a "stat block" because it's a block of text. If you've read this far into the book, the stats should be fairly self-explanatory.

You will note that each adversary has an entry for favored stunts. These are the most commonly used stunts for that adversary, but don't feel compelled to use them. Favored stunts are provided as a suggestion, but as always use your best judgment. Also, note that many adversaries have unique stunts to give them flavor and make fighting one enemy different than fighting another. These fulfill a role similar to class stunts for Player Characters, though they are not necessarily the result of training and might be due to a natural capability, magical interference, or any number of other reasons.

### ADVERSARY FOCUSES

For the most part, adversaries use the same ability focuses listed in CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS. There are a few more required, however, to deal with creatures and animals, mostly relating to their natural attacks. Player Characters cannot take these focuses unless a special rule listed for their ancestry, class, talents, and so on say otherwise. These additional focuses vary, but examples include **Accuracy (Bite)**, **Fighting (Claws)**, **Fighting (Gore)**, and **Fighting (Kick)**. Some creatures' focuses may have different base abilities than others. When a creature has a focus bonus other than +2, this will be listed within the brackets beside the focus name, such as **Fighting (Heavy Blades +3)**. Such creatures are not present in this chapter but might be found in other *Fantasy AGE* books.

### ADVERSARY TRAINING

Unless otherwise noted in an individual description, adversaries are considered trained in all the weapons they carry, and in any other attacks that have been calculated for them in their game statistics. Similarly, adversaries wearing armor are trained in its use. The Game Master decides which, if any, other weapons and armor any adversary is trained in.

### ADVERSARY SPECIAL QUALITIES

Beyond abilities and focuses, an adversary's notable traits can be found under **Special Qualities**. These include the following.



## GAME STATISTICS IN THE WORLD

Game statistics such as abilities, talents, qualities, and even Health don't represent the physics and biology of the game world. They are not objective values. Rather, they represent what capabilities come into play during adventures, and measure a person or creature's ability to use them in these unusual situations. For instance, the typical student at a school of magic might be a "Zero" (see **Zeroes** elsewhere in this chapter) whose field is "Magical Studies" and might have one minor arcana from **CHAPTER 5: MAGIC**. They might be called "mages" even though they don't have Mage class levels of abilities. In fact, they might possess theoretical knowledge superior to that of a PC Mage, but when asked to answer an arcane riddle in the middle of a monster-haunted ruin, they come up short—unless the GM decides they happen to know the clue.

Naturally, game statistics are not completely separated from the reality of the campaign world (a huge, muscular dragon is going to have a high Strength) but don't feel bound to include game statistics in the NPCs and creatures you create simply because, by Player Character standards, they should have them. NPCs and creatures follow their own paths, and they have their statistics for their own reasons—reasons that happen to fit what the GM needs to make them successful elements in the heroes' ongoing adventures.

### FAVORED STUNTS

An adversary can use any basic stunt permitted by the Game Master but tends to favor those listed in its game statistics. When a stunt lists a cost and a note to "see below," this means the stunt has a modified cost or is a special stunt used by the creature to represent some exceptional trait.

### TALENTS

Adversaries may have various talent degrees. Unlike Player Characters, they do not need to meet the listed prerequisites. If talents include knowledge of arcana then specific spells known will be listed as well.

### OTHER QUALITIES

Other special qualities use rules designed for that quality, whether they are unique to a creature or belong to other types of creatures. For instance, both dragons and demon soldiers have the *vicious combatant* quality, but of the creatures listed in this chapter, only dragons have the *breath weapon* quality.

## ADVERSARY THREAT

While almost any creature is potentially dangerous with proper planning, wild luck, or the right circumstances, it's generally the case that certain adversaries work better against PCs of certain levels. Creatures are organized roughly into Threat categories based on the level of PC they are generally a suitable danger to. Check out the **Adversary Threat Level** table for some guidelines.

Also note that Threat is a general indicator, it's not a perfect measure of how dangerous a particular adversary is to all characters. For example, a heavily armored, healthy 3rd-level Warrior might do better against a Moderate threat than an injured 7th Level Mage who's mostly out of magic points. Likewise, Threat is a range, not an exact ranking; goblin raiders are generally less dangerous than fanatical cultists, but both are comparatively Minor threats when compared to tougher adversaries. Also, monsters are generally assigned Threat based on how they normally operate. Thus, bandits

### ADVERSARY THREAT LEVEL

THREAT LEVEL	PC LEVEL RANGE
Minor	Levels 1–4
Moderate	Levels 5–8
Major	Levels 9–12
Dire	Levels 13–17
Legendary	Levels 18–20

are assumed to appear in a group roughly equal to the size of a party of PCs, while dragons and similar monsters are assumed to appear alone or in very small numbers.

As always, GMs should be aware of the PCs' individual capabilities and any significant things that might make them more or less effective against a particular adversary. Impressive magical items, a larger than normal group, special knowledge of an adversary, and numerous other factors can cause the actual Threat to shift from its baseline. Armor Rating can be especially difficult for PCs to deal with at low levels—in general, you likely do not want a foe to have an AR higher than the PCs' average level, regardless of what a stat block says.

## BEEFING UP ADVERSARIES

The stats presented are average for an adversary of that type, but you can change them for individual encounters. It's a simple matter to modify the weapons and armor of many adversaries to create different tactical challenges. If you want a tougher adversary (one you want to be a major NPC, for example), you can also modify the stats. You can change the stats as you like, but here are some basic guidelines for making more challenging adversaries.

### ELITE

To make an adversary who is a little tougher than average, add 1 to any three abilities, add two focuses, and increase Health by 5. You can also make the NPC an Novice in a new talent or add a degree to an existing one.



## HEROIC

To make an adversary who is very tough indeed, add 2 to any two abilities, add 1 to any three other abilities, add four focuses, and increase Health by 15. You can also make the NPC a Novice in two new talents or add two degrees to existing ones.

## EPIC

To make an adversary who is extremely potent, add 3 to one ability, 2 to any two other abilities, and 1 to any three others. Add five focuses, increase the adversary's Health by 20, and increase Armor Rating by 3. You can also add three degrees to new or existing talents.

## OTHER NPCS

Not all NPCs are adversaries. The PCs will meet many people in their travels, and you needn't provide full stat blocks for all of them. Oftentimes NPCs will only appear in the game for a

single roleplaying encounter. Many of them don't need stats at all, but it is often useful to know some basics about the character. Generally speaking, the dividing line is whether you want the NPC to present a complex threat in combat. If not, you can use an abbreviated stat block, which simply lists the abilities and focuses. Such NPCs usually surrender, hide or flee in the face of danger, and are defeated with as little as a single blow. The Innkeeper, Merchant and Beggar are all examples of this format.

## ZEROES

The vast majority of NPCs are Zeroes. This sounds a little uncomplimentary, but Zeroes live rich, dramatic lives and are in no way inferior to other people. They just don't interact with the rules and story beyond the basic functionalities of informants, people on the street, victims of shape-changing horrors, and so on. Zeroes take their name from their game statistics, listed here.

## MAJOR NPCS, MINOR NPCS, AND EXTRAS

The categories of Major NPCs, Minor NPCs, and Extras, introduced in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES, overlap with the NPC types described previously. Major NPCs will often use Elite, Heroic, or Epic templates to represent their increased power and importance, but this isn't always necessarily the case. Many typical encounters with guards, ruffians, or monsters the PCs can definitely beat if they exercise a bit of strategy, are minor NPCs. They act together, and once defeated don't need to be worried about again. Extras might use simplified statistics or even be Zeroes.

These correspondences are not rules, however, and the GM can switch things up any way they like, such as by making terrifying-looking foes Extras to indicate they're putting up a front, or by creating major NPCs who aren't especially powerful but are still important, such as young royal heirs or a commoner with a world-shattering secret.

## FOLK

The following adversaries represent a slice of who or what heroes might encounter across their adventures. Not every danger during an adventure need be horrendous monsters. Some of the most dangerous and treacherous enemies take the form of other people just like the Player Characters. In some cases, these adversaries might be working with or for a more monstrous foe. For example, a warlock might have a demon bound to service. It is also possible that some folk might come to the aid of the PCs and could be used to bail them out if they get in over their heads such as a group of soldiers or town guards coming to help against a serpentfolk incursion.

## ASSASSIN

AKA: KILLER, MURDERER, SILENT ONE

This relentless killer may follow a death cult, or might end lives purely for money. This assassin prefers stealth and break-and-enter tactics over disguises, though they have

### BEGGAR

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0, **Communication** 1 (Persuasion), **Constitution** 3 (Tolerance),  
**Dexterity** 0, **Fighting** 1, **Intelligence** 1, **Perception** 2 (Hearing),  
**Strength** 1, **Willpower** 1

### INNKEEPER

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 1, **Communication** 3 (Bargaining, Persuasion),  
**Constitution** 2 (Tolerance), **Dexterity** 0, **Fighting** 1, **Intelligence** 1 (Evaluation),  
**Perception** 2 (Seeing, Tasting), **Strength** 1, **Willpower** 1 (Morale)

### ZEROES

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0, **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 0, **Dexterity** 0, **Fighting** 0,  
**Intelligence** 0, **Perception** 0, **Strength** 0, **Willpower** 0

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
10	10	10	0

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FIELD:** Zeroes don't have focuses. Instead, they have a field with a simple description, such as "Blacksmith," "Farmer," or "Street Urchin." They gain a +2 to ability tests the Game Master feels would benefit from their field. They also possess common knowledge suitable to their field, as well as any other less common knowledge the GM sees fit to give them.

**OPTIONAL POTENTIAL:** If a Zero takes on increased dramatic importance, the GM may change their game statistics to fit, giving them anything that would be consistent with their prior actions. In such cases, they lose the field quality, though not the accompanying knowledge. Zeroes can also be converted to Player Characters with the GM's permission. In neither case must these alterations be limited to weaker NPCs or PCs—remember that game statistics are a measure of a character's abilities in dramatic situations rather than a strict simulation of their competencies.

THREAT: MINOR



## ASSASSIN

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 4 (Brawling, Light Blades), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 1, **Dexterity** 4 (Acrobatics, Lock Picking, Riding, Stealth), **Fighting** 2, **Intelligence** 2 (Brewing), **Perception** 2 (Searching, Tracking), **Strength** 1 (Climbing), **Willpower** 1 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
14	55	14	3
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Dagger	+6	1d6 + 3	
Short Sword	+6	1d6 + 4	
Throwing Knife	+7	1d6 + 2	

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Pierce Armor, Mighty Blow

**TALENTS:** Thievery (Novice), Dual Weapon Style (Novice), Thrown Weapon Style (Novice)

**SPECIALIZATION:** Assassin (Novice)

**ROGUE ABILITIES:** Pinpoint Attack, Rogue's Armor, Stunt Bonus (Pierce Armor for 1 SP)

**DEADLY POISON:** The assassin may coat their dagger or a throwing knife with a lethal herbal concoction. If the assassin hits with it, the poison inflicts an extra 2d6 penetrating damage. A successful TN 13 Constitution (Stamina) test reduces the damage to 1d6 + 1. Once the poison is used, it's wiped off the weapon, and must be applied again. This requires one major and one minor action.

**WEAKENING POISON:** Instead of deadly poison, the assassin may apply manticores venom to their dagger or a throwing knife. If the attack from the envenomed weapon hits, the poison slows and partially paralyzes the victim, who suffers a -3 penalty to Dexterity, Fighting, and Accuracy until the end of the encounter or they receive a *cure* spell. A successful TN 15 Constitution (Stamina) test reduces these penalties to -1. Once the poison is used it's wiped off the weapon and must be re-applied. This takes one major action and one minor action to accomplish.

**EQUIPMENT:** Light leather, dagger, short sword, six throwing knives

### THREAT: MODERATE

enough skill (via the Brewing focus) to poison targets' food and drink. Yet above all, they prefer to drop on victims from above or cast knives from the shadows, confirm the kill, and collect their reward.

## BANDIT

### AKA: MERCENARIES, PIRATES, ROBBERS

The bandit is similar to many armed fighters willing to trade violence for coin. These adversaries may be actual bandits and criminals or they could be hired guards or soldiers—or both, depending on the fortunes of the realm. In many cases the weapons and armor used by these foes vary more than their skills, though a unique or well-trained individual could have additional focuses, talents, and higher ability ratings.

You can easily use bandits for minor combatants of any ancestry. If you want to use them in circumstances where having a specific species benefit is critical, such as elven Dark Sight, simply add the appropriate quality or other trait.

## BANDIT

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Light Blades, Bows), **Communication** 1, **Constitution** 2, **Dexterity** 1 (Stealth), **Fighting** 2 (Heavy Blades), **Intelligence** 0, **Perception** 1 (Searching), **Strength** 1 (Intimidation), **Willpower** 1 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
11	15	11	3
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Dagger	+4	1d6 + 2	
Longsword	+4	2d6 + 1	
Short Bow	+4	1d6 + 2	

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Skirmish, Knock Prone

**TALENTS:** Single Weapon Style (Novice)

**EQUIPMENT:** Light leather, dagger, longsword, short bow

### THREAT: MINOR

## CRIME BOSS

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Grenades, Light Blades), **Communication** 2 (Investigation, Leadership), **Constitution** 0, **Dexterity** 4 (Stealth, Legerdemain, Lock Picking, Traps), **Fighting** 0, **Intelligence** 3 (Evaluation, Engineering), **Perception** 2 (Searching), **Strength** 0, **Willpower** 1

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
14	50	14	3
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Dagger	+5	1d6 + 3	
Pistol	+3	1d6 + 5	

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Defensive Stance, Skirmish

**TALENTS:** Alchemical Explosives (Novice), Contacts (Novice), Thievery (Expert)

**ROGUE ABILITIES:** Pinpoint Attack, Rogue's Armor

**EQUIPMENT:** Light leather armor, four daggers, two pistols, and three thunder vials

### THREAT: MODERATE

## CRIME BOSS

### AKA: GANG CHIEF, STREET ENGINEER, TRAPBOSS

This clever, ruthless criminal channeled their gift for chemistry and crafts into a life of crime, until they became the leader of their own gang. They see thievery as an intellectual challenge, so that anyone who loses their goods to them obviously lacked the wit to truly own them. They spent much of what they earned on a hideout for the gang and filled it with secret doors and traps. Visitors who come to fence their own stolen wares meet them in one room of the complex. They abhor violence, but steal from them or harm the gang, and you'll meet them with a couple of big strong leg-breakers in tow, willing to teach you a "regrettable lesson."



## NPCs AND CLASSES

At this point you may be wondering, do NPCs have character classes? The answer is that they can, but they don't have to. Classes provide a framework for advancement that is necessary for the Player Characters, but not for NPCs. Classes, levels, and associated abilities represent a path for the heroes at the heart of the story, but few people take that route. If you want to use the rules in **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION** to build NPCs, you certainly can do so, but you are equally welcome to give NPCs whatever abilities, focuses, talents, and other capabilities that seem appropriate. This chapter is full of examples that you can use and modify as needed.

### CULTIST

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Light Blades), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 0, **Dexterity** 2 (Initiative), **Fighting** 2 (Bludgeons), **Intelligence** 0 (Religious Lore), **Perception** 2, **Strength** 2, **Willpower** 0

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	25	12	0

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Dagger	+4	1d6 + 2
Mace	+4	2d6 + 2

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Grab, Mighty Blow

**TALENTS:** Observation (Novice), Lore (Novice)

**IRON MORALE:** When pursuing their religion's goals or defending their faith in combat, cultists automatically succeed at Willpower (Morale) tests and can only be forced to retreat through supernatural mind-control or by being physically forced out of the fight.

**EQUIPMENT:** Mace (usually sculpted into a holy symbol), dagger, religious robes

**THREAT:** MINOR

### EMISSARY

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 1 (Light Blades), **Communication** 3 (Deception, Disguise, Etiquette), **Constitution** 0, **Dexterity** 2 (Stealth, Lock Picking, Riding), **Fighting** 0, **Intelligence** 3 (Cultural Lore, Cryptography), **Perception** 2 (Empathy, Searching), **Strength** -1, **Willpower** 1

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	25	12	0

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Dagger	+3	1d6 + 3

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Skirmish, And Another Thing (Roleplaying)

**TALENTS:** Intrigue (Novice), Observation (Novice), Contacts (Novice)

**EQUIPMENT:** Finery, disguise kit, and a hidden dagger.

**THREAT:** MINOR

## CULTIST

AKA: ZEALOT, TEMPLE GUARD, TRUE BELIEVER, EXTREMIST

Unquestioning, intense faith defines a cultist. These religious followers are trusted to bear arms in the service of the religion, acting as guards, escorts for clergy, or enraged mobs to be directed at anything their religion says needs to be destroyed. Dark religions may use mind-altering drugs or painful ordeals to initiate cultists, destroying their old selves so that a new, "pure" personality shines forth. Yet religions known for morally upright practitioners and just doctrines may also produce cultists such as ardent true believers or secret societies willing to bend the letter of the sacred law to preserve its supposed spirit.

## DWARF GUARD CAPTAIN

AKA: AXE CONSTABLE, SHERIFF OF THE MOUNTAIN

Even tight-knit dwarf communities need armed individuals ready to stop violent quarrels, deter crime, and keep watch for threats. The largest settlements have a watch or other force of guards, led by a captain whose great axe serves as a symbol of authority. In elder times, this was because the captain of the guard was also the sworn executioner, but this grim tradition is less common in the current day. Dwarves are known for diligently carrying out any duties sealed with a payment in gold, so dwarf "axe constables" can be found serving other cultures as well.

## EMISSARY

AKA: COURTIER, INFORMANT, SPY

The emissary is a professional or amateur collector of information. They makes friends easily, pay attention to gossip, and check it against their political knowledge. They may be

### DWARF GUARD CAPTAIN

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bows), **Communication** 1 (Leadership), **Constitution** 3 (Drinking), **Dexterity** 1 (Initiative), **Fighting** 4 (Axes), **Intelligence** 1 (Military Lore), **Perception** 0, **Strength** 3, **Willpower** 1 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
7	70	12	10

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Two-Handed Axe	+6	3d6 + 3
Crossbow	+4	2d6 + 1

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Disarm, Threaten.

**TALENTS:** Armor Training (Expert), Command (Expert), Two-Hander Style (Expert)

**DARK SIGHT:** As a dwarf, the captain of the guard can see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.

**EQUIPMENT:** Heavy plate, crossbow with 20 quarrels in a hip quiver, a two-handed axe decorated with his rune of authority

**THREAT:** MODERATE



in the pay of foreign rulers as their secret agent or official diplomat. They might spy for the local lord instead—or act as a double agent for local and foreign powers. Sometimes, they're a sort of mercenary, and their secrets can be bought. They find violence distasteful, but of course they're quick with a dagger when they need to be.

## GUTTERSNIPE

AKA: FOOTPAD, LOOKOUT, SNEAK-THIEF

"Guttersnipe" is a slang term used to describe ill-behaved urban young people, but it is often applied to minor crooks and brawlers who are typically of smaller stature who prevail over their foes through swiftness, stealth, and treachery. Criminal groups employ them as petty thieves, lookouts, burglars, or backup for the more physically intimidating brutes they use to frighten people. Members of smaller-sized ancestries, such as goblins and halflings, may be pressed into the role, or adopt it to survive. In some cases people develop these skills in rural areas, or even when they're forced to occupy ruins and tunnel systems.

Elite and better "guttersnipes" are usually criminal leaders, or the head protectors of a beleaguered community. In addition to other improvements, they may gain one or more Rogue class powers as described in CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION.

## SOLDIER

AKA: MERCENARY, SQUIRE, FOOTMAN

Well-trained professional soldiers are in demand almost everywhere. They can be common or noble-born, but all enter the field with a trained toughness that mere bandits and peasant partisans are hard-pressed to match. Soldiers might be older squires, waiting to win their spurs, or mercenaries who earn wealth, but no titles.

### GUTTERSNIPE

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Light Blades, Thrown), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 1, **Dexterity** 3 (Initiative, Legerdemain, Stealth), **Fighting** 1, **Intelligence** 1 (Thieves' Lore), **Perception** 1, **Strength** 0, **Willpower** 1

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
13	15	13	3

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Short Sword	+5	1d6 + 3
Throwing Knife	+5	1d6 + 1

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Lightning Attack, Skirmish, Snatch

**PACK TACTICS:** If a guttersnipe is attacking with at least three other guttersnipes, they may perform stunts for 1 less SP than normal.

**PINPOINT ATTACK:** Once per round, a guttersnipe can add 1d6 to the damage of a successful attack if their Dexterity is greater than their opponent's, or if the opponent is experiencing one of the following conditions: Defenseless, Prone, Stunned, or Unconscious.

**EQUIPMENT:** Light leather armor, 3 throwing knives, short sword

THREAT: MINOR

## TRIBAL WARRIOR

AKA: BARBARIAN, HILLFOLK, THE UNRULED

Called "barbarians" as a pejorative term, the members of various indigenous tribes live away from cities and farms, in wild places beyond the reach of kings and noble councils. Some are hunter-gatherer groups who always lived this way; others descend from people who fled densely populated kingdoms to escape disaster or persecution, or to just live as they wished away from robed potentates and their decrees. They do not farm on any large industrial scale, though some tribes

### SOLDIER

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 1, **Communication** -1, **Constitution** 1 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 0 (Riding), **Fighting** 2 (Heavy Blades, Spears), **Intelligence** 0 (Military Lore), **Perception** 0, **Strength** 2 (Climbing), **Willpower** 1 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
10	32	12	5

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Longsword	+4	2d6 + 2
Throwing Spear	+4	1d6 + 3

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Mighty Blow, Skirmish

**TALENTS:** Armor Training (Expert), Single Weapon Style (Novice), Thrown Weapon Style (Novice)

**EQUIPMENT:** Light mail, medium shield, longsword, and two throwing spears

THREAT: MINOR

### TRIBAL WARRIOR

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bows), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 2 (Swimming), **Dexterity** 2 (Initiative, Stealth), **Fighting** 1 (Spears), **Intelligence** 0 (Natural Lore), **Perception** 2 (Tracking), **Strength** 1, **Willpower** 0 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	34	12	0

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Long Bow	+4	1d6 + 5
Spear	+3	1d6 + 4

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Defensive Stance, Skirmish

**TALENTS:** Scouting (Expert)

**HOME ADVANTAGE:** Hunter-gatherers adapt to their homelands, developing instincts that help them survive. In their home territory, or in places with very similar terrain, these characters may perform the Skirmish or Defensive Stance combat stunts, or any exploration stunt, for 1 SP less (but at a minimum cost of 1 SP).

**EQUIPMENT:** Long bow, twelve arrows, and two spears

THREAT: MINOR



## WARLOCK

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 4 (Arcane Blast, Light Blades), **Communication** 2 (Deception, Persuasion), **Constitution** 0, **Dexterity** 2 (Initiative, Stealth, Riding), **Fighting** 0, **Intelligence** 5 (Arcane Lore, Cryptography, Power Arcana, Research, Shadow Arcana), **Perception** 2 (Searching), **Strength** 0, **Willpower** 5 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	70	12	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Arcane Blast	+6	1d6 + 5	
Dagger	+6	1d6 + 1	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Mighty Blow, Magic Shield (spell), Mighty Spell (spell)

**TALENTS:** Alchemical Explosives (Expert), Death Arcana (Expert) Power Arcana (Expert), Shadow Arcana (Master)

**MAGE ABILITIES:** Arcane Blast, Arcane Device (sacrificial dagger), Magic Points (100), Magic Training

**BLOOD AND SOULS:** After studying forbidden texts, the warlock has learned to trade a victim's life force for power. If the warlock kills a victim with their sacrificial dagger, they acquire as many magic points as the dagger inflicted when it struck the fatal blow. Track these magic points separately, as they are especially potent; they provide +1 Stunt Point to any spell they empower, in whole or in part.

**DEMON OF VENGEANCE:** Having sold their soul to a demon prince, the warlock becomes possessed by one of the prince's vassals upon death. Three rounds after being killed, the warlock's body warps and splits to reveal the form of an Elite demon soldier. See page 214 for the base demon soldier statistics and add +1 Fighting, +1 Dexterity (and +1 Defense as a result), +1 Strength, the Strength (Might) focus, the Willpower (Morale) focus, and +5 Health. The demon also possesses the *Shadow* special power, below. Reducing the warlock's corpse to ash before the three rounds are up prevents the demon from coming forth.

**SHADOW:** Weird experiments have merged the warlock with the stuff of shadow. The character takes half damage from all non-magical attacks and can use the Regenerate and Blending powers (see p. 227) in darkness or dim light. In sunlight or other bright light the infernal sorcerer takes damage normally. All light-based magical attacks inflict an extra 1d6 penetrating damage.

**SPELLS:** The GM should customize the infernal sorcerer's spells as best fits their origin and their nefarious plans.

**EQUIPMENT:** Dark robes, sacrificial dagger, arcane library, any magical items the GM feels would be appropriate

THREAT: MAJOR

do practice agriculture. Many trade furs and their own crafts for metal arms and tools from the cities. Otherwise, they avoid "civilized" places, whose inhabitants they consider odorous and uncultured. Most tribesfolk are simple non-combatants, but in emergencies their warrior societies can defend them. At times, these warriors might be found working as a scouts or guides for city-ruled folk.

## WARLOCK

AKA: DARK MAGE, UMBROMANCER

In search of power and knowledge, this worker of magic channels dark forces in search of more of it. The infernal sorcerer may have political goals—conquering a region or manipulating a king with magic and evil counsel—but these are means to metaphysical, mystical ends: become a god, achieve everlasting life, or bring dark entities from beyond this world back to mortal reckoning, to bathe in the ashes of the resulting apocalypse.



## WEIRD MORTALS

The warlock is an example of an NPC who also has the characteristics of monstrous adversaries, as well as a few distinct, custom-built abilities. The Game Master should feel free to design such NPCs. As we noted in the beginning of this chapter, not everyone in the campaign follows the paths of the players' heroes. NPCs don't have to follow their rules, and you should use this principle to streamline adversaries' game statistics, add unique characteristics to enhance their value, or both.



# BEASTS

This section provides information on common kinds of beasts and animals. These creatures are driven by simple needs such as food, reproduction, and self-protection. Most animals, even predators, do not attack unless they or their young are threatened, or they are stalking prey.

Animals are not capable of reasoning, but sometimes have well-honed instincts that allow them to act in sophisticated ways. Characters might use the Animal Training talent to tame an animal and teach it to perform certain tricks. Some Mages, or characters with special talents or qualities, might also be able to influence or train these types of creatures.

The base statistics provided for beasts in this chapter are for average specimens of moderate size. For example, the bear statistics provided represent a large black or medium-sized brown bear: dangerous under the right circumstances, but not the most fearsome type of bear that may be encountered.

## BATS

Bats are small, nocturnal flying mammals with leathery wings. Their primary food sources are insects or fruit. They are usually harmless, solitary hunters. However, if encountered in a cave or other tight space, or if they are magically controlled, bats can be dangerous.

## BEAR

Bears are found primarily in forested and mountainous regions. Bears are forest-dwelling omnivores, usually not dangerous unless an interloper threatens its cubs or food. Many bears hibernate during the winter, so it is unlikely to encounter them in the wild during the colder months. There are different varieties of bears, some of which are more aggressive

while others tend to be shier and avoid civilization. This is not to say that all bears can't be extremely dangerous, especially if they feel trapped or threatened. Their fur can be pure black, blond, white, brown, or cinnamon in color. They can grow to massive size: nearly 9 feet tall rearing up on their hind legs, with a weight of some 1,800 pounds.

## BISON

Great and powerful herd animals, bison can be found roaming various plains. Bison can be aggressive when protecting young and during the mating season, but they generally prefer running to fighting. A bison stands more than 6 feet tall at the shoulder and is 9 to 12 feet long. It weighs 1,800 to 2,400 pounds. The bison's statistics can be used for almost any similar large herd animal, such as oxen or yaks.

### BAT SWARM

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Bite), **Communication** -3, **Constitution** 1, **Dexterity** 3, **Fighting** 0, **Intelligence** -3, **Perception** 3 (Hearing), **Strength** 0, **Willpower** 0

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
2 (Fly 17)	20	13	0

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Swarm	+5	1d6

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Skirmish

**ECHOLOCATION:** Bats can function normally in total darkness.

**SWARM ATTACK:** A bat swarm covers an area with a rough diameter and height of 3 yards, and can attack all creatures inside or adjacent to that area on its turn as a single major action.

**SWARM DEFENSE:** A bat swarm suffers only 1 point of damage from any sort of attack that targets a single point, save that a Mighty Blow inflicts 2 points of damage and a Lethal Blow 3 points. Only area attacks, or mystic attacks with a broad effect, inflict full damage on the swarm.

#### THREAT: MINOR

### BISON

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0, **Communication** -1, **Constitution** 5 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 0, **Fighting** 2 (Gore), **Intelligence** -2, **Perception** 1 (Smelling) **Strength** 5 (Might), **Willpower** 1

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
13	50	10	2

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Gore	+4	2d6 + 5

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Mighty Blow, Skirmish

**TOUGH HIDE:** Bison have tough hides and thick bones that provide a natural Armor Rating of 2.

#### THREAT: MINOR

### BEAR

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bite), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 6 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 1, **Fighting** 3 (Claws), **Intelligence** -1, **Perception** 2 (Smelling, Tasting), **Strength** 6 (Intimidation, Might), **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
13	60	11	2

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Bite	+4	1d6 + 7
Claws	+5	2d6 + 6

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Grab, Quick Bite\* (2 SP)

**STUNT - QUICK BITE\*:** A bear can follow up a successful attack with its claws with a Quick Bite as a special stunt costing 2 SP. This bite attack must be taken against the same target as the original attack and is a simple test that doesn't generate or use stunt points.

**TOUGH HIDE:** Bears have tough hides and thick bones that provide a natural Armor Rating of 2.

#### THREAT: MODERATE



CROCODILE			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
<b>Accuracy</b> 2 (Bite), <b>Communication</b> –2, <b>Constitution</b> 4 (Stamina, Swimming), <b>Dexterity</b> 0 (Stealth), <b>Fighting</b> 2, <b>Intelligence</b> –2, <b>Perception</b> 1 (Smelling), <b>Strength</b> 4 (Intimidation), <b>Willpower</b> 2			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
10 (10 Swim)	45	10	4
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+4	2d6 + 4	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			
<b>FAVORED STUNTS:</b> Grab, Lethal Blow* (4 SP), Mighty Blow* (1 SP)			
<b>AMBUSH:</b> Crocodiles have a +2 bonus to Dexterity (Stealth) tests when submerged (partially or fully).			
<b>POWERFUL JAWS*:</b> Crocodiles may perform a Mighty Blow or Lethal Blow stunt with their Bite attack for 1 fewer SP than normal.			
<b>SWIMMING CHARGE:</b> If a crocodile uses at least half its movement swimming, even while moving onto land, it can move its full speed while taking the Charge major action.			
<b>VERY TOUGH HIDE:</b> Crocodiles have tough scaly hides that provide a natural Armor Rating of 4.			
THREAT: MODERATE			

BOAR			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
<b>Accuracy</b> 0, <b>Communication</b> –1, <b>Constitution</b> 3 (Stamina), <b>Dexterity</b> 2, <b>Fighting</b> 2 (Gore), <b>Intelligence</b> –2, <b>Perception</b> 1 (Smelling), <b>Strength</b> 3 (Might), <b>Willpower</b> 2			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
13	35	12	2
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Gore	+4	2d6 + 3	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			
<b>FAVORED STUNTS:</b> Knock Prone, Mighty Blow			
<b>TOUGH HIDE:</b> Boars have tough hides and thick bones that provide a natural Armor Rating of 2.			
THREAT: MINOR			

## BOAR

Though not carnivores, wild swine are ill-tempered and usually charge anyone who disturbs them, slashing with their sharp tusks. A boar is covered in coarse gray and black fur. Adult males are about 4 feet long and stand 3 feet high at the shoulder.

## CAT

Cats are common pets in many places. There are numerous breeds, both long and short-haired, with various markings and coloration. Some breeds are especially prized, fetching high prices among the wealthy of different nations. With the application of Elite or higher modification, these statistics can be used to model smaller wild cat breeds as well.

CAT			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
<b>Accuracy</b> 1 (Bite), <b>Communication</b> –1, <b>Constitution</b> 2, <b>Dexterity</b> 3 (Stealth), <b>Fighting</b> 1 (Claws), <b>Intelligence</b> –1, <b>Perception</b> 1 (Searching), <b>Strength</b> 0, <b>Willpower</b> 1			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
13	5	15	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+3	1d3	
Claws	+3	1	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			
<b>FAVORED STUNTS:</b> Skirmish, Defensive Stance			
<b>NIGHT VISION:</b> Cats can see in near darkness as if it were normal light.			
<b>SMALL:</b> A cat's small size makes them harder to hit and allows them to sneak into places larger creatures normally can't. This is reflected in their abilities, though they may also receive a +2 circumstance bonus when their small size would be an extra advantage, such as Dexterity (Stealth) tests involving hiding in small spaces.			
THREAT: MINOR			

DOG			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
<b>Accuracy</b> 2 (Bite), <b>Communication</b> 0, <b>Constitution</b> 1 (Running), <b>Dexterity</b> 2, <b>Fighting</b> 2, <b>Intelligence</b> –2, <b>Perception</b> 3 (Hearing, Smelling, Tracking), <b>Strength</b> 1 (Jumping), <b>Willpower</b> 0			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
15	15	12	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+4	1d6 + 1	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			
<b>FAVORED STUNTS:</b> Knock Prone, Skirmish			
<b>LOYAL:</b> Dogs are considered to have Willpower 2 and the Willpower (Courage) focus when defending their owners, families, or loved ones.			
THREAT: MINOR			

## CROCODILE

Crocodiles are aggressive predators that grow 11 to 12 feet long. They lie mostly submerged in rivers or marshes, with only their eyes and nostrils showing, waiting for prey to come within reach. Monstrous giant crocodiles are sometimes found along the seashore in marshy regions, growing up to 20 feet long, but are otherwise similar to their smaller cousins. The statistics here are for a moderate-sized crocodile.

## DOG

The statistics presented here describe a domestic dog of about 20 to 50 pounds in weight. They also can be used for small wild canines such as coyotes and wild dogs. Wild dogs generally hunt in packs, chasing and exhausting prey until they can drag it down. Larger breeds would have more Strength, Constitution,



EAGLE			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
Accuracy 2 (Bite), Communication −2, Constitution 1, Dexterity 3 (Flying), Fighting 2 (Claws), Intelligence −2, Perception 3 (Seeing), Strength 0, Willpower 1			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
4 (18 Fly)	20	13	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL		DAMAGE
Bite	+4		1d6
Claws	+4		1d6
SPECIAL QUALITIES			
FAVORED STUNTS: Pierce Armor, Skirmish			
THREAT: MINOR			

RAT SWARM			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
Accuracy 3 (Bite), Communication −3, Constitution 1, Dexterity 2, Fighting 0, Intelligence −2, Perception 3 (Smelling), Strength 0 (Climbing), Willpower 0			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	25	12	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL		DAMAGE
Swarm	+5		1d6
SPECIAL QUALITIES			
FAVORED STUNTS: Skirmish			
NIGHT VISION: Rats can see in near darkness as if it were normal light.			
SWARM ATTACK: A rat swarm covers an area with a rough diameter and height of 2 yards, and it can attack all creatures inside or adjacent to that area on its turn as a single major action.			
SWARM DEFENSE: A rat swarm suffers only 1 point of damage from any sort of attack that targets a single point, save that a Mighty Blow inflicts 2 points of damage and a Lethal Blow 3 points. Only area attacks, or mystic attacks with a broad effect, inflict full damage on the swarm.			
THREAT: MINOR			

and Health, whereas smaller dogs would have lower stats in these categories but have a higher Defense due to their small size and perhaps the Small Size special feature (see **Cat**).

## EAGLE

These majestic birds of prey inhabit nearly every terrain and climate though they all prefer high, secluded nesting spots, making them common in mountain areas. A typical eagle is about 3 feet long and has a wingspan of about 7 feet. These statistics can describe any similar-sized bird of prey.

## HAWK

Hawks are similar to eagles but smaller: 1 to 2 feet long, with wingspans of 6 feet or less. These statistics can describe falcons and similar-sized birds of prey. Hawks are trained as hunting

HORSE			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
<b>Accuracy</b> 0 (Kick), <b>Communication</b> –3, <b>Constitution</b> 6 (Running, Stamina), <b>Dexterity</b> 0, <b>Fighting</b> 0, <b>Intelligence</b> –3, <b>Perception</b> 1 (Hearing), <b>Strength</b> 5 (Might), <b>Willpower</b> 1			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
18	45	10	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL		DAMAGE
Kick	+2		1d6 + 5
SPECIAL QUALITIES			
<b>FAVORED STUNTS:</b> Knock Prone, Skirmish			
THREAT: MINOR			

HAWK			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
<b>Accuracy</b> 2 (Bite), <b>Communication</b> –2, <b>Constitution</b> –1, <b>Dexterity</b> 4 (Flying), <b>Fighting</b> 1 (Claws), <b>Intelligence</b> –2, <b>Perception</b> 3 (Seeing), <b>Strength</b> –2, <b>Willpower</b> 1			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
4 (20 Fly)	10	14	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL		DAMAGE
Bite	+4		1d6 – 2
Claws	+3		1d6 – 2
SPECIAL QUALITIES			
<b>FAVORED STUNTS:</b> Pierce Armor, Skirmish			
THREAT: MINOR			

animals in some cultures. Owls have similar stats, though with the added special quality of Dark Sight (see page 134).

## HORSE

Horses are widely domesticated for riding and as beasts of burden. The statistics describe large breeds of working horses. These animals are usually ready for heavy work by age 3.

## RAT

These omnivorous rodents thrive almost anywhere. Rats usually run away when confronted. They bite only as a last resort, usually when trapped. Except when carrying disease, they are only really dangerous in large swarms.

