

Heart Rush

Silas Rhyneer

Contents

Contents	2	Equipment	46
Foreward	3	Weapons	46
Introduction	4	Armor	47
Where Is Heart Rush?	4	Shields	47
Who Are the Players?	4	Magic	48
World Creation	5	Lore	48
Big picture	5	Attunement	48
Palette	5	Spell List	51
Build the world	5	Spells	52
Reflection	6	Ritual Magic	57
Building Your Character	7	Running the Game	58
Core Stats	7	Complications	58
Who You Are:	8	Running Combat	58
Why You Do Things:	10	Events and Clocks	58
Your Connections	11	Improvising	59
Positions & Classes	13		
Heavies	13		
Damage	14		
Support	16		
Control	18		
During the Game	20		
Rolling Dice	20		
Debts	21		
Story Points	22		
Exploring and Surviving	23		
Currency	25		
End of the Session	26		
Gaining Experience	26		
Combat	27		
Turns	27		
Retreating	31		
Recovering Vigor	31		
Cover	31		
Lingering Injuries	32		
Conditions	32		
Talents	34		

Foreward

Heart Rush, like nearly every other TRPG game out there, was created after someone naïve but determined got fed up with the rules they had been given and figured they could do a better job themselves. In that sense, Heart Rush is another book cut from the same paper. However, over the course of hundreds of grueling hours (okay, they weren't grueling), I have uncovered, crafted, and polished several gems—several choice mechanics and design decisions that I believe make Heart Rush a game that is worth your time.

Before I vomit forth 30,000 words of rules and mechanics, I'd like to present some of the ideas and goals that led Heart Rush to where it is now, as well as some things that I wanted to avoid. Hopefully this will save you some time—if you think the goals are stupid, you can save yourself some effort and not bother reading the rest of this manual. However, if the design objectives I set out resonate with you, then please read on! I don't think I will disappoint.

Avoid

- Taking turns beating each other over the head with boring combat mechanics
- Realism for realism's sake
- Exhausting and time consuming prep work
- Players who are uninterested in the larger setting
- Excessive number crunching
- Situations where you feel your character isn't strong or important

Achieve

- Tactically diverse combat
- Naturally climactic gameplay

- A sort of cross-character balance that doesn't just mean that all players are re-skins of the same mechanics

- Minimal prepwork
- Non-intrusive aspects of cooperative story telling

I know that it's hard to believe that a game does all that—after all, it's the game designer who's telling you all this, and why the \$&%@ should you believe what he has to say, he's got an *agenda*. He's biased. He's got a warped perspective.

And so, I must confess, those things are all true. I can't deny any of them, and I know better than to try. However, I may be able to produce some credibility.

First, I am a long time GM and game designer. I've been designing games since I was 9, when I made a terrible sea faring war game, and I've been playing and running RPG games since I was 12, when I first played a gnome rogue who ate all of the things he stole before picking them out of his excrement in the morning. See, I'm a veteran.

Second, my playgroup enjoys the rules. We've run a campaign using them (and I didn't even GM it!), and for them most part, people loved it. I am still in a play testing phase, and I'm still improving it, so while not every mechanic is seamlessly integrated into the game, many of them are, and they really shine.

Wait, he's not finished? No, I'm not. That's where you come in. This manual, as it stands now, is a semi error-free, organized compendium of the rules, and in order to get it the rest of the way, I need your feedback. So, however it's easiest, whether it's a loose stream of thought on a word doc, or just a couple of comments here and there, I would greatly appreciate any thoughts you had on what I've produced.

Introduction

Welcome, adventurer! And prepare yourself—you are delving into something fantastical. You are about to enter a world of magic, danger, wonder, horror, and edge-of-your-seat excitement. No, you're not about to get launched into space or sent to the bottom of the ocean—you're staying much closer to home. You are about to explore the collective imagination of the minds of you and your friends.

At its root, Heart Rush is a game about problem solving and telling stories in an imaginary world. It's like playing pretend, but with more rules. Unlike many other games, you all, the players, are the main source of game content in this game, and these rules are more similar to a guide on a journey up that mountain of content, rather than the mountain itself. This is because Heart Rush is a roleplaying game. You may have heard of them before—if yes, kudos. If not—you're in for a treat.

a focus on explicit actions rather than abstract ones.

The storylines within this game will play out to how they would in most sci-fi/fantasy novels—there are some main characters who the narrative follows, and the characters face specific challenges that they overcome until they eventually die or succeed.

Where Is Heart Rush?

Heart Rush has no setting built into the ruleset, unlike many other tabletop roleplaying games (TRPGs). Instead, the game master (GM) and players start the game by building the world in which they play in. The rules are specifically left fairly open ended, only making the assumption that people don't have powerful weapons (no guns), and that society is organized either through faith, state, or familial relations. Extensive rules for magic are included, but non-mandatory.

Who Are the Players?

This game takes a relatively zoomed in perspective on the day to day life of adventurers, with

World Creation¹

Before anyone begins to create characters, the world must begin to come to life. Unlike in many other RPGs, this process is not solely in the hands of the GM, but involves everyone at the table to contribute to the setting they want to play in. To begin, get everyone around the table, grab some paper, writing utensils, and some note cards. Then get to work.

Big picture

The big picture is what your world is all about, and should be decided and unanimously agreed upon by the group. This is one sentence, describing the state of the world, and should act as the roughest of guides moving forward. Heart Rush was developed to be played at medieval technology levels and in a world with magic, but beyond that, there are no limits to where you can go. “Warring clans in fairylands”, “Ancient Egypt,” and “Dystopia ruled by dragons” are all perfectly viable big picture titles.

Palette

The palette is both a source of inspiration and limits on to what ideas can be explored in the world. As a group, create two lists, one titled “Yes” and the other titled “No”. Then, go around the table and list things that “yes” you do want in the world or “no” you don’t want in the world. The “yes” list will be used as inspiration for later world building, but by no means guarantees what is present in the world. The “no” list is a compilation of ideas that are off limits.

These lists can be as long as you want, and can contain both specific and general things.

Build the world

In this phase of world creation, you get down to business, actually creating the world you want to play in. This part of the process is broken up into five topics: Magic, Environment, Foundation, Action, and Cultures. You will repeat a similar process for each one.

Every topic focuses on one aspect of the world, and allows everyone to hone both broad picture ideas as well as specifics within them. One person will begin, as the director. They will describe some facet of that topic in general detail. This should be several sentences, and should set the tone, actors, and the stage for whatever follows.

The person to the director’s left is the amplifier, and must add on to their description. It can be large picture addition to the focus, or it can be a much narrower detail, zooming in to describe a specific person or thing. A good rule of thumb is to begin your description with, “Yes, and...”

The next person to the left is the muddler, who must add a conflict or complication to the previous detail. This shouldn’t directly contradict what the amplifier said, but should add drama to the situation. A good rule of the thumb is to begin your description with “Yes, but...”

Continuing around the rest of the play group, people should alternate being the amplifier and the muddler. This includes the director. If there are an even number of people, the last person to be the muddler immediately becomes the amplifier after

¹ These mechanics were partly inspired by the rules for the world building game *Microscope*. This is one of the favorite aspects of a Heart Rush game for my play group, and makes people much, much more engaged in the world that they are playing in. When the pages of lore is lore that *everyone* made together, it’s no longer boring.

muddling, and turns proceed in the opposite direction. If there are an odd number of people, play should be able to continue clockwise in order until everyone has done both.

After everyone has amplified and muddled once, the role of director passes to the left and a new round of amplification and muddling begins. The cycle continues until everyone has been a director.

Once everyone has been a director for a topic, then you move on to the next topic, and continue, until every topic has been done.

Magic: This topic explores magic's role in your setting. Some ideas to explore are: usage, origins, history, abuse, symbolism, rules, acquisition, divinity, role in society, costs

Environment: This topic looks at the actual physical world that the game takes place in. Some ideas to explore are: geography, wildlife, nature, cities, ruins, settlements, monsters, atmosphere, seasons, oceans

Foundation: This topic is about the events that the world is built upon. This is the broadest of the topics, but should look at the events that have occurred in the world, and who and what was involved. The director may find it easiest to describe events in history, and then everyone can flush out the details. Some ideas to explore are: civilizations, cultures, peoples, struggles, triumphs, power, turmoil

Action: This topic focuses on what's actually been going on in the world right now, or at least recently. All of the advice applying to the foundation topic applies here as well. Some ideas to explore are: civilizations, cultures, peoples, struggles, triumphs, power, turmoil

Culture: This topic looks at the different cultural groups within the world. It will be used later when determining character's traits. When working through

this topic, aim to focus on cultures that have already been mentioned, and flush those out, rather than making new ones. That way, there is already supporting background lore for the culture.

Advice

- Try to connect new topics to old topics. If you're describing a battle that took place, see if you can describe it taking place in one of the previously made up geographic locations on the world.
- Be specific! Don't say "a country went to war over a food shortage," say, "Dalaria started raiding the Edomon Empire after Dalaria saw the last of its corn die off to the corn plague"

Reflection

This is the final part of world creation, and is one of the most important. Each player should pick three things that they want to explore more, and write them down for the GM. They can be anything, from the precise and specific all the way up to abstract ideas and events. These should be things that you want to see during gameplay that the GM can use to inform their thoughts when planning the game.

Building Your Character

The fun begins! As with most RPGs, start with a concept of the character you want to play, and build towards it.

Core Stats

These parts of your character are the hard numbers behind it—the chassis on which you will build your idea on top of.

Level

When the game begins, you start at level 1. This is because this game is about character story arcs, and most story arcs begin with a main character who starts small and grows. In order to level up, you must acquire enough experience. Upon reaching 4, you level up and should remove all of your XP. You'll also gain some things after every session and upon leveling up, detailed in the *End of the Session* chapter.

Ability Scores

Players have three important stats—**Might**, **Agility**, and **Cunning**. These traits define your physical and mental abilities, and are used to determine the outcomes of nearly any difficult task you attempt to do.

Might is your strength, endurance, or ability to turn aside powerful blows. **Cunning** is your intellect, charm, or ability to exploit weaknesses and predict your enemy's movements. **Agility** is your physical dexterity, speed, and ability to dodge attacks. Your prowess in each of these abilities is represented by a die. Whenever you attempt a task that requires one of

these abilities (making a skill check, for example), roll and add the result of the corresponding die to the result.

The first step in creating your character is determining which dice you will use for which stat. Typical humans use d6s and d4s for each ability, reflecting a general mediocrity at most things. However, you are no mere peasant—you have a destiny. You may distribute a d4, d6, and d8 among your three stats.

Vigor²

Besides your core ability stats, you also have a vigor die. Vigor represents a creature's stamina, determination, and fortitude. Small creatures, like rats, generally have a low vigor die, such as a d4, whereas large and powerful creatures, like dragons, typically have larger vigor dice, such as a d20. Humans (and any other race you may start the game as), use a d8.