## SHARK

Sharks are carnivorous fish governed by ancient instincts. Thrashing motions and the presence of blood may provoke them to attack. Medium sharks range from 5 to 8 feet long and are not usually dangerous to creatures other than their prey (smaller fish and sea mammals). Large sharks can reach around 15 feet in length and are a more serious threat to human-sized creatures. Huge sharks might exceed 20 feet in length. The statistics here are for a large shark.



## BIGGER, BADDER BEASTS

GMs desiring more formidable versions of various beasts can achieve this by applying the Elite, Heroic, or Epic modifiers from this chapter. As a general rule, adding Elite to a beast and increasing their Fighting or Accuracy, Strength, and Constitution is a good way to model a larger or more fearsome breed of beast. Heroic or Epic modifiers should be reserved for truly fearsome individuals of those breeds. A grizzly or polar bear can be modeled by applying Elite to the bear statistics, a large and particularly fearsome member of these breeds might be Heroic, and abnormally enormous and fearsome members of the largest breeds would be Epic.

In other words, Elite is how you turn the standard shark into a great white, tiger, or thresher. Heroic is how you model the biggest members of these breeds. Epic is how you make "Jaws."

### SHARK

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bite), **Communication** -3, **Constitution** 4 (Swimming), **Dexterity** 2 (Stealth), **Fighting** 1, **Intelligence** -4, **Perception** 2 (Smelling, Tracking), **Strength** 4 (Intimidation, Might), **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
17 (swim)	40	12	2
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+4	2d6 + 5	

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Lethal Blow\* (4 SP), Mighty Blow\* (1 SP), Skirmish

**BLOOD TRACKER:** A shark automatically succeeds at Perception tests to smell or determine the direction of blood shed within 400 yards, in the same body of water.

**POWERFUL BITE:** Sharks may perform a Mighty Blow or Lethal Blow stunt with their Bite attack for 1 fewer SP than normal.

**TOUGH HIDE:** A shark's thick skin and flexible body allow it to absorb impacts, giving it an Armor Rating of 2.

#### THREAT: MINOR

### TIGER

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Bite), **Communication** -1, **Constitution** 3, **Dexterity** 3 (Stealth), **Fighting** (Claw) 4, **Intelligence** -2, **Perception** 3 (Hearing, Smelling), **Strength** 4 (Intimidation, Climbing, Jumping), **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
15	50	13	2
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+5	2d6 + 4	
Claw	+6	1d6 + 5	

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Lethal Blow\* (4 SP), Lightning Attack\* (2 SP)

**NIGHT VISION:** Tigers can see in near darkness as if it were normal light.

**DEADLY:** Tigers may perform the Lethal Blow and Lightning Attack stunts for 1 fewer SP than their normal cost.

**POUNCE:** A tiger can make two Claw attacks with one major action. Roll separately for each. Both attack rolls become simple tests that don't gain or use SP.

**TOUGH HIDE:** A tiger's thick muscle and fur give it a natural Armor Rating of 2.

#### THREAT: MODERATE

### SNAKE, CONSTRUCTOR

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0, **Communication** -3, **Constitution** 3, **Dexterity** 1 (Stealth), **Fighting** 2 (Constrict), **Intelligence** -3, **Perception** 1 (Smelling), **Strength** 3 (Might), **Willpower** 0

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
9	25	11	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+0	1d3 + 3	
Constrict	+4	Special	

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Lightning Attack

**CONSTRUCT:** A constrictor seeks to encircle and crush the life from its prey with its Constrict attack. A successful attack imposes the Hindered (target loses major action) and Defenseless (-3 to Defense and target loses Dexterity Defense modifier) conditions. These last until the constrictor attacks anyone else or the target of the attack succeeds at an opposed Strength (Might) test with the constrictor as a free action on the victim's turn. The constrictor can make a second Constrict attack on a target it is already constricting, and if it succeeds it imposes the Slowed condition (Speed is halved, -3 to Chase Tests and initiative). Each additional successful Constrict attack on an already constricted target after that inflicts 1d6 + 3 damage and imposes one degree of the Fatigued condition until the target is Exhausted, after which it continues to do damage. Escaping constriction resets this process to the beginning.

**NOTE:** Constrictors use the Lightning Attack stunt to make two quick Constrict attacks or a Bite and Constrict attack in the same turn.

#### THREAT: MINOR

### TIGER

As large, powerful apex predators tigers rarely fear smaller creatures, but generally avoid populated areas. Occasionally a tiger kills an intelligent creature and learns they may be hunted with relative ease, which makes them a problem for nearby communities. They are primarily solitary hunters, stealthily stalking prey before they strike. The base statistics here can also be used for panthers, leopards, cougars, jaguars, lions, and other big cats by adjusting statistics to match the species. Prehistoric and fantastical felines may also use these statistics, though powerful examples are likely Elite, Heroic, or even Epic compared to their cousins. Lions tend to appear in groups rather than in the solitary fashion of the tiger and have the Pack Advantage special quality.



## SNAKE, VIPER

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bite), **Communication** -3, **Constitution** 1, **Dexterity** 3 (Initiative, Stealth), **Fighting** 0, **Intelligence** -3, **Perception** 2 (Smelling), **Strength** -2 (Intimidation), **Willpower** 0

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
10	10	15	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+4	1d6 - 2	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Lightning Attack

**SMALL:** A venomous snake's small size makes them harder to hit and allows them to sneak into places larger creatures normally can't. This is reflected in their abilities, though they may also receive a +2 circumstance bonus when their small size would be an extra advantage, such as Dexterity (Stealth) tests involving hiding in small spaces.

**VENOMOUS BITE:** If a venomous snake's bite attack deals damage, it injects its venom into a target. The target will become poisoned unless a successful TN 12 Constitution (Stamina) test is made. Poisoned targets take 1d6 + 1 penetrating damage and suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls and their Defense rating until the end of the encounter or they receive a *cure* spell. The target or an adjacent ally may also attempt a TN 15 Intelligence (Healing) test to end the venom's penalties.

**VENOMOUS VARIANTS:** Some snakes have even deadlier venom that does more damage, inflicts higher penalties, and has a higher TN to resist.

**THREAT:** MINOR (HIGHER FOR MORE POISONOUS SNAKES)

## SNAKE

Snakes come in many varieties and can be found in forests, deserts, swamps, and other habitats. They thrive in warm environments. Constrictor snakes usually are not aggressive and flee when confronted. They hunt for food but do not attempt to make a meal out of any creature too large to constrict. Constrictors hunt by grabbing prey with their mouths and then squeezing it with their powerful bodies. Vipers are not particularly aggressive, but they are territorial and will often lash out with a bite attack before attempting to retreat. They rely on their venomous bite to kill prey and defend themselves. Other venomous snakes can be easily modeled by adjusting the venom statistics of this snake.

## SQUID, GIANT

These voracious sea creatures can have bodies more than 20 feet long and attack almost anything they meet. They mainly spend their days hunting in the murky depth of the oceans. When they are encountered on the surface it's a lucky mariner who swims away from the meeting.

## WOLF

Wolves are pack hunters known for their persistence and cunning. A favorite wolf tactic is to send a few individuals

## SQUID, GIANT

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 1 (Bite), **Communication** -4, **Constitution** 6 (Stamina, Swimming), **Dexterity** 0 (Stealth), **Fighting** 2 (Tentacle), **Intelligence** -2, **Perception** 1, **Strength** 6 (Might), **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
15 (Swim)	80	10	4
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+3	2d6 + 6	
Tentacle	+4	1d6 + 8	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Lightning Attack, Tentacle Grab\* (3 SP)

**INK CLOUD:** A squid can spray an inky cloud underwater that covers 10 yards in diameter. This cloud blinds all within it, making them unable to see clearly until it dissipates (1d3 rounds). Squids usually avoid using this ability unless they are seeking to escape an encounter.

**STUNT - TENTACLE GRAB\*:** A giant squid can use Tentacle Grab as a special 3 SP stunt. If the giant squid wins an opposed Strength (Might) test, the target cannot move and suffers a -2 penalty to ability tests and Defense. A grabbed target can attempt to break free as a minor action, with another Strength (Might) test opposed by the giant squid's Strength (Might) roll. Air breathers also need to worry about drowning if they are held underwater.

**VERY TOUGH HIDE:** The giant squid's rubbery hide provides it with a natural Armor Rating of 4.

**THREAT:** MAJOR

## WOLF

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Bite), **Communication** -2, **Constitution** 3 (Stamina, Running), **Dexterity** 2, **Fighting** 1, **Intelligence** -1, **Perception** 1 (Hearing, Smelling, Tracking), **Strength** 3 (Intimidation), **Willpower** 2 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
16	30	12	1
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+5	1d6 + 4	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Lightning Attack

**NIGHT VISION:** Wolves can see in near darkness as if it were normal light.

**COORDINATE ATTACK:** A wolf attacking with at least three other wolves may lend SP to a packmate to spend on the Knock Prone or Lightning Attack stunts, using the discount provided by *pack tactics*.

**PACK TACTICS:** If a wolf is attacking with at least three other wolves, it may perform stunts for 1 less SP than normal.

**TOUGH HIDE:** A wolf's thick fur and natural toughness provide it with an Armor Rating of 1.

**TRACKER:** Wolves may reroll failed Perception (Smelling) and Perception (Tracking) tests, but the results of rerolls are final.

**THREAT:** MODERATE

against their prey's front, while the rest of the pack circles and attacks from the flanks or rear. Packs are predominantly families consisting of a breeding pair and offspring.



# MONSTERS

And finally, we come to monsters. Monsters of all types are often the central focus of an adventure, whether it be an ancient dragon, insidious serpentfolk, or a horde of walking corpses that has been raised by a necromancer. In the end, most adventures involve one or more monsters. The selection provided here offers a wide range of monster types. They can range from mindless to incredibly intelligent, encompassing everything in between.

Take care when choosing what monsters the Player Characters will face. Not only do you want to consider whether the monster makes sense for the setting, but the power level of the monster as well. If you really want to use a particular monster but fear it to be too powerful, you can feel free to

alter its stats to make it a fairer challenge. A better-matched monster might be a younger version or even one which is wounded in some way.

## BONELESS ONE

AKA: EEL-PRIESTS, KEEPERS OF THE FORBIDDEN

Supposed cousins to the ichthyoid sea devils, the victims of a curse laid on some amphibious humanoid people, or an evil that simply grew in the abyss, the boneless ones are said to guard strange temples and cursed altars the gods hurled beneath the waves. Whatever their origins, they have proven ideal for the task. Each boneless one clan honors one submerged religion or another, maintaining its otherwise-obscure or forgotten rituals. As a curious effect of their physiology, they are capable of giving captives from the surface the ability to breathe air—which they use to ensure their gods receive the freshest sacrifices.

A boneless one has a moray-like head, including secondary jaws it can extend to swiftly bite opponents in combat. Mucus shines on their faces and gills when they're above water. Their scaly bodies have long tails, along with webbed arms and legs, though their torsos are flexible and appear to be a compromise between the eel and humanoid forms. A long fin travels from the tops of their heads to the tips of their tails.

BONELESS ONES

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Bite), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 2 (Swimming), **Dexterity** 1, **Fighting** 3 (Polearms, Spears), **Intelligence** 1 (Navigation), **Perception** 2 (Tasting, Smelling), **Strength** 3 (Intimidation), **Willpower** 2 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
11 (16 Swim)	30	11	2
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+5	1d6 + 3	
Throwing Spear	+3	1d6 + 6	
Trident	+5	2d6 + 4	

SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Disarm, Grab, Quick Bite\* (2 SP)

**AMPHIBIOUS:** Boneless ones can survive and breathe on both land and underwater. They must spend at least one hour a day submerged in water or take 2d6 damage.

**BLOOD TRACKER:** Like a shark, a boneless one automatically succeeds at Perception tests to smell or determine the direction of blood shed within 400 yards in the same body of water.

**BONELESS:** Boneless ones are not truly so, but everything below the skull is mostly cartilaginous, allowing boneless ones to wriggle through any opening no wider than their head, and which could fit anything they might carry.

**BREATHING MUCUS:** A boneless one can spit *breathing mucus* on an Unconscious or immobilized foe as a free action. This gives an air breather the ability to breathe water as listed for *breathing mucus* in **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**. This substance naturally coats the snout, mouth, and gills of boneless ones and four doses can be harvested from one of their dead, though this would be a disgusting task.


**DARK SIGHT:** Boneless ones can see normally in total darkness.

**STUNT - QUICK BITE\*:** A boneless one can follow up a successful attack with a Quick Bite as a special stunt costing 2 SP. This bite attack must be taken against the same target as the original attack and is a simple test that doesn't generate or use stunt points.

**TOUGH HIDE:** Boneless ones have a natural AR of 2.

**EQUIPMENT:** Trident (military fork), throwing spear (optional)

THREAT: MINOR







## BURROWER

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** -3, **Communication** -4, **Constitution** 9 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 0, **Fighting** 0, **Intelligence** -2, **Perception** 2 (Touching), **Strength** 9 ( Might), **Willpower** 4 (Courage)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
10 (12 Burrow)	110	10	8

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Bite	+11	3d6 + 9
Tentacles	+11	1d6 + 9

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Mighty Blow, Swallow\* (5 SP), Tremor\*\* (2 SP)

**EARTHSENSE:** The burrower senses its prey by feeling the vibrations they make on or in the ground. It can detect the movement of a creature up to 20 yards away using its Perception (Touching) focus for any tests. It can detect larger animals like horses or wagons at two or three times that distance. A creature must make a successful TN 11 Willpower (Self-Discipline) test to remain still enough that the burrower can't sense its presence.

**LARGE AND IN CHARGE:** The size and bulk of a burrower is truly impressive. It is immune to the stunts Skirmish and Knock Prone, except when performed by other very large creatures or equivalent forces, such as giants or dragons. Its long reach also treats enemies up to 4 yards away as being adjacent.

**MASTER BURROWING:** A burrower can not only dig itself through anything weaker than solid rock at least two feet thick as part of actions where it moves, but it gains +2 Speed while doing so.

**SMASH:** The burrower's strength and size is so overwhelming that it can use Strength (Might) instead of Accuracy (Bite or Brawling) for its attacks.

**MONSTROUSLY TOUGH HIDE:** The armored plating that covers a burrower gives the creature an AR of 8.

**STUNT - TREMOR:\*\*** For 2 SP, the burrower can rise up and slam its bulk onto the ground with great force. It makes a single Strength (Might) attack roll, as a free action, against all creatures within 4 yards. If struck by the attack, the target is knocked Prone as the ground shakes. Burrowers often use this as a Stunt Attack.

**THREAT: DIRE**

**STUNT - SWALLOW\*:** For 5 SP on a bite attack, the burrower can swallow a human-sized or smaller target whole. The victim can make an opposed Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. Strength (Might) test to roll or dive out of the way at the last moment; otherwise, the target is swallowed and takes 2d6 damage per round until they are freed or they die. Cutting the monster open so the target can escape can be done automatically once it is slain, but otherwise requires doing at least one-quarter of the monster's health in one hit with a slashing or cutting weapon and spending 2 SPs. Swallowed targets can attempt to cut their way out of the creature and free themselves as well, but the cramped space inside the monster's stomach makes using any weapon larger than a short sword to do it impossible.

**TENTACLES:** The retractable tentacles that surround the mouth of a burrower allow it to make four melee attacks with a single major action and these attacks can reach targets up to 4 yards away.

## BURROWER

**AKA: EARTHSHAKER, TUNNEL-FOE**

A huge, armored worm of a monster capable of tunneling through the earth quickly, the burrower prefers to attack prey from surprise by bursting up out of the ground, then grabbing it with tentacles it can extrude at will from its body before biting it with its large, multi-toothed-mouth.







## DEMON, SOLDIER

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 1 (Bite), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 5 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 1, **Fighting** 3 (Claws), **Intelligence** 1, **Perception** 1, **Strength** 5 (Intimidate), **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
13	40	11	5
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+3	2d6 + 5	
Claw	+5	1d6 + 6	

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Crushing Blow, Lightning Attack, Mighty Blow

**IMPENETRABLE HIDE:** The soldier demon's hide not only provides a natural Armor Rating of 5, but applies it to penetrating damage with the sole exception of weapons and other sources of damage that have special effects versus demons, as noted in their descriptions or as ruled by the Game Master.

**DARK SIGHT:** The soldier demon can see perfectly in total darkness.

**VICIOUS COMBATANT:** The soldier demon can make both a Bite and Claw attack with its major action. Roll each attack separately. Either attack, or both, can generate and use stunt points.

**THREAT: MODERATE**

Although burrowers spend most of their time alone, they sometimes work in packs while still in their adolescence or when prey is particularly easy to find. Young burrowers are also more cautious, so they tend to hunt prey before moving in for the kill. But the longer they hunt, the more likely their prey will detect them and escape. As they age, burrowers become more direct and aggressive, charging through the earth to attack from surprise.

## DEMON, SOLDIER

**AKA: FIENDS, INIMICALS, DEVILS**

This demon is commonly summoned to serve evil sorcerers or members of various demon-worshipping cults. They are only one of many such extradimensional entities, who vary greatly in power and ability. The soldier demon usually serves an evil god or demon lord, beings of incredible power who command armies of lesser fiends. Demons can't usually enter normal reality from the hellish realms they call home without being summoned by magic or sent by more powerful entities.

## DRAGON

**AKA: DRAKE, WYRM**

One of the most well-known and rightly-feared creatures in many worlds, the dragon is a powerful threat embodying hunger and greed. Dragons are usually solitary or found in mated pairs, and different breeds may favor different climates and locations for their lairs. The classic dragon sits on a hoard of wealth, treasure taken from fallen kingdoms or foolish adventurers. Some cultures worship dragons as gods, sacrificing flesh and wealth to keep them appeased. Depending on the exact setting and their origins dragons may be cunning animals or fully intelligent creatures capable of magic use and advanced planning. These intelligent dragons are among the most dangerous adversaries in existence.

## DEEPPDREAD

**AKA: DROWNER, SEA SHADE**

Despite the potential chaos they can cause in boarding actions, few sailors would kill a mystic navigator, friend or foe, unless they had no other choice. It's bad luck for a number of reasons, and their ability to lead ships through the Deep and mundane oceans is incredibly valuable. Navigators gain additional protection from the legend that if even a *drop* of their blood touches the sea before they die, the Deep will claim their souls when their bodies fail. It is also said that if the navigator dies by violence at sea, their vengeful spirits can embody themselves from the waters of lightless abysses and the blood of the drowned, surfacing from the depths to ride the raging waves and hunt down their killers.

A deepdread's body of dead blood and gray-silted water can take the shape of ominous sea creatures and even phenomena: red-black albatrosses, sharks, and even storm clouds. But all the legends say the most frightening manifestation of all is when one visits its killers in the shape of its



## DRAGON

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bite, Breath Weapon), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 8 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 2, **Fighting** 4 (Claw, Tail Bash), **Intelligence** 0, **Perception** 2 (Seeing), **Strength** 8 (Intimidation, Might), **Willpower** 4 (Courage)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12 (15 Fly)	180	12	9
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+4	2d6 + 8	
Breath Weapon	+4	3d6 + 3	
Claw	+6	1d6 + 9	
Tail Bash	+6	1d6 + 9	

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Lightning Attack, Knock Prone, Lethal Blow\* (4 SP), Mighty Blow\* (1 SP), and Tail Bash\*\* (2 SP)

**BREATH IMMUNITY:** A dragon is immune to damage from the same element as its own breath weapon. A dragon that breathes fire is immune to damage from heat and fire, for instance, while one that breathes ice is immune to damage from the cold. Only dragons whose breaths are equivalent to ordinary weapon attacks (such as by shooting pellets of stone or shards of glass, etc.) lack this immunity.

**BREATH WEAPON:** A dragon can spew flame, ice, or some other element either in a wide arc (4 yards long and 6 yards wide) or a narrow stream (8 yards long and 2 yards wide) as a major action. The dragon makes one attack roll against all targets in the area, and even if it misses targets in the area of effect take 1d6 + 3 penetrating damage. If the attack hits this increases to 3d6 + 3 penetrating damage, but targets struck by the breath weapon can reduce the damage down to 1d6 + 3 through evasion by making a TN 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics) test.

**BUFFET:** As a minor action, a dragon can flap its wings and buffet nearby creatures with gusts of rushing air. This does not require an attack roll. Anyone within 4 yards of the dragon must make a successful TN 15 Strength (Might) test or be knocked back 1d6 yards. Those that fail their tests and have a Stunt Die result of 1 or 2 are also knocked Prone.

**POWERFUL BITE:** The toothy maw of a dragon can spell doom for its prey. A dragon may perform a Mighty Blow or Lethal Blow stunt with their Bite attack for 1 fewer SP than normal.

**LARGE AND IN CHARGE:** Few creatures compare to the size and strength of a dragon. It is immune to the stunts Skirmish and Knock Prone, except when performed by other very large creatures or equivalent forces, such as giants or other dragons. Its long reach also treats enemies up to 4 yards away as being adjacent.

**SUPREMELY TOUGH HIDE:** Dragon scale is legendary for its toughness, giving a dragon an Armor Rating of 9.

**STUNT - TAIL BASH\*\*:** As a special 2 SP stunt, a dragon can make a tail bash attack against any adjacent opponent without using an action, as a simple test that doesn't generate or use stunt points.

**VICIOUS COMBATANT:** A dragon is a vicious opponent. It can make both a Bite and Claw attack with its major action. Roll each attack separately. Either attack, or both, can generate and use stunt points.

**THREAT: DIRE**





## DEEPRDREAD

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bite, Lash), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 4 (Swimming), **Dexterity** 4 (Initiative, Sailing, Stealth), **Fighting** 3 (Talons), **Intelligence** 3 (Arcane Lore, Navigation), **Perception** 4, **Strength** 5 (Climbing), **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
14 (19 Fly/Swim)	46	14	0

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Bite	+4	2d6 + 5
Lash	+4	1d6 + 5
Talons	+5	1d6 + 5

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Grab, Knock Prone, Skirmish, Drown\* (4 SP)

**STUNT - DROWN\*:** As a special 4 SP stunt with its Lash attack, the deepdread forces the animated water and blood of its body into the throat and lungs of its victim. This inflicts 1d6 penetrating damage and imposes the Hindered condition until the deepdread's next turn as the victim must use their minor action to expel the noxious liquid.

**LIQUID BODY:** A deepdread's body is made of the blood of those who have died at sea and water from the deepest rifts of the ocean. A deepdread may enter any non-watertight space as if intervening barriers don't exist. It's immune to fire as a source of damage and douses all mundane flames it touches and takes half damage from all non-magical sources.

**LIQUID SHAPESHIFTING:** A deepdread can take the form of a seagoing bird, any unintelligent aquatic creature no larger than it was when it was a living being, or it can assume the shape it had when it was a mystic navigator. These shapes can feel solid, but they're actually liquid (dead blood and abyssal water) bound by the deepdread's will. The entity often takes the shape of an albatross, shark, or squid. It uses attacks appropriate for its current form, but uses its Lash attack—a tentacle or tendril of hardened liquid—in any shape. It can also take the form of a cloud, mist, or shadow in the water, in which case it cannot attack, but it can reroll failed Dexterity (Stealth) tests and keep the result of the second roll. The deepdread must use a minor action to change shape.

**MYSTIC NAVIGATOR:** A deepdread always has the Mystic Navigator specialization talent at Expert degree by default, and if improved using the rules in **Beefing Up Adversaries** may have this increased to Master.

**THREAT: MODERATE**

former body, to accuse and kill. Fortunately, all of its forms are the color of deep red blood and gray silt, shiny and translucent, so while their silhouettes may deceive mariners from a distance or at night, they almost always reveal what they are up close.

## ELEMENTALS

**AKA: NATURE SPIRITS, PRIME SPIRITS, PRIMORDIALS**

The exact origin of elementals is unknown. Some suspect they are the result of powerful magicians' spells gone awry, that they could have traversed portals from other realms where elementals are common, or they might be leftovers from the creation of the universe. No matter their origin,

what is known is they are inherently wild and unrestrained forces of nature. It should be noted, however, that although they can be destructive, volatile, and even brutish, they are not inherently evil.





## WATER ELEMENTAL

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0, **Communication** -2, **Constitution** 0, **Dexterity** 3 (Acrobatics, Stealth), **Fighting** 3, **Intelligence** 3 (Water Whip), **Perception** 1, **Strength** 3, **Willpower** 5 (Courage)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
13 (13 Swim)	45	13	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Water Whip	+5	1d6 + 5	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Skirmish, Mighty Blow

**FREE FLOWING:** A water elemental is immune to the Skirmish and Knock Prone stunts.

**SLIPPERY CUSTOMER:** Any enemies of the water elemental which end their turn within 2 yards of it must make a TN 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall Prone as water pushes and pulls around their legs.

**FLUID NATURE:** A water elemental may contort its body to fit itself through any gap wider than one centimeter as a major action. Once on the other side, however, it must return to its natural state. If it cannot fit itself in the space, it quickly returns during the same action and reforms.

**WATERY:** If fully submerged in water, the water elemental is invisible (See the spell *invisibility* spell on pg. 136).

**WATER WHIP:** The elemental can lash out with a watery tendril at any target within 3 yards using its Intelligence (Water Whip) to attack. This attack does 1d6 + 2 + Strength damage (normally 1d6 + 5).

THREAT: MODERATE

## EARTH ELEMENTAL

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0, **Communication** -2, **Constitution** 4 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 2, **Fighting** 2 (Slam), **Intelligence** -3, **Perception** 3 (Hearing, Touch), **Strength** 4 (Might), **Willpower** 1

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
10 (10 Climb/ Burrow)	45	12	8
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Slam	+4	2d6 + 4	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Mighty Blow, Defensive Stance, Knock Prone

**BLIND:** Earth elementals are effectively blind. They can, however, detect motion by sensing vibrations in the ground. This sense has been taken into account in the attack rolls.

**STONE ROOTS:** Any creature that starts its turn on the ground within 2 yards of an earth elemental must make a TN 18 Strength (Might) check, or be unable to move their feet as the ground attempts to root them in place.

**STONEFORM:** Due to their rocky nature, Earth Elementals have a natural Armor Rating of 8.

THREAT: MODERATE

## AIR ELEMENTAL

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Wind Buffet), **Communication** -2, **Constitution** 0, **Dexterity** 6 (Stealth), **Fighting** 2 (Slam), **Intelligence** 2, **Perception** 3 (Hearing), **Strength** 2, **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
16 (Fly)	25	16	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Slam	+4	1d6 + 5	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Lightning Attack, Seize the Initiative

**WIND BUFFET:** As a minor action an air elemental can create a sudden and powerful gust of wind to batter nearby creatures. Anyone within 4 yards of the elemental must attempt an opposed test of their Strength (Might) vs. the elemental's Accuracy (Wind Buffet). Those that fail their test and have a Stunt Die result of 1 or 2 are also knocked Prone.

**AIR WHIP:** Anyone the air elemental hits with a Slam attack or its Wind Buffet ability must succeed at a TN 12 Strength (Might) test or have their weapon knocked a number of yards away from the air elemental equal to the Stunt Die on the air elemental's attack or ability roll.

**ETHEREAL:** Air elementals are ethereal, being comprised of dense air itself. They ignore the effects of terrain. Normally only magical attacks (spells or hits from magical weapons) can harm them; other attacks pass through their forms without effect. A character attacking an air elemental can perform a special stunt called Spirit Bane (see **Customizing Creatures**). The character then inflicts normal weapon damage but substitutes Willpower for Strength or Perception.

THREAT: MODERATE

## FIRE ELEMENTAL

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Fire Bolt), **Communication** -2, **Constitution** 1, **Dexterity** 4, **Fighting** 1, **Intelligence** -3, **Perception** 3, **Strength** 0 (Intimidation), **Willpower** 0 (Courage)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
16	35	14	4
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Fire Bolt	+5	1d6 + 4	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Pierce Armor, Set Aflame, Skirmish

**FLAME BLAST:** As a major action, a fire elemental can cast Flame Blast without using mana or requiring a casting roll. As this does not have a casting roll, it does not generate stunt points.

**FIRE BOLT:** As a major action, a fire elemental can throw a bolt of fire up to 26 yards as a ranged attack.

**FIRE SHIELD:** The elemental's semisolid fiery form grants a base Armor Rating of 4. If attacked by wooden weapons, this Armor Rating is increased to 8.

**SET AFLAME STUNT:** A fire elemental can set aflame one or more of its targets of Fire Bolt. This is a special stunt for 2 SP per target to be affected and not all targets of the attack need be affected. The target takes 1d6 penetrating damage at the start of each of their turns until they or another character within 2 yards can put out the fire by spending a minor action.

THREAT: MODERATE





## GHoul

AKA: ANTHROPOPHAGI, STARVING ONE

Ghouls are pale monstrous humanoids with complex vertical jaws, who hunger for the flesh of intelligent beings. Some are born ghouls. Others occasionally become ghouls after being bitten to death by one without being eaten. A rare few who have ghouls for ancestors transform into them after eating the flesh of thinking creatures. Some ghouls favor living flesh, while others devour corpses. Both types of ghouls are often more than willing to attack others to feed their cravings—the chief difference being whether or not they eat their victims before or after killing them. Ghouls are long-lived and do not slow down with age. They're very tough, but they are living things and can be killed. Ghouls often gather in packs or more sophisticated communities depending on how smart they are, and many variations of these creatures exist, with abilities such as shapeshifting or (typically at the expense of intelligence) increased ferocity and toughness.

## GIANT

AKA: ANAKIM, JOTUN

Often believed to be one of the first humanoids to walk the world, giants are sometimes credited with building the first cities and monuments. Alternatively portrayed as enemies

## GHoul

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** (Bite) 2, **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 4 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 2 (Initiative, Stealth), **Fighting** 3 (Claws), **Intelligence** 0, **Perception** 1 (Smelling, Tasting), **Strength** 3 (Climbing), **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12 (6 Burrow)	45	12	3
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+4	2d6 + 3	
Claws	+5	1d6 + 3	

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Lightning Attack, Mighty Blow

**LESSER BURROWING:** Ghouls can dig themselves through materials less dense and tough than rammed earth at half their Speed as part of any action where they move, such as Move or Charge.

**CANNIBALISTIC REGENERATION:** If a ghoul has fed in the last hour it can regenerate lost Health each round equal to its Constitution (usually 4). If killed, the creature does not revive.

**FRENZY:** When attacking someone they have bitten, otherwise tasted the flesh of, or who is seriously wounded (lost at least half their Health) ghouls may perform the Lightning Attack and Mighty Blow stunts for 1 fewer SP than normal.

**SCENT OF DEATH:** A ghoul gains +2 to Perception (Tracking) tests to follow the trail of any target who is wounded or bleeding. They may also use this power to locate and track nearby corpses.

**VERY TOUGH HIDE:** Ghouls have a natural Armor Rating of 3.

**THREAT:** MODERATE

or servants of the gods, giants are often hostile to other humanoid races. The gentlest among them desire solitude and avoid others, but the more dangerous are flesh-eating tyrants who use their great size and power to oppress and destroy. Giants are usually clumsy compared to smaller humanoids, but they are incredibly strong and can kill or maim smaller folk with a single blow.

The statistics on the next page are for a relatively small giant, somewhere between 12' and 20' tall. For larger, more powerful individual giants or members of larger giant clans apply the Elite, Heroic, or Epic templates.

## GIANT SPIDER

AKA: CAVE SPIDERS, DEEP CRAWLERS

Venomous arachnids of exceptional size, these creatures dwell in caverns, deep forests, and other dark places where they can spin their huge webs and ambush unsuspecting prey. A giant spider's venomous bite is relatively weak, but the venom can be delivered in large quantities due to the creature's size. It is used to incapacitate a target so it can be devoured or dragged off for later consumption.

Commonly encountered giant spiders generally range from the size of a large dog to that of a horse, but you can generate much larger ones with application of the Elite, Heroic, or Epic templates.



## GIANT

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** (Brawling) 0, **Communication** –1, **Constitution** 6 (Stamina),  
**Dexterity** –1, **Fighting** 2 (Axes, Bludgeons, Heavy Blades),  
**Intelligence** 0, **Perception** 2 (Smelling),  
**Strength** 9 (Might, Intimidation), **Willpower** 3 (Courage, Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
11	80	9	5

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Large Club	+4	2d6 + 9
Unarmed	+2	1d6 + 11

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Grab, Lightning Attack, Mighty Blow, Slam\* (3 SP), Threaten

**EXTREMELY TOUGH HIDE:** Giants' large size and thick skin gives them a natural Armor Rating of 5.

**GIANT WEAPONS:** Giants have the same range of craft skills and possible equipment as humans, subject to limits on available materials and facilities. Giant-sized weapons inflict an additional 1d6 damage compared to their normal counterparts.

**LARGE AND IN CHARGE:** Giants are, well, gigantic. A giant is immune to the stunts Skirmish and Knock Prone, except when performed by other very large creatures or equivalent forces, such as other giants, dragons, and other creatures with the *large and in charge* quality. Its long reach also treats enemies up to 4 yards away as being adjacent.

**STUNT - SLAM\*:** For 3 SP, giants can pound the ground with earth-shattering force, knocking over those nearby. All targets within a 5-yard radius of the giant must make an opposed test of their Dexterity (Acrobatics) vs. the giant's Strength (Might) or suffer 1d3 penetrating damage and be knocked Prone.

**THREAT: MAJOR**

## GIANT SPIDER

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Bite, Web), **Communication** –2,  
**Constitution** 2 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 4 (Stealth), **Fighting** 2,  
**Intelligence** –2, **Perception** 2 (Touch),  
**Strength** 3 (Intimidation, Jumping), **Willpower** 2 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
14	35	14	4

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Bite	+5	2d6 + 3
Web	+5	Immobilized; see below

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Venomous Bite\* (2 SP)

**STUNT - VENOMOUS BITE\*:** A giant spider can inject venom as a special stunt costing 2 SP. The poison debilitates the victim, who suffers a –1 penalty to Dexterity, Fighting, and Accuracy-based tests until the end of the encounter or they receive a *cure* spell.

**WALL CRAWLER:** A giant spider can walk up walls and even on ceilings at their normal Speed without making tests to climb them.

**WEB:** As a major action a giant spider can shoot a web at a visible enemy within 12 yards. This requires an attack roll. The target must make a successful TN 11 Dexterity (Acrobatics) test or suffer the Defenseless condition and be unable to move from the spot until free. The target or an ally can free the victim by taking a major action and making a successful TN 13 Strength (Might) test.

**VERY TOUGH HIDE:** The tough exoskeleton of a giant spider gives the creature an AR of 4.

**THREAT: MINOR**

Some giant spiders possess exceptional intelligence and are capable of communicating with each other and some other creatures, particularly those linked to evil gods or dark magic. Such variants generally have Intelligence 1 and Communication 1. Rare intelligent giant spiders may also have special talents, focuses, or even magical powers.





## GNARLWALKER

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0, **Communication** -1, **Constitution** 6, **Dexterity** 0, **Fighting** 2 (Branch Blows), **Intelligence** 0 (Natural Lore), **Perception** 2 (Smelling, Tracking), **Strength** 6 (Intimidation, Might), **Willpower** 4 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
10	60	10	8
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Branch Blow	+4	2d6 + 9	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS\***: Crushing Blow, Lethal Blow\* (4 SP), Mighty Blow\* (1 SP)

**MIGHTY AND LETHAL\***: Gnarlwalkers can perform the Mighty blow and Lethal Blow stunts for -1 SP.

**BIG**: Knock Prone and Skirmish stunts, and any other stunts that might push, pull, knock down, or otherwise move a gnarlwalker around each require +1 SP over their normal costs to work. In the case of stunts with a variable cost, such as Skirmish, the +1 SP cost increase is on top of the total number of SP it normally costs, so moving a gnarlwalker 6 yards costs 4 SP instead of the usual 3, for instance.

**MADE OF WOOD**: one of the gnarlwalker's few obvious weaknesses is their flammable body. Fire-based attacks and hazards inflict +2 damage to gnarlwalkers, and the damage is penetrating.

**MANY BRANCHES**: A gnarlwalker's numerous branches allow it to make a branch blow attack as a minor action. However, this attack is a simple test that can't generate or use SP.

**VOICE OF THE GREEN**: A gnarlwalker understands other plants, and they can use the equivalent of the *wood speech* spell without an MP cost or casting roll at all times.

**MONSTROUSLY TOUGH HIDE**: Their tough bark and wooden body gives a gnarlwalker a natural AR of 8.

THREAT: MODERATE

## GNARLWALKER

AKA: GREEN ONES, TREEFOLK

Gnarlwalkers have varied origins, but they're all rooted in the powers of nature, assigned to various deities, or sometimes known as the "Green Soul," "Anima," or numerous other titles. When unusual events affect wooded lands, reducing their size or changing their character, these powers sometimes awaken plant life.

Legends record a whole host of such entities, and cultures that thrive near woodlands know them well.

The majority of gnarlwalkers awaken from moderately sized trees, or were parts of larger trees that peeled off from their parents, though it leaves no sign of injury to its "parent" tree. The result is an eight- or nine-foot-tall walking tree. Gnarlwalkers are sometimes briefly born from Wood Arcana spells as well, and occasionally those roused in this fashion never truly return to "sleep" as ordinary trees. Finally, it is said a few gnarlwalkers are sorcerers and shapeshifters who, by choice or accident, transformed into the treefolk permanently.

Gnarlwalkers found in the wild are not necessarily malevolent but even without any evil influence, they can be fiercely, even violently, protective of their home forests. Woe betide the ignorant woodman who swings his axe at trees under such a creature's protection.





## GRIFFON

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Bite), **Communication** 1, **Constitution** 3 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 4, **Fighting** 3 (Claws), **Intelligence** 1, **Perception** 3 (Sight, Hearing), **Strength** 5 (Intimidation, Might), **Willpower** 4 (Courage)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
14 (Fly 16)	75	14	2

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Bite	+5	2d6 + 5
Claws	+5	1d6 + 5

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Defensive Stance, Lethal Blow, Lightning Attack, Threaten

**FLURRY OF CLAWS:** The griffon may make its claw attack as a minor action. This is a simple test that cannot generate or use stunt points.

**TOUGH HIDE:** The griffon's thick muscles and tough hide give it an Armor Rating of 2.

**THREAT:** MODERATE

## GRIFFON

### ALSO KNOWN AS: ANZU, SHIRDAL

Griffons have been a symbol of royalty and protection for many years, often because they will naturally create nests and homes from any valuables in their vicinity thus allowing a noble to place one in the location of their treasure hoards safe in the knowledge that any thieves are unlikely to survive meeting it. In rare cases, griffons are used as mounts, though taming and training such a creature is a significant challenge.

The griffon's head, neck, front legs, and wings resemble those of a powerful eagle, albeit an oversized one, and starting from behind its front legs its features are the regal body and tail of a lion. Griffons are about the size of a large horse or bear, and far more dangerous than either.

A hippogriff is remarkably similar to a griffon, though its hindquarters resemble a horse instead of a lion. They are somewhat less dangerous, but faster. Use the griffon statistics for a hippogriff but reduce Health by 15 and Strength by 1 and increase Speed (ground and flight), Dexterity, and Defense by 2.

## KNIFEHOUND

### ALSO KNOWN AS: HYAENODONT, SABERWOLF

Knifehounds are massive mastiff-like canines with a pair of long knife-like fangs in addition to their normal-sized teeth. They are usually pack hunters, though some rangers, hunters, and athletes have trained a lone knifehound to serve as a guard or companion. A wounded or aging outcast from a pack occasionally stakes out a territory near civilization and preys on livestock and unlucky citizens.

Knifehounds are likely natural in origin, though occasional myths and legends persist about them being the creation of an angry god or dark sorcerer. In any event, they follow very dog- or wolf-like social structures and show intelligence and social ability similar to most other large canines.

## KNIFEHOUND

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Bite), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 2 (Running, Stamina), **Dexterity** 2, **Fighting** 3, **Intelligence** -1, **Perception** 3 (Hearing, Smelling), **Strength** 3, **Willpower** 2 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
14	30	12	2

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Bite	+5	2d6 + 4

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Mighty Blow, Knock Prone, Pierce Armor\* (1 SP)

**KNIFE FANGS\*:** Using their large knife-like fangs this creature can perform the Pierce Armor stunt for just 1 SP when making a Bite attack.

**TEAM COMBATANT:** On any round where a knifehound's pack member or trainer succeeds at an attack roll, the knifehound gains a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls.

**TOUGH HIDE:** The tough hide of this creature provides a natural Armor Rating of 2.

**THREAT:** MINOR





## MANTICORE

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Bite, Sting), **Communication** -1, **Constitution** 5 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 2, **Fighting** 3 (Claw), **Intelligence** -1, **Perception** 2 (Smelling), **Strength** 5 (Intimidation), **Willpower** 2 (Courage)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
14	70	12	6
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+5	1d6 + 6	
Claw	+5	1d6 + 6	
Sting	+5	2d6 + 6	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Mighty Blow, Venom Sting\* (2 SP)

**EXTREMELY TOUGH HIDE:** A manticore's tough hide gives it a natural AR of 6.

**STUNT - VENOM STING\*:** A manticore can inject venom as a special stunt costing 2 SP. The venom slows and partially paralyzes the victim, who becomes Hindered and suffers a -3 penalty to Dexterity, Fighting, and Accuracy-based tests until the end of the encounter or they receive a *cure* spell. A successful TN 15 Constitution (Stamina) test reduces these penalties to -1.

**VICIOUS COMBATANT:** The manticore can make both a Bite and Claw attack with its major action. Roll each attack separately. Either attack, or both, can generate and use stunt points.

**THREAT: MAJOR**

## MANTICORE

**AKA:** MANTYGER, MONTEGRE, MANTICORA SATYRAL

A ravenous monster that favors deserts and wastelands, the manticore possesses a lion's body, a scorpion's tail, and a humanoid head with three rows of sharklike teeth. Some manticores also have leathery wings allowing flight; others are strictly land-based. Despite their humanoid facial features, the manticore is largely unintelligent and lives only to hunt, feed, and reproduce. Captured manticores are sometimes used to guard valuable treasures or as battle beasts in gladiatorial contests.

## MEDUSA

**AKA:** GORGONS

Snake-haired and with a gaze that can turn mortals to stone, the medusa is a terrifying adversary to face. Cursed by the gods, these creatures are doomed to destroy virtually every living creature around them, and the isolation has driven many of these creatures mad. In some settings, there are only a handful of these creatures and they usually have the Elite, Heroic, or Epic templates. In other worlds they are capable of reproduction and spread their malevolent progeny throughout the land. Medusae don't age; those not killed by violence can be both venerable and privy to numerous secrets and arcane lore.

In many stories the medusa's head can still cause petrification after the creature is dead. Heroes who slay the creature may be able to use this to their advantage, though they

## MEDUSA

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 3 (Bows, Light Blades, Brawling), **Communication** 1, **Constitution** 4 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 3 (Stealth), **Fighting** 1 (Spears), **Intelligence** 2 (Historical Lore), **Perception** 3 (Seeing), **Strength** 3 (Intimidation), **Willpower** 3

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
13	50	13	4
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Longbow	+5	1d6 + 6	
Short Sword	+5	1d6 + 5	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Lightning Attack, Petrifying Gaze\* (2+ SP), Venomous Snakes\*\* (2 SP)

**PETRIFYING GAZE STUNT\*:** For 2 SP per target affected, a medusa can catch a character's eye during a battle or other encounter. A medusa must be able to see each target directly to use this stunt. Anyone able to see the medusa risks locking eyes with them. When the medusa uses this stunt, each person affected must succeed at an opposed Willpower (Self-Discipline) test vs. the medusa's Perception (Seeing). Failure results in 4d6 penetrating damage. Any target reduced to 0 Health by this attack is turned to stone. Any target who survives this effect is partially petrified and suffers a -2 penalty to all ability tests until they can rest for at least 8 hours as their body slowly and painfully reverses this effect.

**STUNT - VENOMOUS SNAKES\*\*:** The Medusa's venomous snake-hair can strike a target in melee as a special 2 SP stunt. There is no separate attack roll, as the snakes bite during the medusa's melee attack. The target must make a TN 13 Constitution (Stamina) test or suffer 1d6+1 penetrating damage and a -1 penalty to all attacks until the end of the encounter or the *cure* spell is used on the target.

**TALENTS:** Archery Style (Expert), Dual Weapon Style (Expert).

**TURNABOUT IS FAIR PLAY:** A character with access to a mirror or other reflective surface can reflect a medusa's Petrifying Gaze back onto it as a 3 SP stunt. The medusa must be able to see its reflection for this to work and must resist the effect normally.

**EQUIPMENT:** Long bow, 2 short swords

**THREAT: MAJOR**

must be very careful not to ever look into the creature's eyes or they will suffer its gaze. There are many rumors about how to reverse the medusa's gaze, but they usually require a great quest, powerful artifact, or the favor of the gods.

## OGRE

**AKA:** BUGBEARS, GRENELS, TROLLS

Standing between 8' and 15' tall, ogres are brutish, extremely violent giant humanoids. Most have gray, green, or corpse-like skin with patches of greasy, coarse hair on their heads and bodies. They often operate in small groups with their kin, though solitary ogres may carve out a territory after the fashion of an apex predator. Though they are capable of scavenging, even eating carrion when necessary, ogres prefer fresh meat. They'll attack large animals and armed humanoids as food or competitors for territory. They tend to



## OGRE

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0 (Brawling), **Communication** -1, **Constitution** 6, **Dexterity** 0, **Fighting** 2 (Axes, Bludgeons, Heavy Blades), **Intelligence** -1, **Perception** 2 (Smelling, Tracking), **Strength** 6 (Intimidation, Might), **Willpower** 1 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	60	10	2 (7 with armor)
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Maul	+4	2d6 + 9	
Unarmed	+2	1d6 + 6	

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Lethal Blow\* (4 SP), Knock Prone, Mighty Blow\* (1 SP), Threaten

**BIG:** Knock Prone and Skirmish stunts, and any other stunts that might push, pull, knock down, or otherwise move an ogre around each require +1 SP over their normal costs to work. In the case of stunts with a variable cost, such as Skirmish, the +1 SP cost increase is on top of the total number of SP it normally costs, so moving an ogre 6 yards costs 4 SP instead of the usual 3, for instance.

**BRUTAL ACT:** An ogre may use its minor action to make a Strength (Intimidation) test opposed by the Willpower (Courage) rolls of anyone smaller than it, who can perceive it, usually by bellowing or performing some act of unmitigated brutality to a fallen foe. It gains a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls against anyone who rolls lower than it did until someone damages it in combat. This bonus may be regained by making another successful test.

**GIANT WEAPONS:** Ogres use giant-sized, if crude, weapons which inflict an additional 1d6 damage compared to their normal-sized counterparts.

**MIGHTY AND LETHAL\*:** Ogres can perform the Mighty and Lethal Blow stunts for -1 SP.

**TOUGH HIDE:** Ogres have a natural AR of 2, though most wear hides, patchwork armor, and other protection that increases this to AR 7.

### THREAT: MODERATE

operate close enough to civilization to provide themselves with ample prey but not so close as to draw the attention of heavily armed interlopers. Ogres keep captives for labor and eventually food. Ogres use crude weapons, though their great strength makes them a danger even if unarmed.

Trolls are a common variant of the normal ogre. Some are functionally identical, differing only in coloration or appearance. Others have the ability to regenerate, or they cannot bear the sun without turning to stone.

## SELKIE

### AKA: FINFOLK, SEALFOLK

A selkie is a seal or other pinniped (Sages quibble if non-seals should be properly called "selkies," but multiple types can belong to the same selkie community) that can remove its skin to reveal a human-like body beneath—or they're a human-like people who turn into seals and the like with the help of a magical skin that might be removed, but which

## SELKIE

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bite), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 3 (Stamina, Swimming), **Dexterity** 2, **Fighting** 3 (Bludgeons), **Intelligence** 1 (Navigation), **Perception** 3 (Smelling, Tracking), **Strength** 2, **Willpower** 2 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12 (Swim 17)	26	12	0 (2 in seal form)
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+4	1d6 + 3	
Stone Mace	+5	2d6 + 2	
Throwing Spear	+3	1d6 + 6	

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Defensive Stance, Skirmish

**BREATH HOLDING:** A selkie can hold their breath for a number of hours equal to their Constitution.

**FREE IN THE WATER:** Selkies swim at their land Speed +5 and do not suffer penalties to melee attacks or physical actions that would be impeded by water resistance.

**SELKIE SKIN:** Selkies gain many of their powers through what looks like the skin of a seal (and occasionally other pinnipeds, such as sea lions and for especially big and strong selkies, walruses) but actually belongs to them. A selkie is born with their skin, and discovers it falls away the first time they take human-like form. They need only close it around them and concentrate for a minor action to assume pinniped form, or from seal form, slip out of it with a minor action to take human-like form. Most selkies look like humans, though a few look like elves, dwarves, and other ancestries when they shed their *selkie skins*. The sealskin provides the selkie's bite attack and their *breath holding*, *free in the water*, and *tough hide* special qualities. In human-like form they retain *breath holding* and *tough hide*, and have no bite attack, as long as they wear the skin. If they are in human-like form and not wearing their skin, they have none of these benefits, and cannot change shape. A selkie's skin doesn't grant powers to anyone else, and a selkie cannot regain their powers by taking another selkie's skin, though there are rumors of magics that break both these rules.

**TOUGH HIDE:** Unless separated from their skins, selkies have a natural Armor Rating of 2 due to their thick, insulated hides.

**TALENTS:** Scouting (Expert)

**EQUIPMENT:** Stone Mace, Throwing Spear

### THREAT: MINOR

remains part of them. They must have these second skins to change form. Some believe selkies were wildfolk who wished to live upon and by the sea and devised a special way to direct and enhance their ancestral abilities in exchange for the vulnerability of a removable skin. Of course, other students of such lore say this is nonsense and that selkies are cousins to rougher beings such as werewolves, or that they were blessed (or cursed, depending on the story and the listener's perspective) by one or more gods.

No matter the truth, selkies maintain a distinct culture, along with coastal settlements. Selkie enclaves are usually suspicious of outsiders, and they may not even reveal they have human-like forms lest someone who knows their vulnerability exploit it. Selkies are sometimes honored as friends to sailors and the enemies of malefic sea creatures.



## SERPENTFOLK PRIEST

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 4 (Bite, Arcane Blast), **Communication** 2, **Constitution** 0, **Dexterity** 2, **Fighting** 0, **Intelligence** 4, **Perception** 2 (Smelling), **Strength** 0, **Willpower** 2 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	70	12	4

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Arcane Blast	+6	1d6 + 5
Dagger	+4	1d6 + 1

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Mighty Blow, Magic Shield, Mighty Spell, Quick Bite\* (2 SP)

**STUNT - QUICK BITE\*:** Serpentfolk can follow up a successful attack with a Quick Bite as a special stunt costing 2 SP. This bite attack must be taken against the same target as the original attack and is a simple test that doesn't generate or use stunt points.

**VERY TOUGH HIDE:** Serpentfolk have a natural AR of 4.

**TALENTS:** Alchemy (Expert), Death Arcana (Expert), Power Arcana (Expert), Shadow Arcana (Master)

**MAGE ABILITIES:** Arcane Blast, Arcane Device, Magic Points (100), Magic Training

**SPELLS:** The GM should customize the serpentfolk sorcerer's spells as best fits their nefarious plans.

**EQUIPMENT:** Robes, staff, sacrificial dagger, magic items the GM feels would be appropriate

**THREAT: MAJOR**

## SERPENTFOLK WARRIOR

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bite, Bows, Brawling), **Communication** 0, **Constitution** 3 (Stamina, Swimming), **Dexterity** 2, **Fighting** 3 (Bludgeons, Swords, Spears), **Intelligence** 0, **Perception** 2 (Smelling, Tracking), **Strength** 3, **Willpower** 2 (Morale)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	30	12 (14 w/ Shield)	4

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Short Sword	+5	1d6 + 4
Short Bow	+4	1d6 + 3
Spear	+5	1d6 + 6
Bite	+4	1d6 + 3

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Quick Bite\* (2 SP), Skirmish

**STUNT - QUICK BITE\*:** Serpentfolk can follow up a successful attack with a Quick Bite as a special stunt costing 2 SP. This bite attack must be taken against the same target as the original attack and is a simple test that doesn't generate or use stunt points.

**VERY TOUGH HIDE:** Serpentfolk have a natural AR of 4.

**TALENTS:** Scouting (Novice), Weapon and Shield Style (Novice)

**EQUIPMENT:** Short sword, medium shield, short bow, spear

**THREAT: MINOR**

## SERPENTFOLK

**AKA: LIZARDFOLK, REPTILIANS, SNAKE PEOPLE**

The reptilian, serpentfolk are sometimes said to be the most ancient intelligent people—the ones who discovered fire before creatures like elves and dwarves even existed. Of course, conflicting legends say the serpentfolk came from another world, riding the metaphysical coils of their world-serpent, Yig. Whatever the truth, most serpentfolk belong to territorial hunting and gathering groups now. These groups often claim territory near ruins said to have been built by their ancestors during a period of ancient empires and potent magic. Contemporary serpentfolk consider these sites sacred or cursed, and almost always forbidden to outsiders. Often suspicious and even isolationist, they are nonetheless not automatically hostile to other intelligent peoples as long as outsiders don't trespass or interfere with their traditions.





## SPECTRE

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Brawling), **Communication** 1, **Constitution** 2, **Dexterity** 4 (Stealth), **Fighting** 1, **Intelligence** 2, **Perception** 2, **Strength** 0, **Willpower** 4 (Self-Discipline)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
14 (Fly 14)	35	14	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Chilling Touch	+4	2d6 + 4	
SPECIAL QUALITIES			

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Lightning Attack, Skirmish

**CHILLING TOUCH:** The touch of a spectre drains the life force from any living thing. This *chilling touch* inflicts 2d6 + Willpower penetrating damage. And the attack uses Accuracy (Brawling). Beings without a soul, such as raised corpses or magically animated entities, take half damage from this attack.

**INCORPOREAL FORM:** As incorporeal beings, spectres ignore the effects of terrain and can walk through solids and liquids as if they aren't there, as long as they begin and end each turn in an open space. If somehow stuck inside a solid or liquid at the end of a turn, at the beginning of their next turn they are ejected to the point they entered.

**SPECTRAL ATTACK:** The spectre's *chilling touch* ignores the target's shield bonus to Defense and inflicts penetrating damage, though this is reduced by half the target's Willpower (rounded up).

**THREAT:** MODERATE

**INCORPOREAL RESISTANCE:** Spectres can only be damaged by magical weapons, spells, and qualities, as well as the psychic intention to harm them. Magical methods inflict full damage, while a character using a missile or melee weapon does 1 point of damage or damage equal to their Willpower ability, whichever is higher. If a stunt would increase damage from a mundane attack, it does so by the lowest amount that can be rolled. Characters may be able to use a special stunt called Spirit Bane (see Spirit Bane under Customizing Creatures) to attack a spectre.

**TERROR:** As its major action, a spectre can utter a terrifying shriek that forces all targets within 30 yards to experience supernatural dread. Targets must succeed in a TN 14 Willpower (Morale) test or experience the Frightened condition (use one of your actions each turn to move away from it or suffer a –3 penalty to all tests other than those supporting retreat—see **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**) for 2d6 rounds or until the spectre is defeated, whichever comes first. If the GM is using the **Horror** rules in **CHAPTER 8** this is a horror test against the Threatening stimulus with possible other effects listed in that chapter and section.

**WEIGHTLESS:** Spectres can Fly their Speed, and hover at will. They cannot fall or be knocked Prone.

## SPECTRE

**AKA:** BANSHEES, HUNGRY GHOSTS, WRAITHS

Spectres are evil or corrupted spirits of the dead who for whatever reason can't move on to the afterlife. Instead, they haunt the dark corners of the world to torment, terrorize, and destroy the living. Many spectres' spirits have been damaged or changed somehow, forcing them to repeat certain tasks they performed in life, especially if they left them undone. If prevented from performing these tasks they grow enraged. They are not necessarily aware they have died. However, other spectres know exactly what they are, and enjoy tormenting the living. Spectres coming from violent deaths often stalk and kill individuals who remind them of the event—for example, one killed by a dwarven warrior might attack all dwarves who take up arms.

Spectres of great heroes, master mages, and other important characters will be Elite, Heroic, or Epic threats, often with additional powers relating to their mortal lives. All spectres enter their existence looking like a strangely colorless duplicate of the individuals they were in life, but as these shapes are made of spiritual material they can change according to the spectre's temperament. Exposed bones, skull-like visages, and ferocious features appear among older and more malevolent spectres, though some horrific shapes conceal benevolent personalities, and some of the most evil have pleasant forms—at least, at first.





## WALKING CORPSES

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0, **Communication** -2, **Constitution** 5, **Dexterity** -2, **Fighting** 1, **Intelligence** -2, **Perception** -1, **Strength** (Intimidation) 2, **Willpower** 1

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
8	25	8	4
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Bite	+0	1d6 + 2	
Claw	+1	1d6 + 2	

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Knock Prone, Swarm Tactics\* (3 SP)

**DEATHLY FORTITUDE:** Walking corpses do not need to breathe, sleep, rest, eat, or drink normally.

**MINDLESS AGGRESSION:** Walking corpses never flee from battle unless commanded, though they can be tricked or manipulated.

**STUNT - SWARM TACTICS\*:** Walking corpses can perform Swarm Tactics as a special stunt costing 3 SP. This stunt allows any other walking corpses adjacent to the target to make an immediate attack outside of their usual turn, as a free action. This bonus attack is a simple test that can't generate or use stunt points.

**VERY TOUGH HIDE:** Walking corpses have a natural Armor Rating of 4.

**THREAT: MINOR**



## WALKING CORPSES

AKA: ANIMATED DEAD, ROTTERS, SHAMBLERS

Dead bodies animated by necromancy, evil spirits, or some other arcane force, walking corpses are nearly mindless reanimated cadavers, some so decomposed that they are mere skeletons. If left to their own devices they wander in search of living beings to attack, ripping them to shreds or devouring them. If controlled by someone, they will follow simple, direct commands in the most obvious fashion. Depending on how they were animated, those killed by walking corpses may rise again as walking corpses themselves. Fortunately, this seems to be difficult to achieve through any spell, saving the world from necromancers summoning plagues of them, but strange celestial phenomena, weird alchemical accidents, and other unlikely sources might produce the “infectious” variety.

The statistics here are for animated corpses of peasants, civilians, and other noncombatant NPCs. Walking corpses created from the bodies of warriors could have armor, weapons, and retain some of their training and combat skills. Treat such animated corpses as Elite, Heroic, or Epic adversaries and add weapons and armor as necessary.

## CUSTOMIZING CREATURES

Some creatures have variants that possess unique or strange abilities. These variations may be unique monsters, members of a magically altered lineage, or may just have undergone special training in various fields. Special qualities give creatures distinct traits beyond their abilities and other basics. You can use the following special qualities to further customize the varied beings heroes encounter. For instance, a “troll” could be a variety of ogre with the *regenerate* quality found further on in this section. Remember that even human NPCs don’t need to follow the rules PCs do and they might have all manner of unique powers. GMs should note that adding powers to a monster may increase its Threat Rating.

### AGILE

The monster is exceptionally agile and quick for its type. It has +2 to Dexterity-based tests and can go Prone or stand up as a free action, without using up any movement if they do so while using the Move action or a similar movement-based action.

### AQUATIC

The monster gains the ability to breathe underwater and can swim equal to its normal Speed. It also suffers no penalties for moving, attacking, or otherwise operating underwater.

### BIG

This creature’s mass makes it difficult to push or knock down. Knock Prone and Skirmish stunts, and any other stunts that might push, pull, knock down, or otherwise move the crea-



ture around each require +1 SP over their normal costs to work. In the case of stunts with a variable cost, such as Skirmish, the +1 SP cost increase is on top of the total number of SP it normally costs, so moving the creature 6 yards costs 4 SP instead of the usual 3, for instance.

#### BLENDING

The monster can camouflage itself in some manner, blending into its surroundings. This gives the monster a +2 bonus to any Dexterity (Stealth) checks based on hiding or avoiding being seen.

#### BURROWING

This monster gains the ability to burrow through the earth at its normal Speed. Variations of this quality include *lesser burrowing*, possessed by ghouls, and *master burrowing*, possessed by burrowers.

#### CLOCKWORK

The monster is a clockwork or other mechanical model of an actual monster. The monster no longer needs to breathe, eat, or sleep. Because it is a clockwork construct, any damage to it cannot be healed and must instead be repaired. A repair action works like the Heal action but uses Intelligence (Engineering) instead of Intelligence (Healing). Clockwork monsters often have *tough hides* representing their artificial structure.

#### DARK SIGHT

The monster can see normally in total darkness.

#### ELEMENTAL RESISTANCE

The monster is immune to a certain type of damage such as fire, cold, earth, electricity, or water. Magical damage of this type can still harm the monster, but it does half damage.

#### GIANT WEAPONS

Creatures must have the *big* or *large and in charge* qualities, or must otherwise be large enough, to have access to giant-sized weapons, which inflict an additional 1d6 damage more than usual. Creatures within the size ranges of typical Player Characters can't use these.

#### INCORPOREAL FORM

The creature ignores the effects of terrain and can walk through solids and liquids as if they aren't there, as long as they begin and end each turn in an open space. If somehow stuck inside a solid or liquid at the end of a turn, at the beginning of their next turn they are ejected to the point they entered.

#### INCORPOREAL RESISTANCE

Creatures with this quality can only be damaged by magical weapons, spells, and qualities, as well as the psychic intention to harm them. Magical methods inflict full damage, while a character using a missile or melee weapon does 1 point of damage or damage equal to their Willpower ability, whichever is higher. If a stunt would increase damage from a mundane attack, it does so by the lowest amount that can be rolled.

#### LARGE AND IN CHARGE

The size and bulk of the creature are truly impressive—bigger than the *big* quality, which may not be taken with it. It is immune to the stunts that might move it, including Skirmish, and Knock Prone, except when performed by other very large creatures or equivalent forces, such as other creatures with the *large and in charge* quality. Its long reach also treats enemies up to 4 yards away as being adjacent.

#### MAGIC RESISTANCE

The monster gains a +2 bonus to resist spells or other magical effects. It possesses an Armor Rating against magical damage equal to its Willpower +2. Such monsters often can't be healed magically.

#### MANY-HEADED

The monster gains one or more additional heads. It gains 1 Perception and can make an additional attack each turn. If it possesses a bite-based attack, the monster can use this attack with its other heads and can make one additional attack each turn per head. Attacks with all of the heads can be made as a major action but they are all simple tests and do not generate stunt points.

#### MIGHTY

The monster is exceptionally strong. It gains the Strength (Might) focus, and +2 Strength-based tests. If it already has the Might focus, it gains an additional +1 to Strength (Might) tests, stacking with other bonuses.

#### PIERCING

One or more of the monster's attacks now halves a target's Armor Rating when it hits. If the monster uses the Pierce Armor stunt, it ignores the Armor Rating altogether.

#### REGENERATE

The monster can heal Health = Constitution (Minimum 2) as a 2 SP stunt. This stunt may be used multiple times in the same roll if enough SP are available, increasing the healing effect. Wounds of a certain type cannot be healed with *regenerate*—this varies depending on the monster but is typically fire or acid-based damage.

#### SHADOW

The monster is attuned to the mystical realms of darkness and shadow. It takes half damage from all non-magical attacks and can use the *regenerate* and *blending* powers in darkness or dim light. In sunlight or other bright light, it takes damage normally, and all light-based magical attacks do an extra 1d6 penetrating damage.

#### SMALL

This monster is exceptionally small. It gains +2 defense due to its size but loses 2 Strength. It also gains a +2 circumstance bonus to situations where its size would be a benefit, such as hiding in small spaces.



## OPTIONAL RULE: SPIRIT BANE

At the Game Master's discretion, characters may be able to use a special stunt called Spirit Bane to effectively attack creatures such as spectres and air elementals who are ethereal or have an incorporeal resistance. Discovering this stunt might be a function of a successful Arcane Lore or Religious Lore test, or it might be known to characters with those focuses, certain groups who study hauntings, or in highly magical settings maybe everyone.

SP

STUNT

3

**SPIRIT BANE:** Using a special ritual or form of mental focus, you overcome an incorporeal being's resistance to ordinary sources of damage. You inflict the normal damage for the melee or missile weapon you're using, but you add Willpower, not Perception or Strength, to its base damage rating. If you string together other damaging stunts, such as Mighty blow, they inflict full bonus damage to the attack as well.

### SPECTRAL ATTACK

The monster's attack ignores the target's shield bonus to Defense and inflicts penetrating damage. This is reduced by half the target's Willpower (rounded up).

### TOUGH HIDE

Many creatures have variations of the *tough hide* quality, which grants a certain range of Armor Rating. This is an innate rating that stacks with worn armor, though most creatures with this quality don't wear armor.

- *Tough Hide* grants an AR of 1 or 2
- *Very Tough Hide* grants an AR of 3 or 4
- *Extremely Tough Hide* grants an AR of 5 or 6
- *Monstrously Tough Hide* grants an AR of 7 or 8
- *Supremely Tough Hide* grants an AR of 9 or 10

### UNHOLY

The monster is cursed or hails from some terrible hell realm. It cannot enter sacred or holy ground without taking 1d6 penetrating damage per turn and all attacks against it with holy relics or blessed objects do an additional 1d6 damage.

### VULNERABILITY

This isn't a power so much as a special weakness. When attacked with a substance or element to which the monster is vulnerable, the creature takes an additional 1d6 damage and its Armor Rating is halved, or its Armor Rating is completely eliminated if the attacker used the Pierce Armor stunt.

### VICIOUS COMBATANT

Instincts and aggression make the creature extremely deadly in combat. It can make two different specific attacks, such as a Bite followed by a Claw, with just one major action. Roll each attack separately. Either attack, or both, can generate and use stunt points.

## WEIGHTLESS

The creature can Fly at its Speed, and can hover at will. Such creatures cannot fall or be rendered Prone.

## WINGED

The monster gains flying movement equal to its normal Speed and can use flying actions.

## BORROWING SPECIAL QUALITIES

In addition to using the special qualities provided in this section, you can also modify monsters by taking special qualities from other monsters—those various stunts, powers, and effects listed under an individual monster's Special Qualities section of their entry. Not every power or ability works when given to a new monster, but many do.

### EXAMPLE

*Malcolm needs to design a wyvern—a lesser form of dragon—for a major encounter in an adventure. He's using the griffon as the basis for the creature and has already augmented the monster by making it an Epic version, but it doesn't seem quite dangerous enough for how he envisions the monster.*

*Looking through the monsters in these listings, he spots the manticore's Poison Sting stunt, which adds a venomous attack that can slow foes. Malcolm decides that's perfect and adds the ability from the manticore to his griffon stat block, completing his "wyvern" adversary.*

## BY ANY OTHER NAME...

Sometimes you can change an adversary significantly by changing its name and making some modifications to its general appearance, even if any mechanical changes are minor or even absent altogether. These differences might be the variations in the same breed of creature, or they might represent creatures that are mechanically very similar but have different histories and roles in a campaign.

### EXAMPLE

*Kate is running a game with cultures based loosely on those of Norse myths and legends. She decides that the Norse-inspired cultures call giants 'jotun' and dragons 'wyrms.' However, mechanically these creatures use the same statistics of normal creatures of their type. The changes are purely cosmetic.*

Often a change in name and appearance combined with a special quality or two is all it takes to create a whole new type of monster, greatly expanding the utility of each and every adversary in this and other *Fantasy AGE* products. GMs are encouraged to develop their own versions of classic monsters and supernatural creatures as part of the worldbuilding for their campaigns, renaming them as desired and making even fantasy standards feel unique to their games.





# 10: REWARDS

In *Fantasy AGE* the PCs enter dangerous situations, unearth weird secrets, and fend off threats to friends, nations, and even worlds. They deserve rewards not only to encourage the story to continue, but to reflect the heroes' maturing abilities and ties to the campaign—and a bit of loot doesn't hurt, either. This chapter talks about such rewards, from experience points and magic items to Relationships and Reputation.

## LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

In *Fantasy AGE* characters gain levels over time, turning their accumulated experience into greater power. They master their areas of expertise and might develop new skills as well.

The easiest way to deal with level advancement is to just grant a new level whenever the Player Characters make it past a significant milestone in the campaign, such as completing an adventure. It's usually a good idea to slow advancement at higher levels so your heroes don't overshoot the challenges you'd like to present to them. **Level Rewards**, following, covers this option.

There's another way to control level advancement: experience points (XP for short). The GM grants XP for good roleplaying, successful actions, and rewarding moments during the game. **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION** lays out the XP requirements to gain a level. **Experience Points** and subsequent sections in this chapter tell you how to award it.

Both methods are equally valid, and the Game Master may even decide to switch from one to the other based on how the campaign is going. Experience points may be more desirable for lower levels when characters crave every step

toward improving their more modest abilities, while at high levels it may be more preferable to grant a new level every few sessions as characters broaden in power.

## LEVEL REWARDS

The easiest option is simply to reward PCs with a level when they do something significant, such as finishing an adventure or achieving a major campaign or personal goal. To exercise this option, don't worry about tracking the details of every encounter. You just award levels as you see fit. This gives the GM a lot of freedom to control the overall pace of the campaign and it is fast and easy to implement, requiring no XP tracking. However, it can be tricky to work out a balance between stagnating PCs or advancing them too quickly. Also, if you have PCs of different levels, unless you grant lower-level PCs extra levels along the way they'll never catch up to their higher-level companions.

That's the basic concept of level rewards; they can take some getting used to for GMs and players accustomed to XP-based advancement, but they're fast, plot-driven, and easy.

### EXAMPLE

*Steve has been running a Fantasy AGE campaign and the PCs are currently level 2. The last four sessions have been dedicated to an adventure in which the PCs ferret out a sinister cult that had secretly taken over a nearby town. In the final session, the PCs defeated the cult leaders and liberated the town. Steve decides this is an appropriate moment to level up the characters. He tells the players to advance their characters to level 3.*



## MILESTONES

One way to pace level advancement is to decide you'll grant one based on how many important encounters or story events—**milestones**—have passed. Possible milestones include:

- The characters' first encounter with a new foe or mystery.
- Discovering who their primary adversary is.
- Arriving at a significant new place.
- Any major combat encounter where the characters are in significant danger.
- Any encounter that results in the death of a character.
- Solving an important section of a mystery.
- Discovering an important object, such as a magic item key to the story.
- Defeating important secondary adversaries.
- Defeating their primary adversary.
- Forging a critical alliance.
- When an important Player Character retires from play.

The GM can decide that characters gain a new level at the end of any session where a certain number of milestones have passed and the session didn't conclude in the middle of an important encounter, as gaining a level usually assumes some kind of interlude where characters train or come to terms with their improved skills.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

If a GM elects to award XP as a reward, they must decide on how many XP a given encounter generates. This system should remain consistent. Inconsistency in awarding experience can make players lose trust in the GM, so while predictability can make a reward lose drama, it does assure a player that their character performing  $x$  yields  $y$ . Likewise, players are entitled to know how many XP their characters need to meet the next level in their characters' progression.

### ENCOUNTER-BASED XP AWARDS

*Fantasy AGE's* base system awards XP based on the difficulty of an encounter—that is, how hard it is to prevail over its challenges and continue further along the adventure. This difficulty is based on how hard the encounter actually was—not how hard you predicted it to be—with the exception that clever planning that makes the encounter easier does not count against its difficulty.

#### EXPERIENCE POINT REWARDS

ENCOUNTER	REWARD
Routine	0 XP
Easy	100 XP
Average	250 XP
Hard	400 XP

For instance, if the heroes storm a wizard's tower and face nothing but weak apprentices, that's an Easy encounter—unless they blunder into a laboratory where they've all gathered and have access to explosives, poisons, and other dangerous materials, in which case it might be more difficult. Conversely, if the lead wizard is home, the encounter might be Average or Hard. If they lock the wizard in his own chamber by stealth, taking him out of the encounter, it *still* counts as Average or Hard, even though the PCs defeated the challenge he posed through wits, not steel.

Experience points for encounters are usually divided among each character present at the encounter. Some other awards (detailed later in this chapter) may only go to individual characters based on their exceptional actions.

### ROUTINE

A routine encounter is one in which nothing special happens. A walk down the street, a risk-free conversation with a partner, or fetching supplies with coin in hand are all Routine.

### EASY

An easy encounter occurs when a character overcomes a difficulty without much time or labor involved. The results of failure would also be low. Easy encounters could entail intimidating a couple of goblins so they stop harassing a friend, or finding an unguarded piece of lore in a mystic library. In combat encounters, Easy examples involve Extras (see CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES) and enemies two or more threat levels below your own, as per the equivalencies listed in CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES, unless they significantly outnumber the PCs.

### AVERAGE

An average task poses a challenge that takes a moderate amount of skill, cleverness, and resources to overcome. Taking on a gang of brigands or getting a haughty lord to act on a petition are examples of average encounters. These are the staples of adventures and should be the majority of encounters. Enemies in Average combat encounters are typically one threat level below the equivalent PC levels, with adjustments for greater or smaller numbers.

### HARD

Hard tasks are those that characters struggle to complete successfully. They take time, great effort, and the sacrifice of valuable resources. Hard encounters often involve serious peril, either to the character or someone or something dear to them. The risk is high when attempting a Hard encounter. Taking down a well-equipped band of mercenaries or stopping a rite to summon some unspeakable entity might be Hard encounters. A Hard combat encounter involves enemies as powerful as the PCs, at minimum.

#### EXAMPLE

*Donna has just run a short session of Fantasy AGE and needs to calculate XP for the party. There were three encounters: a roleplaying encounter in a tavern, a combat encounter in the*



streets, and then a roleplaying encounter with a militia captain. The tavern encounter was an attempt to gather some information. The characters talked to some locals and found out a few things, but overall Donna rates it as routine. After leaving the tavern the characters were ambushed by thugs. Donna hadn't expected this encounter to be too challenging, but bad luck plagued the party and the thugs made good use of stunts. One of the characters went to 0 Health and nearly died and the party Mage spent half her magic points. Donna decides to rate this as hard. In the final encounter, the local militia captain confronts the party about fighting in the streets. He wants to throw them in jail for murder and isn't well disposed toward adventurers. It takes some doing to convince him that they were defending themselves. In the end, he only agrees to let them go if they investigate a small matter for him in a nearby village. Donna decides this is an average encounter. The characters thus earn 650 XP for the session (0 for the tavern encounter, 400 for the ambush, and 250 for the negotiation with the militia captain).

## MILESTONE XP

In addition to encounter-based rewards, you should grant bonus XP for milestones: moments which have particular importance in the campaign. One common milestone is the climactic encounter of an adventure. Others include completing a plot thread or making a critical discovery whose effects influence the rest of the campaign.

Milestone award amounts are entirely up to the GM, but the suggested award is similar to those for encounters, on top of any encounter-based awards. There usually isn't anything equivalent to an "Easy" milestone, so 250 XP, or 400 for the most important milestones, is appropriate. In addition, if characters would be close to gaining levels, awarding enough milestone XP to put them over the top matches their advancement to the progress of the story.

## INDIVIDUAL XP

Individual characters are also eligible for bonus XP. If a player roleplays their character peerlessly, really jibing with the plot, a key NPC, or perhaps an internal struggle, the GM ought to be generous. Good roleplaying drives a game of *Fantasy AGE*, whether it's through the rapturous celebration of a job well done, or the garment-rending tragedy of a failed mission or fallen friend.

Like milestone XP, individual awards should be based on the awards for encounters, though Easy awards are possible here for the bon mots and minor but vivid descriptions offered by players in less dramatic situations.