Your vigor is important for determining your successes and fails. Making skill checks, attack rolls, and nearly every other roll in this game will use your vigor die as one of the dice used.

However, your vigor can decrease as you turn aside blows—everyone runs out of energy eventually. As vigor falls, so will your ability to accomplish most tasks.

Sometimes, effects will cause your vigor die to increase or decrease in size. This means that you should switch your vigor die with one that is “bigger” or “smaller”. For example, increasing in size from a d6 would mean you would replace it with a d8. Decreasing from a d20 would mean replacing it with a d12.

² Some games have catch-up mechanics, some have spiral-of-death mechanics. This game falls into the latter. As you fight, your vigor falls, and you are weaker and weaker. Besides being more realistic, this puts a stronger emphasis on strategy and moments of tension, rather than luck and indifference.

Nothing can cause your vigor die to fall beneath a d4, though events may trigger if reach that threshold and need to go lower. Your vigor die also cannot increase size beyond your regular maximum, so at level 1, your vigor die cannot grow larger than 1d8.

Classes³

The next step is to choose a position and class, which are outlined in the next section. Positions represent your general role in a party, while classes further specialize into a more specific play style. Each position (Heavy, Damage, Support, Control) and class (many more) grants a set of abilities. These abilities break down into three types of categories. Passive abilities, which are always on and available; minor abilities, which can be used any number of times in an encounter, but their cost ramps up with each use; and major abilities, which can only be used once per encounter, and whose power ramps up over time. The type of ability is noted at the end of the description for each ability.

Specific rules on how to use your abilities are explained later, but the important thing to know now is that each position will grant a three abilities (one passive, two minor), and each class within that position will grant an additional three abilities (one passive, one minor, one major). After choosing a position and a class within that position, you should have 6 abilities total.

In addition, each class will grant you some bonuses to different ability scores. These bonuses

represent the training in different areas gained from the type of work each class does.

Talents

Talents are specialized combat maneuvers that you know and can utilize. These act as a way of specializing your playstyle and differentiating you from anyone else who does similar things and has a similar role in combat. At level 1, choose three talents from the talents section. At every even level, you gain one more talent.

Who You Are:

Background

Backgrounds represent what your character is good at, their background, or areas of expertise. When you create your character, write down two backgrounds, and put a 1 next to one of them and a 2 next to the other, representing their relative importance and prevalence in your upbringing. For example, your traits could be “Champion wrestler (2)” and “Orphan (1)”.

Whenever you make a skill check that one of your backgrounds would conceivably apply to, you may add its rank to your roll. If multiple backgrounds apply, only use the highest.

Destiny Points

Heart Rush is not about ordinary people—it is about people are destined to be remembered, and you

³ Positions and classes are like the different roles in MOBAs. The tank is supposed to tank, the healer heals, the damage dealer whittles people down, and the flank kills them off. If the damage dealer is dealing the most damage, the tank doesn't feel bad—that's not their job. The tank can feel satisfied, believing that the damage only could do what they did because they were not get harassed—thanks to the tank's playing.

This means that I can throw a lot of balancing issues out the window, so long as I emphasize these roles. D&D doesn't do a great job of this; although different classes do more or less damage, the less damaging classes don't excel in a different area of combat, they excel *out of* combat. This leads to different classes liking different elements of gameplay, which makes it harder for the GM to satisfy everyone at once.

are no exception. Over time, you will become either a hero or a villain, until you eventually retire your character, or finally fall to the forces working against you.

When you first create your character, you gain three destiny points. These destiny points can be spent to twist fate in your favor, and to make shine the differences between you and the common rabble. They are yours to spend as you wish.

Aspects⁴

Your aspects describe the features and traits from your personality, background, and experiences that make you distinct. Many of the following character building rules pertain to which aspects you should give your character. Aspects will affect everything you do, and will aid you or hinder you every session. As you play your character, you will gather more and they will grow. Here are the rules for what aspects are, and how they are used.

Each aspect has four parts: its name, level, virtue, and fault. The name describes the aspect as a whole, the level quantifies its potency, the virtue describes the positive part of your aspect, and the fault describes how this aspect hurts you.

An example aspect follows:

Mischievous (2)

Virtue: When I'm trying to make trouble

Fault: When I'm trying to get out of trouble

Whenever a virtue or fault from one of your aspects affects the situation, its virtue or fault can be applied.

Virtues can be applied whenever you are making a skill check (notably *not* in combat) to do something

that it would make sense for the virtue to effect. You may then pay destiny points up to or equal to the aspect's level, and add that number to your roll.

Pretend you are in the situation where you wish to create a distraction in the courtroom to allow the defendant to escape. In this case, your virtue—excelling at making trouble—would apply. When making a skill check to cause chaos, you could choose to pay 1 or 2 destiny points before you roll to get an additional 1 or 2 added to the result.

However, the fault can be applied as well, and can be applied by anyone. First, if you apply the fault to yourself, you automatically fail whatever check you were attempting, and gain destiny points equal to the level of the aspect.

Second, if the fault is invoked by another player or the GM, you have two options. You can either automatically fail the roll, and take the corresponding number of destiny points, or you can choose to only take a penalty to your roll equal to the level of the aspect, but gain no destiny points.

If the fault is invoked by another player, that player must pay destiny points equal to the level of the aspect, regardless of if you choose to auto-fail or only take the penalty.

Creating Aspects

When creating an aspect, start with the name. It should describe a general trait of your character, and should be open ended to have both positive and negative sides. For example, "Titanic Strength" has no downsides, whereas "Stronger Than They Realize" leaves room for downsides.

After determining the name, define the circumstances in which you gain the benefits and penalties of your aspect. These should both be

⁴ A number of games have a mechanic very similar to this. I like the mechanic, so I included it. It replaces aptitude at different skills, which boxes players into arbitrary, and occasionally unrealistic sets of talents.

activities one would reasonably partake in—remember, you can only spend or gain destiny points when you are in one of those situations. It's easiest to write these as phrases that begin with “when...” or “when I’m...”

Notably, the fault does not have to perfectly correspond with the virtue. The important part is that your positive traits scale alongside your negative ones. The mightier you become, the harder you fall.

Lastly, all of your aspects should be okayed by the GM.

Here are some more examples of aspects to help you figure yours out:

Calculating Eyes (1)

Virtue: When I’m trying to figure people out

Fault: When I’m trying to remain unreadable

Paranoid (4)

Virtue: When I’m looking for danger

Fault: When I’m trying to make a good impression

Never Say Never (3)

Virtue: When I’m trying to do something impossible

Fault: When I try to do something a second time

Personality

You are unique. Create two aspects that singularly describe your character. Put one at level 1, and the other at level 2.

Culture

With aspects out of the way, you can begin actually building your character. The first decision to make when determining who you are is first determining the people you came from. Choose one

of the cultures that your playgroup created during the world building phase, and devise an aspect that you believe is representative of the traits of the culture you chose. Other people who choose the same culture will develop their own aspects—cultures are diverse, and there is a wide array of things people get from their culture.

Beliefs

Everyone has ideals, or core beliefs directing their moral compass. When you create your character, write down an ideal your character has. Examples include “No one deserves to die,” “Freedom for all,” “Innocent until proven guilty,” and “One must be honorable.”

Whenever your character makes an action that aligns with their belief and also complicates the story, then you may claim a destiny point. You can do this once per session.

Why You Do Things:

Story Points

Story points are points that can be gathered by players that can be used to exert influence over the narration of the story. You start each session with 3 story points, and you can never have more than 3 story points at a time. The specific rules and uses of story points are outlined later in the Playing the Game section.

Goals

Goals are a major factor in driving the storyline forward, and are integral to leveling up your character. Goals are anything concrete your character wants to achieve. Often they are fueled by your beliefs, but they need to be something that you could

legitimately achieve and have a clear point where you could say that you have accomplished the goal. For example, “Robbing the Dearthwright Bank” is a goal, but “Making money” or even “Stealing money from a bank” are not goals, because they are not specific enough.

At the beginning of the game, make up three goals. One of these goals must connect to one of your obligations, one must connect to your future aspirations, and the other can be anything.

When coming up with goals, work with your GM and other players to come up with specific goals so that you can create the initial setting for the world together. As you play and complete your goals, new goals will likely arise from the story.

Note: If you have massive goals, you should pick a goal that is the first step in achieving that goal, not the end result. For example, if you want to own a kingdom, you might first need an army, so your first goal might be to recruit people for your cause. Some goals are so difficult that you cannot achieve them, or only will after many sessions, so it’s better to take baby steps.

Your Connections

Obligations

Since Heart Rush is a sandbox game, it is especially important that your character is tied to the world in which they live in. That is the point of obligations. Obligations are connections to the world that have tasks that you don’t necessarily want to do attached to them.

There are many different types of obligations that your character may face. However, some of the most common will likely be those of debt, the law, and the wrath of those you’ve angered in your past. However,

do not feel restricted to just those—a promise you made, an addiction to a substance, or your family can all be obligations in the right circumstances. They should be things that show up in your life from time to time that you have to deal with or else face consequences.

When you start the game, create three obligations. Whatever sorts of obligations you choose, be sure to come up with a brief description of the nature of the obligation, as well as a few details on the subject of your obligation, if applicable (e.g. who the NPC is, what the faction wants, the properties of the addictive drug).

These obligations will likely turn up during play, as the GM should tie them into the story.

Contacts

Contacts are members of your particular network of favor-trading individuals. When you create your character, create two NPCs and choose one other player. Determine how you know each of these people, and why you are close to them. They can be family members, professional partners, childhood friends, or anything else you can imagine. Members within your contact circle are people you can get favors from when you are actually playing the game.

When you determine the contact you have with another player, talk to them and figure out how you know them. This could be anything from “They used to work on the same castle construction job that I did” to “They orchestrated a jailbreak for one of their friends, and I was his cellmate,” but whatever it is, it should be specific.

Debts

Each contact also includes a value associated with it, representing the direction of debt in the

relationship. Similar to obligations, debts are payments due to other characters in the world. While gold is the currency of material trade, debts are the currency of social interaction.

Throughout the game, you will gain and lose debts to both other players and NPCs in the world. In turn, they will sometimes have debts to you.

Assign a 0 to each of your contacts, representing a neutral relationship. A positive value delineates debt owed to you, whereas a negative value represents debt you owe them.

The rules for spending and gaining debt are outlined in the *Playing the Game* chapter, and the rules for gaining and losing contacts are in the *End of the Session* chapter.

Positions & Classes

Choose one position and one class within that position.

Heavies

Heavies are accustomed to taking the brunt of the damage in a fight. They can survive more hits than other classes, and do best when they are in the thick of the fight. They generally have ways of keeping enemies near themselves, rather than threatening their allies. Two types of Heavies exist—battleheads and sentinels.

Hearty

Passive ability

You are better at throwing off the brunt of enemies' attacks. You have +2 to all defense rolls.