Unlike other XP awards, individual awards go to single characters, and aren't necessarily split among all PCs. This doesn't mean they *can't* be split. The GM should decide whether this XP joins the common pool that gets split up, or not. Pooling individual awards allows characters to advance at the same rate constantly, and means good roleplaying helps everyone in the party. However, some players want the recognition of a sole award. Choose the option your group would enjoy the most.

## INSTANT AWARDS AND EXCEPTIONAL CHALLENGES

By dint of their personal histories and other circumstances, some characters may face challenges others don't. In cases where a character's situation forces some challenge other characters don't have to confront, or makes certain tasks notably more difficult, the GM may choose to provide an instant experience award to recognize that character's extra efforts, even if they normally don't use instant awards. These awards are pooled or kept separate using the same policy the GM sets for other individual awards. This is applicable to personal challenges, as described in **Personal Challenges (Optional)** in CHAPTER 7: THE GAME MASTER.

## INSTANT EXPERIENCE AWARDS

If you use XP, you may also use the option of instant rewards. Grant an instant reward whenever a player portrays their character especially well, does something clever, or entertains the group. Grant the award then and there—don't wait for the end of the session. Be careful to note the accomplishments of quiet players who express themselves through actions instead of raw, attention-getting behavior. Never award instant XP for actions that annoy other players or hinder their ability to have fun.

Instant experience awards come in three denominations:

- **NICE (10 XP):** Award 10 XP whenever a player does something a bit better than average, such as inspiring a chuckle, making a challenge a bit easier through clever thinking, or helping another player have fun. You can also award this if a player chooses to suffer a slight disadvantage because it would fit their character, even if the rules say the player doesn't have to experience a drawback.
- **GREAT (25 XP):** Award 25 XP if a player's cleverness and good roleplaying are appreciated by most of the other players, or quietly accomplishes something that moves the story forward or makes it more interesting. This is encouraged if the player allows their character to be put at risk for the group or suffer a significant disadvantage. This award should be granted no more than once or twice per session.
- **AWESOME (40 XP):** If a player's actions win accolades from the group and will be something fondly remembered for the rest of the campaign, and really go above and beyond good roleplaying, award 40 XP. This award should only take place once in a handful of sessions. You can also award it when the player decides their character would act in a way that risks their lives or seriously burdens them in some other way, when it would be consistent with what their character would do and adds drama and enjoyment to the story.

Instant awards will speed advancement. Experiment with them. If you find players win XP too fast, cut standard awards by 25%, 50%, or more. The easiest way to track them is to use coins or other markers representing the value of each reward level. Hand out the markers during play, then tally them at the end of the session.



Instant awards can go to the player or a common XP pool according to whatever policy the GM sets for other individual awards.

#### EXAMPLE

*Running an action encounter with a cult-linked Freeport gang, Donna goes through PC and NPC actions as they fight across rooftops. A cult tough corners Adhar, and after his player consults with Donna the Envoy says, "You know, I used to work on roofs just like this. The tiles overlap and support each other." Instead of attacking, Adhar makes a Dexterity (Crafting) roll and scores doubles and 4 SP, which, with Donna's permission, gets used to Skirmish the cultist right off the roof. "Swipe the supporting tiles at the base, and it all comes down," says Adhar as he does just that, and watches the cultist slide by and drop 30 feet. Donna hands out a 25 XP instant award for Adhar's plan, and how he carried it out with panache.*

## SOCIAL ACTIONS

CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES mentions that even though PCs don't normally have to change their behavior when social maneuvers targeting them succeed. However, if they voluntarily choose to be influenced and experience hardship for doing so consider an individual or instant award. When a player portrays their character as unable to suspect their close companion is a sinister cultist, or when their hate for a minor enemy clouds their judgment as a greater foe awaits, consider an award.

## REPUTATION

Rewards need not always be tangible. Reputation is its own reward in many social situations. Whether a character gains the epithet of "Savior of Stonebreak Isle" after preventing a pirate raid or is simply known as a trustworthy soul for acting as counsel and friend to many, reputation can make the difference between a discount in the store or having to pay a gouging price. A warm reception upon arriving in town makes future interactions easier.

Reputation may indicate a character's specializations and talents. An elite archer's reputation for having a natural aptitude comes with their skill, while a wizard's fearsome reputation speaks to their ability to rain fire and unnatural fury on their enemies. These reputations may form through play and convey a mechanical benefit when handling the subject matter to which the reputation pertains.

GMs and players should remember that reputation can disappear as easily as it arrives. If the archer loses a public competition, or the Mage gets tossed out of their own tower by robbers they lose their respective reputations.

## HONORIFICS

In its simplest form, reputation manifests as a title a character carries: an honorific. They might be known as "The Sharpest Blade This Side of the Serpent's Teeth," or "The Gossip of a Thousand Pubs."

The honorific defines its usefulness. A superlative lover is unlikely to count on their reputation before an irate lord—unless, of course, the lord's lonely and a bit corrupt. The GM is the final arbiter on whether an honorific is appropriate for the given scene, though inspired use should always be rewarded.

Honorifics do not stack with each other, each being pertinent to a specific use of reputation.

## INSPIRED REPUTATION

Inspired use of reputation appears in many forms, and it is the most likely form of reputation use to require GM adjudication. The *Defender of Innocents* who uses her reputation to arm herself at a bargain to "protect the children" is using her honorific in an inspired way. So is the rooftop vigilante, the "Moonlight Menace," when he intimidates a footpad into telling him the name of the local gang leader.

Inspired use of reputation grants a character a bonus of +1 to the result of the Stunt Die. This bonus is not counted when determining doubles. This is applied before the test, so it increases its chance of success, its degree of success, and how many SP a successful test might grant.

## PASSIVE REPUTATION

Passive reputation is the most common use of an honorific. This makes a group or person act more or less favorably toward the character if they already know the reputation, and it affects them in some way. A thief known as "Invisible Hands" will, for instance, receive contract work from thieves' guilds quicker than someone with no reputation at all. However, Watch members and magistrates will make less than charitable assumptions about the character based on her honorific.

Thus, passive reputation shifts the Attitude (see CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES) of people who know it one step, in a direction that fits the NPC's feelings about the character's honorific. "Invisible Hands" will find friends in low places but may not be welcome at the local market.

## PERSONAL REPUTATION

Using reputation in a personal way, such as prefacing a name with a title or telling a tale of former deeds, earns a character a simple advantage over opponents. In a contested action involving the character's famed trait, the opponent suffers a -1 penalty to their opposing roll. Personal use of reputation is purely psychological, serving to unnerve an opponent, making them second-guess their action. It activates when a character cites their own reputation.

## SUPPORTIVE REPUTATION

A character with an earned reputation should proudly demonstrate the truth behind his honorifics, such as through an entourage of supporters or foes applauding his skill openly or whispering of it in fear. This use of reputation triggers successfully if any character but the one with the honorific convincingly speaks to another (outside the protagonist's party) about the reputation in question, in advance of or during a scene in



which the reputation receives use. Supportive use of reputation provides a character a +2 bonus to any roll in which the character demonstrates the reputation's effects, such as an expert in the field of small blades wielding a dagger in a barroom fight, or a superlative lover seducing someone in the opposite corner of that same bar. Audience makes a reputation, inspiring confidence in the individual with the epithet when he hears others chanting his name.

## EXAMPLE HONORIFICS

Reputation and honorifics may manifest in any form, for any reason, but characters shouldn't gain more than a handful over an adventuring career. The following examples are starting points, and include alternatives, including their opposites. These should also be customized for your campaign, referring to its distinct places and situations.

### ARDENT DUELIST

The character is known to love challenging people to duels on the thinnest pretenses—and if they've survived the habit, they must be fairly good with a sword. They're disliked by the authorities as a troublemaker, and by many others as a bully, but might be envied by aspiring sword fighters and people who think bloodshed is romantic.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Fight-Shy, Ardent Schemer

### BANE OF THIEVES

The character's actions in bringing criminals and other ne'er-do-wells to justice earn her a reputation as a crimefighter. Perhaps they act against those who escape justice—or maybe they figure lawful punishments don't go far enough. Criminals may not respect them, but certainly fear them.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Bane of Dark Cults, Bane of the Watch

### DEFENDER OF INNOCENTS

Defenders of the innocent gain their reputation through their deeds combating the forces of corruption. Many defenders rely on skills other than physical prowess, using trickery and the time-honored practice of stealing from the undeserving to aid the needy. Defenders of the innocent run the risk of losing their reputation if they stretch their kindness too far.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Advocate of the Corrupt, Defender of the City

### DESTINED FOR GREATNESS

It seems no matter what this character attempts, they succeed, earning increasing praise and regard from their peers. It's almost as if a supernatural force were watching over them, pushing them on a fateful path of glory and renown. Such individuals draw the ire of the bitter, and the reverence of those who see providence in these characters' actions. An individual destined for greatness is likely to earn an arch-nemesis, determined to break whatever it is destiny has in store.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Destined for Doom, Has a Deal with the Unspeakable

### EXPERT IN THE FIELD

A learned character may receive acclaim for their research, knowledge, and accomplishments. A field of interest may lack mainstream recognition, but this character talks about and acts on his pursuit with such confidence, that few can doubt they are a paramount scholar except jealous colleagues eager to discredit them.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Crackpot, Reclusive Genius

### LOYAL

Some characters earn a reputation for loyalty against all odds. Simply serving well rarely generates a reputation but diving into the path of an arrow intended for one's liege or defending a friend against hideous accusations earns such an honorific.





There are those who rate loyalists highly, and others who enjoy taking advantage of such faithful hounds.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Dedicated Partner, Treacherous

#### LUCKY

Somehow, things always turn out well for this character. Unlike individuals destined for greatness, a lucky character just seems to have fortune smiling on him whenever times get rough. The dice tend to fall their way, which isn't as charming as you might think, especially if you're playing against them.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Cheater, Cursed

#### NATURAL APTITUDE

The character's natural abilities stand out in one or more respects, to the envy and awe of others. Some people consider it unfair that parentage and fate gave the character their gifts. When such a prodigy falters, it breaks the hearts of supporters but comforts people who believe the character's abilities were overrated or undeserved.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Inept and Innocent, Well Trained

#### REBELLIOUS

A character with a reputation for rebelliousness easily draws like-minded individuals to their banner. Maybe they just want to stick it to the king, but they might run an underground movement for dissent and anarchy. Not only do the minions of orthodoxy oppose them, but they also face dissent within their own factions—rebellious against a fellow rebel is only natural.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Polemicist, Usurper

## TREASURE

Money can be power in *Fantasy AGE*, so treasure is a common reward. Be careful not to overdo it, though. If the PCs bring home a hoard of coins it can reduce their motivation to go on further adventures. Of course, wealth attracts unwelcome attention so treasure can also be the source of adventures as well.

When you want to give treasure as a reward you can consult the **Treasure Category** table. This provides a rough guideline that you can use or modify as you see fit. The value is given in silver pieces, but the actual treasure can be in other denominations of coins or in the form of gems, jewels, and the like.

TREASURE CATEGORY	
CATEGORY	VALUE
Trifling Treasure	1d6 silver pieces
Paltry Treasure	3d6 silver pieces
Middling Treasure	2d6 × 10 silver pieces
Substantial Treasure	2d6 × 100 silver pieces
Abundant Treasure	4d6 × 100 silver pieces
Lavish Treasure	6d6 × 100 silver pieces

## MAGIC ITEMS

Perhaps the greatest rewards characters can receive are magic items. They are rare and prized by those lucky enough to have them.

In general, there are two broad categories of magic items: temporary and permanent. Temporary items have enchantments that fade over time or are good for a single use. Potions are a good example of temporary items. Since they last for a short time and often use tried and true recipes, they tend to be generic. Permanent items are different; each one is special. As such, permanent items tend to have unique names and histories. If you create new magic items for your campaign, try to make each permanent item unique. It may provide the same bonus as another item, but its origin and appearance should be different.

## RARITY OF MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items come in increasing levels of rarity:

- **Common** items are almost always temporary magic, fairly easily made and acquired, and may even be found for sale in some places.
- **Uncommon** are generally acquired as treasures or the result of a quest. They're rarely ever offered for sale and, when they are, they tend to be expensive.
- **Rare** items are not often seen and draw attention when they show up. They are almost never offered for sale and are usually acquired from adventures, hidden treasure troves, and the like.
- **Legendary** items are truly one-of-a-kind, and a character is lucky to acquire even one over the course of a career. Such items are the subjects of great quests, and many may have sought and failed to find them in the past. A legendary item is worth a king's ransom.

## AVAILABILITY OF MAGIC ITEMS

If you want to adjust the availability of magic items in the game, just shift their rarity up or down a level. For a "high magic" game common items become very common, even items of regular equipment, and even legendary magic items are only rare, and characters might well have more than one. For a "low magic" game even common items are uncommon and rarely offered for sale, rare items become truly legendary, and legendary items earn their category, belonging to myths and tall tales.

You can also modify the availability of specific types of magic items based on their benefits. You might decide that armor, attack, and damage bonus items have their usual rarity, but that immunity items are high magic and rarer, while talent bonus items do not exist in your game at all, because you don't want items overshadowing characters' chosen talents.

## MAGIC ITEM BENEFITS

Magic items can provide several benefits. Most items provide only one or two benefits, temporary items in particular





usually provide only one. Single-use items, due to their limited nature, are typically one class more common than permanent items. For example, an effect that would normally be uncommon would be common in a temporary item.

#### ABILITY BONUS

While the item is in use, you gain a bonus to a specific ability (and therefore to all tests of that ability, and any secondary traits based on it). A +1 ability bonus is uncommon, +2 is rare, and +3 is legendary.

#### ARMOR BONUS

While the item is in use, you gain a bonus to your Armor Rating. A +1 bonus is uncommon, +2 is rare, and +3 is legendary. Alternately, this benefit might negate up to twice its value in armor penalty for a regular suit of armor.

#### ATTACK BONUS

The item grants a bonus on attack rolls. A +1 bonus is uncommon, +2 is rare, and +3 is legendary.

#### DAMAGE BONUS

The item grants a bonus to damage rolls. A +1 bonus is uncommon, +2 is rare, and +3 is legendary.

#### DEFENSE BONUS

While the item is in use, you gain a bonus to your Defense. A +1 bonus is uncommon, +2 is rare, and +3 is legendary.

#### FOCUS BONUS

While the item is in use, you either gain a focus you don't have or increase the bonus of a focus you do already have by +1.

#### IMMUNITY

While using the item, you gain immunity to a specific hazard or effect, such as: one spell arcana, a specific form of damage (such as poison or lightning), a specific hazard (such as disease or demonic possession), and so forth. The GM sets the parameters of the immunity granted by the item.

#### SPELL BONUS

The item grants you the use of a particular spell you don't already know.

#### STUNT BONUS

The item grants you the ability to perform a particular stunt at a reduced cost in stunt points, or to perform a unique stunt normally unavailable to you.

#### TALENT BONUS

When in use, the item grants you the benefits of a talent you do not already have (usually at the Novice level) or an additional level in a talent you already do have, up to Master level.

#### UNIQUE BONUS

This is a catch-all category for benefits not fitting into any of the previous categories, chosen and defined by the GM for a



particular item. Use the guidelines of the other magic item benefits to set the effect and define its rarity, although items with a unique bonus are uncommon, at least.

## USING MAGIC ITEMS

A magic item generally requires an Activate action to use, although once activated some items continue providing their bonuses until they are specifically deactivated. This is particularly the case for magic items that are worn, such as armor, items, clothing, or jewelry; the Activate action is the process of putting the item on, and it is deactivated when it is removed. Likewise, items such as potions are activated by drinking them (an Activate action) and then have their effect, which may last for a predetermined amount of time.

Other magic items, particularly magic weapons, are activated by taking a melee or ranged attack action with the item. Magic items granting a spell bonus are generally activated with a cast action.

## MAGIC ITEM RESTRICTIONS

When an item grants a bonus to a trait the character does not have, such as a class-specific talent or stunt, that aspect of the item is ineffective for that character. For example, a Mage's staff that contains spells and magic points can't be used by someone with no magic training, and an item that reduces the cost of Rogue class stunts is useless to anyone who can't use those stunts. When exceptions to this rule exist, they should be specifically noted in the item's description.



ARCANE LIGHT

BLASTING GEL



ARROWS OF ACCURACY, PIERCING, AND WOUNDING



Characters can use magic weapons and armor they don't have training in but suffer the same penalties they would when using normal items untrained. When halving weapon damage due to lack of training (see CHAPTER 4: EQUIPMENT under **Weapon Training**), add magical bonuses before halving the final total. This makes magical weapons much less useful in untrained hands.

Additionally, some magic items may have restrictions as a part of their nature or enchantment, limiting them to users of a particular background. So, a dwarf-made hammer or axe, for example, might only exhibit its bonuses in the hands of a dwarf, while a holy weapon or item could only function for a devout believer in a particular faith, and so on. These restrictions are imposed as the GM sees fit based on the nature and description of the magic item.

## TEMPORARY MAGIC ITEMS

### ARCANE LIGHT

COMMON

A palm-sized crystal, an arcane light glows as brightly as a torch with an Activate action and a touch, and it can be extinguished with an Activate action as well. They are often mounted in lantern housings or torch holders, or at the end of a staff or walking stick. An *arcane light* lasts for 28 days of continual use before its enchantment dims and fades altogether.

### ARROW OF ACCURACY

UNCOMMON

This arrow (or crossbow bolt, sling stone, or other missile) is enchanted for greater accuracy. The character who fires an *arrow of accuracy* gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll. The arrow is good for only one attack.

### ARROW OF PIERCING

UNCOMMON

This arrow (or crossbow bolt, sling stone, or other missile) magically penetrates armor. An attack from this arrow halves the target's Armor Rating (rounded down). The arrow is good for only one attack.

### ARROW OF WOUNDING

UNCOMMON

This arrow (or crossbow bolt, sling stone, or other missile) is enchanted to inflict more damage. The character who fires an *arrow of wounding* gains a +2 bonus to the damage roll. The arrow is good for only one attack.

### BLASTING GEL

UNCOMMON

A product of advanced alchemy, this red sludge is a powerful alchemical explosive. *Blasting gel* comes in two forms: unprimed and primed. Unprimed *blasting gel* is perfectly safe, and has a dull red color. Exposing it to strong kinetic energy (a stomp or punch), fire, freezing temperatures, or electricity, primes it, turning it bright red. When it is exposed to the same thing that primed it once again, it explodes. A pound of *blasting gel* explodes for 1d6 damage in a 2-yard blast radius, but it is commonly found in five- and even ten-pound allotments, multiplying its damage and area of effect accordingly. This substance is often used in construction and siege warfare.



rather than personal combat, as the risks of accidentally priming and then detonating it are significant.

#### BREATHING MUCUS

UNCOMMON

Harvested from boneless ones (See CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES) or magically duplicated based on their example, this vile substance is highly useful to anyone who'd explore underwater. This translucent green slime solidifies over the breathing holes of its user, and allows an air breather to breathe water, or a water breather to breathe air. Its effects last until an air breather returns to air for one minute, or a water breather returns to water for one minute.

#### HEALING POTION

COMMON

This elixir of healing herbs is infused with magic. A character who imbibes the potion as an Activate action immediately regains 3d6 + Con in Health. This does not provide extra Health; it merely restores that which has been lost.

#### MAGE'S ELIXIR

COMMON

This potion is a fizzy liquid that seems to almost glow with an inner light. A character who drinks it as an Activate action immediately regains 1d6 + Willpower Magic Points. If the character has no Magic Points, the potion has no effect. The potion does not provide extra MP; it only restores those expended.

#### POTION OF MIGHT

UNCOMMON

Consume this spicy elixir with an Activate action and feel power thundering through your veins. You gain a +2 bonus to damage with all melee attacks for one minute after drinking the potion.

#### RESTORATIVE BALM

UNCOMMON

This jar of restorative herbal ointment is infused with healing magic. Applying it as an Activate action immediately restores 6d6 + Con in lost Health. A single application of *restorative balm* can be used in smaller amounts, if desired—either two restoring 3d6 Health each, or three restoring 2d6 Health each. A jar usually contains 1d6 applications when found.

#### SPELL STONE

COMMON

This small precious or semi-precious stone or crystal contains or stores a particular spell. If you are a Mage, while touching the stone you can cast the spell it contains as if you know it, with no Magic Point cost (the energy of the spell is contained in the item). Once the stored spell has been cast it cannot be used again, although you can recharge a *spell stone* by casting the spell it is meant to hold upon it while the stone is empty.

#### WARDING AMULET

UNCOMMON

This protective amulet is inscribed with arcane symbols and worn close to the skin, often on a necklace, ring, or charm bracelet. A *warding amulet* provides immunity to any spell from a single magical arcana, such as Fire Arcana or Death Arcana. A spell from the arcana automatically has no effect on the amulet's

wearer. After stopping a single spell, the *amulet* breaks and is no longer effective. Rare (and more potent) amulets stop from two to six total spells before becoming ineffective.

#### WARDING DUST

UNCOMMON

Usually found in sealed jars or paper packets, this glittering powder made from a combination of arcane ingredients can create a barrier against magic. One packet of *warding dust* is enough to create a line 10 feet in length (or a circle roughly 3 feet in diameter, enough for a person to stand inside) as a major action. A Mage's casting roll must be 20+ to successfully cast a spell across a line of *warding dust*. On a failed test, the spell fizzles, just like a failed casting roll. Additionally, incorporeal creatures cannot cross the line of dust or use their powers on any target on the other side of it. Neither magic nor incorporeal creatures can move or affect the line of dust itself, although mundane things can brush or blow it away normally. *Warding dust* lasts for up to 1 hour.

#### WARDING PAINT

COMMON

If used to paint and decorate the face and body before battle, these magical pigments filled with protective enchantments provide a +1 bonus to Armor Rating with no additional armor penalty. The bonus lasts until the *warding paint* is washed off, usually the length of a single battle, although careful preservation could allow it to last longer.

HEALING POTION,  
MAGE'S ELIXIR, AND  
POTION OF MIGHT



SPELL STONE  
AND WARDING  
AMULET



RESTORATIVE  
BALM





## PERMANENT MAGIC ITEMS

### ADEPT'S WAND

UNCOMMON

This slim baton of carved and polished wood, ivory, bone, or even metal is magically aligned with a particular arcana of magic. If you are a Mage wielding an *adept's wand*, you gain +2 spell power with all spells of its aligned arcana.

### CORMORANT CLOAK

UNCOMMON

This black cloak is made from the oily feathers of a diving bird. A thick silver clasp holds it in place. In addition to keeping its wearer completely dry during downpours and even ocean storms, a *cormorant cloak* grants the wearer Speed (Swim) 10 and a +1 bonus on Constitution (Swimming) tests. While the wearer does not gain any ability to breathe underwater, they can hold their breath for up to 5 minutes.

### DRAGONWALL

LEGENDARY

A medium kite-shaped shield depicting the head of a roaring dragon, *Dragonwall's* magic makes it indestructible by ordinary means. It provides a magical +2 bonus to the wielder's Armor Rating and additionally makes the wielder immune to all ordinary and magical fire, including the fiery breath of dragons.

ADEPT'S  
WAND

HUNTER'S  
BOW

CORMORANT  
CLOAK

### ELVEN MAIL

RARE

This fine suit of chain mail is as light as gossamer, but as protective as regular mail, having an Armor Rating of 5, but no armor penalty. It is light enough to wear under ordinary clothing without being noticeable.

### GORGET OF THE GRENADIER

UNCOMMON

This ceremonial gorget is finely etched with what at first look like flowers, but closer inspection reveals they are, in fact, explosions. A character who has the Grenades focus gains two bonuses when wearing the gorget. First, a +1 bonus on Accuracy (Grenades) attack rolls. Second, the range of thrown grenades increases to a short range of 6 yards and a long range of 12 yards. If the attack roll is successful, the explosions on the gorget light up as the grenades strike home.

### HELM OF INVISIBILITY

RARE

This is an ornate metal helm to accompany a suit of mail. While you are wearing it a helm of invisibility grants you the power to become invisible at will as an Activate action (see the *invisibility* spell on pg. 136). You remain invisible until you take an attack or cast action, whereupon you immediately become visible. You cannot take an Activate action to become invisible again until the beginning of your next turn.

### HUNTER'S BOW

RARE

Magical bows of this sort were originally crafted by the elves. When wielding a *hunter's bow* if you take an Aim action the subsequent attack roll receives a +3 bonus rather than the usual +1 bonus. You can also perform the Lightning Attack stunt with the bow for only 2 SP.

### MAGE'S FONT

UNCOMMON

A magical precious or semi-precious gem able to fit easily into the palm of the hand, a *mage's font* is infused with pure arcane energy. A *mage's font* can contain up to 20 Magic Points, though one usually contains only 3d6 when found. If you are a Mage holding a *font* you can draw upon it with an Activate action, using the stone's Magic Points to fuel a spell, rather than your own. Any excess over the amount contained in the *font* comes from your Magic Points, as usual. A Mage holding a *mage's font* can also infuse Magic Points into it with an Activate action, refilling the *font* up to a maximum of 20, using the Mage's available MP. Magic Points infused into a *font* remain there until used.

### MAGISTER STAFF

LEGENDARY

The *Magister* or "Master" Staff is a legendary item of power wielded by the mightiest of Mages. It is a gnarled and polished wooden staff some six feet in length, topped with a crystal or gemstone, and has the following properties: The gem acts as both a *mage's font* (storing up to 20 Magic Points) and an *arcane light* with an unlimited duration. The staff extends the Mage's touch, such that touching something with the staff counts as touching it with a hand for the purposes of spell-casting. While wielding the staff, a Mage gains a +2 bonus to



Spellpower. Used as a striking weapon, the *Magister Staff* does 2d6 damage and 1 point of its damage is penetrating.

### NECKLACE OF THE TRITONS

RARE

Said to have once been worn by the scouts of the legendary (and perhaps lost) tritons, this necklace of shells and green gold adds a +1 bonus to Constitution (Swimming) tests and allows the wearer to swim while wearing or carrying the same loads they could on land without sinking.

### ROGUE'S PURSE

RARE

This ordinary-looking battered leather satchel contains potent magic, making it larger on the inside than the outside. Although only about the size of a backpack, it can hold up to 500 pounds of cargo while never weighing more than one-twentieth of the weight it contains. Additionally, you can withdraw an item contained in the purse with an Activate action by placing your hand inside it. The desired item always comes to hand (provided it is contained within).

### SCOUT'S BOOTS

UNCOMMON

Magical leather boots or shoes of dark leather, this footwear makes you impossible to track as you leave no footprints or other traces of your passage. Additionally, you gain a +2 bonus to Strength (Climbing) and Constitution (Running) tests.

### SCRYING STONE

RARE

These enchanted crystals range from fist- to head-sized. They are sometimes faceted, rough, and cloudy, and sometimes polished and perfectly clear. A Mage whose Intelligence + Arcane Lore focus is 4 or higher can use a *scrying stone* to view distant places, seeing and hearing all that occurs there as if physically present. You can specify a place to view based on a general description, such as "Near the ruins on Dunmara's Isle," or "At the entrance to the Swalegate." Those observed by means of a *scrying stone* can make a Perception (Empathy) test vs. a TN of 10 + the scrying Mage's Intelligence (Arcane Lore). If they succeed, they have a powerful sense of being watched. A *scrying stone* cannot view into a place warded against magic, including anywhere with all of the entrances sealed with *warding dust*.

### SHADOW CLOAK

UNCOMMON

Magically woven of silk and shadow this dark cloak grants its wearer a +2 bonus on Dexterity (Stealth) tests while it is worn with the hood drawn up.

### THUNDER AXE

LEGENDARY

An ancient creation of dwarf master smiths, the *Thunder Axe* is a heavy, double-bladed battleaxe, etched with runes of thunder and lightning. Its fine heft, balance, and perfect sharpness grant a wielder a +2 bonus on attack rolls and a +2 bonus on damage rolled with the weapon. In the hands of a dwarf whose Strength + Axes focus is 4 or higher, the axe crackles with blue-white lightning around its blades. Its wielder can perform the Knock Prone stunt for only 1 SP

and the Lightning Attack stunt for only 2 SP. The wielder can throw the axe as if it were a throwing axe, and it returns to the wielder's hand. Additionally, the user can perform the special stunt *Axe Storm* for 4 SP. With a flash of lightning and a clap of thunder the *Thunder Axe* inflicts an extra 1d6 damage and all of its damage for the attack is penetrating.

### TRIDENT OF THE ABYSS

UNCOMMON

This unnaturally tough copper trident is often wielded by malevolent beings to help them seek audience with entities in the deepest aquatic rifts, but it is also useful as a weapon or an aid to seeing in the murky depths. As a weapon the trident is treated the same as a military fork. This item provides a +1 bonus to attack rolls, or +2 versus sea creatures, and it provides Dark Sight out to 20 yards when held or extends the range of ancestral Dark Sight abilities by 20 yards.

### WYRMSLAYER

LEGENDARY

*Wyrmslayer* is a longsword featuring a gilded hilt in the shape of a dragon's neck, with the head as the pommel and spreading wings as its cross-guard. The blade provides a +2 bonus on attack rolls, which increases to +3 against dragons and dragon-like creatures. Additionally, *Wyrmslayer* inflicts +1d6 damage to dragons and dragon-like creatures and allows its wielder to perform the Pierce Armor and Mighty Blow stunts against them at a cost of only 1 SP each. Lastly, *Wyrmslayer's* blade glows with a fiery reddish light when a true dragon is within a mile of it, the light growing in proportion to the closeness of the beast: from a faint glimmer to as bright as a lantern within 100 feet.



SCRYING STONE



THUNDER AXE



ROGUE'S PURSE





## ARTIFACTS

Artifacts are exceptionally powerful magic items. Some might grow even mightier as the hero that wields them grows and learns to harness more of their prize's hidden potential—for a price. All artifacts have a price, after all.

Artifacts are literally game-changers. While some only grant a few special abilities or bonuses at first, all have the potential to be extremely dangerous. All artifacts were created by powerful beings or immense supernatural forces, often long ago.

There are two types of artifacts, **locked** and **tiered**. Locked artifacts have an established set of potent abilities any wielder can use as soon as the power within the artifact is unlocked. An artifact is considered “locked” when it requires a special action or condition beyond the obvious (i.e., more complicated than having to swing an artifact sword to use it) to unleash its powers, such as blood sacrifice, depositing in a mystical place of power to “charge” it, or a set of parts that must be assembled, to name a few. Tiered artifacts start with a basic ability, often no more potent than a standard magical item or weapon. However, when wielded by a character of high level, or as its wielder goes up in level, the artifact manifests more powers, becoming much stronger.

It is theoretically possible for an artifact to be both tiered and locked, but this is not recommended, since for game purposes these are both ways of making an artifact part of an extended story and not something to just tuck away as loot.

By default, artifacts endanger their wielders. Some artifacts have **curses**, and others impose **dependence**, where the wielder suffers if parted from their prize.

### LOCKED ARTIFACTS

Locked artifacts have a set number of powers, usually three to five, though more powerful artifacts are certainly possible. Most of these powers can only be unleashed by unlocking the artifact—that is, meeting the conditions laid out to access those powers. While some locked artifacts also allow anyone to use one minor power—typically something comparable to an ordinary magic item—others may not even seem to be magical objects until they're unlocked.

### LOCKS AND UNLOCKING CONDITIONS

How an artifact is locked, and how it may be unlocked, is a narrative, in-world element over game mechanics. Some unlocking conditions can be easily met, but others may be exceedingly difficult. Unlocking an artifact isn't a game balance consideration, but a story element. Some artifacts may require more than one circumstance to unlock them, such as a command word that only functions when spoken by a member of the royal dynasty.

As soon as the unlocking conditions are met, the wielder can use all the artifact's powers. Possible conditions include the following:



## ASSEMBLY

The artifact has been disassembled or broken—as a machine in disrepair or shattered sword, for instance—and must be made whole again, possibly by a difficult or obscure process. A variation is **configuration**, where the artifact appears to be a functioning or whole object but doesn't attain its true power unless physically adjusted.

## ATTUNEMENT

The wielder must spend time with the artifact, either using it or having it at their side. This ranges from days up until one or more level advancements (though level requirements bleed into making this more of a tiered artifact).

## IDENTITY

A wielder of a specific ancestry, family, place of origin, or another background element can unlock the artifact. This may be paired with another condition such as a password.

## KEY

The artifact requires interacting with a specific object, such as a gemstone that must be inserted into a slot designed for it, or a literal key that opens its lock.

## KNOWLEDGE

A potential wielder must have certain skills to employ the artifact. This might be a minimum ability rating (or for certain dark artifacts that prey on weakness, a *maximum* rating), a focus, a certain degree in a talent, membership in a character class, or level of experience. A variation of this requirement is **training**, where the artifact itself has a special talent or focus that must be learned by studying the artifact or its legend. A focus thus learned is usually Intelligence (*artifact name*), and provides its bonus when using the artifact or recalling information about it. The GM must devise an artifact-related talent, and typically unlocks the artifact at Novice degree, and provides various advantages when using it at higher degrees.

## PASSWORD

The artifact can only be unlocked by a particular command word or phrase. Alternately, this can be a **ritual**, requiring an inscription, gesture, dance, or other specific action.

## PLACE

The artifact must be brought to a specific place or type of place, such as a mystical locus of power, the temple of a god, the place it was made, or something of that sort. A password or ritual might also be required once the artifact is on site. Some artifacts may have a **precinct**, which is not only where it can be unlocked, but the only place it is unlocked—the artifact's full powers don't manifest anywhere else.

## QUEST

The wielder must perform a series of tasks, after which the artifact's powers manifest. A variation of the quest is **predes-**

**tination**, where the artifact unlocks itself after a combination of events occurs that may or may not have been intentionally set in motion.

## SACRIFICE

The artifact requires something that causes some kind of loss to one or more people. It might need to drain life force from the land, withering crops. It might need to be quenched in the blood of intelligent beings, or it might need precious metals, jewels, or significant raw materials. It might drain life force or something else from its wielder, though in some cases these situations are better expressed as artifact curses.

## TARGET

The artifact's full powers only manifest when it is used upon certain living and/or inanimate targets, for good or ill. A staff from an elven sage destined to renew her people's fortunes might only allow its full power to be used to heal elves, renew their home forests, and so forth.

## TIME

The artifact might activate at a certain time for astrological reasons, because of the cycle of nature, or because a prophecy is being fulfilled. Some may only unlock their full power at certain times.

## TIERED ARTIFACTS

Tiered artifacts begin with one accessible power but gain additional powers when used by an experienced or more powerful wielder, up to the maximum number of powers (up to as many as the artifact actually has indicated on the **Tiered Artifact Powers** table. PCs and NPCs with class levels use the indicated level ranges, while NPCs and creatures without levels use the listed Threat rating.

TIERED ARTIFACT POWERS		
MAXIMUM ARTIFACT POWERS	CHARACTER LEVEL	THREAT RATING
1	1–4	Minor
3	4–8	Moderate
5	9–12	Major
7	13–16	Dire
All	16+	Legendary

## ARTIFACT POWERS

Powers are a collection of qualities that give an artifact its awesome potency. The following powers are starting points and the Game Master can use them as the basis for others. Powers are sometimes described as having ranks or being taken multiple times, where each rank/selection counts as an additional power on top of the base selection. In these cases, tier artifacts only unveil their powers after wielders have progressed to being able to use as many powers as the total cost.





### ARCANE POWER

The artifact can cast one particular spell with no casting roll or MP cost and no drain effect from armor, once per encounter. The spell can be from an arcana and belong to any degree, and neither the wielder nor the artifact require any prior degrees in an arcana or magical knowledge, unless these are unlocking requirements. The artifact's Spellpower is 20 or whatever the wielder's would be if casting the spell, whichever is higher. Because no roll is required, the spell has no ability to generate SP from doubles. At the GM's discretion, a spellcaster can study an artifact with an arcane power to learn its associated arcana, or the individual spell.

### CONTROLLING

The character can utterly control the actions of a target. They must be able to communicate with the target. If they can do so and use a minor action, the target must succeed at a TN 20 Willpower (Self-Discipline) test or be forced to obey any command the wielder utters. Player Characters and major NPCs may opt to suffer 4d6 penetrating damage instead each time they disobey. The victim of the *controlling* power may make another test to throw off control after spending two or more consecutive encounters out of the wielder's presence, and then once per 24 hours. Commands cannot violate the standards of the campaign, such as its lines and veils (see CHAPTER 7: THE GAME MASTER).

Articulate, fearsome, or commanding characters can change the control test to an opposed test against the wielder's choice of Communication (Leadership), Communication (Persuasion), Communication (Seduction), or Strength (Intimidation), limited by the nature of the artifact. Beyond any possible statistical advantages, this allows the wielder to gain SP, which can be used on any stunts the GM believes appropriate, as well as the following special stunt, Utter Domination.

SP Cost	STUNT
5	<b>UTTER DOMINATION:</b> You exert lifelong control over your target if they are a minor NPC, unless you release it or tell the NPC to obey someone else, in which case they can resist control at the usual intervals. Against a PC or major NPC, it extends control by as many months as the higher of the wielder's Communication or Willpower, and disallows the initial two-encounter resistance opportunity that the <i>controlling</i> power usually permits.

If this power is taken twice it becomes *greater controlling*, and can be used on whole groups of the same type of a specific creature (undead, humans, etc.) at once, if they would be classified as minor NPCs, and are within communication range of the wielder. If taken three times, it becomes *supreme controlling* and works on entire groups of all kinds.



Finally, for one additional rank on top any of the above, the artifact exerts this power by projecting the wielder's will, so they need not be able to communicate with targets (they don't have to see or hear the wielder, or understand any particular language), but must be aware of their exact location.

## DAMAGING

This artifact either inflicts injuries itself or empowers its wielder to do so based on the number of times this power is taken and other factors listed on the **Damaging Artifact Power** table. This power is not necessary to give an artifact that takes the form of a weapon the ability to do damage as a normal example of its type, but this power will enhance and modify the damage it does. Determine the damage type based on the artifact's story, though it should not be penetrating in most situations unless you take a rank of the power to make it so on top of its general damage capability. The artifact uses the most appropriate ability and focus for its type of object. If it cannot normally be used as a weapon, it uses Accuracy (Arcane Blast), giving Mages an advantage when using such esoteric weaponry.