Retaliate

Minor ability

You are keen eyed, capable of taking advantage of any drop in your enemies' defenses. If an ally is attacked by enemy adjacent to you, you get an opportunity attack against that enemy.

Cry of Defiance

Minor ability

Remove all levels of one condition from yourself. Alternatively, remove one level of every condition from yourself.

Battlehead

Also known as: Barbarian, Berserker

Agility +2, Might +1

A crazed woman with blood-soaked braids charges across the battlefield, great-axe swinging around her head. With a primal scream, she leaps off a

boulder, bringing the axe down on the ogre, splitting its skull in two.

A hulking man covered in wounds closes his eyes, long sword held tightly in front of him. Gradually at first, and then rapidly, cuts heal over, and bruises fade away. With a slowly spreading grin, the man brandishes his sword, ready to continue the fight.

As two armies approach, a lone figure, wearing nothing but a kilt and hammer charges out ahead of the front lines. Arrows fly against him, but they do not slow his charge. At last, he reaches the opposing side, where he knocks three soldiers off their feet with a sweeping blow, beginning the battle all on his own.

Battleheads are ferocious warriors, built to thrive in the thick of a fight. They can take blows and dish them right back just as fast, and just when you think you've killed one, they're back for more. There is no escaping an angry battlehead.

Battleheads gain the following abilities.

Hungry for Blood

Passive ability

You may take your turn at any point during the round, including before people who are retreating. In addition, whenever you take the move action you move 10 feet further, so long as you are moving towards an enemy that you engage with.

Reckless Attack

Minor ability

Upon entering an engagement, but before revealing stances, you may declare this to be a reckless attack. When stances are revealed, defense rolls against your attack are halved, and your defense rolls are halved as well.

Eternal Endurance

Major ability

Roll any number of adrenaline dice. For every 4, 5, or 6, your vigor die increases by one size. It cannot increase greater than your maximum vigor. Your vigor die returns to its in-fight state after combat ends.

Sentinel

Also known as: Tank, Frontline

Might +2, Agility +1

A knight dressed from head to toe in plate mail stands tall, shield in hand, mace swing above her head. Around her stand half a dozen goblins, unable to do anything but dodge the swinging mace, as her allies finishes them off.

A man stands tall, war-hammer in hand, daring the dire wolf before him to make a move. At last, the wolf attempts to leap over him, to attack the man's nearby ally—but with a smack, the man brings the hammer down on the wolf's back, knocking it immediately to the ground, whimpering.

A burly woman stands, glimmering with an enchanted aura as blow after blow bounces off her. Her dark hair flashes as she whirls from side to side, swinging her broadsword at anyone who dares to ignore her.

Sentinels are the iron strong cores of any fight. Any fighting is nearly guaranteed to surround them, as a sentinel demands the attention of those around her. Unfortunately for those who turn their attention towards her, sentinels' defenses are nearly impenetrable.

Sentinels gain the following abilities.

Crippling Blows

Passive ability

Whenever you deal damage against an enemy, their move speed decreases by 15 feet.

Always Waiting

Minor ability

Whenever an enemy willingly leaves your melee reach, you may make an opportunity attack against them.

Bastion of Defense

Major ability

Set aside any number of adrenaline dice you have right now. Until the end of the encounter, you may spend adrenaline dice from this pool to add to any defense rolls you make (must add them before you roll).

Damage

Damagers are best at dealing out lots of damage. Their abilities grant bonuses that make them more likely to hit, and more likely to deal more damage. Two types of Damages exist—rangers and ravagers.

Brutal Attacks

Passive ability

Whenever you roll the maximum result on an attack roll, reroll the die and add it to the result. If it is the maximum again, repeat this process.

Eye for Weakness

Minor ability

Your fighting senses are well tuned, and you are capable of pinpointing weaknesses in your enemies' attacks. When you successfully attack an enemy, you may choose which ability they use to roll their defense. For example, you could attack with Might but force them to defend with Cunning.

Perfect Technique

Minor ability

Apply the effects of any stance twice when you choose them this round.

Ranger

Also known as: Assassin, Bounty-hunter

Cunning +2, Might +1

A lone man stands on a boulder, high above the battle below him. With each passing moment, he loosens another arrow from his bow and another enemy falls beneath him, an arrow at their chest.

A woman drops from the rafters, landing on the back of the false king. With a quick jerk of the arm, the king's neck fountains blood, before the man topples to the floor. In a moment more, she is gone.

An old man stands in the branches of a tree, unnoticed by the passing caravan beneath him. Silently, the man pulls taut his bowstring, then let's go, freeing the arrow that pierces the driver's back and heart.

Rangers are master assassins, profoundly skilled at taking down even the mightiest of foes. Whether using knives, arrows, or anything else, rangers exceed at turning their weapon into the most deadly killing device it can be.

Rangers gain the following abilities.

Called Shot

Passive ability

Whenever you have advantage on your attack roll, you may declare your shot to be a called shot. If you do, you may choose to roll a number of additional vigor dice up to your advantage level. Add their result to the total damage. 1s still trigger vulnerability. You must choose how many extra dice you are rolling before you roll any of them.

Marked to Die

Minor ability

You are incredibly accurate when you focus on a single target. When you use this ability, choose a target to be marked. On your next attack roll against the target, you may reroll all 1s and 2s. Rolling a 1 will still trigger vulnerability.

Assassinate

Major ability

You are well suited to dishing out enormous, deadly attacks. When you enter an engagement but before you choose an ability to attack with, you may state that this is a called shot. If you land the attack, each adrenaline die spent is rolled with the attack roll. If you miss, you lose the adrenaline dice, but may still use this ability.

Ravager

Also known as: Battleheart, Skirmisher

Might +2, Cunning +1

A small woman with bloodshot eyes and a dagger in each hand whirls and dives, darting between the outstretched arms of her attackers and skewering them both in the sides as she passes.

A man stands before a horde of goblins, his belt jammed with nearly a dozen instruments of death. With a deep breath, the man leaps forward, bringing his sword down on the head of the first goblin before drawing a hand-axe and throwing it at the next, before finally leaping over the heads of the next, and driving an arrow from his quiver into the eye of the next goblin.

A lithe woman draws forth a paper thin blade of steel, sharp as a razor. With a short hop, she begins to move, jumping like lightning from foe to foe, lopping off heads and severing limbs in an endless graceful dance that only she can understand.

Ravagers are weapons masters, and masters of the horde. They have learned to wield multiple blades at once, always capable of choosing the right weapon to gain the edge in the fight. No battle is too thick for a ravager to enter, and then leave again with a trail of bloody corpses in their wake.

Ravagers gain the following abilities.

Master of Many Weapons

Passive ability

You may sheathe and draw weapons as a free action at any time, even during an engagement. Additionally, whenever you deal a life threatening injury to an enemy, you may immediately take an extra action.

Everywhere at Once

Minor ability

Whenever you enter an engagement, you may force two enemies to engage rather than just one. If you do, you may make an attack against each valid target in the engagement rather than only one.

Battleweave

Major ability

Until end of turn, you may spend an adrenaline die to make an opportunity attack against an enemy or take the dash action. You cannot make an opportunity attack against the same target more than once.

Support

Support characters are best at providing help to their teammates, either augmenting their attacks, or debuffing enemies to make their attacks weaker. Two types of support classes exist—scoundrels and tacticians.

Clever

Passive ability

You gain an additional talent at every odd level, starting at level 1.

Always Ready

Minor ability

Although not necessarily the best at dishing out the damage in a fight, supports excel at everything else. You may take an extra, non-engagement, non-spell casting action on your turn.

Aid

Minor ability

You may yell distractions, coordinate, or provide some other form of help to an ally attacking an enemy. That ally gets advantage on their next attack roll.

Scoundrel

Also known as: Rogue, Trickster

Agility +2, Cunning +1

A sly man in dark leather leaps forward, swinging his sword in a low, sweeping arc, slashing the heels of the the distracted guard. Startled, the guard tries to move away, but immediately falls over, as he finds he can no longer walk.

A small woman with daggers in each hand circles the fight. One moment, she is watching, eyes narrowed, tracking those before her, and the next moment she has darted in, leaving a knife wound in her wake.

A master swordsman faces off against a heavy brute. With calculating eyes, he finally feints to the side before thrusting his blade forward, causing the brute to nearly fall off his feet in attempt to avoid both attacks.

Scoundrels are tricksters and skirmishers, capable of aiding anywhere in the fight they're needed, and providing the support to weaken their enemies so that allies can finish them off.

Scoundrels gain the following abilities.

Opportunist

Passive ability

Masters of evading reprisal, scoundrels can frequently find ways to attack without any risk to themselves. You may make an opportunity attack if the enemy is adjacent to two of your allies. Opportunity attacks made using this ability require your action.

Dirty Trick

Minor ability

You know every trick in the book, and even some of the ones that aren't. Whenever you successfully land an attack using the cunning stance, rather than make an attack roll, you may instead impose 4 levels of one the following conditions:

- Off-balanced
- Weakened
- Dazed

Disabling Shot

Major ability

You are naturally capable of finding and enabling the exploitation of enemies' weaknesses. When you land an attack, for each adrenaline die you spend, the enemy gains a level of vulnerability.

Tactician

Also known as: Commander, Mastermind
Cunning +2, Agility +1

A woman in the uniform of a battalion commander stands atop a boulder, shouting out

orders. As the soldiers beneath her command follow through, the tides of the battle turn in their favor.

A man with hardened eyes stands at the back of his company of compatriots as the pack of wolves come closer. With the point of his finger, everyone focuses on one wolf at a time, mowing it down before moving on to the next.

A woman stands tall, looking out over the battle. As she watches her troops fight, she coordinates their movements into one, mighty crescendo, ultimately crushing their opponents.

Tacticians provide a boost to everyone around them. They know how to coordinate and shape a battle, sculpting the flow and action in their hands to best suit the situation, and have the strength to turn the tide of battle.

Tacticians gain the following abilities.

Combined Efforts

Passive ability

Whenever you are in an engagement where you and your allies are utilizing all three stances, you and your allies all get advantage on any A/D rolls in the engagement.

Commander's Call

Minor ability

You provide tactical aid to a teammate. Choose an ally and one of the talents you know. Until the end of their next turn, they are granted the benefits of that talent as though they knew it themselves.

Call to Action

Major ability

You issue a command, calling your allies into action. For each adrenaline die spent, you may grant a player an additional action. You can grant someone a second action for 2 more dice. Only one of these extra actions can be used to enter or join an engagement.

Control

Control characters are similar to support, but sacrifice nearly all ability to do damage to instead have powerful battlefield control abilities. Two types of control classes exist—mages, who are natural spell casters, and spell-touched, who make up those who dabble in magic.

Since magic is slightly more complex, rules for the class are slightly different than for the others.

Attuned with Magic

Passive ability

You are in touch with a certain aspect of the world, on a deeper, magical level. Choose a field from the following list: Air, Water, Earth, Fire, Ether. You gain an attunement with that element, as described in the Magic section of this book.