## FLY

The artifact grants the character the ability to Fly at double their normal Speed. If this is taken again, it either increases Speed to triple the character's ground Speed or provides the ability to hover, making falling impossible.

## IMMUNITY

The artifact renders the wielder immune to some specific type of mundane hazard or type of attack, such as fire, poisons, weapons made of bronze, and so on—something narrow but useful. For an additional rank, the immunity can be broader and include such things as "melee weapons" or "ranged weapons." The drawback of *immunity* is that it is ineffective against magical threats, including magical versions of mundane threats and magical weapons, so *immunity* to fire doesn't help against the Fire Arcana, for instance. However, taking an additional rank will cover the magical form of a threat as well.

## MASTERY

This power may be taken multiple times. Each rank of this power reduces the cost of one or more specific stunts by 2 SP. If this reduces the cost of any stunt to 0 SP, it may be performed during any appropriate action for no SP cost, but only on rolls where doubles generate stunt points.

## POWERFUL

This power may be taken multiple times. The artifact grants 1 additional point of a predetermined ability rating to the wielder. Each rank provides another point to the same or a different ability rating. Increases above 5 do not require double points, as they would for a character improvement.

## PROTECTING

This power may be taken multiple times. Each rank grants the wielder a cumulative +2 to their Armor Rating, or +1 if they

## DAMAGING ARTIFACT POWER

DAMAGING RANKS	ALREADY A MELEE WEAPON	ALREADY A RANGED WEAPON	NON-WEAPON
1	+2d6	+1d6	3d6
2	+3d6	+2d6	4d6

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

MODIFIER	DESCRIPTION
+1	All damage is penetrating.
+1	Gains range of 30/60 if melee/non-weapon, range increases to unimpeded limit of perception ("line of sight") if ranged.
+1	Ranged attack (only) can go around corners, ignores all penalties for cover.
+1	<b>SLAYING:</b> Against one category (undead, servants of the God of Justice, faeries, etc.) add +1d6 to damage and roll damage twice, taking the higher result.

already have an Armor Rating from armor (including if the artifact is physical armor), special qualities, and so on, whichever is better. (The wielder's current equipment can therefore make this benefit fluctuate.) For one additional rank, the artifact protects against external attacks and hazards that inflict penetrating damage.

Alternately, this power can be taken separately, in addition to its main function, so that each rank of *protecting* provides a cumulative +2 Armor Rating against penetrating damage from an internal source, such as a poison, disease, magical curse, etc.

## PROWESS

The artifact grants the wielder a specific new focus, or it adds +1 to the wielder's focus bonus if they already possess it. This includes all the factual knowledge associated with the focus.

## SPECIAL QUALITY

The artifact grants a special quality normally possessed by a specific creature, such as an exclusive stunt or power. If the special quality is particularly potent, the GM may decide it counts as two powers/ranks. This is also a catch-all for any extraordinary power that can't be easily classified.

## SWIFTNESS

This power reduces the time required to perform a specific action (or an interval in an advanced test)—such as an attack with a specific ability, focus, and weapon type, cast a specific spell, and so on—by one step, going from month, to week, to day, to hour, to encounter, to round, to major action, to minor action, and finally, to the ability to perform the action once per round without using up a minor or major action, on the wielder's turn. This power can be taken as often as twice, reducing the time to execute an action by two steps, the maximum possible. This is often combined with other artifact powers to make them speedier.



## SUPREMACY

This power may be taken multiple times. Each rank grants the wielder a new degree in a specific talent. If the wielder already has the talent, their degree increases accordingly, up to a maximum degree of Master. If the artifact would increase a wielder's talent degree above Master, excess ranks become the *mastery* power in one or more related stunts. If the power provides ranks in a spell talent or a talent that requires magic points, the character must possess MP to use it. To embed spells that don't need MP, use the *arcane power* option.

## CURSED ARTIFACTS

Many artifacts carry curses laid upon them by their creators, victims, gods, and other figures, but in some cases the curse is the flipside of its potent magic and integral to its functioning. A few artifacts have effects that don't matter to their intended wielders, but harm anyone else. For instance, a magical crown that convinces the wearer they deserve to rule the world and must gather an army to conquer it doesn't especially harm a demigod who already thinks all that and was going to try to conquer the world anyway.

## CORRUPTION

By default, curses and their severity are represented by the **Corruption** rating of artifacts which possess them, and game systems descending from them. When an artifact possesses a corruption rating, its wielder must make a Constitution or Willpower test to resist it. The exact focus depends on the nature of the artifact. If, as GM, you can't decide on a focus,

the defaults are Willpower (Self-Discipline) and Constitution (Tolerance). Constitution is appropriate if the artifact's potential curses cause physical changes, while Willpower is the basis of tests to resist mental or mystical effects. In the case of an artifact whose deleterious effects are mixed or hard to classify, use Willpower—and thus, Willpower (Self-Discipline) is the default basis for the test if nothing else seems appropriate.

Anyone who has held the artifact or had it in their possession for more than a single encounter must make a Corruption test that day. The TN for the test is 10 + the number of powers (counting powers that count as two or more selections as one power per selection) the wielder can currently use, whether they have or not. This is why locking an artifact or giving it tiers can make it safer. The wielder must make a daily test every time they meet the same conditions until they no longer do for at least two days in a row—making a Corruption test the first day they're separated from the artifact—or until they fail it.

If the artifact wielder fails the test, they gain 1 degree of Corruption and the duration between tests and “drying out” time until they are no longer required lengthens, as noted on the **Artifact Corruption** table. This process continues until the wielder relinquishes the artifact for a long enough period, or until they gain the maximum Corruption rating the artifact can confer, which is equal to the number of powers it has—counting powers that require multiple power selections as the equivalent multiple powers.

## CORRUPTION EFFECTS

The effects of Corruption are summarized on the **Artifact Corruption** table.

- **Corruption Rating:** Corruption possessed by the character, up to a maximum equal to the artifact's powers.
- **Curses:** Number of curses. When the type of curse changes but the number of curses don't go up, the curse changes in intensity. When the number of curses changes, add or remove curses accordingly.
- **Test Interval:** Time between Corruption tests.
- **Abstention Interval:** How long a character must refrain from more than momentary contact with an artifact to no longer have to make Corruption tests.

## REDUCING CORRUPTION

Corruption can decrease as well as increase, but the conditions depend on the GM and should generally be difficult in proportion to the character's current Corruption rating. For ratings of 1–3, extended time away from the artifact past the point where Corruption tests are no longer required may be sufficient. Ratings of 3–6 are a moderate challenge to reduce and might be accomplished with such things as spiritual guidance or a minor quest. Ratings of 7 or higher can only be reduced with significant feats consuming an entire story arc. However, the higher the rating, the more dramatically it might drop.

Furthermore, the nature of the artifact may affect Corruption. If an artifact radiates evil power some distance, putting miles

## CURSES WITHOUT CORRUPTION

Some artifacts may have curses that just happen, without any slow process of corruption. These are usually single, potent curses that come and go according to the story of the artifact. These are just as possible as curses that grow with Corruption, and often suit artifacts with more of a classic mythological or fairy tale type of story behind them.

### ARTIFACT CORRUPTION

CORRUPTION RATING	CURSES	TEST INTERVAL	ABSTENTION INTERVAL
1	1 minor	1 day	1 day
2	1 moderate	1 week	1 week
3	1 major	1 month	1 month
4	2 major	1 month	2 months
5	2 major, 1 minor	1 month	3 months
6	2 major, 2 moderate	1 month	6 months
7	3 major	1 month	1 year
8+	4 major	1 month	Special*

\* Instead of abstention, this always requires some kind of special event, such as a quest or magical phenomenon



## DESTROYING ARTIFACTS

Characters may wish to destroy cursed or dangerous artifacts. This can be done, but it is usually exceedingly difficult. Many flimsy-looking artifacts are indestructible by conventional means, and many reappear after being destroyed, none the worse for wear. The requirements to destroy an artifact vary, but usually involve either unmaking it in a process similar to its construction or taking it to a place or creature of great power who can do away with it. This is usually an adventure by itself, and it may place the characters in the path of those who want the artifact for themselves, or who want it to persist for reasons ranging from prophecy to spite.

between yourself and it might be effective. If the artifact actively maintains its curses, destroying it might remove all Corruption.

### CURSES

The curses an artifact confers come in three degrees: Minor, moderate, and major. Some examples follow, but artifacts are unique, and any given example may have a new curse or a variation on an existing one.

#### ATTACHED

The artifact cannot be dropped, removed, or otherwise taken from the character. This is a physical attachment. A sword fixes itself to the character's hand with spikes. Armor fuses to the skin. As a minor curse, a Strength (Might) test with a TN equal to 10 + character's Corruption can be used to momentarily remove it. As a moderate curse this is still possible, but removal causes 2d6 + character's Corruption penetrating damage. As a major curse, removal is impossible—even if a body part is removed, it magically reappears grafted to another.

#### CORRUPT MIND

The artifact is altering the character's mind. As a minor curse the GM may inflict the Influenced condition at will, so the character performs minor actions that conform to the artifact's influence. As a moderate curse the GM may also impose the Controlled condition, taking over the character's major action once per encounter. As a major curse the character is substantially dominated by the artifact. The GM provides role-playing guidance the character must adhere to, though the player should have some room for individual judgment. Alternately, the character becomes an NPC, controlled by the GM.

#### DEPENDENCE

The artifact makes the wielder dependent on it. As a minor curse this imposes a penalty equal to the character's Corruption whenever they are separated from the artifact. As a moderate curse the character also gains the Confused condition for 2d6 rounds or one degree of the Fatigued condition (GM's choice) the first time they fail

a test without having the artifact in hand. As a major curse each day they're separated from the artifact for more than one encounter causes 1d6 penetrating damage which can only be healed with total rest (see **Rest** in CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES).

#### DISTORTION

The character gains a distortion as detailed under **Horror** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES. As a minor curse this is a permanent, short-term distortion. As a moderate curse it's a permanent, long-term distortion. And as a major curse it's a permanent, indefinite-length distortion. Note that short-term, long-term, and indefinite refer to the duration of each time it manifests, while "permanent" refers to how long the distortion remains with the character, even when it doesn't manifest.





## FRAILITY

The artifact causes deleterious physical or cognitive effects. As a minor curse this imposes the Scarred condition in the form of a -1 penalty to tests using one ability. As a moderate curse the penalty increases to -2. As a major curse the character instead gains a permanent condition from among those usually represented by severe versions of **Scarred**, as listed in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**.

## TRANSFORMATION

The wielder is slowly transformed into another creature or individual. Each time the character gains a Dependence they become a bit more like their new form. As a minor curse this might change eye color, cause excess hair growth, or impose similar cosmetic changes that can be disguised. As a moderate curse the changes can't be easily disguised to provide the illusion the character hasn't changed. Alterations can be hidden under hoods, masks, large cloaks, and the like, but it is obvious the character is hiding their features. As a major curse the character substantially transforms into a new form, which can almost never be concealed and may change the character's physical capabilities. Unlike most artifact curses, there is an optional stage beyond major; when the cursed character reaches the maximum Corruption possible for the artifact they might transform into some radically different form—a mass of pseudopodia, a two-headed demon, or some other bizarre shape—with physical game statistics designed by the GM.

## SAMPLE ARTIFACTS

The following sample artifacts may be used as tiered or locked artifacts. In the case of locked artifacts, suggested conditions are provided. Any of these artifacts may also be cursed (see **Cursed Artifacts**).

### EYE OF MEDUSA

This golden orb is imbued with the power of an ancient and powerful monster. Depending on its specific manifestation the orb must either be worn, or must replace one of the wielder's own eyes. In the latter case it serves as a functioning eye in addition to its other powers.

**POWERS (5):** *Immunity* (2; petrification and poison, except from medusae), *prowess* (2; Perception (Seeing), Strength (Intimidation)), *special quality* (1; medusa's Petrifying Gaze stunt).

**IF LOCKED, UNLOCK BY:** Replacing your existing eye (sacrifice, ritual); tearing the eye out of the queen of medusae (quest).

### HAND OF GRUM

When the ogre king Grum killed a demon with a mighty blow from his armored gauntlet, it absorbed some of his foe's power. Upon Grum's death, numerous people have sought it for its demonic abilities, and as a symbol of authority to strengthen claims to Grum's lost throne.

The *hand of Grum* is a leather and iron gauntlet that still bears the stains of blood of the demon whose death empowered it. It can be worn surprisingly comfortably by ogre- and human-sized wielders alike, though it appears noticeably oversized on the latter.

**POWERS (6):** *Damaging* (1; 2d6 + 1d3 + 1 standard damage), *greater controlling* (2; ogres), *mastery* (1; reduce the cost of Mighty Blow and Knock Prone by 1 SP each), *powerful* (1; +1 Strength), *prowess* (1; Strength (Might)).

**IF LOCKED, UNLOCK BY:** Bathing the artifact in the blood of a demon (ritual, sacrifice); defeating an ogre lord from the line of Grum in single combat (quest).

### MIMM'S NEEDLE

This bone needle about six inches long was carved from the ulna of a famed saint and healer. Its tapered spike can be used as an improvised weapon in a pinch, but its true power lies in the fantastic healing abilities it grants to its wielder. Although it is most useful in the hands of someone with training in the healing arts (mundane or magical), it can impart rudimentary abilities to the uninitiated as well.

**POWERS (7):** *Arcane power* (1; healing touch, once per encounter), *immunity* (1; mundane disease), *prowess* (1; Intelligence (Healing)), *supremacy* (2; two degrees of the Chirurgy talent), *supremacy* (2; one degree of the Healing Arcana).

**IF LOCKED, UNLOCK BY:** Trying to heal a dying character who could not be healed by another (ritual); immersing the needle in the blood of a dying king (quest or sacrifice).

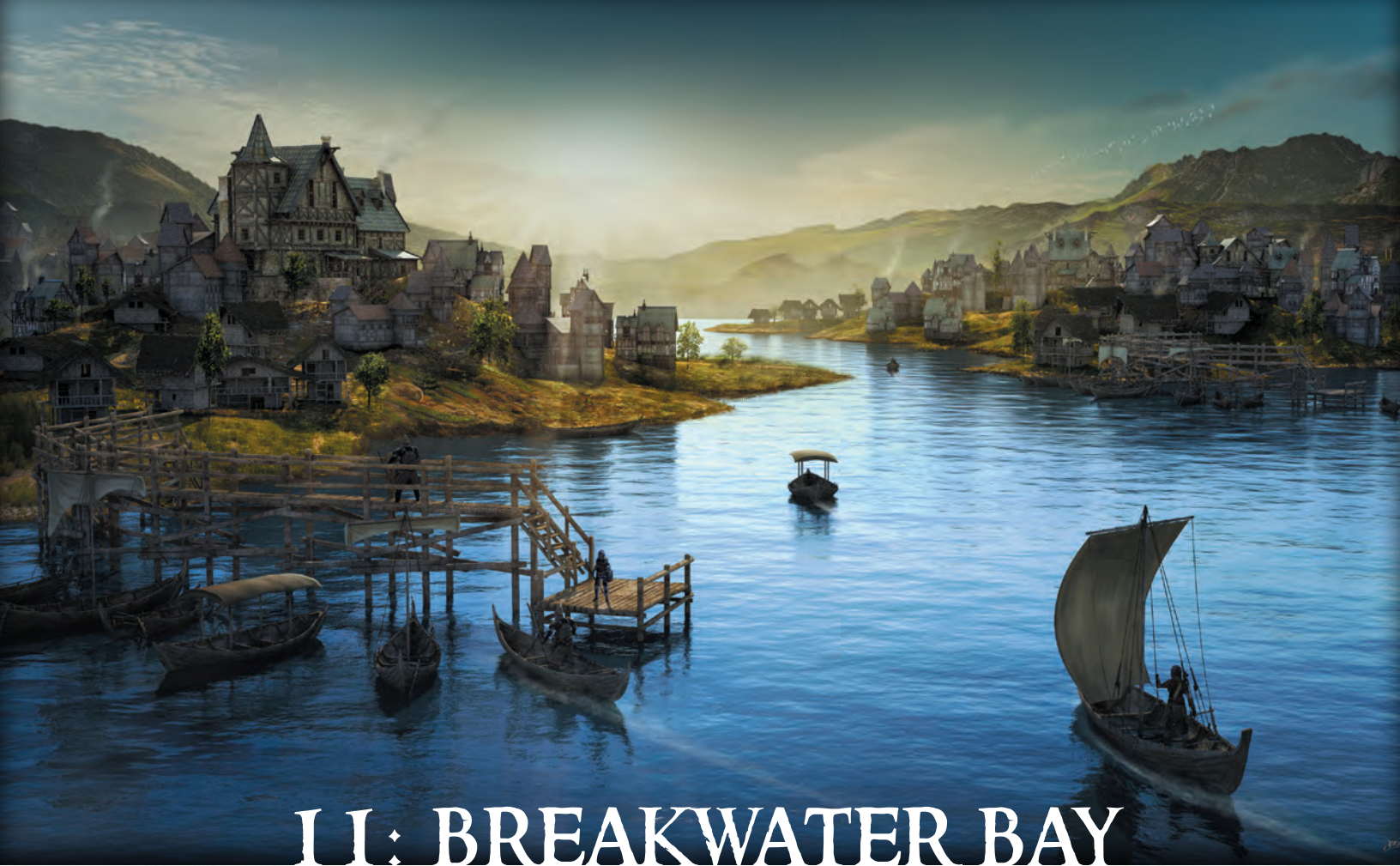
### FELLTIDE

This curved two-handed sword looks too large for shipboard use, but the wave-like runes, the aquamarine decorations on its crossguard, and its ray skin grip that terminates in a stylized fishtail pommel tell its tale. Once the blade of the chief executioner from a forgotten empire that spanned an entire world, *Felltide* was used to dispatch the first mystic navigator to arrive on its shores. The navigator allegedly enchanted the sword in a dying curse so that its powers would be used to overthrow the empire. After the revolution it was refitted to honor its last victim—and then lost. Legend has it *Felltide* appears when a nation is doomed to fall.

**POWERS (4):** *Damaging* (2; two-handed sword that does a base 5d6 standard damage, slaying for +1d6 damage and higher of two damage rolls vs. nobles with vassals), *supremacy* (1; one degree of the Mystic Navigator specialization talent), *supremacy* (1; one degree of Two-Hander style).

**IF LOCKED, UNLOCK BY:** Take the sword to another world or plane of existence by navigating the way yourself (quest); feed a king to a shark (sacrifice).





## II: BREAKWATER BAY

**B**reakwater Bay, on the island of Kassa, is a starter setting for *Fantasy AGE* campaigns. It provides a small, self-contained region where novice characters can have their first adventures and establish a home base in and around the town of Breakwater. There's plenty to do on the island, and characters should fairly easily be able to get safely back to Breakwater after their initial outings. As characters outgrow the island setting they can set sail to other lands and adventures. They may return home to Breakwater from time to time, or they can leave it behind altogether to seek a new home elsewhere.

Breakwater is set within the larger fantasy "meta-setting" of *Stranger Shores*. In this realm, sailing across the Deep of the Sea is a mysterious form of travel that carries travelers to "stranger shores," places all connected by touching upon the sea—although whether or not it is all the "same sea" is largely up for debate. Navigation is an arcane art, and certain people and devices allow vessels to sail the currents of the Deep to a variety of places, some easier to navigate to than others. This creates a vast, interconnected world of places you can customize to your heart's desire to suit your own plans for a *Fantasy AGE* campaign.

### SAILORS TO STRANGER SHORES

Beyond the shores of the land lie the waves of the sea, where all waters eventually flow. Two or more islands in a chain (or related naval points of interest), or any large area of land, such as a continent, or an island large enough to support multiple cultures, may all be part of the same set of so-called Shallows, where mariners can use standard navigation techniques to safely sail from one location to another. This represents sailing in the same world. Travel out of sight of land and you may leave the local Shallows and find your way out into the Deep, above the mysterious watery abyss where the whole surface of the world is nothing but the sea around you, Deep reflected in the endless blue or the dark depths of the sky above. The Deep brings with it the possibility of traveling to unknown lands which may not even be in the same world, but defining

what constitutes a world or realm of existence is no sure thing when the ocean stretches between them.

Those who understand the currents of the Deep can help navigate them, some using the stars, others arcane items, or even their own connection to the Deep within themselves. With a combination of talent, intuition, skill, and instrumentality, these mystic navigators (see the **Mystic Navigator** specialization in **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**) can safely guide vessels across the Deep to distant shores. Because currents shift and change, and the ways of the Deep are mysterious, not every trip is completed in the same amount of time, nor is every shore as far as it was on the last voyage. Some routes are circuitous, with certain places one must visit in order to reach a particular destination. Other routes can be traveled directly. Being off-course, even a little, can send a vessel to a different landing altogether—assuming they do not simply plunge into the endless Deep of the Sky or the Sea, or fall prey to whatever dwells therein.



Thus, the world is balanced on the tilting deck between curiosity and wanderlust on one side, drawing folk to brave the Deep and travel to stranger shores, and caution and fear on the other, keeping most close to home for fear of the siren call of the dark depths. There are many opportunities for those who set sail to return with tales, treasure, and trade—should they return at all.

From time to time, the Deep even reaches out toward the shore. Wyrd Tides wash up on them, bringing up things from the depths, and strange storms blow in from the sea, driving gods-only-know-what upon the winds and the waves, and illuminating the unknown in flashes of lightning. For more information on sailing the Deep, reaching Stranger Shores, and mystic navigators, see **Sailing to Stranger Shores** in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES**.

## WELCOME TO BREAKWATER

Nestled within a sheltered bay with a natural breakwater on the northeast of Kassa, in the shadows of the foothills of the tallest mountain, sits the town of Breakwater, named for the Breakwater Bay. Just over a century-and-a-half ago the shifting currents brought traders, travelers, and explorers to the shores of Kassa, and they found this sheltered bay. The currents also bought castaways, who found life and shelter.



As it became clear that a number of currents flowed past the island, an outpost was established and quickly grew into a fishing village, and then a small town. Now Breakwater is a thriving community made up of both the local folk born and raised here, those newly arrived on the tides, and visitors stopping over on voyages elsewhere.

## THE TOWN AND ITS PEOPLE

Much of Breakwater is made up of small homesteads and houses. The town is roughly divided into areas based on the distance from the shore. The docks are where boats and ships are moored alongside the boardwalk that services them. Step back from there and you find the various stalls and structures along the waterfront, from bait-shops to food stalls to a place for a sailor fresh off the boat to find a drink.

Go further back still and you'll find the narrow, cobblestone streets that cut through the two- and three-story buildings, often with a shop on the ground floor with apartments above, then to the town square around the carved fountain of Usine, the great Queen of the Waters, and her leaping dolphins. This is where you can find a room for the night better than a flophouse by the docks (or a hammock aboard ship) and a better quality of company, too.

Beyond that, the houses—and sometimes businesses—of various folk give way to small house-and-garden plots, before gradually on the outskirts of town those garden plots grow into proper acreage for farming, until the dirt track winds away into little more than a trail into the foothills of the northern ridge of Mount Kassa.

## BREAKWATER RESIDENTS

Close to 1,300 people live in Breakwater proper, often with as many as 200 visitors staying over or passing through the port town. The largest concentrations of people are found at the center of town and along the waterfront, spreading out on the outskirts inland.

The locals most often call themselves “Breakers,” sometimes Kassans, although the town is more important than the isle when it comes to where one is from. Breakers don’t confuse themselves with “Southies” from South Harbor, nor with fisher-folk from Weston, much less those Nordmars! Still, a great many folk on Kassa are strangers, “and a stranger is just someone who’s not yet at home,” as they say. Most—if not all—on the isle recall when they or their people were strangers themselves, and welcome others accordingly so long as they mind their manners.

Criminals looking to avoid notice in Breakwater for a few weeks, sailors thrown off their ships unable to find a berth, the destitute, the distrusted, and the malcontent often create campsites that can last for weeks or months at a time, sometimes gaining some notoriety and their own names, such as Smokepit or Ramble. While those living in such temporary camps often think of themselves as Breakers, most folks with permanent dwellings within the town do not.

The people in Breakwater, and the other settlements on Kassa, were originally from many different shores. Most are



human in all of their many shapes and shades, but there are all manner of folk of every ancestry: draak and dwarf, elf and halfling, wildfolk, orc, goblin, and then some. Even the original settlers, the so-called Founding Families of Breakwater, came from many different heritages.

## THE COMMON CANT

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Since Breakwater and Kassa have such a mix of heritages and see so many travelers from distant shores, the locals have developed a reliance upon what many sailors of the currents call “the Common Cant.” It is an amalgamated language that nearly everyone speaks and understands to some degree. Some may also be taught one (or even more) languages from their heritage, but the Common Cant connects all of the folk of the island, and a great many who visit Kassa’s shores.

Of particular note on Kassa, the Common Cant includes many elements of what is known as “the Silent Speech,” a language made up of gestures. One of the founding families of Breakwater included hearing-impaired members, and there is still a significant deaf and hearing-impaired community there. Others have also found the Silent Speech useful in various ways: sailors to communicate across a deck, often in high winds or the roar of waves; scouts to pass messages to each other in the wild; or thieves to “speak” to each other without being overheard. The Common Cant on Kassa includes many Silent Speech gestures, such that locals have a reputation for “speaking with their hands” and unconsciously gesturing as they speak.

## LETTERS AND LEARNING

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Most people in Breakwater learn to read and write, do basic sums, and know the essentials of local history and lore. Breakwater Hall serves as a schoolhouse during the day for three seasons out of the year, allowing time for harvest and work at homes or businesses. Children from the ages of about six to twelve attend school to learn these essential lessons. Teenagers typically seek out apprenticeships to learn trades, sometimes taking up the callings of their families, other times pursuing their own path. Attendance in these classes is not mandatory, but it is socially encouraged.

The other settlements on Kassa are similar. South Harbor has a schoolhouse of its own, while smaller places typically educate children at home, sometimes cooperatively. The education in isolated fishing villages is often focused more on practical work-related skills and less on academics, although most folk are at least basically literate. Sometimes families in smaller communities with family ties within Breakwater send their cleverest (or most troublesome) children to their in-town family in the hopes of benefitting from Breakwater Hall.

A small number of youngsters continue their education beyond the basics, seeking apprenticeships at nearby Bookhaven Academy in the mountains (see **Places of Note** under **Exploring Kassa Island**). There they can become scribes, scholars, academics, and even Mages, for those having a talent for arcana.

## GODS AND CULTS

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Deities have found their way to the shores of Kassa along with their adherents, and Breakwater and the other settlements on the island have an eclectic collection of Powers that people pray to and propitiate. The island communities are too small for temples devoted to individual gods, so instead there are small communal temples shared by the faithful for all gods, along with small, dedicated shrines to particular gods like seaside offerings to Usine or stone “larms” (way-markers) that are also shrines for offerings to Larus. The main Powers venerated on Kassa, in rough order of popularity, are as follows.

### USINE

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Our Lady of the Waves, the Sea Queen, and the Mother of All Waters, Usine (YOO-seen) is goddess of the sea. She is usually depicted as a crowned mermaid, and her image is often painted or carved on ship prows to invoke her blessings (or at least turn away her wrath).

### LARUS

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The Cunning, The Far-Seer, and the White Winged Wanderer, Larus (LAR-us) is the god of travel, but his diverse portfolio also includes sailing (sails often referred to as “the white wings of Larus”), the winds, exploration, roads, mercantilism, and thievery. Larus is a shapeshifter able to transform into a gull or other sea-bird, and the superstitious believe the killing of gulls and albatrosses invokes his curse.

### GALEA

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The Shipwright, the Builder, and the Feller of Trees. Galea (Gal-EH-ah) is the god of building and construction and, by extension, of wood-cutting, smith-work, and ship-building. Many craftspeople keep shrines and make offerings to Galea to bless their work and she is called upon to bless the quality of new ships before they are launched. She is depicted as a strong woman with skillful hands, often wielding a hammer or an axe, and dressed in work clothes, particularly a heavy leather apron with pockets of tools.

### AGUROS

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The Green Seer, the Harvester, and the Stauncher of Blood, Aguros (Ah-gur-os) is the god of agriculture, medicine, and healing, particularly associated with herbalism and, to a lesser degree, alchemy, particularly as it relates to the secrets of life. His depictions are usually as a handsome young man, often clad in green, bearing a staff twined with ivy, the Aguron. Some devoted to Aguros venerate him for gifting the secrets of fermentation, distillation, and other “ecstatic wonders” to mortals.

### THEMMON

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The Dreamer, The Quill, and the Tale-Teller, Themmon (them-ON) is god of knowledge, as well as writing, stories, and – to a certain measure – dreams and the imagination. Commonly



depicted as gray-robed and hooded, Themmon's face and features are sometimes shadowed or blank. He is depicted seated or reclining, never standing, and some tales say he moves from place to place in a chair that flies or moves on wheels. Themmon's most esoteric mysteries say he is "The god who dreamed himself," in truth a mortal dreamer dreaming they are a god, which in turn has made it so.

## TANA

The Silent Warrior, the Red, and the Champion, Tana is a god of war, strength at arms, and marshal prowess. She is called "the Silent" and never speaks or "Lets her blade speak for her," as her adherents say. She is often depicted gesturing in the signs of the Common Cant because of this. Her cult's tales say Tana will one day meet the Demon Lord of Doom on the field of battle to decide the fate of the world, and that all of her fights are training for that fateful day.

## OSSIEN

The Smiling Skull, Ol' Bony, and the Pale One, Ossien (AH-see-en) is the deity of death and the dead, depicted as a fleshless, grinning skeleton, often clothed in fine, embroidered robes. Ossien's priests tend corpses and funerary rites, and the death god is popular with many folk as the patron of lost causes, criminals, and the forgotten, since Ossien accepts and embraces all ... in time.

## HARRIMAST

The Old Salt, Cap'n Brine, Admiral of the Hulks, Master of the Deep, and many other titles belong to Brine, properly called Harrimast, the god of pirates. It's unclear if the legendary Harrimast ever lived or sailed the seas as a mortal, but his legend makes him the master of all of the drowned pirate wrecks—and their lost treasures—beneath the waves. "Send 'em to Brine's Deep hall!" say pirates before casting victims overboard. Despite being a divinity of pirates, Harrimast is generally considered with grudging respect within Breakwater as a god of skilled sailing, fighting, and keeping one's word to crewmates. A darker deity forbidden within Breakwater is Yarash, supposedly Harrimast's first mate who mutinied against his captain. Of course, despite being forbidden, there are those within the town who secretly worship Yarash and carry out dark deeds in the night to glorify him.

## CYGNUS

The Star Traveler, The Scales, The Silent Scream. Two things are commonly said about Cygnus (CYG-nus): that he was once a mortal man and that he sailed through the stars from unknown lands to reach the Stranger Shore. Those departing on long voyages often seek his blessing. He is also the God of Balance. It is said that on his voyages he witnessed too much conflict from too many extremists. His worshippers thus seek balance in all things, but especially their emotions. Cygnus is commonly portrayed as a man with long, dark hair wearing a kimono and standing on the prow of a ship.

# PLACES OF NOTE

A few places in Breakwater are of particular note to both visitors and locals of a more adventurous nature.

## BREAKWATER HALL

The largest building in Breakwater is Breakwater Hall, a three-story structure that serves the town as schoolhouse, meeting place, courthouse, and festival hall. The lower story of Breakwater Hall is stone construction, and the upper floors are wood-framed and sided, with a slate roof and the tall, thin, shuttered windows common in seaside towns. Virtually any large public event takes place at the Hall, including the business of the Breakwater Town Council.

The Town Council is made up of **Arno Brewbaker** (he/him, human), the honorable Mayor of Breakwater, and five council members:

- **Effan DuMere** (he/him, halfling), a merchant who runs DuMere Mercantile, the general store in town.
- **Pella Soan** (she/her, human), a graduate of the Bookhaven Academy and the town's primary school teacher.
- **Plutors Meridat** (he/them, human), a descendent of one of the founding families of Breakwater, and among the richest people in town, Plutors is elderly and often refrains from voting, calling his position "honorary." However, unbeknownst to the rest of the council, Plutors is the leader of a cult of Yarash, who believe they are destined to betray the town someday and reap great wealth and power by doing so.
- **Gronth** (he/them, dog wildfolk), a forester and one of the best trackers in Breakwater.
- **Thistle** (she/her, goblin), more commonly known as "Stickpins," a tailor and weaver, the grand-dame of an extended goblin family in town.

The Council usually meets once per month to go over important town business but will sometimes call supplemental meetings for important matters. Traditionally, the mayor allows the council members to vote first and casts the deciding vote in the event of a tie.

## BILGER'S

Bilger's is a warehouse on the northern end of the waterfront, where buildings are more run-down, and less reputable ships tend to dock. It also serves as a flophouse, pawnbrokers, and cheap grog-tavern with broken crates as tables and empty casks for seats. It is owned by **Bilger** (human, he/him), who operates the most organized criminal network within Breakwater. Due to the town's size, Bilger makes a point not to direct violent crimes at his neighbors but considers visitors far more fair game. Which is not to say he doesn't commit crimes with locals as victims, but they tend to be more related to loan sharking, acquisition of narcotics and other illicit materials, and smuggling goods in and out of the port without official notice.



Bilger manages to not be directly connected to any of these activities, but the town council is well aware of his true power. However, most citizens in Breakwater assume someone is going to organize such crimes, and at least Bilger tries to keep the damage to a minimum, and the volume low enough not to drive off trade or damage the town's reputation.

## THE DRIFTWOOD

Breakwater's waterfront tavern, welcoming visitors from distant shores, along with local salts in port and looking for a drink or two and some company. The Driftwood is a simple two-story building just steps from Breakwater's docks, with a broad front porch and swinging front doors, with the inner door left open while the place is open for business. A painted wooden sign displays a sailor clinging to a large piece of driftwood amidst the waves, toasting with a large mug of ale. The tavern is the center of waterfront social life and a hub of local gossip and news brought in by visiting sailors.

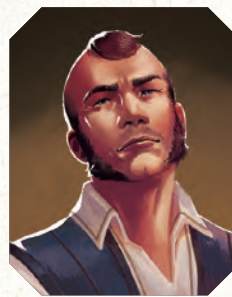
The Driftwood's proprietor is **Sol Boden** (BO-den, human, he/him) an old salt who lost his right foot and eye to the sea and retired to shore. Sol wears an eyepatch and gets around easily enough on a peg-leg, and even dances a mean jig when the mood takes him. However, the business is actually owned by **Plutors Meridat**, who can depend on Boden to update him on any local scuttlebutt.

## KAAN'S SMITHWORKS

Between the waterfront and the center of town is Kaan's Smithworks, Breakwater's local smithy. One side of the building is the forge itself, with broad, open windows and shutters that can be thrown wide during all but the coldest of weather to allow the heat of the furnace to escape. The ringing sound of hammer against metal makes it easy to find the Smithworks when **Kaan** (draak, he/him) or one of his apprentices are at work. The other side of the building is a long shop where metal goods are offered for sale. Kaan does far more work making ship fixtures and household and farm implements than he does weapons or armor, but he can and does make virtually anything. The Breakwater smith's scales blend in with the shop around him in the light of the forge, black tinged with red at their edges reflecting sparking heat and light, and he's usually dressed in a heavy leather apron and a short-sleeve tunic that strains around his powerful arms and chest.

## THE TEMPLE OF THE TRAVELERS

Quite different from the grand temples found elsewhere, the Temple of the Travelers in Breakwater is a long, low building with arched windows. Small shrines are placed between the windows along its length for all of the major powers venerated in Breakwater, along with a small ritual space at the end of the building opposite the entrance. The faithful of Breakwater share the temple for worship of the gods, but services tend to be limited to visiting the shrines to make offerings, or seasonal ritual observances.



ARNO  
BREWBAKER



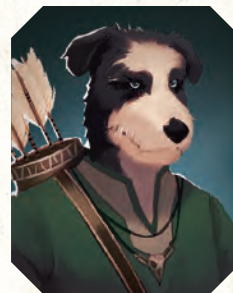
EFFAN  
DUMERE



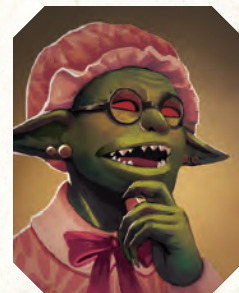
PELLA  
SLOAN



PLUTORS  
MERIDAT



GRONTH



THISTLE



BILGER



SOL  
BODEN



KAAN



SISTER  
QUEN



PORTIA  
WAYFARER



RIX & LYSE

An elf known as **Sister Quen** (she/her) arrived in Breakwater decades ago and took responsibility for the temple, which had fallen into disrepair. She now serves as both caretaker and on-call clergy of sorts, never talking about her life before Breakwater other than to say, "I had not found the gods then."

## THE WAYFARER INN

This three-story structure near the center of town is not quite as large as Breakwater Hall, but sufficient to offer ten guest rooms along with a sizable common area on the ground floor. The



Wayfarer has a small barn and other associated out-buildings, and its kitchens prepare and serve meals to the inn's guests as well as some locals who drop in for a bite from time to time. **Portia Wayfarer** (she/her, human) is the inn's proprietor, her parents having established the place some forty years ago. Portia's widowed mother **Marlene** still cooks in the kitchen sometimes. The middle-aged Portia is herself fifteen years widowed; her husband Trallen was lost at sea and Portia raised their two children, **Rix** (they/them, elf) and **Lyse** (she/her/they/them, human), by herself with the aid of her parents and community. Now they are nearly grown, although it remains to be seen if either or both will take up the family business.

## EXPLORING KASSA ISLE

Beyond the sheltering harbor of Breakwater Bay stretch the mountainous ridges of the island of Kassa. The island is roughly circular and about 40 miles across, nearly bisected by a narrow inlet or sound from the south. The southern two-thirds of Kassa are mountainous, with folded ridges running north-south in a range from east to west. Mount Kassa, just to the south and west of Breakwater, is the tallest peak on the island. The mountains are thickly forested, save for their rocky peaks, which feature only small, tough, wind-swept trees and plants and are snow-capped for almost half of the year. The woods are a mixture of coniferous trees, such as pine, cedar, and spruce, along with leafy trees like aspen, birch, alder, and maple. Hardwoods and tall, straight pines are regularly felled for logging, construction, and ship-building.

The northernmost lowlands of Kassa, where several mountain streams branch and spread extensively, are marshy wetlands and bogs, where the skeletal hulks of leafless trees rise above the still waters and waving stands of reeds and marsh grasses. Sandy dunes or breakwaters often separate the wetlands from the sea, although the waters are known to mix from time to time.

Two mountain ridges rise on the sunset side of the island, to the west of the reach, with a sizable lake nestled between them. The Sunset Shore beyond is a sandy area of shoals and coves and shifting sandbars where it is possible to land a small vessel, but also all too easy to accidentally beach one. The Sunset Shore is known as the farthest place from civilization on Kassa and is used accordingly, but also sparingly due to the mysterious ruined village along one small southwestern river bay.

Because Kassa is relatively small and mountainous, most travel is on-foot or by boat. In the island interior, people from Breakwater will travel to nearby Bookhaven Academy or hunt on the wooded slopes of valleys dotting Mount Kassa. The most common overland route to the western side of the island skirts the northern edge of the mountains, south of the marshy lowlands. Horses are relatively rare, and used more for farm-work than riding, although donkeys are sometimes used as pack animals. Sailing around the island to get from place to place is common, particularly between South Harbor and Breakwater.

## PLACES OF NOTE

Although Breakwater is the center of activity on Kassa, it is by no means the only inhabited place, or place of interest, on the island. Kassa features a handful of other settlements, along with various natural features and a number of ruins with potential draw for players.

### THE BLACKWOODS

Spread across the southeastern mountains like a cloak, the Blackwoods are a thick forest of evergreens and deciduous trees covering the mountain valleys and reaching partway up their slopes. The Blackwoods teem with wildlife, including deer and elk, beaver, muskrat, lynx, raccoon, squirrel, wolf, and bear, to name a few. Hunters and trappers collect meat and furs from the woods, and loggers closer to Breakwater sometimes cut down trees for construction or firewood, though the latter rarely make their way too deep into the woods. There's no shortage of trappers' tales of strange creatures or mysterious forest folk within the Blackwoods. Numerous such creatures do exist, from dire wolves to herbalists of questionable ethics, but they keep their activities largely to the deepest parts of the forest. A small clan of trolls lives within the woods and tends to treat outsiders with hostility, but most have no interest in the goings on of the rest of the island.

### BOOKHAVEN ACADEMY

Located on the mountainous slopes overlooking the Long Lake a short distance into the valley is a walled enclave that might easily be taken for a monastery, though it is not a religious institution. The enclave known as Bookhaven Academy is a place of study, learning, and scholarship, established just over a century ago by a wealthy patron from Breakwater. He wished to create "a haven for books, and those who love and care for them," and so the Academy has become. It is home to the largest library on the isle, along with scholars, scribes, and academics who care for and add to its collection. Bookhaven is the closest thing Kassa has to both an institution of higher learning and a school for magic, as many of the books in its collection are tomes pertaining to all manner of arcana.

Bookhaven is fairly self-sufficient, with its own kitchens, gardens, and livestock, being a hike of a couple of miles from the outskirts of Breakwater over mountainous terrain. Still, the scholars are occasional visitors in town, usually young apprentices sent on errands for their teachers and elders.

Bookhaven is treated as an independent settlement by other towns on Kassa, and generally seen as entirely neutral to any isle politics or plans. However, the official policy of Bookhaven is to only judge its members on what they do within the enclave itself and how they impact its reputation. A few of its members actively study darker arcana, carefully making sure none of their ritual needs or failed experiments directly impact fellow scholars or get traced back to them or Bookhaven.





# KASSA ISLE



## THE CROWN CIRCLE

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At the peak of Mount Kassa, the highest point on the island, stands a circle of eight stones around a low, central stone in their midst. The standing stones are all about twice the height of an adult human, roughly carved and weathered by untold years. The central “table” is broad, flat, and roughly waist high. The circle has stood since long before folk most recently settled on Kassa, and is so named because of the way it “crowns” the mountain. The circle is sometimes used for religious ceremonies and festivals for “The Three of Earth, Sky, and Sea,” (Auguros, Larus, and Usine) since the stones are aligned with the rising and setting of the sun on the solstices and equinoxes. There are a number of local legends of folk seeing or hearing strange things in or near Crown Circle by the dark of the moon.

## CROW’S NEST CRAG

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On the high peak of Sunset Mountain overlooking the lake to the west sits an old ruin that predates the founding of Breakwater, the remains of a stout stone tower the local folk now call Crow’s Nest Crag. It seems to almost grow out of the stone of the peak, rising more than thirty feet high, its battlements crumbling and its sides heavily overgrown with vines and creepers. The Crow’s Nest is unusual in that the tower has no openings in its stone-block walls, neither windows nor doors, and the climb up the slopes of Sunset Mountain to reach it is treacherous. It is widely believed the Crag is haunted, or the focus of some malign magics. Certainly, explorers have all suffered terrible accidents or simply disappeared.

## THE DRAGON’S REACH

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A deep, wide inlet from the sea stretches northward, nearly dividing the island in half. Known as the Dragon’s Reach for the vague shape of a long-necked, roaring beast, the sound is surrounded by steep mountain slopes on all sides. Small, narrow, and rocky coves are found along its length, mere steps from the forested slopes, often surrounded by tumbled rocks of various sizes. The northwestern end of the Reach is a powerful waterfall known as the Roar, cascading down from Sunset Mountain, and audible some distance away. The Reach is quite deep in its center, easily navigable to most ships, and a useful means of moving both passengers and goods from the north of Kassa to the south. Small barges regularly carry logs felled from the interior down to Tall Pines, and a flat-bottom ferry runs passengers down the length of Long Ridge to the southern port as well.

## LAMPLIGHTER ISLE

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To the east of Breakwater Bay, this small, rocky island is home to a single tall, stone tower that serves as a lighthouse for the Bay, shining a bright light visible to ships approaching at night or in foul weather. Apart from the lighthouse-keepers who spent shifts living in the tower and tending the lamp, Lamplighter Isle is largely bare of life save for lichens, kelp, and sea-birds.

There are numerous aquatic things from the Deep that visit Lamplighter Isle during various astrologic conjunctions. The lighthouse-keepers have long traditions of which ones to

ignore, which ones to placate with gifts, and which to flee from or attack on sight. Sadly, these traditions are far from complete, and some aquatic visitors expect specific ancient pacts to be honored, even those made long before the current families came to Kassa.

## LONG LAKE VALLEY

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From Breakwater Bay in the north to Seal Cove in the south, Long Lake Valley runs between the eastern mountains of the island. It is named for Long Lake, which occupies more than a third of the valley’s length, followed by Mirror Lake, a bit further south. Outlets from the lakes flow down to the sea to the north and south. The valley is lush with plant life and thick woodlands cover the mountain slopes. Long Lake Valley sees fairly few folk apart from hunters and trappers, foragers out from Bookhaven, or travelers making their way between Tall Pines and Breakwater.

Long Lake Valley is far more casually dangerous than most of Kassa, with small drakes dwelling in the nearby mountains, wooded valley, and even the lake itself. Though the drakes are unquestionably at the top of the valley’s food chain, other creatures within the area—ranging from cave bears and blood stags to manticores and troll outcasts—are also more powerful (and generally hostile) than their equivalents elsewhere on the island.

## NORDMARSH

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Across the interior of the northern quarter of Kassa, rivers running out of the mountains to the south toward the sea bend, twist, split, and often spread into sodden marshes and bogs—miles of them. Nordmarsh is both the local name for the marshy interior as well as the small fishing village set at the mouth of one of the rivers near a stretch of land known as the Fingers. The people of Nordmarsh are insular, taciturn, and have little to do with outsiders. This isn’t overly difficult, since reaching the village overland involves wading through the wetlands; parts of the village itself are on stilts built just above the flood-line.

Nordmarsh is largely self-sufficient and looks to be left alone, which is enough for most folk, but some find the “marshers” strange to say the least, and say there is something “off” about them. They’re right, as it turns out: Nordmarsh is home to a secretive cult, the Children of the Deep, who worship the unknowable darkness of the Abyss. Anyone in the village who is not a member of the cult is entirely cowed by them and fears their retribution, as the Children are known to make occasional offerings to feed the Deep’s endless hunger. It is said the Children capture sacrifices that their allies among the aquatic boneless ones (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES) take to undersea altars for their final fates. On rare occasions, the Children will secretly venture far from Nordmarsh to find a sacrifice that meets some specific requirements they believe the Deep demands.

## NORTH WOODS

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A swath of woodlands covers the land to the north of Mount Kassa, with high cliffs overlooking parts of Breakwater Bay



out to Overlook Point on the furthest stretch out to the sea. A few isolated manor houses can be found between the woods and the sea-cliffs, for those who prefer privacy from their neighbors. Gossip in Breakwater is rife with the doings of the well-to-do families who own these places. While most are simply interested in not having to answer to some town council's authority, there are a few who perform deeds they know are best not witnessed by others.

Otherwise, the North Woods are home to hunter's tracks and trails, eventually giving way to marshland to the west.

### SEAL COVE

The V-shaped cove where the waters flowing from Mirror Lake in the north empty out into the sea is named for the number of seals seen there, often sunning themselves on the rocky shoals or the narrow beaches. Hunters sometimes kill seals for pelts or meat, but there's fairly little demand for either, and many consider hunting seals bad luck, telling tales of selkies (seal shape-changers) and the curses that befall those who threaten them.

A very small number of selkies do dwell in a few of the shoals of the cove, though they are more likely to hide from hunters than curse them. However, if harm is done to a selkie child, knowingly or by accident, the selkies can be moved to great anger. Similarly, anyone who renders aid to one of the community's young may gain a powerful, if secretive, group of allies.

### SHIPWRECK SHORE

The eastern shoreline of Kassa is known as Shipwreck Shore and with good reason: the surface pounds constantly against rocky shoals and cliffs that offer no safe place to

land anything larger than a rowboat, and even that may be dashed upon the rocks by a powerful enough wave. A ship driven by wind and water against the shore is almost certain to have its hull sundered by the sharp rocks or be smashed upon them. The wreckage of no few ships can be found along this stretch. Sometimes would-be treasure hunters explore the rocks of Shipwreck Shore in hopes of salvaging valuables washed up in the shallows or the tidal pools left at low tide.

### SMUGGLER'S COVE

The deep and sheltered cove on the southwestern side of Kassa, in the morning shadows of the Western Mountain, has been a useful haven and landing-point for ships looking to avoid any attention to their arrival or their business on the island. It is a simple matter to offload goods at the cove and move them on smaller boats to nearby Tall Pines, or even up the Dragon's Reach. So long as landings at Smuggler's Cove cause no trouble for anyone, the folk of Tall Pines are inclined to ignore them, even more so in Breakwater, where what happens on the far side of the island might as well be on the far side of the sea. Those who land at the cove tend to avoid the nearby ruins of Sundown, and there are tales of smugglers who thought the village would make a useful hiding place—and then were never heard from again.

### SUNDOWN

On the north side of a triangular river mouth on the western shores of Kassa are the ruins of a village. Breakwater-folk call the place "Sundown" both for its location and as a warning of sorts, for it is not a place to be after the sun has





set. Its real name is unknown as it appears Sundown was abandoned if not before Breakwater was founded, then not long thereafter.

The village is a cluster of a dozen or so small houses around a few central, larger structures that might have been central meeting hall, temple, marketplace or all of those things. The mostly stone portions of the structures still stand, along with some dry and rotting timber. While nature has reclaimed some of Sundown, it is not as much as one would tend to think, given the time that has passed.

What became of the people of Sundown? There is no evidence of violence or disaster, nor of plague. It is as if the people who once dwelled here simply all disappeared. Stories persist in Breakwater and South Harbor that Sundown is haunted, cursed, or both, and a handful of people have disappeared there, never to be seen again. It hasn't happened for years since most island-folk know enough to stay away from the place. Still, strange lights and noises are often reported within Sundown by scouts and hunters foolish enough to be close to it, but wise enough not to enter.

### TALL PINES

The second largest settlement on Kassa is the small town of Tall Pines at the western shore of the "tail" of the Dragon's Reach. Tall Pines grew up around the twin businesses of logging in the woodlands along the Reach and a shipyard that took advantage of the ready supply of timber, including the tall, straight pines for which it was named, suitable for ship's masts. While the docks of Breakwater have some facilities for the repair of vessels, the ship-building on the isle happens in Tall Pines, and ships needing extensive repairs or reconstruction dock here.

Tall Pines is a bit more of a "frontier town" than Breakwater, with a population of four hundred or so. Nearly everyone in Tall Pines is either involved in the businesses of logging, milling, or ship-building, or services the needs of those who are. A substantial portion of the town spends time at logging camps in the Dragon's Reach or upriver in the Sunset Valley, returning occasionally to town to enjoy their time off and spend their hard-earned coin. Tall Pines is at its both most populated and quietest during the winter months, when most folk are indoors and tending to their crafts and their homes.

### WESTERN MOUNTAIN

The furthest western mountain ridge on Kassa forms a short, steep river valley with Sunset Mountain to the east, tapering off into the Western Hills to the north. Western Mountain ensures sunset comes a bit earlier to Tall Pines, situated in its shadow, and the eastern slopes of the mountain are regularly visited by loggers who float cut logs downriver to mills on the outskirts of Tall Pines. The most common threats in these mountains are wolves, including some able to speak and even know arcana, and giant spiders (which loggers keep at bay with perimeters of torches and by staying grouped in large numbers).

### WESTON

The village of Weston on the northwest shore of Kassa is a settlement of a few hundred folk focused on the business of fishing along the island's coast, with boats occasionally venturing out onto the Deep for their catches. Westoners are known as hardy folk who make their living from the sea and tend small farms in and around their village. They trade regularly with Breakwater, mostly selling the excess of their catch for various necessities. Westoners prefer to steer clear of the southwestern shore due to the ruins of Sundown and occasional "visitors" in and around Smuggler's Cove.

Part of the quiet of Weston is bought by the actions of the Night Fishers, a small group of extremists who gather once a month to decide if any threat to the town is severe enough to call for a Night Fleet—a visitation of cloaked, mask-wearing members who either hang rotting fish as a warning to those they do not approve of, or who beat or kill those they have previously warned. Most Westoners do not approve of the Night Fishers, but since Night fisher's opinions on what poses a danger to the town generally aligns with the opinion of the privileged majority of its denizens, also see no pressing reason to root them out.

## BEYOND THE ISLE

Kassa is well-situated along the currents of the Deep, such that ships pass by often on their way to or from some distant shore, even if they do not mean to stop over at Breakwater or one of the isle's other ports. Some shores are well known to the locals, given the ships they regularly see from there, while at least one other *should* be known to the people of Kassa, but is carefully biding time.

### THE COMPANIONS

Two small islands, known as "The Companions," sit just offshore to the south of Kassa. They are sometimes known as "The Dragon's Feet" or "The Dragon's Footprints" due to their placement to either side of the Dragon's Reach. The larger eastern island is commonly known as Seal Island for the seal population on its north and eastern shores. The smaller western island is Gull Rock, a steep-sided rocky place inhabited primarily by scrub trees, wild grasses, and flocks of gulls that come to rest there. Some island children refer to the small island as "Skull Rock," largely because of the rhyme, but also because the eastward face of the island looks vaguely like a skull in the afternoon light.

### THE TRADE PORTS

What Breakers and others on the isle call "the Trade Ports" are key ports along the currents to and from Kassa, places that regularly trade with Breakwater, with ships visiting at least once per month, if not more often, depending on the time it takes to sail to and from that port.



## FREEPORT

One of the greatest of the trade ports is Freeport, the legendary “City of Adventure.” Founded by pirates as a safe haven and free and open port, Freeport has since transitioned to a largely legitimate naval power governed by its Sea Lord and Captains Council. The city is on the shore of the island of A’Val, the largest of the Serpents’ Teeth, a warm, tropical land between ten and fifteen days’ journey from Breakwater. Trade between Breakwater and Freeport is fairly commonplace, and a number of adventuresome young souls in every generation take ship to the City of Adventure in search of fortune and opportunity, although all too few of them actually find it.

## INMYRK

Long ago, before the founders of Breakwater settled on Kassa, the island was a way-station along the currents of the Deep for the Eldritch Empire of Inmyrk. Vessels from Inmyrk’s shores could sail to Kassa and, from there, to other shores. Then, centuries ago the currents shifted and Inmyrk was cut off from reaching Kassa, its ships confined to the shores of their own land. For all that time the Inmyrk (as the people of the Empire are also known) have sent out the occasional expedition, but none have returned.

Recently, however, the currents have shifted once more. Although difficult, it is possible to sail from Inmyrk to the shores of Kassa, and the Eldritch Empire is on the verge of discovering this. Once they do, they will want to seize Kassa and its settlements as the island remains the Empire’s gateway to other currents of the Deep and its stopover to reach more distant shores. Characters in a *Fantasy AGE* campaign set in Breakwater may learn of this looming threat and have an opportunity to act before it is too late for the island, and mount a defense against Inmyrk’s forces. See the **Salvage on Shipwreck Shore** adventure idea in the following section.

The Eldritch Empire is centered within the great city and shore of Inmyrk, a place easily a hundred times the size of Breakwater. It was a corrupt and decadent place, but a long period of isolation has driven Inmyrk toward regimentation and conformity. Its population is primarily human, and Inmyrk view human ancestry as superior. Having fallen into the worship of eldritch beings from the Deep long ago, they survived their isolation by selling themselves to their masters, while at the same time propping up their empire on the backs of less-resolute citizens (including many of other species) who are treated as thralls and who have not actively embraced the evil of Inmyrk’s ruling cults.

Inmyrk has mastered many arcane secrets over time, including ways of grafting alien flesh and arcane constructs onto living bodies. What began as a means of treating injury and extending life has become a method of creating more powerful soldiers, sailors, and spies for the Empire. Once they rediscover the means to reach out again to other shores, the Eldritch Empire’s greedy grasp will know no limits.





# TALES FROM THE DRIFTWOOD

Apart from silver, some of the best coin in the common room of the Driftwood is a good tale to entertain everyone from old salts to young landlubbers who haven't yet left shore. Those who experience adventures on Kassa should find themselves with some fine yarns to spin and won't have to buy their own drinks for some time.

The following are some potential adventures for *Fantasy AGE* heroes hailing from or visiting Breakwater and the isle of Kassa. Game Masters should feel free to expand on this, adjusting as needed to suit their own characters and their adventures.

## SALVAGE ON SHIPWRECK SHORE

After a powerful storm blows in and buffets Breakwater and the eastern shore of Kassa, there are stories of a vessel sighted out at sea, which vanished during the storm. The Breakwater town council looks to put together a group to make their way down along Shipwreck Shore in search of any evidence of the ship, with an eye toward aiding survivors, should there be any. The adventurers do indeed find the wreck of a strange ship along the shore, with markings they have never seen before. The ship contains strange eldritch traps along with at least one survivor, a warrior from Inmyrk, supported by undead eldritch abominations. The adventurers can capture the wreckage of the ship and overcome its guardian, but there is evidence at least one individual, perhaps more, may have left the wreck before they arrived.

## THE BOOKHAVEN INVESTIGATION

The adventurers visit the nearby Bookhaven Academy to deliver some needed supplies and, while there, research some information within Bookhaven's archives. This may be a follow-up to the previous adventure, looking into the strange markings and descriptions of the vessel from Shipwreck Shore. Something is already abroad in the halls of the Academy, one of its scholars having vanished and one of its students murdered before their arrival. The scholar dabbled in occult practices he should not have and the arrival of Inmyrk's vessel caught him up in forces no mortal mind could withstand. Now he is drawn to the strangers and their power, along with ancient ruins elsewhere on the island. Can the adventurers prevent his escape and discover the things he has learned about Kassa and its history?

## GHOSTS OF SUNDOWN

The scholar's work in Bookhaven points to the possibility that the long ago abandoned village of Sundown on the western side of the island may be connected to recent events. An explo-

ration of Sundown some years ago discovered archeological evidence of artifacts taken from Crow's Nest Crag, high atop Sunset Mountain. Unfortunately, the expedition did not return with the artifacts; they were set upon by "murderous ghosts" in the night and only a few survivors escaped with their lives to tell the tale. Adventurers can brave the ruins of Sundown to try and find the artifacts and face the ghosts of the town's former inhabitants, slain by the eldritch powers from the Crag and bound to guard the ruins forever unless the explorers can find the means to free them.

## THE HAUNT OF CROW'S NEST CRAG

Information and artifacts (possibly those from Sundown in the prior adventure) lead the heroes to learn more about Crow's Nest Crag, including a hidden entrance concealed behind the cascade of the Roar, and the existence of extensive tunnels and passages beneath Sunset Mountain. What they may not yet know is that both a survivor from the mysterious wreck on Shipwreck Shore, and possibly a corrupt scholar from Bookhaven (from "The Bookhaven Investigation"), are already aware of the ruins and investigating them, looking for something. The Crag is, in fact, the ruins of an outpost of the Eldritch Empire of Inmyrk. It contains unnatural creatures and guardians, eldritch treasures, and a kind of "signal beacon" that will alert the Empire and help their vessel to navigate to Kassa if activated. The heroes have to stop their foes from signaling that Breakwater and the whole of the island are ripe for conquest, and they can also explore and clear out the ruins.

## OUT UPON THE DEEP

The people of Nordmarsh primarily fish the waters around Kassa, so small fishing boats are their most common vessels. It is notable when the village's elders commission a larger full-masted ship capable of longer voyages. Named *The Deep Voyager*, the ship is built in Tall Pines and delivered to Nordmarsh. Folk all across Kassa are curious as to why. Does Nordmarsh intend to build its own trade with other ports, independent of Breakwater? Are they funding privateers to threaten Breakwater's own trade? The heroes may be asked to discreetly investigate, or might choose to do so on their own, especially if there's evidence one of their foes from a previous adventure fled to Nordmarsh. It turns out *The Deep Voyager* is meant to sail to Inmyrk, the wreck upon the eastern shore having been a sign to the elders of Nordmarsh and the beings they serve. They intend to make contact as "heralds of the Deep" and to lead the forces of the Empire back to Kassa, as foretold to them. If the heroes discover the plan and find a way to thwart it, perhaps they can claim *The Deep Voyager* for their own and set out from Breakwater to sail to even stranger shores.



# SET SAIL FOR BREAKWATER BAY!

Welcome to the introductory adventure for *Fantasy AGE*. This adventure is designed to take characters to Breakwater Bay (see **CHAPTER 11: BREAKWATER BAY**), allowing players to step into the role of cunning, brave, resourceful heroes in a pre-industrial world of swashbuckling and adventure!

## INTRODUCTION

The players' characters may seek to become silver-tongued Envoys able to grant insight to allies and talk circles around their foes, brilliant Mages who twist the laws of nature to their needs, clever Rogues whose grace and stealth are a constant surprise for pirates and monsters, or fearsome Warriors who bring cold steel and hot sweat to bear against monsters and cultists.

But before your characters can begin a life of adventure, first they need to reach Breakwater Bay.

**SET SAIL FOR BREAKWATER BAY!** is an introductory adventure suitable for three to five characters of level 1 or 2, designed to teach new players and GMs the basic rules of the *Fantasy AGE* game system.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Captain Erasmus "GlassEye" Garrag never wanted a ship of his own or a crew to command, but he inherited the *Tradewind* after her previous captain passed without family and few friends. He spent the ensuing 20 years ferrying passengers and cargo from major ports on the nearby continent to smaller settlements like Breakwater Bay—a journey of five to seven days from the last big city—with few incidents. His operation on the ship *Tradewind* is small enough to avoid the attention of powerful pirates and the aggressive trade companies, and his reputation is fearsome enough to dissuade small-time criminals. He finds the familiarity of the route a great comfort even if he chafes under the administrative duties of his command.

But Captain GlassEye isn't the only man struggling with an unwanted legacy. Hono Rettelwen had grown up believing himself an unremarkable human son and heir to a small trading house. But on his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday his parents

revealed they—and he—were scions of Inmyrk, an ancient empire of cultists, magicians, and flesh-grafters who once held dominion over hundreds of lands and ruled in the name of their dread gods. Devotees of the Blood Mark, the Rettelwen family used their import business as a cover to search the world for relics of the empire's demon-god: the Unnamable Silence. Hono rejected the truth of his heritage at first, but soon flung himself into the hidden history and mythology of his people to understand his new place in the world. After two years of acclimating himself to the idea of being a sleeper agent for conspiracy dating back eons, Hono is ready to prove himself worthy of his legacy. His parents have dispatched him to Breakwater Bay to recover a relic of their dark god said to have reached landfall there in an ancient shipwreck.

In his research on the Devotees of the Blood Mark, Hono uncovered a ritual—the *karis zethai*—which priests of the Unnamable Silence may use to learn their terrible god's true name and earn its blessing. The text demands a cultist, "Feed the Grave. Feed the Servant. Feed the Eye. Sate the Master," which Hono deciphered as making a sacrifice for the sake of bloodshed, then another to monsters bound to the Unnamable Silence, and finally a sacrifice to nature's fury such as a storm or volcano. Only after this bloodshed can he make a final sacrifice—those virtuous souls who survived the first three hardships—to Unnamable Silence itself.

Hono booked passage on the *Tradewind* and has decided to use the confined space of the vessel as the perfect place to perform the *karis zethai*. With no authorities or reinforcement and his ability to pose as a panicked passenger, Hono plans to winnow away the crew until only the most noble remain as a final, glorious tithe in blood. Under the guise of ensuring one of his crates got properly secured in the cargo hold, he convinced a number of the *Tradewind*'s off-duty junior crew to help him haul it aboard, while virtually everyone else was enjoying a bit of shore leave. With nobody below decks, a few inattentive crewmembers above, and the help of a couple of poisoned nicks with a simple utility knife, Hono murdered the off-duty counterparts and shoved their corpses in the

## MAKE THE PLAYERS ASK

This adventure requires characters to spend an extended period of time with someone who's constantly lying to them ... and heroes are pretty good at sniffing out liars. It would be no fun if the players immediately pinned Hono Rettelwen for his crimes, but it's unfair to come up with totally arbitrary impediments to their curiosity.

That's why if you're running the adventure, be careful not to point too hard at clues. Don't hide them for no good reason, but don't prompt the players to ask questions or follow leads unless they are lost to the point of not having fun, or act completely passively. Also, just as it's no fun to have the Player Characters win right away, it's also no fun to leave them chasing red herrings for too long. If they do so, feel free to let them discover in some convincing way they're barking up the wrong tree so they can move on.

For instance, after the events of **Scene 2**, Hono has a suspicious-looking wound—it's secretly self-inflicted. Don't launch into a description of who has various wounds and why unless the characters investigate it, and don't give the characters an instance of Hono changing his bandages so the heroes get an unasked-for peek at it. Follow this guidance for all clues. Unless it would be immediately obvious, or given to them by a very friendly ally, make the players specifically ask for information unless you need to move the story forward.



ship's bilge to satisfy the Feed the Grave portion of the ceremony, and to keep the remains aboard for future necromantic and sacrificial use.

Thus, when Captain GlassEye complains about missing crew he's talking about dead sailors, stashed on his own ship. The number of missing crew is up to the Game Master, since later, as walking corpses, some of them will rise to face the Player Characters. By default, this is three people: Two who are made into walking corpses (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES), and one whose body parts are used for various ceremonial purposes.

## SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The plot of **SET SAIL FOR BREAKWATER BAY!** is fairly linear, with Hono disguising his multi-part ritual as various misfortunes and attacks. This section outlines the general order of events assuming the adventurers don't become involved. The GM can use this guide to decide what happens as a result of the heroes' actions once they *do* become involved.

Hono arranges passage to Breakwater Bay aboard the *Tradewind*. After crewmembers Vickers, Duguay, and Ehsal (and possibly other sailors, depending on how difficult the GM wants to make the climax) load one of his crates, he murders them. Unable to otherwise dispose of the bodies due to the bustling harbor and populated upper deck, he stows them in the bilge, making it appear they vanished into the city during

leave. Captain GlassEye is concerned about being shorthanded for the trip and asks passengers to chip in if they're able.

The first evening after leaving port, Hono captures and kills sailor Arsenault as the "Feed the Servant," sacrifice, throwing his body overboard. The lookout spots the body adrift, but when Captain GlassEye circles the ship to pick Arsenault up, it's too late.

In the night, Hono stuffs entrails from one of the dead crew in the bilge into a fishing trap from the hold along with a piece of parchment with the glyph of the Unnamable Silence written on it, before trawling it behind the ship. His actions attract boneless ones (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES), lumbering eel-humanoids who serve the same terrible god. They crawl aboard and attack.

Hono believes a storm forming on the beginning of night three to be a sign from his patron and magically inscribes several sigils around the ship to conjure a magical miasma, leaving most of the crew too sick and vulnerable to steer the ship once the storm hits.

Finally, on the fourth night Hono plants an alchemical explosive below the ship's waterline, which he plans to detonate after stealing a lifeboat, sacrificing any remaining crew to the Unnamable Silence, and completing his *karis zethai*.

Only the involvement of brave heroes can stop Hono's ritual. While the heroes might become suspicious that there is a traitor on board long before they discover the sigils in **Scene 4**, try to keep them unsure of who it might be and highlight the danger of making unproven accusations. The adventure presents several additional named NPCs—Captain GlassEye, Mazarine Vol, and Mather Mangrove—with their own suspicious behavior and ulterior motives.

You can find more detailed information on each of the Non-Player Characters involved at the end of this adventure.

## CONTENT AND HORROR

This is a horror-tinged *Fantasy AGE* adventure featuring murder, animated corpses, drug use, rotting viscera, murderous moray-humanoids, poisonings, and other frightening situations, all by design, to make for a harrowing voyage that ensures the destination, Breakwater Bay, seems that much sweeter. Read **SET SAIL FOR BREAKWATER BAY!** from beginning to end before you run it and eliminate or change any elements you think would damage the fun for anyone playing through it. For instance, if it better fits your campaign you might reposition Hono as a rogue alchemist and artificer who is powering humanoid automata with the souls of his victims—and the boneless ones and terrible storms come from gods and demons who don't want souls diverted into machines.

**CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES' Horror** section is highly applicable to this adventure, but using it remains optional, especially since this is an introductory adventure. Maybe shuddering fear isn't the best way to get started for your group! Nevertheless, when encountering sea monsters, body parts, the sickening indigo mist, and other terrors, you may wish to use those rules to emphasize how strange and perilous the situation is.

## RANDOM CREW STATISTICS

While only four NPCs feature prominently in **SET SAIL FOR BREAKWATER BAY!**, the *Tradewind's* crew numbers almost two-dozen and additional passengers may be making the trip to Breakwater Bay. If you need a new character quickly, use the following table to generate a general description on short notice. Roll once for each column to determine a gender, ancestry, and defining quirk.

RANDOM CREW			
1d6	GENDER	ANCESTRY	QUIRK
1	Male	Dwarf	Detail-oriented
2	Male	Elf	Gossip
3	Female	Goblin	Phobia (heights, snakes, etc.)
4	Female	Halfling	Small Pet (monkey, parrot, etc.)
5	Agender	Human	Terrible Jokes
6	Nonbinary	Orc	Uncomfortable with Silence

Most crew are Zeroes with the field of Sailor (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES for more information). This doesn't mean they're weaklings; they may be highly skilled in day-to-day work but fall short in a crisis. They need heroes to help them.

Since this may be your first *Fantasy AGE* adventure, the crew also provides an excuse for players to make last-minute changes to their characters. Any class, background, and ancestry might be working under GlassEye (though never for a year or more, for reasons related to the adventure), so a player with second thoughts can simply decide a crewmember fits the bill and joins the adventurers, while their old character becomes a background crewmember, having taken the captain up on his offer of employment.



# PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION

Once everyone is ready for play, read the following introduction aloud to the players. Feel free to paraphrase or use your own words to help make the adventure your own, so long as you make sure to tell the players that they have booked passage on the *Tradewind*, a solid sailing vessel bound for Breakwater Bay, that they have heard of Captain GlassEye, and three other passengers are trying to get loaded and settled onto the ship at the same time.

*Each of you booked passage to Breakwater Bay for your own reasons. Perhaps you're escaping some trouble you got into in Freeport or another bustling city. Maybe you've decided to get out of some sleepy continental town or fishing atoll. Breakwater Bay's the kind of place you go to start a life—or start again after you decide your old life doesn't suit you. While each of you came to fulfill individual needs, and you may have come from far-flung places, your common destination and travel experiences have brought you together. You might even call each other friends.*

*You've pooled your coin to book passage for the last leg of your trip on the Tradewind, a stout but swift ship that makes the run to Breakwater Bay once or twice a month. Its captain, GlassEye, is a no-nonsense sort determined to reach each destination at its appointed time—no sooner, no later—so you expect your final voyage before Breakwater Bay to be comfortably dull. But even though the morning tide has come and gone, you all still stand with your things on the pier beside the moored ship, watching her crew scramble as they rig sails and load supplies.*

The characters have a few minutes to mingle while they watch the ship's preparation to set sail. Ask each player to describe their character, mention what they're doing as they wait, and what they hope to do in Breakwater Bay. Encourage them to make up bits of lore about the setting—peoples, places, or events—in Breakwater Bay; you can use these as elements of your own campaign if you continue your adventures beyond **SET SAIL FOR BREAKWATER BAY!** Most of all, ask them to come up with ways in which they know each other and why they're willing to cooperate when problems arise—this isn't an adventure for a group of loners.

## SCENE 1

### WE'RE GOING AWAY TO LEAVE YOU NOW

#### Roleplaying Encounter

In this opening scene, Captain GlassEye asks the adventurers to help prepare the *Tradewind* to launch in a few hours. This is an opportunity for the Player Characters to introduce themselves to one another and to meet the Non-Player Characters who will be involved in the adventure.

Read or paraphrase the following once the players have a chance to introduce their characters to one another



*Captain GlassEye lumbers toward you. The orc bears a ferocious scar by his right eye, but it's difficult to tell which of the two eyes is actually glass, given his tendency to stare into the middle distance. "Apologies," he rumbles, clasping his hands in front of him, "Seems several of the crew have abandoned post, and we find ourselves shorthanded. Aye, we missed the morning tide, but with a bit o' luck and sweat we just might 'ave everything stowed by evening tide."*

*One of your fellow passengers—a burly human woman with sun-kissed skin and a sack slung over her shoulder—snorts at the captain's apology. But the other two—a portly elfen man wringing his hands and staring into the water beside the dock, and a well-dressed human in his teens or twenties who looks like he's about to start crying—barely nod in acknowledgment.*

*Captain GlassEye wets his lips and pauses a moment. "Course, if any of you care to pitch in, we could guarantee we weigh anchor by sunset. I'd be happy to pay, seeing as I suddenly find myself with a glut of wages."*

Unbeknownst to everyone but Hono, the crew who "abandoned post" were murdered below decks and stashed in the ship's bilge beforehand. Hono picked these otherwise unexceptional individuals because they were newcomers and, easily led by money, seemed unreliable to begin with—exactly the sort who'd run away during shore leave and who few would miss.

Encourage the players to talk to the other passengers and learn more about who they are and what they need.



## MOVE YER BONES!

If they volunteer to work, Captain GlassEye gives them a level of unskilled labor he believes they can manage, and in the bustle characters have plenty of time to circulate and meet Player Characters and Non-Player Characters. Captain GlassEye offers 3 silver pieces per day as wages to characters without any special skills who volunteer to work alongside the crew. This increases to 5 silver pieces if the character has the Dexterity (Sailing) focus or an applicable talent or specialization (such as Mariner or Pirate), and 10 silver for characters who have both a focus and a useful talent or specialization. GlassEye isn't especially impressed with offers to fight or use magic. "If we get attacked, everybody fights anyway," and "If I don't understand it, I'm not paying extra for it," are examples of his responses. He does need someone to fix his sextant, however (see **Meeting the Other Passengers**).

## MEETING THE OTHER PASSENGERS

There are currently four characters on the pier in addition to the heroes: the orc sea captain, Erasmus "GlassEye" Whitesmith; the cantankerous human marine, Mazarine Vol; the opportunistic elf, Mather Mangrove; and the insecure human merchant, Hono Rettelwen. The Player Characters may speak to any of them to attempt to learn more about them. Each NPC has a specific task they need someone to assist them with. When an adventurer approaches one of them to talk, read or paraphrase the appropriate text.

### CAPTAIN ERASMUS "GLASSEYE" GARRAG

*"Lookin' for a bit of coin, are ye? Well, before we can set out anywhere, I need to find a tinker to repair my sextant. It seems to have flown into a wall of its own accord."*

Captain GlassEye's sextant flew into a wall, but not by its own will. The captain lost his temper when he discovered several of his trusted crew failed to report back for duty after furlough, leaving the *Tradewind* understaffed. He's still embarrassed at his outburst and refuses to discuss it, but he opens up quickly to anyone who accepts his lighthearted explanation of the damage, even eventually admitting to his juvenile tantrum if a Player Character is particularly cordial or open.

Repairing GlassEye's sextant requires a successful **TN 13 Intelligence (Engineering)** test. A character who fails this check must spend 1d6 copper pieces to buy new parts or tools before they can try again. If a character succeeds at repairing the instrument, Captain GlassEye reimburses them for the money spent, gives them 10 silver pieces on top of that, and tells them they have earned the skilled daily wage of 10 silver pieces per day, should they wish to help the crew on an ongoing basis.