Spellcasting

Passive ability

As a magic user, you are capable of casting spells you know. Choose 2 spells from the spell list that have a tag that matches your attunement. You know these spells.

You may cast any spell you know as an action. Doing so requires at least one free hand and spoken words. Different spells have different effects. If the spell has the *ongoing* tag, then it remains active until combat ends. If it is *immediate*, it only occurs once. Casting the same spell as one that is already active causes the original instance to cease to exist.

Casting spells requires having free hands and powerful focus, making it very difficult to defend yourself when in combat. Usually, this will mean making the choice between casting protecting yourself and casting a spell on your turn. Whenever you are in an engagement with someone, choose either option:

- You are no longer part of the engagement. Any enemies in the engagement may immediately make an opportunity attack against you.
- You remain in the engagement. You cannot cast a spell this turn. You cannot choose this option if you have already cast a spell this turn.

Mage

Also known as: Sorcerer, Wizard, Warlock, Elementalist, Cleric

Cunning +1, Agility +1, Might +1

A robed woman stands praying next to an archer, whose firing at the approaching mob does nothing to quench the tide. Suddenly, she lets out a cry and lifts up her hands to the sky, and a roaring wall of fire erupts from the ground, blocking the mob's advance.

A silver haired man with a crazed look in his eye whirls his hands, drawing arcane golden runes in the air, oblivious to the approaching soldier. Then, everyone around him freezes for a moment, suspended in time, before suddenly disappearing and reappearing where they were 5 seconds before.

A bald man sits meditating, his eyes closed and his legs crossed. At first nothing happens, but in a few more moments, a twisting tornado touches down on the ground, flinging aside everything in its way.

Mages are masters of controlling the battlefield. By using magic, they create large area effects that profoundly change how a battle plays out. Although they lack the skills to directly damage a single target, they may be able to shape the way that target behaves.

Mages gain the following abilities.

Improved Spellcasting

Passive ability

You gain an attunement to an additional field, or an improved attunement in the field you already

chose. Then, pick out 2 more spell from the spell list that matches one of your attunements, and 2 more spells from any tag, which you learn as well.

Amplify

Passive ability

You can over-channel spells, causing them to be much more powerful than they would be otherwise. You may spend adrenaline dice to amplify any spell you cast, a number of times equal to the number of adrenaline dice you use.

Twinned Spell

Major ability

You weave the magic of two spells together, casting them as one. As an action, you may cast two different spells at the same time. You may choose the order in which they resolve, and may distribute adrenaline dice as you wish towards amplifying either spell.

Spelltouched

Also known as: Gish, Eldritch Knight, Arcane Archer, Spellsworn

Cunning +1, Agility +1, Might +1

A

Student of Two Arts

Passive ability

You are still a mage, but you have not forgotten how to handle yourself in melee or ranged combat. Gain the minor abilities of another position (note: *not* class).

Spellweave

Minor ability

You weave the magic of a spell into the movements of your weapon as you attack and defend. You can still cast a spell on your turn even if you are

in an engagement. You still need the action in order to cast the spell, and you still need a free hand.

Arcane Conduit

Major ability

Your magic courses through your body, enchanting you and those around you with incredible power. For each adrenaline die you spend on this ability, you and your allies get +1 to all non-vigor rolls.

During the Game

Rolling Dice

Skill Checks

Whenever you attempt to do something that has a realistic chance of failure, the GM may ask you to roll a skill check to see if you succeed. Whenever you roll a skill check, there are two dice you need to roll—your vigor die, and one of your ability dice. The ability die should correspond to the activity you are doing, so if you are lifting something heavy, you should use your Might die.

After rolling the dice, calculate the sum, and then add any bonuses you may gain from your background or other bonuses. If the sum of the dice is higher than the GM's predetermined challenge number (CN), then you will succeed. The DM should use the following chart to set difficulties.

Challenge Difficulty

CN	Difficulty	Low	Avg	High
3	Routine	97%	98%	99%
6	Fairly Easy	69%	79%	95%
9	Average	31%	44%	77%
12	Hard	3%	13%	44%
15	Very Hard	—	—	16%
18 +	Nearly Impossible	—	—	2%

Vulnerabilities

Vulnerability makes you more susceptible to disaster. Sometimes they are caused by injury or

exhaustion, though other times they may be self imposed, in order to have a better chance in an attempt at something difficult. You always have at least one level of vulnerability, which cannot be reduced below one.

Whenever you make a skill check, if the results on one or more of the dice is equal to or below your level of vulnerability, you have triggered your vulnerability. You must choose to either automatically fail your roll, such that it can not even be attempted again (at least in the same way), or to cause a complication. The nature of a complication is up to the GM, though it could mean anything from breaking your weapon, catching the notice of a guard, or tripping on your shield. If both dice are at or below your vulnerability level, then both of these effects occur.

Pushing Your Luck

Sometimes, you may want to attempt something that you see to be beyond your ability, or likely to fail. In this case, you may choose to take on vulnerability to give yourself a bonus to your roll. Whenever you make a roll, you may give yourself any number of levels of vulnerability up to your level. For every level of vulnerability you gain, add two to your next roll. The levels of vulnerability you gain only affect your next roll, as does the bonus.

Attack/Defense Rolls

Attack and Defense rolls, or A/D rolls, are made whenever your roll to deal or negate damage in an engagement. Roll the relevant ability die, your vigor die, and add any necessary modifiers. A/D rolls are explained in greater detail in the *Combat* chapter.

Advantage and Disadvantage

Advantage and disadvantage give you bonuses or penalties to a roll. When you have advantage on a roll, you may re-roll your vigor die and take the higher result, and when you have disadvantage on a roll, you must re-roll your vigor die and take the lower result. Advantage and disadvantage cancel out, and multiple instances of either one can stack.

For example, if two sources each give you advantage, and another source gives three instances of disadvantage, you only have one level of disadvantage, and no levels of advantage.

Multiple levels of advantage and disadvantage are generally referred to as ADx or DAx respectively, where x is replaced with the number of instances of advantage or disadvantage.

Helping

When someone wishes to assist another person with a skill check, they can choose to help. If you are in combat, this requires your action. Helping grants the person making the check advantage, so long as you have experience in that area of skill.

If you help someone, you both suffer any consequences of vulnerability triggering.

Group Rolls

Sometimes, everyone in a group will need to make the same check, together, or will all want to help out on the same check. For example, working together to break down a door, sneaking past some guards, and persuading a judge could all be group rolls. Rolls are calculated differently, depending on the exact type of task.

If everyone is making a check where their combined effort stacks, such as when trying to lift something heavy, simply add the rolls together.

Vulnerability only triggers when someone rolls two ones.

If everyone is making a check where one person can do very little to help anyone else with their roll, such as sneaking past guards as a group, only one person rolls. Find the person in the group who is the worst at making this roll, and they make the roll for the group. It is assumed that everyone else will succeed, but if this person fails, everyone will fail together.

Lastly, if it is a task where people can only help somewhat, such as when everyone works together to convince someone of the truth, then only the person best at the task has to roll, and they may roll with advantage.

Debts

During the game, you will gain and lose debts as people do favors and pay back favors. Debts can only be gained and spent on your contacts.

Debts Transactions

Debts are gained and spent through favors for your contacts. They can be either gained or spent.

There are two types of favors: minor favors, and major favors. Minor favors consist of things that don't require much time (no more than a day), and bear no threat to life, livelihood, or reputation. They are worth 1 debt. Major favors are anything else, that don't meet those criteria, and are worth 5 debt.

At any time, you may request a favor from one of your contacts. If they accept, then you owe them debt equal to the value of the favor they did. However, your contacts can do the same to you, and request favors from you.

Avoiding Debt

Sometimes, you or an NPC won't want to do the favor requested of them. In this case, there are several options available. If the character doing the favor does not owe the other character any debt, or if the favor is a major favor, the character granting the favor can freely refuse at no cost.

If a favor is requested of a player, and they do not wish to fulfill it, then they must choose one of the following options. If they can't do any of the options, they must do the favor anyways.

- **Indebted:** Their debt increases by 1. This option is not available if you already owe them 6 or more debt.
- **Dishonored:** They lose all debts owed to them by all of their contacts, which automatically become 0. This option is not available if no one owes you debts.
- They lose the contact

Special Circumstances

Sometimes you will have an ability that forces others to become indebted to you if you do certain things. These abilities will specifically state that they do this. In other cases, the GM may decide that some particular action warrants debt to another character, and will award it then.

Story Points

Story points (SP) are used by players to exert narrative control over the game. With more points, you can achieve greater control. At the beginning of each session, gain 3 SP, and at the end of the session remove any you have left over.

Claiming a Connection

At any time, you may spend story points to create a fictional NPC that you are acquainted with. You must describe how you know each other, and briefly describe who they are.

NPCs of different reputation are more or less likely for you to know, and therefore cost different amounts of points. For example, knowing a shoemaker in a small village is quite reasonable—perhaps you got your shoes there once on a trip. Personally knowing someone important, however, such as a general, or even an emperor, is much less likely, and will cost more. Use the chart in the *Influence* section below as a general rule of thumb.

If you do not have story points to spend, or wish to gain a relationship with someone with greater influence than you can afford, you may choose to take on debt instead. You can only do this once per session, and the relationship must be paid for entirely with levels of debt. This means that to claim a connection with someone of 5 influence, you would have to gain 5 debt towards them. The nature or cause for the debt is up to you, though it must be approved by the GM.

Plot Hooks

In addition to forming relations with NPCs, story points can be used to create plot hooks. Plot hooks can be used to make parts of the narrative more important to the plot of the game. For example, if the you got in a bar fight with a one eyed sailor, you may decide to spend plot points to make the sailor somehow relevant to the plot.

Plot hooks can be used on anybody or anything. You do not get to decide how it is relevant to the current plot of the story, but it will be, as the GM now

must find a way to tie whatever it is into the what's going on in the world.

Cinematic Moment

Sometimes, very dramatic moments will arise. At times like these, or at moments that you wish were more dramatic, you have a chance to make the moment more spectacular. Whenever you make a roll, you may choose to spend a story point to turn the roll into a cinematic moment. You must do this before the roll. Whatever the outcome of the roll, the effects are increased. So, if you roll low, then you may fail spectacularly badly, and if you succeed, you would succeed with additional positive effects. Complications and auto-fails are equally amplified.

Influence

1	A nobody, likely unknown by anyone outside their community (local smithy; stableboy; farmer).
2	Moderate influence, likely known by over about a dozen people outside their local community (village sheriff, successful trader; minor gang leader).
3	Influential, well known by dozens of people well outside their community (wealthy merchant; local representative; expert craftsman).
4	Very influential, likely known by many people who haven't met them but know the name (leader of a larger settlement; important sage; crime boss).
5	A name known by nearly everyone in the region, or in control of enormous power (minor-moderate nobility; military general; hero of the nation).
6	Everyone within the region knows this person, as well as many without. They exert tremendous power (high nobility; dragons; those who go down in history).