### MAZARINE VOL

*"Such an absurd delay! On my ship we'd scrape the floor of every bar in the docks until the scum fell out and give them a lashing before setting them back to work! Some of us got places to be!"*



Mazarine Vol is upset and visibly impatient, but reluctant to talk to strangers. She's obviously an experienced sailor—with tanned skin, sun-bleached hair, wiry muscles, and thick calluses on her hands and bare feet—and would be a huge boon to the crew in preparing to make way, but in her sour mood she refuses to work with the "white-bellied amateurs" of the *Tradewind*.

Vol is a sailor of less repute (though more fame) than the *Tradewind's* crew—she's a pirate of minor notoriety known as the "Tide Razor." After spending several months visiting her family on the continent, she's eager to return to her ship, the *Frisky Bishop*. The pirate vessel doesn't dock in any landside ports, and so she needs the *Tradewind* to ferry her to Breakwater Bay where her own vessel is scheduled to stop. While not ashamed of her work, Vol has a few small bounties on her head and is understandably tight-lipped about her profession. The delay in departure leaves her uneasy and defensive.

Vol only needs one thing: For the *Tradewind* to set sail. A character can convince her to pitch in and help with preparations with a successful **TN 11 Communication (Persuasion)** test. A character who fails this check must spend 5 copper pieces to buy Vol a tankard of grog (a tavern is within a stone's throw of the ship) before they can try again. If a character succeeds at persuading Vol to help out, the work takes her mind off her frustrations. She does the work of a small team of sailors, ensuring the ship will set sail by the afternoon tide, assuming no other complications arise. She opens up more readily in the future and takes a particular liking to that character. Furthermore, as Vol helps around, Captain GlassEye not only pays her the skilled rate, but gives a one-time gratuity of 2 silver pieces to anyone who persuaded her to do so.

### MATHER MANGROVE

*"Oh, well this is a bother, friend, a bother indeed! I cannot allow this ship to leave with myself in arrears as I seem to be! But what hardy soul could brave the black depths of the harbor and save my fortune?"*



The elf Mather Mangrove is a self-proclaimed student of the arcane, but not one of any great skill. Instead, the agreeable man—gifted with a nonthreatening, round face and easy smile—found his calling in grifting. He acquired a map to an ancient vault in Nordmarsh on the island of Kassa (see **CHAPTER 11: BREAKWATER BAY**) as



part of a recent confidence game, and he is eager to relocate his operation and begin hunting for this potential fortune.

Mangrove is eager to explain his predicament to any sympathetic ear: Mangrove fumbled his folio, containing his map and most of his coin, into the black waters of the harbor while pacing the docks. Unable to swim, he only looks forlornly into the cold water, where a few small bubbles occasionally break the surface. The folio is lined with oilcloth and will be safe for a time, but it's entirely outside the elf's reach unless he can find some brave soul to dive into the water and retrieve his savings. He omits the quasi-legal origin of the map and his fortune, playing the part of a humble, affable scholar.

The water of the harbor is about twenty feet deep. To recover the folio, a character must first succeed at a **TN 9 Constitution (Swimming)** test. If they succeed at this check, they must succeed at a **TN 11 Perception (Searching)** test. If a character fails this Perception check, they must choose between surfacing to take a breath—and needing to succeed at a new Strength (Swimming) test to swim back down—or take 1d6 penetrating damage to stay deep below to keep searching as their air runs low. If a character succeeds at the Perception test, they locate the folio and can return it to Mangrove on the docks. Alternatively, a character could hide the folio on themselves before surfacing with a successful **TN 13 Dexterity (Legerdemain)** test. The folio contains 13 silver coins, Mangrove's map, and a selection of slightly damp legal documents.

In gratitude, Mangrove offers a single silver piece and the promise of a favor in the future. The elf isn't completely heartless, and also refrains from scamming anyone who helps him in any situation except for a truly big score.

## HONO RETTELWEN

*"Oh dear, oh dear. Maybe if I lift with my legs more? No, that won't work. Should I unpack it all? Goodness, Mom and Dad are going to be so upset. Why is everyone else too busy to help? Can't they see how important this is?"*



Hono Rettelwen is a slight young man with messy black hair who looks to be on the verge of tears as he circles a large wooden crate trying to find just the right way to push, lift, or otherwise haul it aboard. He's the son of local importers who run the Rettelwen Trading Company reselling artisan goods—mostly porcelain—from across the world. His parents have entrusted him with his first big business responsibility: traveling to Breakwater Bay with samples of their wares to find new trade partners and shipping contacts. Unfortunately, the crew of the *Tradewind* is too busy preparing to catch the afternoon tide to finish loading Hono's samples, and he's begun to worry they won't bother to load the crate before casting off.

Hono is frank about his problem, but shy. His awkwardness is genuine, even if he does have a concealed motivation in addition to his trading venture. He's overwhelmed, bordering on

frantic. The crate contains some of the more valuable porcelain samples his parents entrusted to him, and he worries that if he drops it or bangs into anything, he'll break the valuables. His cognitive dissonance is strong enough that he fully believes in his role as a timid young scion while simultaneously having the psychopathic confidence to plan the mass murder of the people he's asking for help, the rest of the *Tradewind*'s crew, and anyone else it would be convenient to kill.

Moving Hono's crate requires a successful **TN 16 Strength (Might)** test. This may seem formidable, but up to four characters can work together to carry the crate if they want. This is an example of force multiplier cooperation (see **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES**). Add the Stunt Die result of each additional lifter to the highest result among them all for the final total.

Hono rewards anyone who helps him with 1 gold piece each but tells them not to flash it around. This is to conceal the extent of his wealth from other passengers and crew, but it may draw attention to the gold itself. These are ancient coins, though so well-preserved they look almost newly-minted, and bearing the mark of the Inmyrk Empire (the half-flayed head of a snake). A character who has the Intelligence (Evaluation) or Intelligence (Arcane Lore) focus recognizes the symbol without a test, though the Empire is obscure, vaguely known for its dark sorcery and mystery cult worship of some unnamed god, and not much else. The GM can allow tests to find out more but should limit what can be found out to preserve the adventure's mystery—this is only foreshadowing (see **The Lore of Inmyrk and the Unnamable Silence** later in this chapter). Hono's parents had the gold lying around as remnants of an ancestral trove, and gave it to him as spending money. If asked about it, Hono truthfully relates this, emphasizing that his family are merchants who get coins from many lands and omitting the part where they're the last of the old imperial cult.

This is actually the second crate Hono stows aboard the *Tradewind*, having had his victims load the first. Although they have a dissimilar appearance, a character who inspects the ship's cargo and succeeds at a **TN 12 Dexterity (Crafting)** or **Intelligence (Evaluation)** test notices the two crates were made by the same crafters as the plank widths, nails, and other subtle features are the same.

## SETTING SAIL

Once the PCs successfully help at least one other passenger, Captain GlassEye sees their initiative and approaches them specifically about chipping in as part of his crew if he hasn't already, with an immediate 3 silver piece bonus to sweeten the deal. Even if the characters decline GlassEye and his crew will freely ask them for help, and if they spend a good part of the day working they get paid for that day.

There are several tasks the heroes can perform to help out. These require an advanced test as described in **CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES**, described as follows in **Casting Off**. If the characters succeed by the evening high tide, the *Tradewind* departs without incident. If not, the ship creeps out as the



waters wane, and a locally notorious cross-current picks up, adding a day to the travel time. This automatically occurs if the PCs don't help at all and lowers Captain GlassEye's opinion of them to: "Cargo that eats." (Standoffish, if using the social rules in CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES). If they try and fail, he at least respects the effort and pays them, nonetheless.

### CASTING OFF

**DIFFICULTY:** TN 12 using any of the following focuses:

**Communication (Leadership)** to direct the crew, **Constitution (Stamina)** to pitch in with loading supplies, **Dexterity (Sailing)** to prepare the rigging, **Intelligence (Navigation)** to chart a course, or **Strength (Climbing)** to assist in raising the sails. These are specialist collaboration tests (see **Cooperation** in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES) so every successful participant adds the degree of success from their individual tests to the growing total—provided they succeed.

**SUCCESS THRESHOLD:** 18

**TIME INTERVAL:** 30 minutes

By the time the characters have finished talking to each other, to NPCs, and have otherwise dithered and worked, enough time has passed that they have just 2 hours (and thus, four rolls each) to be ready to sail by the afternoon high tide. Fortunately, each NPC the character assists except for the captain (who is already doing his best to get the ship ready) feels inspired to help out, reducing the Success Threshold by 2 each, except for Mazarine Vol, whose skill reduces the Success Threshold by 4.

Note that the *Tradewind* crew are already working as hard as they can and do not make rolls for this advanced test—this is solely to measure how well the PCs do helping out.

### SAILOR OVERBOARD!

Omelia, a human sailor acting as lookout, calls "Sailor overboard!" shortly before dawn during the first night of the voyage. She spotted a struggling figure's silhouette (she doesn't know their identity) at least 200 yards away, and by the time crew assembles and drops a boat to rescue them, the anonymous figure slips below the cold, black waves.

Captain GlassEye's subsequent roll call reveals a sailor named Arsenault is missing. This is a set event that can't be altered by Player Characters. Arsenault was known as a loner, an indifferent mariner with a love for exotic drugs, and known for his tendency to walk the deck while enjoying them.

Characters who take it upon themselves to dig deeper find that anyone suspected of foul play has an equally spotty alibi, as crew and passengers both regularly wandered around the ship. Searching the decks, characters find a spot between the railing and a crate that affords shelter from the wind, as well as a clay pipe containing a bitter-smelling ash; remnants of an uncommon drug of the GM's choice known by characters with the Intelligence (Natural Lore) or Intelligence (Healing) focuses to cause euphoria, disorientation, and even hallucinations in high amounts—but there is also a splash of blood nearby, though this is easily explained as Arsenault injuring himself on a loose nail or other projection before stumbling

overboard. It's not enough blood to suggest a mortal wound, and Arsenault was seen struggling in the water. With sea spray everywhere it's difficult to learn much from a blood spatter, but a successful **TN 15 Perception (Searching)** test from a PC deliberately examining the scene convinces them Arsenault wasn't injured by anything nearby because the blood spatter lies far from anything sharp or pointy.

What actually happened? Hono stabbed Arsenault and shoved him overboard to begin the *karis zethai* ritual. The cultist used a simple eating knife smeared with a potent poison (using the last of his supplies of it) and dropped it overboard. Everyone, including the PCs, have such implements, and Hono has a twin on hand for the one he tossed. Hono is a skilled liar who knows not to make up extraneous information or volunteer anything, and the Game Master should not permit tests to see if he's lying unless players are actively trying to find this out. Arsenault was not well-liked, but nobody on the crew wanted him to die. The event casts a shadow over the voyage and triggers sailors' well-known tendencies toward ritual and superstition. This may cause some of them to appear suspicious and the GM should play this up, having some sailors missing their knives, others with innocent injuries they refuse to explain, and other members of the crew might have their own supply of Arsenault's drug.

### SCENE 2

## UNINVITED GUESTS

### Combat Encounter

In this scene, a small shoal of boneless ones (see CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES) board the *Tradewind* to take prisoners. While it seems to be a random attack, the deadly hunters were in fact called by the Inmyrk cultist, Hono, who stuffed one of the ship's fishing traps with human entrails he collected from one of his murder victims in the bilge along with the Unnamable Silence's glyph: an abstraction of a finger covering a toothy maw as if to say, "Shhhh." The trap acts as a mystical lure, attracting the boneless ones from deep below. Hono believes the second step of the *karis zethai* ritual—Feed the Servant—requires sacrificing some of the *Tradewind*'s crew to the aquatic monsters who serve his alien god.

The scene begins two days after Arsenault's death. Read or paraphrase the following.

*After three days' travel, and two days after Arsenault's accident, the pain of it has eased a little and the Tradewind crew returns to business as usual. After daily duties, the crew assembles for an hour at sunset to eat, drink, play music, and perform short skits to entertain each other. The raucous sailors ask passengers to join in, begging you for stories and songs they haven't already heard a hundred times by now.*

This is the third evening gathering so far on the journey, and the crew have warmed up to the passengers considerably. Mazarine Vol shares a few of her favorite vulgar stories from



## THE LORE OF INMYRK THE BLOOD MARK, AND THE UNNAMABLE SILENCE

Smart players will no doubt ask about the glyph in the fishing trap—the sign of the Unnamable Silence—and if they received a gold piece from Hono may even ask if the two are related, even though they look nothing alike. Since telling them that the cult to that god was a Inmyrkian religion might give up Hono as the perpetrator right away, the Game Master shouldn't reveal the connection, though as it is something educated characters *could* know, you can't make it impossible.

First, follow the advice in **Make the Players Ask**. Second, successful tests with the following focuses and target numbers (attached to relevant objects of study) provide the following narrow information, leaving it up to the players to weave everything into a conclusion.

- **TN 15 INTELLIGENCE (HISTORICAL LORE) — THE INMYRK EMPIRE:** If prompted by coins or artifacts, a successful test reminds the character that the Inmyrk Empire was a small, cruel, sea power allegedly ruled by the mortal offspring of oceanic demons. It considered itself the dire enemy of a “serpent empire,” to the point where the flayed snake became its symbol.
- **TN 13 INTELLIGENCE (RELIGIOUS LORE) — DEVOTEES OF THE BLOOD MARK:** The Devotees claimed descent from the high priests of a vanished kingdom who worshipped a being sometimes known as the god of death by sea. According to the cult, this god was an enemy of the “Coiled One,” a serpent-god of the land. A successful test, revealing this information, might be prompted by the boneless ones, who represent the death their god brings.
- **TN 11 INTELLIGENCE (ARCANE LORE) — THE UNNAMABLE SILENCE:** The glyph of this deity and any ritual events may prompt a test. Success recalls that the Unnamable Silence is a malefic arcane intelligence—called a demon, god, or both, by the religiously inclined—associated with aquatic abysses, and is empowered through complex sacrifices, especially when performed by a hereditary elect.

distant ports of call, Mather Mangrove regales the ship with his sharp singing voice, which he assures everyone is, “Well regarded among the most elite of elven peers,” and Hono Rettelwen reads from a new book of poetry and blushes at the romantic lines.

The players are free to ad-lib stories or describe what their characters do at this point. They can describe how well (or how badly) they do without the need for an ability test, but the results should match their Communication rating, and any applicable focuses and talents. Exceptional participants may have an advantage in future social tests, shifting the attitudes of receptive audience members. After each player has had the opportunity to contribute if they want, the boneless ones attack.

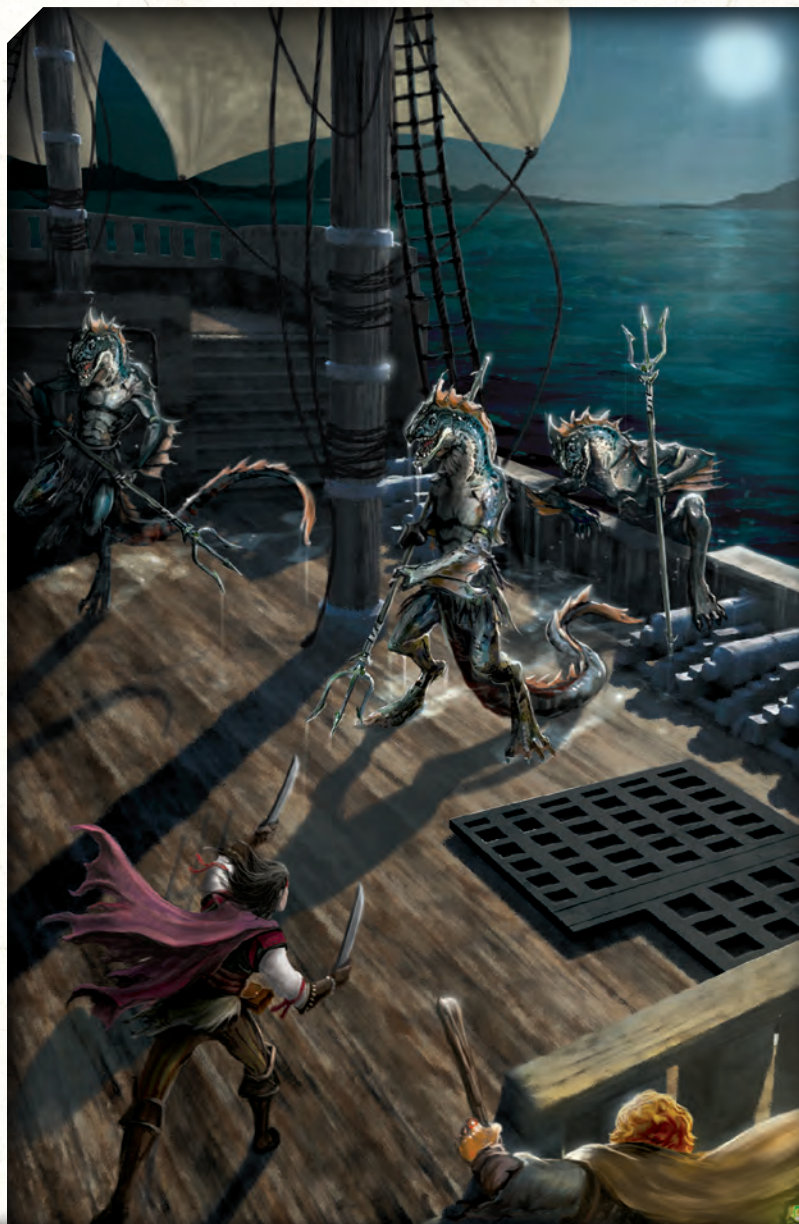
### SLIPPERY WHEN DEAD

Read or paraphrase the following:

*The evening's festivities pause as the ship lurches sideways, as if struck by a rogue wave. A webbed hand, the sickly white of a bloated corpse—reaches over the railing and hauls a muscular, humanoid form into view: seven feet tall, glistening with wet mucus, and with an undulating, eel-like trunk. A pair of round black eyes set themselves on you. Multiple rows of needle-sharp teeth reveal themselves in a gurgling wail that conveys unmistakable rage, issued from the creature's moray-like head.*

*Other slick, aquatic forms hoist themselves onto the deck and the crew scrambles in a panic, screaming: “Boneless ones!”*

Boneless ones are hostile aquatic humanoids whose bodies combine the worst traits of humans and deep-sea fish. They serve alien gods and surface to drag sacrificial victims underwater. They cannot be reasoned with and don't speak any language the characters know. While up to a dozen of them board the *Tradewind* and engage the crew and other





passengers, the Player Characters only confront a band of three: two directed by a leader wearing a necklace of coral, shells, and green gold, who wields a trident of beaten copper that is unnaturally hard, given its construction. These are a *necklace of the tritons* and *trident of the abyss*, respectively (see **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**), and can be seized as loot by heroes who defeat the creature.

To survive, the Player Characters must defeat the boneless ones in combat. Boneless ones impose the Unconscious condition on defeated foes (see **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**) and spit their *breathing mucus* (see the boneless ones' **Qualities** in **CHAPTER 9** and *breathing mucus* in **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**) on them. This is so they can survive being dragged to an underwater altar for ritual sacrifice and consumption.

Once the adventurers defeat all three of the boneless ones attacking them, the others retreat as the characters' fortunes in combat reflect those of crew and passengers.

## SHIPBOARD STUNTS

In addition to any other stunts the PCs can use, fighting aboard the *Tradewind* adds a few special maneuvers to their arsenals. When combat begins, tell the players the following additional stunts are available. These stunts remain available during other fights aboard the *Tradewind*, too.

SHIPBOARD STUNTS	
SP	STUNT
2	<b>ROLL WITH THE OCEAN:</b> You move with the ship's deck, sliding out of the way of blows. You may move 1d6 yards away in a straight line, or until something would stop you, and gain +1 Defense until the beginning of your next turn. You cannot be knocked overboard this way.
4	<b>SWING INTO ACTION (ON DECK ONLY):</b> You grab a loose rigging line and swing into combat. Your added momentum increases the damage of your attack by +1d6, and your target must succeed at an opposed Strength (Might) test against your choice of Dexterity (Sailing) or Strength (Might) or be knocked over. If they are adjacent to the railing, you can knock them off the ship entirely if they fail their opposed test. Otherwise, they fall Prone.

## SWASHBUCKLING

In addition to ordinary attacks, adventurers may try any number of different ability tests on their turn to engage the boneless ones in unexpected ways, from climbing the rigging to kicking an object down a listing deck to pin a foe. These actions are largely governed by the Stunt Attack action in **CHAPTER 2**, but the Game Master should consider accepting unorthodox abilities and focuses for "attacks," such as Communication (Deception) to misdirect a foe or Dexterity (Initiative) to leap out of the way of an enemy so they can stumble overboard. In some cases, opposed tests should be used instead of rolling versus the opponent's Defense.

## THE WOUNDED

A quick survey after the fight reveals only a single death among the crew—a quartermaster's assistant named Renaldo—but plenty of cuts and bites. Among the other passengers, Mazarine Vol received a superficial bite to the forearms, while Hono was, at some point, stabbed in the leg. If the characters ask around, a number of sailors saw Mazarine get bitten in the thick of combat. Nobody saw Hono get wounded, however.

If asked, Hono sheepishly admits he was injured when he ran away to hide. His stab wound is a tolerable small puncture on his upper leg, beside two smaller punctures, which he immediately bandaged himself. In truth this injury was self-inflicted (the smaller punctures were the result of him needing a few tries to work up the bravery). Hono resists attempts to inspect the wound, declaring that he's fine, but it lasts for the entire voyage, and if a character succeeds at a **TN 13 Intelligence (Healing)** test, they can tell the injury's shape and angle make it unlikely to have come from combat.

## THE AFTERMATH

Between the boneless one attack and Arsenault falling overboard, the crew begins whispering that the voyage is cursed. Captain GlassEye quiets any talk of magic or conspiracy, but if the heroes have been cordial with him he admits in private that he worries something sinister is afoot. He asks them to remain wary.

If the adventurers search the ship, a successful **TN 14 Perception (Searching)** test discovers the fish trap still trailing behind the ship, dripping with sea-bloated viscera and a soaked piece of parchment. A successful **TN 10 Intelligence (Natural Lore)** test identifies the viscera as belonging to some large mammal, though they are so waterlogged and damaged by nibbling sea creatures that more precise information is impossible.

After the dust settles from the fight, Captain GlassEye offers each adventurer who defended the ship 10 silver pieces. GlassEye expected people to fight for their lives and the ship, but he recognizes the characters' exceptional acts.

### SCENE 3

## BLOW THE MAN DOWN

### Exploration Encounter

The day begins with a storm at the horizon. While there's little cause for concern thanks to prevailing winds, Hono takes this display of natural power as a sign from his god following the previous day's sacrifice to the boneless ones. He begins discreetly using the *arcane glyph* minor arcana to inscribe four magical sigils on different parts of the *Tradewind*. The Game Master determines where three of them are, but the fourth is on the mainmast. Unlike conventional *arcane glyphs*, these are written in a kind of mystical "invisible ink," and are visible as no more than a strange difference in sheen where the lines and whorls of the symbol are. To see





them before they do their work requires a successful **TN 17 Perception (Seeing)** test.

Hono waits for the PCs to busy themselves below decks or sleep so he can discreetly inscribe them. If someone witnesses him ambling around the ship, they can tell he's doing some form of spellcasting only by winning in an opposed test of **Intelligence (Arcane Lore)** versus Hono's **Communication (Deception)**. Even then, a character must know the *arcane glyph* minor arcana to understand what he is actually doing.

The glyphs are the next step in Hono's *karis zethai* ritual: Feed the Eye. It requires sacrificing living beings to a terrible storm. His glyphs purportedly rouse the Unnamable Silence and, in concert with other rites and the power of Hono's strange heritage, supernaturally attract the nearby storm to the ship, transforming the natural weather into a toxic miasma.

After Hono has inscribed his glyphs read or paraphrase the following.

*Tensions remain quietly raised after last night's boneless one attack. At first, the storm on the horizon didn't warrant concern, but the winds shift against all educated predictions and rain starts falling in thick waves. The crew scrambles to turn the ship into the oncoming waves and furl the sails before the snapping winds tear them to pieces.*

At this point, the PCs may well scramble to help the rest of the crew. As GM, feel free to set up various challenges and associated ability tests for them. Helping the crew, they should be able to ultimately prevail over the storm, but if their performance is lacking it may add another day or two to their journey as the regular crew save the ship, but they have to

repair damage and get the Tradewind back on course. After an hour, the Tradewind enters the storm's eye, and an eerie calm descends. At that point, read or paraphrase the following.

*In this moment of calm, the crew busy themselves checking on each other, making repairs, and warming themselves as best they can in their soaked, ragged garments. Minutes later, a weird indigo mist rises from the sea, pooling around the ship before penetrating the floorboards. Even ignoring its hue, the mist seems to target the ship. Shadows lengthen and twist through the mist, reaching out for you, before a growling, inhuman voice booms between your ears in each of your native tongues:*

*"YOU WHO ARE BOUND TO THE BARGE OF SACRIFICE ARE SEEN. YOU WHO ARE SEEN ARE DEVoured, FOR THE SIGHT OF YOU IS THE FLAME OF SACRIFICE, CARRYING THE SWEETNESS OF FLESH PROMISED BY YOUR EMPEROR. NOW BE DEVoured AND HALT THIS TERRIBLE VOICE, AND YOU WILL ATTAIN THE BLISS OF SILENCE."*

A commotion directs your attention to the mainmast, where a strange symbol glows the indigo of the mist—then it changes color in a pulse of sickly yellow light, and the crew begin to shudder and fall, gripped by seizures.

In the old Inmyrk Empire, the Devotees of the Blood Mark conducted the Feeding the Eye portion of the *karis zethai* with a ritual barge whose miserable crew were bound to the vessel for a year and a day to purify them for sacrifice to the Unnamable Silence. Hono's version of the ritual substituted the *Tradewind* for the barge, so while the mist confuses and sickens everyone, only individuals who've been onboard at



least a year and a day, including Captain GlassEye and most of the crew, are affected. Hono doesn't know about this detail and also pretends to be affected, spasming and foaming at the mouth. Since the other passengers, including the PCs, are unaffected, this ruse might be his undoing.

In any event, when the opposite edge of the storm hits no more than a minute or two later, it's stronger than before—and the *Tradewind* doesn't have a crew who can deal with it.

The *arcane glyphs* Hono has placed at different parts of the ship are the same symbol found in the parchment that, along with rotted entrails, were found in the fishing trap that acted as a lure for the boneless ones: the sign of the Unnamable Silence.

## THE DEADLY STORM

The *Tradewind* bucks and shakes in the storm while the mist confuses the mind, imposing a -2 penalty to all ability tests. A Mage or character with the Intelligence (Arcane Lore) focus knows, without requiring a roll, that while the symbol on the mainmast is some petty form of magic, it's part of a ritual that calls upon mightier forces—and that anywhere from three to five of them would be required to do this to the entire ship.

### STORM HAZARDS TABLE

1D6	RESULT
1	<b>BIG WAVE:</b> A massive wave rocks the ship. Anyone who does not succeed at a <b>TN 10 Constitution (Stamina), or Dexterity (Acrobatics)</b> test is knocked Prone and suffers a -2 penalty to any other tests they make this turn. If this result comes up twice in a row, failing a second time washes the character overboard, at the GM's discretion.
2	<b>LOOSE CARGO:</b> A loose barrel or an unsecured block and tackle from the rigging is about to collide with a random hero. That character must succeed at a <b>TN 11 Dexterity (Initiative) or Strength (Might)</b> test or take 2d6 damage.
3	<b>SLIDING SAILOR:</b> Several crew tumble down the rocking deck and will fall overboard unless one hero uses their turn to save them. If the crew are conscious, catching them requires a <b>TN 11 Strength (Might)</b> test. If they're not, this becomes a <b>TN 14</b> test.
4	<b>NOXIOUS FUMES:</b> A dense cloud of the indigo mist burns one random hero's eyes and throat. They must succeed at a <b>TN 11 Constitution (Stamina) test</b> or take 1d6 penetrating damage and suffer a -1 penalty to their actions this turn on top of any other penalties. Characters who would normally be unaffected by the indigo fog are still affected due to it's intensity.
5	<b>FEARSOME HALLUCINATIONS:</b> The indigo fog forms terrifying images of sharks, boneless ones, drowned corpses, and other horrors attacking the heroes. Anyone who does not succeed at a <b>TN 10 Willpower (Courage)</b> test will not be able to do anything this turn. Characters who would normally be unaffected by the indigo fog are still affected due to it's intensity.
6	<b>LIGHTNING STRIKE!</b> Lightning strikes near a random hero. That character must succeed at a <b>TN 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics)</b> test or take 3d6 penetrating damage.

A significant fraction of the seizing crewmembers are in danger of falling overboard, striking nearby objects, drowning in pooled water, or having the seizure injure them due to existing physical vulnerabilities. Plus, of course, somebody needs to keep the ship from sinking in the storm. This is made apparent by the rising danger aboard ship. At the beginning of each round, roll on the **Storm Hazards** table and apply the results.

Therefore, the heroes can take several approaches to saving the ship and crew.

### DESTROYING THE GLYPHS

Destroying all four *arcane glyphs* will banish the indigo mist, and the crew will quickly revive—disoriented and in pain, but able to shamle through their jobs. As eliminating the mists also removes its hallucinogenic, toxic effects, this gets rid of the -2 ability test penalty in cases of Communication, Constitution, Intelligence, Perception, and Willpower tests. It also eliminates the Noxious Fumes and Fearsome Hallucinations results on the **Storm Hazards** table—when these results come up, nothing happens instead.

The Game Master determines where the three glyphs besides the one on the mainmast are located based on what would serve the story and where Hono could have subtly placed them. The GM can work with characters as they work this out or can abstract it as a **TN 12 Perception (Searching)** test. Now that the ritual is active, the glyphs have a faint yellow and indigo glow, and are visible to heroes with typical vision who are within 2 yards.

Destroying a glyph is a simple matter of marring it with a knife or anything capable of permanently marking whatever material on which it's been placed.

### AIDING THE CREW

Each round a character can ensure 1d6 crewmembers stay safe, by getting them out of dangerous environments and repositioning them to prevent drowning or suffocation. Characters can help large numbers because this is a matter of taking mere seconds to haul them out of danger. A character using the *cure* or *revival* Healing Arcana spells, or any other spell or power that treats poison or removes unconsciousness, can revive fallen crew with the speed of recovery depending on the method. Mundane cures require resting time, while magic works immediately.

As noted earlier, the passengers (and up to a handful of new crewmembers) are unaffected, but Hono pretends to be affected—a mistake, since he wasn't completely conversant in this part of the ritual. Attempting to help him allows the helper to make an **Intelligence (Healing) or Perception (Empathy)** test versus Hono's **Communication (Deception)** roll to detect the ruse.

### CONTROLLING THE SHIP

So long as the *Tradewind* remains out of control, it edges closer and closer to capsizing with every wave that pounds against her side. One or more characters can attempt to take control of the ship and help guide it through the storm. This is difficult because the *Tradewind* normally requires a substantial



crew, and makes doing so a challenge test as described in CHAPTER 8: MASTERING THE RULES, with details in **Controlling the Tradewind**. Reaching the Success Threshold eliminates the -2 penalty to ability tests the storm originally levied when it comes to Accuracy, Dexterity, Fighting, and Strength tests. It also eliminates the **Big Wave**, **Loose Cargo**, and **Sliding Sailor** results from the **Storm Hazards** table. Rolling those means nothing happens instead. The storm is still present, but the ship is safe.

### CONTROLLING THE TRADEWIND

**SUCCESS THRESHOLD:** 18

**INCREMENT TIME:** 1 round

**ABILITY FOCUSES:** TN 11 **Dexterity (Sailing)** roll to seize the wheel and turn the ship into the oncoming waves, a TN 14 **Intelligence (Engineering)** roll to jury rig the damaged spars and rigging, and a TN 12 **Strength (Climbing)** roll to navigate the rigging and begin furling the sails.

**COOPERATION:** Specialist collaboration—each participant adds their roll to the Success Threshold. In addition, for each round after each character revives one or more incapacitated crew, reduce the Success Threshold by 2, as these recovered sailors rush to their aid.

### CONSEQUENCES

- **MINOR:** Timbers crack under the pressure of the storm, and the increasingly damaged ship adds +1 to test TNs.

**FAILURES BEFORE MODERATE CONSEQUENCES:** 2

- **MODERATE:** The vessel smashes into a wave, knocking everyone aloft—or into the ceiling if they're below decks—before smashing back down. All characters must succeed at a TN 12 **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** test or take 2d6 damage.

**FAILURES BEFORE MAJOR CONSEQUENCES:** 2

- **MAJOR:** The ship gets dragged into the most intense part of the storm. Roll on the **Storm Hazards** table 1d3 times, rerolling results of 4 or 5.

### AFTERMATH

Once the adventurers find and destroy all four sigils, the storm only lasts until they get the ship under control and sail past its outer threshold. Once the ship is safe and the storm behind them, Captain GlassEye calls the adventurers into his cabin. Read or paraphrase the following.

*Captain GlassEye frowns meaningfully at his cracked glasses and sighs. "I was suspicious after the boneless one attacks, but this storm and foul magic confirm it. Someone aboard the Tradewind has ill intentions toward my crew and passengers—some manner of magical menace. I doubt it's any of my crew. I've known them too long. And ye lot are the only ones stopping things when they go amuck. I'd be much appreciative if you'd snoop around, find out who's been sabotaging this voyage, and put a quick stop to 'em."*

The captain also pays each adventurer 10 silver pieces for their efforts.

### SCENE 4

## SUGAR IN THE HOLD

### Roleplaying/Combat Encounter

Captain GlassEye asked the adventurers to investigate the strange events on his ship, believing some manner of magical threat has malign intentions for the *Tradewind*. The heroes can begin their investigation immediately, but the entire ship is disheveled and on edge and the characters are likely injured from their heroics during the storm. They can take a night to rest with no ill effects. Even Hono is too tired to scheme.

You may reach this stage early as Player Characters emulating classic heroes typically don't wait for permission to find things out.

### SCUTTLEBUTT

The adventurers might study the passengers' movements and motivations. They have all engaged in some minor suspicious activity since boarding. A successful TN 10 **Communication (Investigation)** test, representing asking around among the crew, reveals the following information. In addition, if a stunt or other circumstance would entitle an investigator to extra information, use the **Bonus Information** provided.

### HONO RETTELWEN

Hono was stabbed by one of the boneless ones. He fell ill from the magical storm's mist. He has been seen entering the cargo hold at odd hours. He seems nervous, a little seasick, and intimidated by experienced sailors among the crew. Since coming aboard, he's been wearing some kind of overpowering floral perfume.

**BONUS INFORMATION:** One of the crew who was tasked with guarding the *Tradewind* during shore leave saw Hono and a couple of the sailors who deserted the ship hauling a crate aboard the day before setting sail. They just didn't think it was that important.

### MATHER MANGROVE

Mather Mangrove hid below decks during the boneless one attack and wasn't seen during the magical storm. He's been asking personal questions of many of the crew and has generally been very friendly to everyone, though some of the crew avoid him. If asked, those crewmembers report that he seemed vaguely false in his demeanor and asked too many personal questions. He did not fall ill from the indigo mist.

**BONUS INFORMATION:** Mangrove fleeced a couple of sailors out of all their money in a card game, and Captain GlassEye put a stop to it. Both sailors were killed by boneless ones.



Mazarine didn't fall ill. She was bitten while battling the boneless ones and slew one herself. While she has comported herself with basic politeness, she has complained about Captain GlassEye's management of the ship throughout their voyage.

**BACKGROUND:** She has threatened a few sailors who asked questions about her past, especially when they noted her Freeport drawl. In fact, before he died, Arsenault confided in some fellow crewmates he thought she might be a mercenary pirate known as the "Tide Razor," and was looking into collecting the price on her head.

The adventurers can also confront each passenger and question them directly.

## QUESTIONING HONO RETTELWEN

Throughout this adventure, Hono has left subtle signs he's the culprit because he is, in fact, the culprit. Hono's inflated self-regard and strange heritage make him a skilled deceiver because he can half-believe his own lies. If characters want to tell if he's lying, in the absence of hard evidence they must beat his **Communication (Deception)** test with their own social tests. His positions about various events and allegations are as follows:

- He doesn't know anything about errant crew members, and if told he was seen with them accepts that it might be possible, but he doesn't know any of the crew and can barely tell them apart. Yes, he has two crates, but he's a trader and didn't think it was worth mentioning.
- He has no idea what happened to Arsenault and doesn't know who he was.
- He doesn't know what boneless ones are and has never seen them before. He ran away when one of them hurt him and was ashamed to say anything. He doesn't know exactly what the creature did to hurt him because he was fleeing and it got him from behind.
- The indigo mist made him sick. If he was caught faking, he concedes that in truth he might have panicked and just thought he was sick.
- Of course he goes into the cargo hold frequently! That's where his damn wares are, and the ship's been through chaos!
- He doesn't know anything about magic, lost empires, or secret cults. If asked about one of these things he does not volunteer an association with the others.

## HONO'S THINGS

Hono's quarters have nothing unusual except for a bottle of floral perfume. If asked, he notes that like most ships the *Tradewind* smells like too many people, too close together. In fact, he uses it to disguise his work with the

corpses in the bilge. A character who succeeds in a **TN 14 Perception (Smelling)** detects a hint of frankincense in the perfume, which hints of its true purpose in disguising the scent of death.

Hono's crates contain various trade goods. The one that was loaded by the sailors who went missing contains various sturdy goods, such as brass implements, while the crate that was loaded on the day he left (which the PCs might have helped with) contains porcelain padded by textiles. While the second crate would seem to have the most room for concealed items, the crate of sturdy goods is the one that contains a secret compartment. Finding it requires an active search of the exterior and a successful **TN 12 Perception (Searching)** test to find the drawer in one bottom corner of the crate. The drawer contains the following items:

- Various magical reagents used in magical research and the cultivation of arcane power, much as any Mage would have.
- The sign of the Unnamable Silence in jade on a brass disk, Hono's arcane device. This is a valuable item, worth 200 silver pieces.
- 10 gold pieces in the form of Inmyrk Empire vintage gold coins.
- Residues of poisonous plant leaves and resins, snake venoms, and other toxins. There's not enough left to cause more than a stomachache now, but at one point there was enough of it all to kill perhaps half a dozen people. He used it up killing Arsenault and the unfortunates in the bilge.
- A piece of parchment identical to the one found in the fishing trap with the same four lines, scrawled again and again: "Feed the Grave. Feed the Servant. Feed the Eye. Sate the Master." Childish drawings of lightning bolts and boneless ones fill the marginalia.
- A fist-sized glob of dark red sludge anyone with the Alchemical Explosives talent, or anyone else who succeeds at a **TN 12 Intelligence (Arcane Lore or Military Lore)** test recognizes as a pound of unprimed *blasting gel* (see **CHAPTER 10: REWARDS**).

## STOP PICKING ON ME!

If Hono believes the characters are onto him, he's smart enough not to play games. He walks off—even runs—in an upset, frightened huff, ostensibly to get help from Captain GlassEye. In fact, he's headed to the bilge to call the walking corpses he has stored there and get on with killing as many people as possible for the glory of his god, before hopefully escaping.

## QUESTIONING MATHER MANGROVE

A successful **TN 12 Perception (Seeing)** test notices an indigo stain on Mather's wrist. He insists the stain is from spilled wine. It is. He immediately retreated below decks when the boneless ones attacked because he was "thinking stra-



teggically.” In reality he was terrified, and admits as much if pressed.

He was out of sight during the storm because he’d snuck into the cargo hold for a nap. He simply huddled there (unless characters pressed him to do anything during that scene) and has no idea why the mist didn’t affect him as badly as most of the crew, but he ventures a theory. Mather has been laying the seeds for various scams and schemes (or in his words, “getting to know my hosts”) by extracting personal information, and he noticed worst-off crewmembers had been aboard ship for a year or more.

Searching his quarters reveals several small valuables stolen from the crew (and possibly one of the adventurers, if the GM wants to try that out).

Mather has one additional clue—and the adventurers can tell he’s holding something back with a successful **TN 10 Perception (Empathy)** test—but is reluctant to share it. If the adventurers succeed at a **TN 15 Strength (Intimidation)** test or bribe him with at least 50 silver pieces, he talks about watching Hono sneak into the hold, open a secret compartment in one of his crates, and whisper to some kind of brass “giant coin” (actually Hono’s arcane device). He followed Hono out of curiosity because the young man smelled terrible at the time—“like something ate the contents of a privy and then died in another privy.” (Unbeknownst to Mather, Hono had been visiting the bilge.) Ever since then, Mather has quietly believed Hono has something to do with the misfortunes on their journey but has been too frightened to say anything.

At the GM’s option, if characters hit a dead end looking for the cultist, Mather might come forward, believing Hono will kill everyone anyway so he might as well support a shot at stopping him. Then again, he might go to Mazarine and accompany her if she steals a boat and flees.

## QUESTIONING MAZARINE VOL

Mazarine absolutely is the “Tide Razor.” Not a captain, but a fearsome pirate marine who was often first on the quarry’s deck, cutlass at the ready. Now she thinks that name is cursed and is headed to Breakwater Bay to meet the *Frisky Bishop* and tell her captain she’d rather sail than fight. At this point, she’s convinced the voyage is cursed and just wants it to be over as soon as possible. She alludes to having “seen some things...terrible things,” in Freeport, and is quietly terrified of dark magic. Even if she knows Hono’s the culprit this phobia prevents her from killing him, as she fears some kind of curse. She has even considered stealing the *Tradewind*’s longboat to take her chances on the open sea.

She has no intention of stealing from or harming the crew of the ship she’s on, considering the idea “damned rude.” However, there is a price on her head (250 silver pieces, according to posters in several allied ports), and she’s willing to kill to stay free, no matter how noble the characters are. However, if the characters look like they might be beaten by Hono and his creatures, Mazarine might have a change of heart and fight on their side at the last minute.

## BATTLE IN THE BILGE

Once Hono completes the four stages of his *karis zethai* ritual, or if he believes he’s about to be caught, he runs to the bilge and calls forth the corpses hidden there: bloated, shambling, dead servants of the Unnamable Silence, ready to slay bold heroes for its glory!

Assuming the adventurers chase him to the bilge, read or paraphrase the following.

*The scrawny figure of Hono Rettelwen strikes a desperate pose, standing in the frigid, knee-deep green waters of the bilge. A small brass cauldron sits with its opening wedged against the hull behind him, oozing bright red slime. He brandishes a curved knife, and as you approach the pupils in his eyes dilate into inhuman slits.*

*“Yes. Yes, come to me! Come to your final fate. So many preparations, and now the ritual concludes with your blood!” His mouth extends into an inhuman maw, filled with sharklike teeth. His pale flesh twists and warps, with glowing glyphs which burn themselves into his skin. The water at his feet begins to churn and bubble. “Soon, the Unnamable Silence shall know my name. He will give me peace from the terrible din of life—and I will rule over your silent souls once I claim them for his glory.”*

*Bloated figures—the bodies of the missing crew—rise from the foul waters between you and the contorted, shark-faced thing that was once Hono.*

*“Anoint my royal body with their blood!” he says to the dead, and they shuffle forward.*







## THE REAL HONO

Hono is a fanatic and a radical imperialist opposed to anyone who is not loyal to Inmyrk, especially all nonhuman ancestries. Much of his vulnerability was a guise intended to deflect suspicion, but of course he believes that because his family are no longer the priest-lords of an empire of sorcery-befouled blood, he's the *real* victim.

In this final confrontation the heroes must defeat the Inmyrk cultist Hono and his walking corpse servants. While the undead are simple-minded brutes who simply stagger forward and bludgeon their enemies, Hono is wily. He casts *puppets of fate* to force the adventurers to reroll and lashes out with his Quick Bite stunt whenever possible. If necessary, he also uses a brass rod etched with the shapes of aquatic monsters and a flared area that he plans to eventually set with an enormous jet, since he commissioned it to be his "imperial scepter." If he suspects he might be caught, he makes this his arcane device instead of the symbol of the Unnamable Silence.

## CORPSE COUNT

The number of walking corpses depends on how many sailors Hono killed before the adventure began, though the GM can declare that he dragged a few victims of the boneless ones below if higher numbers would make for a better fight. Conversely, many of the victims might have been thrown overboard, or their bodies were destroyed in various vile rites

and experiments. Therefore, the final total depends on how challenging you'd like to make the encounter. Two is a decent number for a muted climax, while one per Player Character suits a more desperate battle.

## GOING OUT WITH A BANG

He firmly believes that if he dies in service of the Unnamable Silence, his god will reward him in the afterlife, and so he is difficult to reason with. His one and only goal is to slay at least one hero, then escape to some remote part of Kassa. Before stealing a boat, he will, if possible, send one of the walking corpses back to smack his cauldron of 10 pounds of *blasting gel* primed to react to blows. This detonates it, punching a hole in the hull and scuttling the ship. If Hono cannot escape, he'll do it himself, though he will wait until he is sure there is no other possibility. If detonated, the cauldron has been rigged to direct the explosion through the hull. It won't hurt the characters directly, but as they're stuck below decks on a sinking ship, they'll have other problems to deal with.

## CONCLUSION

With Hono defeated and the *Tradewind* saved, the PCs emerge from the lower decks. After several minutes of sailors clapping them on the back and shaking their hands—that is, assuming the ship isn't sinking—Captain GlassEye pulls the adventurers into his cabins. He gives them 30 silver pieces each for saving the ship's crew yet again, and makes them an offer:

*"Ye've shown yourselves ta be bold and resourceful. Twenty years ago, I'd have been able ta help ye, but I've started slowing down. Maybe too much. I been thinking fer some time that maybe the Tradewind needs a new master, and if'n ye need a sturdy ship, she's yours if ye promise to take as good a care of the crew as you have so far, and ye pay off some o' the debts and answer certain promises we and she are laden with still."*

The adventurers don't need to accept or reject the offer yet—GlassEye can keep sailing his usual route for at least another year before retiring to Breakwater Bay—but having a ship of their own would open whole islands to future explorations and adventures! Should they explore the origins of the Inmyrk Empire? Root out other Unnamable Silence cultists? Turn pirate? Explorer? Or perhaps it's better to wait and see what curiosities await them at their destination. The *Tradewind* also comes with certain obligations. GlassEye has some debts along his route, and he's made various promises over the years for himself and certain members of his crew. The exact conditions are up to the Game Master, but it is suggested that unless the characters have a strong urge to leave it behind, they should encourage the characters to make Breakwater Bay their home port. The GM can also decide that the *Tradewind*, a battered old ship, needs to stay for repairs, long enough to let characters explore the area without feeling pressed to move on.



## ALLIES & ADVERSARIES

The following characters appear in the adventure **SET SAIL FOR BREAKWATER BAY!**.

### FROM CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES

Most sailors are non-combatants as described in **CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES**, with 0 in every ability, 10 Health, Speed, and Defense, and the **Dexterity** (Sailing) focus.

Walking dead and the boneless ones appear in **CHAPTER 9** as well. Note that the boneless one with the *trident of the abyss* has a +6 bonus to hit and does 2d6 + 4 with that weapon.

### DEVOTEE OF THE BLOOD HONO RETTELWEN

Caught between two worlds, Hono Rettelwen believes he must excel at one or else he has no place. Of course, since those worlds are, “Get rich in the family business,” and, “Revive the blood practices of a lost civilization’s imperial cult,” one might say his perspective is distorted, and someone less ensconced in his particular privileges might just find another job—he’s actually a competent Mage, and could have eked out a living for himself anywhere if he wasn’t so intimidated by the outside world. In any event, giving himself over to the Unnamable Silence removes the nagging accountability of caring about people, money, or lives. His dedication drives him to mania to compensate for his massive insecurities. Treating people as sacrifices or future imperial subjects means he doesn’t have to care about them.

His parents, who kept up the cult out of a sense of tradition, trained him well for that role. He learned to keep everything about the Devotees of the Blood a secret, making blood-curdling oaths to do so when his parents revealed the truth to him in his 16<sup>th</sup> year. But his upbringing left him sheltered and a bit cowardly. These cracks show through when he has to play the part of a junior merchant: He’s nervous, shy, and struggles with feeling like an outcast. When he devotes himself to his mission, however, and assures himself everyone around him is a fatted offering to the Unnamable Silence, he becomes *much* more confident. He’s killed and desecrated corpses for the cause, and called down vile occult forces, so there’s no turning back and no way to talk him down.

### CAPTAIN ERASMUS “GLASSEYE” GARRAG

Most people assume the nickname “GlassEye” is related to Captain Garrag’s horrible facial scar and implies his right eye is glass. Rumor suggests it was bitten out by a sea serpent or lost dueling a pirate queen, but in truth it’s a lighthearted nickname his former captain assigned the young orc mate when he began needing to wear glasses. The name simply stuck, and Erasmus learned that hiding his spectacles while in port and letting rumors about him circulate lead to more respect and fewer fights.

GlassEye is a good sailor but only a passable sea captain, with little care for the technicalities of owning and managing

### CAPTAIN GLASSEYE

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0 (Brawling), **Communication** 3 (Deception, Persuasion), **Constitution** 2 (Tolerance), **Dexterity** 2 (Sailing), **Fighting** 1 (Heavy Blades), **Intelligence** 0 (Historical Lore, Navigation), **Perception** 2, **Strength** 3, **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	25	12	0
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Cutlass	+3	2d6 + 3	
Unarmed	+2	1d3 + 3	

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Disarm (2 SP), Knock Prone (2 SP), Compensate (3 SP)

**TALENTS:** Carousing (Novice), Mariner (Expert)

**EQUIPMENT:** Cutlass, compass, navigational charts, eyeglasses, 500 or more silver pieces in a hidden lockbox as pay for the crew.

#### THREAT: MINOR

### HONO RETTELWEN

#### DEVOTEE OF THE BLOOD

#### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Bite), **Communication** 3 (Deception), **Constitution** 3 (Stamina), **Dexterity** 2, **Fighting** 3 (Bludgeons), **Intelligence** 2 (Arcane Lore, Brewing, Death Arcana, Religious Lore), **Perception** 2 (Smelling), **Strength** 3, **Willpower** 2 (Faith)

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
12	30	12	4
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
Arcane Blast	+2	1d6 + 2	
Bite	+4	1d6 + 3	
“Imperial Scepter”	+5	2d6 + 3	

#### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Defensive Stance (2 SP), Lethal Blow (5 SP) Quick Bite (advanced stunt, 2 SP; Hono delivers a quick bite as a free action, requiring a second attack roll against the same target. This is a simple test that cannot itself generate or use stunt points.)

**TALENTS:** Death Arcana (Expert), Fate Arcana (Novice), Lore (Novice)

**SPELLPOWER:** 12 **MAGIC POINTS:** 30

**SPELLS:** *Animate dead* (10 MP), *draw upon death* (7 MP), *hands of fate* (4 MP), *puppets of fate* (6 MP), *speak with the dead* (10 MP)

**BLESSING OF THE BLOOD:** When he feels threatened, Hono draws upon the semi-human heritage of Inmyrk in his bloodline. This gives him shark and eel-like features reminiscent of the boneless ones. Roughened skin provides an Armor Rating of 4 and he gains a bite attack, including the Quick Bite stunt. Entering or leaving his semi-human shape requires a minor action.

**QUICK BITE STUNT:** Hono can follow up a successful attack with a Quick Bite as a special stunt costing 2 SP. This bite attack must be taken against the same target as the original attack and is a simple test that doesn’t generate or use stunt points.

**EQUIPMENT:** Trade goods, “imperial scepter” (mace), symbol of the Unnamable Silence, heavy perfume

#### THREAT: MODERATE



## MATHER MANGROVE

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 0, **Communication** -2, **Constitution** 5, **Dexterity** -2, **Fighting** 1, **Intelligence** -2, **Perception** -1, **Strength** (Intimidation) 2, **Willpower** 1

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
10	10	10	0

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**ARCANE CANDLE:** Mather knows the minor arcana *arcane candle*, which he typically uses to pretend to be a better worker of magic than he is, or for simple, practical things. Since this is the only “spell” he knows and it lasts a long time, there’s no need to track magic points.

**ELF FOR ALL SEASONS:** Mather can attempt tests or know things that normally require a specific lore focus, though he doesn’t get the focus’ test bonus and always knows a bit less compared to someone who actually has the focus.

### THREAT: MINOR

a ship. Thanks largely to his congenial nature and sharing cuts from each venture equally between the crew, his fellow sailors remain steadfastly loyal. But now that he’s beginning to feel his age he’s begun to consider who he needs to pass the *Tradewind* on to. If the heroes struggle on board the ship, particularly in combat, Captain GlassEye can come to their aid for a round or two before their opponent delivers a debilitating wound.

## MATHER MANGROVE

A comfortably rotund elf with an easy smile and cultured accent, Mather Mangrove frequently talks about audiences beneath the trees with elven nobles and discussing the most abstruse, cultured aspects of metaphysics and art. In truth, he was born in a caravan to penniless elves who lost noble titles in a now-obscure power struggle in a far-off freehold. Desperate to give their child a path to something resembling their former privilege, they paid for Mather to apprentice with a human Mage. Mather had little talent for magic, but his resentment for authority motivated him to fleece his master, then run away and live through cons, scams, and get-rich-quick schemes, all at the expense of people who he believes, should they know his true background, would consider them his betters.

Mather hates violence, especially when it targets him, and exercises the better part of valor whenever possible. Despite his broken apprenticeship and unconventional upbringing—or perhaps because of it—he knows a little about everything and will share it for a price. This far-flung knowledge allowed him to identify the map he’s bringing with him to Breakwater Bay, where he hopes for a fine profit with the help of a few local brutes who will hopefully be bad at playing cards or counting coins.

Mather is an example of a supporting Non-Player Character who is unlikely to get involved in combat and action except to flee, so full game statistics are unnecessary. See **CHAPTER 9: ADVERSARIES** for more about supporting NPCs.

## MAZARINE VOL

### THE “TIDE RAZOR”

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

**Accuracy** 2 (Black Powder, Brawling), **Communication** 1, **Constitution** 3 (Swimming), **Dexterity** 3 (Initiative, Sailing), **Fighting** 3 (Heavy Blades), **Intelligence** 0 (Navigation), **Perception** 2, **Strength** 3 (Climbing, Intimidation), **Willpower** 2

SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
13	50	13	4 (Light Leather + Improved Armor Rating)

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Cutlass	+5	2d6 + 5
Unarmed	+4	1d3 + 3

### SPECIAL QUALITIES

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Mighty Blow (2 SP), Lightning Attack (3 SP), Compensate (3 SP)

**TALENTS:** Pirate (Expert), Single Weapon Style (Expert)

**IMPROVED ARMOR RATING:** Mazarine’s AR is 1 higher than normal, even when unarmored.

**REPUTATION—THE TIDE RAZOR:** If identified in her identity as a pirate marine, Mazarine has a reputation honorific that supports her as a fearsome combatant, but interferes with people attempting to trust her. See **CHAPTER 10** for more information on the effects of reputation.

**EQUIPMENT:** Cutlass, light leather armor, two pistols

### THREAT: MODERATE

## MAZARINE VOL, THE “TIDE RAZOR”

As the “Tide Razor,” Mazarine Vol was often the first pirate seen on the decks of besieged merchant vessels, announcing her presence with a terrifying scream and a shot from one of her pistols. Early in her career she learned that a drop of intimidation can be as good as a gallon of bloodshed, and while she’s certainly put sword and gun to tasks she isn’t proud of, the results have been someone less bloody than they otherwise would have been—or are believed to be. Soon, people were laying various accidents and deaths at others’ hands on her feet. But it all came to a head when her ship, the *Frisky Bishop*, was in the distant city of Freeport, when she was magically waylaid by members of a cult. The yellow-robed leader wanted a “brave, evil heart” as a suitable sacrifice to...something. She managed to kill her way out; afterward, she told her captain she needed a break. Now she’s on the *Tradewind*, a few weeks of rest behind her, ready to tell the crew of the *Frisky Bishop* she doesn’t want to be the tip of their spear anymore.

A bronze-skinned, muscular woman whose black hair looks like it’s hacked back with a sword periodically (as indeed, it is), Mazarine is easily irritated, especially by what she perceives as a lack of discipline. Breaking through this exterior is just a matter of simple friendliness—and pulling your weight. Magic terrifies her, however, as she is still coming to terms with her experience in Freeport.



# GLOSSARY

**ABILITY:** One of nine core benchmarks that define a character's physical and mental prowess. The abilities are Accuracy, Communication, Constitution, Dexterity, Fighting, Intelligence, Perception, Strength, and Willpower. They are used most commonly in ability tests.

**ABILITY FOCUS:** An area of expertise within an ability. A character who has an appropriate focus when making a test adds +2 to the test result, or more at higher levels. Only one ability focus can add to a test. Also known simply as focus.

**ABILITY TEST:** The most common dice roll in the game, an ability test is used to resolve actions and reactions. Test result =  $3d6 + \text{ability} + \text{focus}$  (if applicable).

**ACTIONS:** During action time, a character can take a major action and a minor action or two minor actions. Free actions do not count toward this limit.

**ACTION TIME:** When it becomes important to track time precisely and know who did what when, the game switches from narrative time to action time. Time is tracked in 15-second rounds during action time, and characters take turns in initiative order. Action time is used most commonly to handle combat.

**ADJACENT:** When characters are within 2 yards of each other, they are said to be adjacent. You can only make melee attacks against adjacent targets.

**ADVANCED TEST:** Basic or opposed tests that use a Success Threshold to track completion over time. The task is complete when the total degrees of success from all successful tests is equal to or greater than the Success Threshold.

**ADVENTURE:** A series of encounters that tells a complete story. Sometimes called a scenario. An adventure may take a single session to complete, or several.

**ARMOR PENALTY:** Each armor type has a penalty that represents its weight and bulk. The penalty applies to Speed if a character is trained in the armor's use, and to Dexterity-based tests if the character is not.

**ARCANA:** A themed group of spells that correspond to a Spell Talent. A Spell Talent allows you to learn up to four spells in its arcana.

**ARMOR RATING:** Each armor type has a numeric rating. When a character takes damage in combat, subtract the Armor Rating from the damage before deducting Health. Penetrating damage ignores Armor Rating, however.

**ATTACK ROLL:** The roll made when a character wants to attack in combat. This is an ability test with a target number equal to the opponent's Defense.

**BACKGROUND:** Each Player Character has a background that represents their upbringing and training. Available backgrounds depend on social class.

**BASIC TEST:** The most common ability test in the game. A test is made and the result compared to a target number determined by the GM. If the test result meets or beats the target number, the test is successful. Test result =  $3d6 + \text{ability} + \text{focus}$ . A basic test generates stunt points on doubles.

**CAMPAIGN:** This is the continuing story of the Player Characters, as experienced through a series of adventures. If an adventure is a short story starring the PCs, a campaign is a novel.

**CASTING ROLL:** A Mage can cast any known spell by making a successful casting roll and spending the required number of magic points. Casting roll =  $3d6 + \text{Intelligence} + \text{focus}$  (if applicable).

**CASTING TIME:** The amount of time, usually expressed in actions, which it takes to cast a spell.

**CLASS:** Each Player Character has a class that represents their path in life and provides a framework for advancement. There are four classes: Envoy, Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

**CLASS POWERS:** A class provides a character with a variety of special powers, such as ability focuses and talents. Known collectively as class powers, they are listed out by level in the class descriptions.

**CLASS STUNTS:** Advanced stunts only members of certain classes can use if they take a stunt to which they're entitled as a class power.

**CONDITION:** A situation that changes how a character may act due to the environment, magical effects, and other special situations. Characters gain and lose conditions as described in the rules.

**DAMAGE ROLL:** A damage roll is made when a character successfully hits an opponent in combat. Damage total = weapon damage + Strength - opponent's Armor Rating. The opponent deducts the damage total from their Health. Weapons from the Bows and Black Powder weapon groups add Perception instead of Strength.

**DARING:** An optional rule, Daring represented the tendency for a situation to eventually come around in the characters' favor.

The Daring Pool starts at 1 and increases when certain events occur. Players can spend Daring points to increase a degree of success, increase stunt points earned, gain stunt points without rolling doubles, and regain Health.

**DEFEAT:** What happens when a character drops to 0 Health, at which point they can be subjected to severe conditions and even death.

**DEFENSE:** Defense measures how hard it is to hit a character in combat. The higher the Defense, the better. Defense =  $10 + \text{Dexterity} + \text{shield bonus}$  (if applicable).

**DEGREE OF SUCCESS:** When it's important to know how well a character performed on an ability test, the Stunt Die is used to determine the degree of success. The higher the Stunt Die, the greater the degree of success. Accumulated degree of success points are used to meet the Success Threshold of an advanced test.

**DICE:** *Fantasy AGE* uses only one type of dice, the six-sided die. Usually abbreviated d6.

**ENCOUNTER:** An encounter is a scene in an adventure. There are three types of encounters: combat encounters, exploration encounters, and roleplaying encounters.

**EXPERIENCE POINTS (XP):** Player Characters receive experience points after completing encounters during an adventure. A running total is kept and when they accrue enough XP, characters gain a new level.

**FREE ACTION:** An action that takes a negligible amount of time. It does not count toward a character's usual limit of actions on a turn.

**FORTUNE:** An optional rule to the usual Health rules. First, Health is renamed Fortune. Fortune can be spent to avoid taking the Injured or Wounded conditions. It can also be spent to change the value of dice rolled for a test.

**GAME MASTER (GM):** The Game Master runs the game and acts as a referee.

**HEALTH:** This is a measure of a character's fitness and wellbeing. Class choice determines starting Health and characters gain more each time they level up. A Player Character whose Health drops to 0 suffers defeat.

**HORROR:** An optional rule, horror is a type of hazard that affects the psyche more than the body. When confronted with something the GM deems horrific, the PCs must make a Horror Test.



**HORROR TEST:** A Willpower test, where both the focus used and the result of success or failure vary depending upon the nature of the horror: Unnatural, Revelatory, Threatening, or Vile.

**INITIATIVE:** At the start of action time, each character rolls for initiative. This is a Dexterity (Initiative) simple test. The GM arranges the test results from highest to lowest; this is the order in which characters take their turns during a round. If there's a tie, whoever rolled higher on the Stunt Die wins. If it's still a tie, whoever has the higher ability wins.

**LEVEL:** Player Characters and some NPCs have a level. This is a measure of the character's prowess and ranges from 1–20.

**MAJOR ACTION:** An action that takes most of a round to complete. If you take a major action, you can also take a minor action in the same round.

**MAGIC POINTS (MP):** Magic points are used to power spells and each Mage has a number of MP based on level. A Mage who wants to cast a spell must make a casting roll and spend the required number of magic points, based on the spell and the results of the roll.

**MINIMUM STRENGTH:** Some weapons are heavy and/or difficult to wield. A character must have the minimum Strength listed to use a weapon effectively. Otherwise, the weapon counts as an improvised weapon (even if the character is trained in its use).

**MINOR ACTION:** An action that takes only part of a round to complete. You can take two minor actions in a round, or one major and one minor action.

**NARRATIVE TIME:** The periods of play during which it is not important to track time precisely. Most social and exploration encounters take place during narrative time.

**NON-PLAYER CHARACTER (NPC):** Any character portrayed by the GM.

**OPPOSED TEST:** When characters vie against each other, an opposed test is made. This is like a basic test, but the characters compare test results instead of trying to meet or beat a target number. If there's a tie, whoever rolled higher on the Stunt Die wins. If it's still a tie, whoever has the higher ability wins.

**PENETRATING DAMAGE:** Armor offers no protection against penetrating damage. Armor ratings are considered to be 0 against it.

**PERIL:** An optional rule that represents the buildup of events occurring during an adventure. The Peril Pool starts at 0 and increases by 1 when certain events occur. At intervals of 10, 20, and 30, a d6 is rolled to see if the Peril activates.

**PLAYER CHARACTER (PC):** The heroes of a *Fantasy AGE* campaign. In a typical game, each player controls one PC.

**PRIMARY ABILITIES:** Each class has four abilities that are most important to it. They are known as primary abilities and a Player Character can increase one of them by 1 each time an even-numbered level is gained.

**RANGE:** Each missile weapon has a short and long range. If a target is within short range, attack rolls are made as normal. If a target is within long range, but farther away than short range, attack rolls suffer a –2 penalty.

**REACTION:** A free action taken in response to another action, such as when rolling to resist a spell or special effect in combat. These reflexive actions take no time, are sometimes involuntary, and are almost always simple tests.

**ROUND:** A 15-second increment of time used during action time. During a round, each character in the encounter gets one turn to act.

**SECONDARY ABILITIES:** Each class has five abilities that are less important to it than primary abilities. They are known as secondary abilities; a Player Character can increase one of them by 1 each time an odd-numbered level is gained.

**SHIELD BONUS:** A character using a shield is harder to hit and adds the shield bonus to their Defense.

**SIMPLE TEST:** A test used for straightforward answers, for initiative, and for rolls prompted by stunts. Simple tests don't get stunt points on doubles, and stunt points cannot be spent to enhance their results.

**SOCIAL CLASS:** All Player Characters come from one of four social classes: outsider, lower class, middle class, or upper class. Social class helps determine a character's background.

**SPECIALIZATION:** A class power that lets characters focus on their class.

**SPEED:** Speed measures a character's gait and quickness of foot. A character can move up to a number of yards equal to Speed when taking a move action, or double that with a Run action.

**SPELL:** When a Mage harnesses magical energy to create an effect, the result is a spell. Mages gain spells through spell talents. Casting a spell requires the expenditure of magic points and a successful casting roll.

**SPELLPOWER:** This is the measure of a Mage's might; certain spells allow the target(s) to test against it to resist or at least offset their effects. Spellpower = 10 + Willpower + focus (if applicable).

**SPELL STUNT:** A special enhancement a Mage can make when doubles are rolled on a casting roll. This generates a number of stunt points equal to the result of the Stunt Die.

**SPELL TYPE:** There are four types of spell – attack, defense, enhancement, and utility. Each spell falls into one of these categories.

**STRAIN:** When a Mage wearing armor casts a spell they must add the strain of the armor to the magic point cost. Strain ranges from 1 for light leather to 6 for heavy plate.

**STUNT:** A special move a character can make when doubles are rolled on a test. This generates a number of stunt points equal to the result of the Stunt Die. There are combat, exploration, social, and spell stunts, along with special stunts for members of each class.

**STUNT DIE:** In an ability test two dice of one color and one of another are rolled. The Stunt Die is the off-colored die and is used to measure degrees of success, and to generate stunt points (SP) during action time.

**STUNT POINTS (SP):** These are used to perform stunts. A character must spend the stunt points immediately and no stunt but skirmish can be performed more than once on your turn.

**SUCCESS THRESHOLD:** A character making an advanced test must meet or beat this number to successfully complete the task. Each successful test allows the character to add the result of the degree of success to the total.

**TALENT:** An area of natural aptitude and/or special training. Each talent has three degrees: Novice, Expert, and Master. A Player Character gains talents primarily through their class.

**TARGET NUMBER (TN):** You must meet or beat this number to make a successful ability test. The higher the target number, the more difficult the test.

**TURN:** During action time, each character gets to act each turn. On a turn a character can take a major action and a minor action or two minor actions. A character may opt to take fewer actions on a turn if desired.

**WEAPON DAMAGE:** The base damage a weapon inflicts on a successful hit.

**WEAPON GROUPS:** Weapons are divided into groups, each of which usually consists of three weapons. A Player Character receives training in weapon groups through their class. Characters using weapons they are not trained in suffer a –2 penalty on attack rolls and inflict half damage (add Strength and then divide by two, rounding down).

**YOU:** In *Fantasy AGE* "you" can mean either you, the reader, or your Player Character, depending on the context.



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## PERIL ACTIVATION

PERIL POOL	D6 ROLLS 1-3	D6 ROLLS 4-6
10	Stage 1 <b>Minor</b> Effect; Pool Resets to 0	No Effect; Pool Does Not Decrease
20	Stage 2 <b>Moderate</b> Effect; Pool Resets to 0	No Effect; Pool Does Not Decrease
30	Stage 3 <b>Major</b> Effect; Pool Resets to 0	

## PERIL EFFECTS

**STAGE 1- MINOR EFFECTS ARE POSSIBLE:** Pick one of the following:

- **TEST:** +2 to the next test's difficulty, or success requires an additional test using another ability. A failed test brings about a new minor hazard.
- **HAZARD:** A hazard's lethality increases by 1d6 damage or includes an additional ill effect.
- **INVESTIGATION:** It takes an additional test or special circumstance to unlock a clue.
- **SOCIAL:** An NPC's attitude drops one step out of the characters' favor or can only be maintained by satisfying some odd or awkward desire.

**STAGE 2 - Moderate effects are possible:** Pick any two Minor effects or just one of the following:

- **TEST:** +4 to the next test's difficulty, or success requires an additional test using another ability at +2 to the difficulty. A failed test brings about a new moderate hazard.
- **HAZARD:** A hazard's lethality increases by 2d6 damage or includes an additional serious ill effect.
- **INVESTIGATION:** Opposing forces are alerted to the investigation and misdirect it so an additional lead/clue must be investigated to progress.
- **SOCIAL:** An NPC's attitude drops two steps out of the characters' favor or can only be maintained by performing a difficult task. An NPC learns a secret detrimental to the PCs. The PCs make a new minor enemy.

**STAGE 3: Major effects are possible.** Pick any two Moderate effects or just one of the following:

- **TEST:** The test can only succeed at a significant price, sacrificing lives, Resources, or social standing. At its worst, the character attempting the test may be killed or captured. Note this is an additional risk, outside of the standard risks the test might normally impose, and failure must impose a different bad circumstance, so the test remains worth doing. For example, a character might need to hold a door closed against enemies or a wall of water, so allies can escape.
- **HAZARD:** Surviving the hazard leads to an even more dangerous situation, such as a worse hazard or an encounter with adversaries.
- **INVESTIGATION:** The investigation leads to a trap, where characters might be attacked by enemies who have prepared an ambush, framed for a crime or other violation, or otherwise seriously harmed.
- **SOCIAL:** An NPC with a favorable attitude becomes Hostile or one with an unfavorable attitude becomes Very Hostile. An NPC learns a secret which could lead to serious effects, such as being hunted by the authorities or rejected by loved ones (with a consequent modification to any Relationships, Memberships, and titles).

## PERIL POOL



## DARING POOL



At the beginning of each adventure, the Daring Pool starts at 0. Add 1 to the Daring Pool each time one of the following occurs:

- A player fails an ability test and rolls a 1 on the Stunt Die.
- A player fails an ability test where they were entitled to reroll due to a beneficial circumstance such as a talent.
- A character's Health drops below half its usual total.
- A character's Health drops to 0 (if the cause of this also dropped the character's Health below half, add +1 to the pool for that circumstance as well).
- A character is incapacitated, captured, held hostage, or otherwise unable to act (if this happened due to any of the other situations listed here, such as having their Health drop to 0, add +1 per applicable event).
- The group completes a section of the adventure.
- A character suffers another significant indignity, such as a loss of Membership ranks, a Relationship gone sour, or a significant, permanent drop in Resources.
- If a character dies or is otherwise permanently removed from play, add 6 to the Daring Pool.



# INITIATIVE AND QUICK REFERENCE CARDS

NAME / CLASS / LEVEL		
CONDITIONS	SPEED	INITIATIVE
ACCURACY	COMMUNICATION	CONSTITUTION
DEXTERITY	FIGHTING	INTELLIGENCE
PERCEPTION	STRENGTH	WILLPOWER

NAME / CLASS / LEVEL		
CONDITIONS	SPEED	INITIATIVE
ACCURACY	COMMUNICATION	CONSTITUTION
DEXTERITY	FIGHTING	INTELLIGENCE
PERCEPTION	STRENGTH	WILLPOWER

NAME / CLASS / LEVEL		
CONDITIONS	SPEED	INITIATIVE
ACCURACY	COMMUNICATION	CONSTITUTION
DEXTERITY	FIGHTING	INTELLIGENCE
PERCEPTION	STRENGTH	WILLPOWER

NAME / CLASS / LEVEL		
CONDITIONS	SPEED	INITIATIVE
ACCURACY	COMMUNICATION	CONSTITUTION
DEXTERITY	FIGHTING	INTELLIGENCE
PERCEPTION	STRENGTH	WILLPOWER

NAME / CLASS / LEVEL		
CONDITIONS	SPEED	INITIATIVE
ACCURACY	COMMUNICATION	CONSTITUTION
DEXTERITY	FIGHTING	INTELLIGENCE
PERCEPTION	STRENGTH	WILLPOWER

NAME / CLASS / LEVEL		
CONDITIONS	SPEED	INITIATIVE
ACCURACY	COMMUNICATION	CONSTITUTION
DEXTERITY	FIGHTING	INTELLIGENCE
PERCEPTION	STRENGTH	WILLPOWER



NAME			
CLASS/LEVEL			HEALTH
SPECIALIZATION			
ACCURACY			
COMMUNICATION			
CONSTITUTION			
DEXTERITY			
FIGHTING			
INTELLIGENCE			
PERCEPTION			
STRENGTH			
WILLPOWER			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	SPEED
		DEFENSE	
POWERS		ARMOR	
EQUIPMENT		MAGIC POINTS/ SPELLPOWER	

NAME			
CLASS/LEVEL			HEALTH
SPECIALIZATION			
ACCURACY			
COMMUNICATION			
CONSTITUTION			
DEXTERITY			
FIGHTING			
INTELLIGENCE			
PERCEPTION			
STRENGTH			
WILLPOWER			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	SPEED
		DEFENSE	
POWERS		ARMOR	
EQUIPMENT		MAGIC POINTS/ SPELLPOWER	

NAME			
CLASS/LEVEL			HEALTH
SPECIALIZATION			
ACCURACY			
COMMUNICATION			
CONSTITUTION			
DEXTERITY			
FIGHTING			
INTELLIGENCE			
PERCEPTION			
STRENGTH			
WILLPOWER			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	SPEED
		DEFENSE	
POWERS		ARMOR	
EQUIPMENT		MAGIC POINTS/ SPELLPOWER	

NAME			
CLASS/LEVEL			HEALTH
SPECIALIZATION			
ACCURACY			
COMMUNICATION			
CONSTITUTION			
DEXTERITY			
FIGHTING			
INTELLIGENCE			
PERCEPTION			
STRENGTH			
WILLPOWER			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	SPEED
		DEFENSE	
POWERS		ARMOR	
EQUIPMENT		MAGIC POINTS/ SPELLPOWER	







## RELATIONSHIPS

[illegible]

PERSONAL DETAILS AND HISTORY	
Name: _____	
Date of Birth: _____	
Gender: _____	
Address: _____	
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____	
Phone: _____	
Email: _____	
Occupation: _____	
Education: _____	
Marital Status: _____	
Previous Medical History: _____	
Current Medications: _____	
Allergies: _____	
Family History: _____	
Social History: _____	
Psychiatric History: _____	
Substance Use: _____	
Mental Health History: _____	
Stress Management: _____	
Support System: _____	
Coping Mechanisms: _____	
Personal Goals: _____	
Future Plans: _____	
Notes: _____	

[illegible]

MAGIC POINTS	
MAX	

MAX

## SPELLPOWER

[illegible][illegible]



# WORLDS BEYOND EARTH AWAIT YOU!



## THE EXPANSE ROLEPLAYING GAME

*The Expanse Roleplaying Game* brings James S.A. Corey's award-winning series of science fiction novels to the tabletop. Using the Adventure Game Engine (AGE) rules that power Green Ronin's *Fantasy AGE*, *Blue Rose*, and *Modern AGE* RPGs, *The Expanse* takes players to a far-future solar system where humanity is divided: Martians, Belters, and the people of old Earth struggle for political power and resources, but older, alien, forces are stirring in the universe, and human history is about to take an unexpected new turn. *The Expanse* RPG applies the fast-playing, stunt-powered AGE system to spaceships, solar colonies, adventure, and intrigue in the far-future, where the actions of the characters may change the course of history!



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