Exploring and Surviving

Carrying Your Gear

People generally can't pack more than 20% of their body weight on their backs, meaning that the average person can't carry more than 30 pounds over long distances without some sort of pack animal. There are reasons people had horses and donkeys and

other pack animals ages ago. You will likely want one too.

Whenever you pack up to leave for somewhere, you will have to declare how much gear you want to take. You will not, however, have to declare what you are specifically bringing.

The amount of gear you bring is measured in levels, where each level grants you 10 slots of space and 1 level of burden. As you travel, whenever you want something that you think would make sense to have in your bag, instead you will cross off some of the slots and you may now add that item to your inventory. If the item you want to procure costs more slots than you have left, then it means you didn't bring that item.

Being at greater burden has its drawbacks. While wearing your gear, you must subtract your burden level from all skill checks using athletics or endurance. The GM may call for additional times where your burden level will be used as a penalty.

Below is a chart showing the size, slot cost, and example of different types of gear.

Size	Slots	Example
Tiny	1	Pen & Ink, Dice,
Small	2	Food or water ration, Torch, Map
Medium	5	Bedroll, Icepick, 50 ft. rope
Big	10	Painting, Stool, Bear pelt

Food, Water, Sleep

Sometimes having enough food, water, and sleep will be important—specifically when they are not available. Unless the players are in a settlement and have the money to purchase food, water, and quarters,

players will have to find other methods to procure them.

Food and Water

To preface this section, here are some facts about the human body:

The average human eats roughly 4 pounds of food every day and drinks 4 pounds of water. If you were exploring someplace and couldn't forage for food or water, you would need to pack 8 pounds of rations for every day. Most people cannot travel for long periods of time with over 30 pounds on their back, which means that assuming you have nearly no other gear, you can't survive for more than around 4 days of travel while packing your own food and water.

So long as you have access to free food and water, or money to pay for them and a place you can purchase them, then you can ignore food and water mechanics. However, in the likely event that you do not have access to one or more of these things, use the following rules.

Survival Rules

Whenever you are out of food or water, or go some time without resting, your GM may have you make a vigor check. On a failure, you will gain one or more levels of vulnerability that do not go away until you get whatever resource you are missing.

If you are missing a resource, you should roll vigor for it once a day. The DC should be 2 times the number of days you've been missing it, and the amount of vulnerability depends on the resource. For food and sleep it is 1 level, and for water it is two.

Foraging

Luckily, you can forage for food and find water. The difficulty of these tasks depends greatly on where you are. When you wish to forage, you can spend an

hour to forage the local area to find food and water. Roll a cunning check contested by the challenge number for the terrain that you are foraging in. For every 2 points over the result you get, you find endless water and a day's worth of food for one person.

Currency

End of the Session

At the end of the session, story points and XP are awarded, contacts are gained and lost, and players may level up if they have the XP for it.

Gaining Experience

At the end of each session, if you spent time pursuing your goals or beliefs, then you may mark experience. Each time you mark experience you may choose one of the options from the list below (*Experience Options*). You cannot choose that option again until you have marked 4 experience levels, at which point you gain a destiny level, and clear all of your experience.

When you level up, you may choose a divinity level and gain the corresponding abilities.

Experience Options

At any point, you may also choose to decrease the rank of an aspect that you did not use the fault or virtue of. If this would decrease its rank to 0, remove it instead.

- Pick an NPC or player that you connected with during the last session. Mark them as a contact with 0 debt. If you chose another player, they get to mark you as a contact as well.
- Increase one aspect's rank by 2, or two different aspects each by 1.
- Create another aspect that represents your character and add it to your aspects, starting at rank 1.

Destiny Levels

As you pursue your goals, you come closer and closer to your destiny. Whenever you gain a destiny level, choose one of the following options.

- You gain another talent of your choice
- You gain the destiny level in a talent you know
- Choose one of your ability dice, and increase it to a maximum of a d12.

Combat

Combat occurs in rounds, which are split up into turns, and frequently involve at least one engagement. Engagements are short scenes of combat between participants, with usually a clear winner at the end of the engagement.

Turns

Combat takes place over rounds, in which everyone gets a turn. On your turn you can move and take an action. However, the turn order in combat is fluid, and can change from round to round. When a round begins, every character in the fight should roll their vigor die. If anyone in the fight is retreating, they may go first. Otherwise, whoever rolled the highest on their vigor die goes first. After they go, they may choose any ally they want to go next, who then takes their turn. This proceeds until everyone has gone.

If a player or enemy is affected by an attack or spell and they haven't taken their turn yet, they may "interrupt" the turn order and take their turn as soon as the current turn ends.

At the beginning of your turn, remove 1 level from all status debuffs with the *fading 1* tag. Then, you may either move or take an action in any order. You may split your movement by taking an action in between your movement, if you wish.

Adrenaline

Adrenaline represents the excitement and tension of the fight. As the fight goes on, adrenaline builds, and you can perform more and more powerful moves. Adrenaline is represented with a pool of d6s. When you gain adrenaline, you add dice to this pool, and

when you spend adrenaline, you remove them—typically rolling the spent dice as well.

At the beginning of your turn (not the round), you gain adrenaline dice equal to the number of rounds there have been since combat began. Adrenaline resets each time you regain adrenaline again though, so you can't accumulate tons of adrenaline. For example, on your very first turn, you would gain 1d6, but on your second turn, regardless of if you used your adrenaline dice, you'd have 2d6. Adrenaline will fuel many of your abilities.

Note that adrenaline only starts building up and continues building up during combat. Combat does not technically start until someone engages or makes an opportunity attack. You are no longer considered part of combat (and therefore will lose all your adrenaline dice) if you have not attacked or been attacked during two consecutive rounds.

Move

On your turn, move up to your move speed (humans have a move speed of 40). In order to swim or climb, you move at $\frac{1}{4}$ your move speed, rounded to the nearest 5, unless otherwise noted.

Actions

You get one action per turn. Actions must be made during your turn, unless otherwise noted.

Dash

Move 15 feet. This is unaffected by any modifiers to your move speed.

Interaction

If you haven't used this action yet this round, you may take this action for free. Any sort of simple interaction with an object counts as an Interaction

action. Stowing a weapon and retrieving a new one are two separate object interactions.

Skill Checks

If this is something that requires some sort of movement, then the skill check counts as an action. If it is instantaneous, or part of another action (such as recalling a fact or using an object), then the skill check itself does not use up your action.

Hide

If you are not able to be sensed from your current position, you may attempt to hide. Make an agility check contested by their cunning check. On a success, you are hidden. While hidden, you have advantage on your attacks, and can spend your action to make an opportunity attack. Attacking reveals your position, meaning you are no longer hidden.

Treat a Wound

When you take the treat a wound action, you automatically treat a wound on an adjacent creature or yourself. They immediately stop suffering the immediate effects of one wound they are currently under the effects of.

Take a Breather

You can only take this action if you haven't moved this turn. Your adrenaline die counter resets (you get one adrenaline die next round, minor abilities only cost one die, and you can use your major ability again), and you remove all of the immediate effects of any wounds afflicting you. You cannot move, take additional actions, or use any abilities for the rest of this turn.

Engage the Enemy

As an action, you may engage with the enemy. This does not guarantee that you'll injure them, or

even hit them the first place. In fact, they might hit you instead.

Rules for engagement are complicated, and are described in detail in the section below. As a simple analogy, using your action to engage the enemy can be described as initiating a rock-paper-scissors game of combat with the enemy, with the victor having the chance to injure the loser.

Enter an Engagement

As an action, you may enter an engagement that has already been initiated between other characters. It does not have to be your turn to take this action. You must be in range of a valid target of your weapon in order to enter. To continue our analogy from the previous paragraph, this is like deciding to jump into a rock-paper-scissors game going on between the people around you, and deciding to play as well.

Special Abilities

These abilities are unique to your position and class, and can only be used in combat.

Passive Abilities

Passive abilities are inherent to your class, and are always in effect.

Minor Abilities

Minor abilities are special abilities unique to your position and class. Whenever you use a minor ability, you must spend one adrenaline die for each time you've used the ability, including the current use. You have multiple minor abilities (three at level 1), so you will have to manage how many times you've used each separately. They do not require you to spend an action.

Major Abilities

Major abilities are like ultimate moves your character has. At level 1, you only have 1 major ability. Unlike minor abilities, major abilities can only be used once per fight. Many have additional optional adrenaline costs, meaning that your major abilities will get stronger and stronger the longer the fight lasts. They do not require you to spend an action.

Engaging the Enemy

An engagement with the enemy may be a short flurry of crossing blows, or it may be part of a larger combat between you and your enemy. Sometimes it will be a mere duel, while in other situations it will be a brawl of fighting bodies, resulting in dozens of injuries.

In either case, when you first decide to engage the enemy (taking the *Engage the Enemy* action), choose an enemy you can validly hit with the weapon you are currently wielding. You and this enemy are now part of the engagement. The enemy does not have a choice in entering this engagement, and participating in this engagement does not cost them their action.

Any other players or enemies who are within immediate combat range of anyone in the engagement may decide to enter the engagement as well. If they wish to do so, they can spend their action to join the engagement. This is the *Enter an Engagement* action.

Then, every combatant within the encounter must secretly choose their attack style: Might, Agility, Cunning, or the Defensive stance. Once everyone has chosen, everyone must reveal their choice. Note that the GM should choose their stance for the enemies before the players decide for their characters, to prevent any accusations of cheating by reacting to the decisions made by the players.

Attacks proceed in a manner similar to rock paper scissors, except where ties both beat each other:

Might

Those who chose Might are able to crush those who are not agile enough to get out of the way, and get to make attacks against anyone who took the Cunning or Might stance. You may add 2 to your attack roll. If your attack doesn't deal damage, they still gain a minor wound.

Agility

Those who chose Agility are able to maneuver their way past those who can't read their actions, and get to make attacks against anyone who took the Might or Agility stance. Whenever you choose the agility stance, you may take the dash action for free at any time this round, before or after you attack.

Cunning

Those who chose Cunning are able to easily read and avoid the attacks of anyone who can't beat them with just raw strength, and get to make attacks against anyone who took the Agility or Cunning stance. Whenever you choose the cunning stance, you may apply 2 levels of dazed, off-balanced, or weakened to any enemy you hit with your attack.

Defensive

Anyone who chose the defensive stance does not get to attack, but will not take as much damage or crowd control effects from incoming attacks.

Resolution

After everyone has revealed their stance, everyone may attack one other character that their stance beats, and is within range of their weapon. All stances beat defensive stance. If no one else took a stance that they

could beat, or they aren't in range of your weapon, you cannot attack in this engagement.

Attacking

If you get to attack someone, you and your target should each make contested skill checks (though in this context it would be called an attack or defense roll, not a skill check) using the ability that you chose for your attack. So if I chose the Might stance when I attacked, I would roll vigor + might + modifiers, and the defender would roll vigor + might + modifiers.

Then, subtract the defense roll from the attack roll. If this number is less than zero, it becomes zero, and the defender takes a minor wound but no damage.

If you are engaged with someone who is attacking you back with the same stance, make contested attack rolls rather than two attack and defense rolls.

The defender then takes damage equal to the result of the attack roll minus the defense roll. See the next section to determine how damage is dealt with.

Anyone can attack someone who takes the defense stance. Make contested rolls as normal, but the damage is halved, and no status conditions can be applied to the defender.

Taking Damage

Whenever you take damage, there is a high likelihood that you can tough it out, and continue the fight. However, your ability to tank damage is limited, and as you take more and more, your stamina will fall.

When you take damage, keep rolling your vigor die until the cumulative sum is greater than the damage you took. Then, you take a number of minor wounds equal to the number of times you rolled. For example, if I took 6 damage, and my vigor die was a

d8, I might roll a 3 + 1 + 5, at which point I would stop rolling and take 3 minor wounds.

If, after taking damage, you have more than 3 minor wounds, immediately remove all of your minor wounds and decrease the size of your vigor die. If your vigor die is already a d4, then you instead take a major wound.

Major Wounds

While minor wounds represent cuts, scrapes, and bruises, major wounds represent real injuries—ones that have the potential to stick with you. Fighting in this world is nothing to scoff at—getting hit with a sword can be deadly. When you take a major wound, you have two options: you can either tough it out, or you can fall unconscious. Both have their benefits and drawbacks.

If you fall unconscious, you are out of the fight. Most enemies won't target you (unless want to eat you *right* now), and your allies should be able to save you after the fight. If you are treated after the fight, you survive, though you'll still have to treat your wounds. If you aren't treated after the fight, you bleed out and die.

If you choose to tough it out, you can continue the fight, but with some side effects, depending on how many wounds you already have.

First Wound: You gain 1 extra adrenaline die at the beginning of your next turn.

Second Wound: You take on a lingering injury. Lingering injuries are exactly like aspects, but lack a virtue. Rules for lingering injuries appear later in this book.

Third Wound: You are on the brink of death. You gain 3 extra adrenaline dice at the beginning of your next turn.

Fourth Wound: You are dead.

Opportunity Attacks

Opportunity attacks represent instances when your enemy has revealed a weakness that you can exploit in your attack. Although you still have to choose a stance with which to attack, the defender does not get to choose one, and your attack automatically lands. You and your target should roll contesting skill checks in whichever ability you chose for your stance.

By default, you can only make opportunity attacks if you are hidden. However, some abilities grant you the ability to make an opportunity attack, under specific conditions. You do not need to use an action to make an opportunity attack, except when otherwise noted (such as when hidden).

Non-Engagement Defense Rolls

Sometimes attacks do not use a weapon, and therefore don't involve some sort of engagement. In these cases, the target of the attack will generally still have to make a defense roll, defending against whatever ability the attack was made. These attacks frequently take the form of mind attacks, where the defender has to ward their mind against the magics of the attacker. However, defense rolls are also necessary in other events, such as when a boulder is tumbling towards a player and they need to dodge out of the way, or if a player needs to resist the effects of a poison. These rolls are still defense rolls, but are not always made against another character's attack roll (as the case with the tumbling boulder). Instead, the roll may be against a set challenge number (CN), representing how tough it is to avoid the effects of that event.

Retreating

Sometimes, you will realize that you are outmatched in a fight (as will the enemy too, sometimes). In this case, you have the option to retreat. At the start of every round of combat, before anyone rolls initiative, you may declare that you are retreating. If you do, you get to take your turn first, and cannot use your action to engage or join engagements. While retreating, you must take the defense stance in any combats that you are part of. So long as you are moving away from all enemies, you may continue to retreat at the beginning of each round.

Recovering Vigor

If you have lost levels of vigor, whether by expending effort or by taking damage, you can only regain it by taking rests. The first rest you take each day takes 5 minutes, and you regain one level of vigor. The second rest that day takes 1 hour, and you regain one more level. After sleeping for 7 hours, you regain one more level. Having wounds may negate some or all of the effects of resting.

Cover

Cover is an important part of staying alive—if you remain behind cover, you remain safe from enemy attacks. There are four different types of cover, based on how many lines of sight exist between the attacker and the defender. Determining what type of cover you have from an attacker can be done by drawing imaginary lines between any one point on the attacker and each corner of a square that the enemy takes the space of. For each line that is obstructed by an obstacle, the attacker gets a level of disadvantage

on their attack roll. If all four lines are blocked, the defender cannot be attacked.

Sometimes, obstacles do not lend themselves to the line blocked method of determining cover. It is then up to the GM to decide how much cover should be awarded to the defender. Usually, anything small but not very helpful like an ally or small tree in the way of your shot will provide one level of cover. Things that the defender has to poke their body out from behind to attack, such as the rise of a hill, or back of a couch, provide two levels of cover. Lastly, things that are specifically designed for uni-directional attacks, such as arrow slits, will provide three levels of cover.

Lingering Injuries

Lingering injuries are just like aspects, except they only include a fault. When you take a lingering injury, roll a d4, and determine where you were injured and why it's not the type of injury that will ever heal completely. At the end of the session, come up with the exact fault for your injury, and assign the result of the d4 as its rank. Whenever you are doing something that your injury would get in the way of, anyone can invoke the fault of your injury and give you a destiny point.

For example, let's pretend that you decided that the blow with the mace hit your leg, mangling your knee. Let's say you then rolled a 3. At the end of the session, you might decide the fault was, "when I'm trying to lift something heavy or climb something steep." You'd assign the aspect—maybe named "gimp leg"—a "3," and then you could use it like nearly any other aspect to gain destiny points.

Conditions

A variety of conditions can affect players and enemies alike. They generally give banes or vulnerabilities to different sorts of rolls.

Some of the conditions are "leveled," meaning that multiple instances of that condition can be applied, with cumulative effects. It also means that multiple instances of a condition can be applied at once. For example, if a Moon Viper bites you, it could apply two levels of poison, giving you two banes to all rolls. If a condition can be stacked, it will be noted as leveled at the end of the condition's description.

Most leveled conditions have *fading 1*, which means that 1 level of that condition is removed at the beginning of each turn. When conditions are applied, unless otherwise mentioned, they have *fading 1*.

Slowed

Your speed is reduced by 5 feet. Leveled.

Restrained

Your speed becomes zero. You have disadvantage on A/D rolls and all actions requiring movement. Leveled.

Blinded

Your vision is blurred or darkened. You have disadvantage on A/D rolls and skill checks to see things. Leveled.

Deafened

Your hearing is dampened. You have disadvantage on skill checks to hear things. Leveled.

Incapacitated

You take the effects of stunned. Additionally, you cannot speak, and all attacks against you are made as opportunity attacks rather than engagements.

Prone

You move at half speed (round down to the nearest 5). You have advantage on defense rolls against ranged attackers, and have disadvantage on all attack rolls. Standing up costs 10 feet of movement.

On Fire

At the beginning of your turn, gain a minor wound for each level of on fire affecting you. Levelled.

Stunned

Your move speed becomes zero, and you cannot take actions or use abilities.

Poisoned

You have disadvantage on all rolls. Levelled.

Shocked

You have disadvantage on all rolls. Levelled.

Dazed

You have disadvantage on all cunning checks. Levelled.

Weakened

You have a disadvantage on all might checks. Levelled.

Off-Balanced

You have a disadvantage on all agility checks. Levelled.

Terrified

You have disadvantage on all rolls. You may remove all levels of terrified if you leave line of sight of the source of your fear. Levelled.

Enraged

You have disadvantage on all cunning rolls for each level of enraged you have. You may remove all levels of enraged if you make an attack roll against the source of your aggravation. Levelled.

Dispirited

You have disadvantage on all rolls. You may remove all levels of dispirited by making a defense roll. Levelled.

Overwhelmed

You have disadvantage on all rolls. You may remove all levels of overwhelmed by spending an action to put your thoughts in order. Levelled.

Confused

You have disadvantage on all rolls. You may remove all levels of confused if someone else spends an action helping you figure out what's going on. Levelled.

Charmed

You have disadvantage on rolls to resist your charmer's rolls. You cannot willingly attack the source of the charm. Levelled.

Talents

Acrobatic

You know how to incorporate more complex movements into your attacks. Whenever you incorporate the terrain into your attack, either by swinging from something, jumping off of something, or anything else that allows you to incorporate your body's motion into the attack, you get AD2 on your attack.

Destiny Level: You may use your action to make an attack of this type as an opportunity attack instead.

Agile

Whenever you take the Agility stance, you may re-roll 1s on your agility die. Vulnerability still triggers on the first roll.

Destiny Level: Whenever you take the Agility stance, you may re-roll 2s as well.

Battlefield Medic

As an action, you may remove up to 2 minor wounds from another player.

Destiny Level: If removing these wound would set someone's minor wound count to 0, you may remove one level of every condition affecting them as well.

Battleheart

While there are 2 or more enemies are adjacent to you, you have advantage on your attack rolls.

Destiny Level: Whenever you begin your turn with 2 or more enemies adjacent to you, you may gain an additional adrenaline die.

Beast Companion

You have a wild pet animal that accompanies you and is obedient to your commands. It has d4, d4, d6 ability dice, and a d4 vigor die. It must be no bigger than 40 pounds. If your familiar dies, you can either perform a Minor Ritual to bring it back to life, or spend a week in the wild hunting and searching for a new animal companion.

Destiny Level: You can see through your companion's eyes.

Bloodthirsty

Whenever you attack an enemy that is at or below half of its health, you may give it 1 level of dazed, off-balanced, or weakened.

Destiny Level: Whenever you attack an enemy that is at or below half its health and dazed, off-balanced, or weakened, you have AD2 on your attack.

Borne by Flame

If you are attuned to fire, you may choose to ignite your body at will, causing flames to lick up your skin. Your clothes and possessions are immune to this flame. While in this state, flammable things you touch ignite, and anyone who attacks you with a melee weapon takes 1 level of on-fire. Additionally, you are immune to the on-fire condition.

Destiny Level: Your flame extends to your weapon as well, lining it with fire. While in an ignited state, your attacks apply one level of on-fire.

Boundless Fury

Whenever you inflict a major wound on an enemy, you may make an opportunity attack against a different enemy. You gain 3 levels of weakened.

Destiny Level: Whenever you cause an enemy's vigor die to fall, you may immediately make an opportunity attack against a different, adjacent enemy.

Brutal Criticals

Whenever you roll the maximum result on both dice for your attack, you may ignore the enemy's defense roll.

Destiny Level: Whenever you roll the maximum on either die, you may choose to re-roll the other die, using either result.

Burst of Speed

Your move speed is doubled when you move or take the move action. If you do, you move at half speed next turn.

Destiny Level: So long as you end your movement on the ground, you can run on walls and ceilings while using this talent. Walls cost double your movement, and the ceiling costs triple.

Careful Shot

If you haven't moved since the beginning of your last turn, you may apply 1 level of dazed, off-balanced, or weakened with your attack.

Destiny Level: If they take 1 or more minor wounds because of the attack, you may instead apply 2 levels of the condition.

Cast Thoughts

By pointing your index finger at a person, they can hear what you are thinking, projected into their mind. They hear the words as if spoken in your voice.

Destiny Level: You may make the words come out in any voice, and you do not have to point. They may communicate back in the same way if you choose to allow them to.

Charge

Whenever you move 20 feet or more in a straight line towards the enemy and immediately engage them with a heavy melee weapon, they are knocked prone regardless of if they are hit.

Destiny Level: If they are hit as well as knocked prone, you may make an opportunity attack as well.

Clobber

Whenever you hit an enemy that is adjacent to a wall or other piece of impassable terrain with a melee attack, add 2 to your attack roll.

Destiny Level: Add 4 to your attack roll instead. They gain 2 levels of slowed.

Cold Snap

Snapping the fingers of your hand makes a loud noise that causes any nearby liquid to freeze solid. The liquid cannot be part of a currently living creature, such as blood or venom.

Destiny Level: Even the living can feel themselves slow at the snap of your fingers. You may spend an adrenaline die to give all enemies within 30 feet of you one level of slowed.

Creepy Voice

You have advantage on skill checks to intimidate people, and disadvantage on all other skill checks in social encounters.

Destiny Level: You have AD3 on intimidation checks.

Criminal Contacts

You have a wide web of contacts who you currently or once have worked with. Whenever you spend story points to claim a connection with another

criminal, it costs 2 less story points. This cannot reduce the cost below 1.

Destiny Level: Your criminal renown has grown. The story point cost decreases by 3 instead of 2.

Dancing Fingers

As an action, you can make a small object (less than a couple pounds, not much bigger than your hand) disappear on your person so long as you are wearing clothes and your hands are free. In addition, you may spend a story point to produce a minor, inexpensive item from upon your person.

Destiny Level: The maximum size of the object increases to 10 pounds, and can include any hand-held weapon.

Destined for Glory

Whenever you roll doubles on an A/D roll, you may either apply a minor wound to your enemy, or remove one from yourself.

Destiny Level: Apply or remove 2 minor wounds instead.

Divine Consult

You are capable of limited communication with the god you worship. You may spend a story point to ask one yes or no question of your god. The GM must either answer it truthfully, or else grant you 2 story points in return. You cannot use this ability more than once per session.

Destiny Level: Rather than ask a yes or no question, you can ask any question, and get no more than a couple of words in answer.

Dodge and Weave

Taking the dash action gives you advantage on your defense rolls until the end of the round.

Destiny Level: If you have taken the dash action on your turn, and use the defensive stance during an engagement, you cannot take more than 1 minor wound from that engagement.

Down with the Weak

Whenever you deal damage to an enemy that is weakened, it gains 2 more levels of weakened.

Destiny Level: You have advantage to hit weakened characters.

Dream Thief

By spending 1 minute concentrating on the mind of someone else within 10 feet, you can pull thoughts from their mind. Make a contested cunning check against another character. On a success, you learn one thing about them, their plans, or their desires. On a failure, they know that you tried to break into their mind. You cannot steal dreams from the same character more than once a day.

Destiny Level: Failures do not alert your targets, and you only require a few seconds to concentrate.

Elaborate Footwork

Whenever you engage an enemy that is confused or dazed, you get AD2 on your A/D rolls if you choose the agility stance.

Destiny Level: While the enemy is dazed or confused, your attacks apply one level of dazed to that enemy.

Elemental Affinity

Choose an element. You gain a basic level of attunement with that element. You may take this talent multiple times.

Destiny Level: You gain an advanced level of attunement with an element you already have a basic attunement with.

Elemental Weapon

Your weapon carries the power of the elements, and is wreathed in the element of your choice. Choose fire, air, water, earth, or ether. You may spend an adrenaline die before you declare a stance to cause anyone hit with your weapon to gain the effects corresponding to your element. Taking this talent again lets you choose a different element. Additionally, attunement with an element lets you fire arrows of that element.

Fire: Your shot causes enemies to gain 1 level of on-fire, and lights whatever it hits ablaze

Air: Your shots are concussive. Enemies gain 2 levels of dazed if they are hit.

Water: Your shots are powerful. Enemies gain 2 levels of weakened if they are hit.

Earth: Your shots are heavy. Enemies gain 2 levels of off-balanced if they are hit

Ether: Your shots are imbued with mind magic. Enemies gain 1 levels of confused if they are hit.

Destiny Level: Increase the bonus granted from your arcane arrows by 1.

Eloquent

Whenever you speak, your words come out like smooth butter. Re-roll all 1s when making social skill checks. Vulnerability still triggers on the first roll.

Destiny Level: Re-roll 2s as well.

Fingers in Many Pies

Whenever you claim a connection, you may spend an additional story point to make them to be indebted to you by 1.

Destiny Level: They are indebted to you by 2 instead.

First Strike

The first time each round that you hit an enemy that has not been damaged yet, add 3 to your attack roll. If you are the very first person to enter an engagement in an encounter, you may instead choose to use your action to make an opportunity attack.

Destiny Level: The opportunity attacks made with this talent don't require your action.

Gambit

You may declare a non-defensive stance before everyone reveals (allowing other people to change theirs in response). Anyone who attacks you has DA2 on their defense rolls during this engagement.

Destiny Level: When you use this talent, enemies you gain advantage on your attack roll.

Glassy Touch

By molding and sculpting the air, you can shape small objects out of glass. These objects must be able to fit in your hand, and they will evaporate into air again if you create another object.

Destiny Level: The size limit on the object increases to include anything up to the size of a pillow.

Good First Impressions

You get AD2 on all social skill checks in the first minute of a conversation.

Destiny Level: Whenever you meet someone for the first time and spend a minute talking to them, making a good impression, you may spend 3 story points to add them as a contact, if they are of 2 influence or lower.

Grip of the Kraken

While holding a non-living object, you can choose to make it immovable. It remains transfixed in space in relation to the nearest ground beneath it until you let go of it. Once you've used this ability on an object, you cannot use it on that same object again.

Destiny Level: You can use this ability on the same object again. Additionally, you can choose whether the object remains fixed in relation to you, or your immediate surroundings.

Haphazard

Whenever you roll a 1 in an A/D roll, the enemy takes a minor wound.

Destiny Level: Whenever you roll doubles, the enemy takes a minor wound.

Hammer Down

If you fall 10 feet down towards your enemy first, you may make an opportunity attack as an action. You get AD2 on your attack.

Destiny Level: You do not have to use your action to make the opportunity attack.

Harass

Whenever you engage with an enemy that is adjacent to a wall or another piece of impassable terrain, they cannot take the dash action until the end of the next round.

Destiny Level: When you use this talent, their move speed becomes zero.

Hard to Hit

Whenever you move 25 feet or more in a turn, you have AD2 on defense rolls against attacks made by enemies that are 40 feet or more away from you until the end of the round.

Hate

You feel a deep loathing towards a certain type of creature or person. Whenever you kill someone who belongs to your hated group, you gain a story point. Additionally, you may spend to a story point to make a perception check to sense if they are around, even if you can't sense them using traditional methods.

Destiny Level: You may spend a story point to identify one piece of knowledge relevant to your hated group. The information is under a topic of your choice, but up to the GM's discretion to choose.

Headbutter

If you move 10 feet in a straight line towards an enemy, you may spend your action to knock them prone. You gain 3 levels of dazed.

Destiny Level: When you use this talent, the target gains a level of dazed, off-balanced, and weakened.

Hit 'Em Where It Counts

Whenever you have one or more instances of advantage on an attack, you gain an additional instance of advantage.

Destiny Level: If you have advantage on a roll, you may ignore any instances of disadvantage on that roll.

Holmesian Logic

Whenever you spend 10 minutes examining a creature, object, or location, you can produce a random fact about the thing, pertinent to a topic of your choice. You cannot identify anything more using this talent until a significant amount of new information presents itself.

Destiny Level: When you use this ability, you may also ask one yes or no question about the thing

you see, which the GM must answer. It must be something factual, and have nothing to do with discerning motivations or reasoning.

Hulking

While wielding a heavy weapon, your reach is increased by 5 feet.

Destiny Level: By lunging forward, you can extend your reach to 10 feet. Doing so grants any enemy besides the one you are attacking an opportunity attack against you if they are in melee range.

Ingenious

Whenever you take the Cunning stance, you may re-roll 1s on your cunning die. Vulnerability still triggers on the first roll.

Destiny Level: Whenever you take the Cunning stance, you may re-roll 2s as well.

Inspiring

Whenever an ally has a clear line of sight and hearing towards you, they have advantage on checks to avoid being charmed, enraged, dispirited, terrified, and confused.

Destiny Level: Rather than getting advantage on their checks, allies are immune.

Interrogator

You have advantage on persuasion checks to get information when you have considerably more power than your opponent.

Destiny Level: If you have considerably more power than your opponent, you always know when your opponent is lying.

Intimidating

Whenever you inflict a major wound on an enemy, adjacent creatures are paralyzed with fear. They cannot move or take actions until the end of the next round.

Destiny Level: This effect extends out to a 20 foot range around your victim.

Intuitive

You can always tell when something's afoot. Whenever you spend story points to make a plot hook, you may ask the GM what your instincts tell you. The GM must state a creature, faction, event, object, or location that the subject of the plot hook is tied to and is not already apparent.

Destiny Level: You may determine one fact about the plot element you created.

It's Over...

Whenever you make your first ranged attack on your turn from a height at least ten feet greater than the height of your target, you get advantage on the attack roll.

Destiny Level: You get another instance of advantage for every 10 foot height difference you have over your target, up to 30 feet.

Juggernaut

When you are forced to move, you may instead choose to move half as far. Whenever you are slowed, you are slowed by half as much. Additionally, your move speed cannot be reduced below 10.

Destiny Level: Your move speed cannot be reduced below 15.

Last Stand

While your vigor die is a d4, you have AD2 your A/D rolls.

Destiny Level: You may spend a destiny point to change the result of your vigor roll to a 3 if you are rolling a d4.

Low and Fast

While prone, your movement speed is not halved, standing up only costs 5 feet of movement, and you cannot be off-balanced.

Destiny Level: You do not have disadvantage on attacks while prone.

Lucky

If you would roll in a tie, add 1 to your roll.

Destiny Level: If you would roll in a tie, instead add 3 to your roll.

Magic Wards

You have advantage on defense rolls against magic.

Destiny Level: Whenever you take damage from a magical source, you may remove one minor wound.

Manipulative

You can bend others to your will, and trick them into thinking they owe you. Whenever you get someone to owe you debt, they owe you an additional debt.

Destiny Level: After talking with a contact for 10 minutes, you can convince them that they owe you. If your debt value towards them is -1, 0, or 1, it increases by 1. You cannot use this ability on the same person again until you do them a favor.

Master Wrestler

Whenever you deal damage to a creature using a melee attack, you may instead grapple the creature, causing them to gain 2 levels of restrained. At the beginning of each of your turns, if you are still grappling them, you may continue your hold to apply another level of restrained. Your speed is reduced by an amount equal to their speed, no less than 0. If they win an engagement against you, they may instead choose to free themselves from the grapple. You may let go of them at any time.

Destiny Level: They gain 4 levels of restrained instead.

Melt Away

Whenever you take the hide action, or begin a turn while hidden, you may remove a minor wound. This cannot reduce your minor wounds below 0.

Destiny Level: If an enemy spots you while hidden, they have disadvantage to hit you until the end of the round.

Member of a Cult

You have a secret passphrase, hand signal, or greeting that you can use to identify yourself as a member of a certain cult. The nature of the cult is up to you and your GM. Additionally, whenever you spend story points to claim a connection with a member of your cult, it costs 2 less story points. This cannot reduce the cost below 1.

Destiny Level: The cost is reduced by 3 story points instead.

Mighty

Whenever you take the Might stance, you may re-roll 1s on your might die. Vulnerability still triggers on the first roll.

Destiny Level: Whenever you take the Might stance, you may re-roll 2s as well.

Nature's Child

You can communicate simple ideas with wild animals. They are generally friendly and receptive to your requests.

Destiny Level: Animals can communicate simple ideas back to you.

Nimble

Enemies do not count as impassable terrain. You may spend an action to ignore up to 3 points of fall damage. Add 1 to your agility defense rolls.

Destiny Level: Ignore fall damage. When an enemy fails to deal damage to you after attacking, you may take the dash action for free at the end of the engagement.

Of Noble Blood

You are important, and know important people. Whenever you spend story points to claim a connection with someone it costs 2 less points. However, as nobility, you do not mix with the common folk. You cannot claim a connection with anyone with less than 2 influence.

Destiny Level: You can immediately tell someone's influence just by looking at them. Additionally, you can refuse favors without paying any cost, even if you are indebted to the requestor.

One With the Shadows

When in shadow, you can turn invisible so long as you aren't moving.

Destiny Level: So long as you don't take actions or leave the shadows, you can remain invisible when you move.

Parting Blows

Whenever you leave the range of an enemy, they take 1 damage. They can only take this damage once per round.

Destiny Level: Each time you take the dash action, you may choose one person you are adjacent to who takes 1 damage.

Perceptive

So long as you are not blind, you cannot have disadvantage on your skill checks to see things.

Destiny Level: Whenever you walk into an unfamiliar location, you may spend a story point to declare one, nearly unnoticeable thing about the scene.

Phalanx

While you have 1 or more allies adjacent to you, you get advantage on your defense rolls.

Destiny Level: You and one other ally each get AD2 on your defense rolls while you remain adjacent.

Pinky Swear

While the smallest finger of your hand is interlocked with the smallest finger of another person's hand, neither you nor that person can knowingly utter a lie.

Destiny Level: While your pinky fingers are intertwined, each person must truthfully answer any yes or no questions asked of the other, or else lose their finger.

Push Off

Whenever you start your turn adjacent to a wall or other piece of impassable terrain you can immediately take the dash action for free.

Destiny Level: Whenever you use this talent, you get AD2 on your next A/D roll if you attack immediately after dashing.

Quick

Whenever you dash, you move 5 more feet.

Destiny Level: You are immune to the slow condition, and move 5 more feet when you dash.

Rebel Leader

You have a cause, and you are good at rallying those around you to it. If you spend 10 minutes talking to a crowd of 10 or more, you may spend a story point to convert 1/10 of the people of influence 1 to your cause. Additional points can be spent to double the number of people or increase the level of influence by 1.

Destiny Level: You have advantage on social checks to persuade people to your cause, and you have AD2 whenever you try to gather a crowd to hear your cause.

Religious Figure

You have religious contacts everywhere. Whenever you spend story points to claim a connection someone who is a member of your religion, it costs 1 less story point. This cannot reduce the cost below 1. Whenever you declare a connection in the church, you may spend a story point to also make them your contact.

Destiny Level: Unless you commit heresy, any new contacts within your religion automatically owe you one debt.

Rope Servant

A piece of rope being held in this hand, of a length up to six times that of your arm, can be

controlled in any way you wish, as if it were a living thing. It is not strong or dexterous enough to wield a weapon, but it can lift objects and carry them. The control persists only while you hold the rope.

Destiny Level: The rope becomes unbreakably strong, and is can extend up to 500 feet long.

Savage Attacker

Whenever you roll the maximum result on a damage die using a heavy weapon, you may roll that die again, and add that to the result.

Destiny Level: Whenever you choose the might option while wielding a heavy weapon, you have advantage on your A/D roll.

Scholar

Choose a field of study. You have advantage on all rolls on checks to recall information about that field. Additionally, as a well known scholar, and have many academic contacts who you bounce ideas off of in your research. Whenever you spend story points to claim a connection with someone who is in the same field of study as yourself, it costs 1 less story point. This cannot reduce the cost below 1.

Destiny Level: You have AD2 on all skill checks to recall information from your field, and have advantage on all checks to know information that's stored in most libraries.

Sea Worthy

You have AD2 on checks to avoid falling prone or becoming off-balanced. Additionally, your swim speed is increased by 10 feet, and you can hold your breath for 2 minutes. You gain 3 ranks in the sailor background.

Destiny Level: Your ranks in the sailor background increases to 5.

Shield Master

You have learned how wield a shield offensively. Before declaring a stance, you may state that you are using your shield to aid your attack. If you do, you get advantage on your next attack roll this turn and gain 2 levels of off-balanced.

Destiny Level: You have learned how to throw your shield and use it as a weapon itself. Your shield becomes a light, bludgeoning weapon with the ranged or melee options.

Skillful Maneuvering

You gain several abilities granting you prowess in positioning within combat. You may switch positions with any adjacent character as part of your move action, and following an engagement, you may end the engagement in any space adjacent to an enemy you hit with a melee attack.

Additionally, you take only half as many levels of off-balanced when it is applied to you.

Destiny Level: Those who do try to off balance you inevitably become off-balanced themselves. Whenever an enemy gives you levels of off-balanced with an attack, they gain as many as you gain.

Skulker

You have advantage all checks to hide while in combat.

Destiny Level: Shadows count as 1 level of cover.

Soul of the Party

You have the spirit of a party running in your veins. You have advantage on all social checks while at social events, and can claim a connection at parties for one fewer story point. This cannot reduce the cost below 1.

Destiny Level: You have AD2 on all social checks while at social events, and any complications that arise from your rolls during a party can never turn the crowd against you. The story point cost is reduced by 1 more as well.

Staggering Blows

Whenever you roll the maximum on one of the dice in your attack roll, you may push the enemy back 5 feet, or knock them prone.

Destiny Level: You may do both, and you push them back 10 feet instead.

Still Fresh

If your vigor die has not fallen you may reduce the number of levels of dazed, off-balanced, or weakened applied to you by 2 each turn, rather than 1.

Destiny Level: You cannot be dazed, off-balanced, or weekend while your vigor die is still at its maximum.

Stone Skinned

Whether literally or figuratively, your skin is tough as stone. You have +2 on defense rolls against slashing and piercing weapons, and -3 on defense rolls against bludgeoning weapons.

Destiny Level: The bonus increases to +3, and the penalty increases to -4.

Surprise!

Whenever you attack from while hidden, you get AD2 on your attack roll.

Destiny Level: If you roll the maximum result on one of the dice used in an attack while hidden, you may re-roll the die and add that to the result.

Target Practice

Whenever you make a ranged attack on an enemy that did not move on its last turn, you get AD2 on your attack roll.

Destiny Level: You gain this bonus so long as the enemy did not move more than 10 feet.

Take Advantage

Whenever an enemy has 3 or more levels of weakened, dazed, or off-balanced, you get advantage on your attacks against them.

Destiny Level: If they have 3 or more levels of two of those conditions, then you may use an action to make an opportunity attack against them.

Tavern Brawler

You may ignore the penalty on ultralight weapons.

Destiny Level: When you use an ultralight weapon, you may choose for it to break on impact, causing it to deal even more damage at the cost of being unusable again. If you do, the attack deals an extra 3 damage.

Tavern Regular

You have spent a lot of your lifetime in taverns, and have made thousands of acquaintances from around the world. You have advantage on all social checks while at taverns or similar locations, and can claim a connection at taverns for one fewer story point. This cannot reduce the cost below 1. Claiming a connection at a tavern causes you to immediately see them there.

Destiny Level: You have AD2 on all social checks while at taverns, and the story point cost of claiming connections is reduced by one point further, so long as it is someone of influence 3 or less.

Thick Headed

You cannot be enraged, terrified, or charmed, but gain one more level of confused whenever it is applied to you.

Destiny Level: You cannot be dazed.

Two-faced

You have a second face that you can switch in between by passing a hand over your face. Its features are up to you to describe.

Destiny Level: Your face can change to any face you've seen before.

Voice Actor

You can speak without moving your lips. Additionally, you may throw your voice up to 30 feet. You have advantage on checks to mimic other people's voices.

Destiny Level: You can mimic voices uncannily well. People cannot tell the difference between your voice and the voices you try to emulate.

Windup

You may spend your action winding up your attack. Doing so grants advantage on your next attack roll.

Destiny Level: If your attack following the use of this talent would apply any levels of dazed, off-balanced, or weakened, apply two more levels of that condition.

World Traveler

You have traveled the world for much of your life, and have met thousands of other travelers. Once per new settlement, you may claim a connection for 1 less story point. This cannot reduce the cost below 1.

Destiny Level: The cost is reduced by 2 rather than 1.

Equipment

Weapons

Every weapon has a size, attack type, and damage type, which together describe the weapon and its properties.

Size

The size of weapon refers to how big and powerful the weapon is. Two sizes exist: Light, and Heavy.

Heavy Weapons

Heavy weapons require two hands, and cannot be easily hidden upon your body. Longbows, greatswords, pikes, mauls, and heavy crossbows are examples of heavy weapons. Whenever you use a heavy weapon, add 2 to your attack rolls. If the weapon is Your move speed decreases by 10 feet.

Light Weapons

Light weapons are, as their name suggests, light, and are easy to handle and hide. Knives, crossbows, shortswords, and shortbows are all examples of light weapons.

Ultralight Weapons

Ultralight weapons are generally not even considered real weapons. Fists, rocks, chairs, and bottles of booze are all ultralight weapons. Whenever you use an ultralight weapon, subtract 2 from your attack roll.

Attack Type

Two types of weapons exist: melee and ranged. Each come with different benefits.

Melee

Melee weapons are weapons that do not leave involve any part of the weapon leaving your hand. They are generally more powerful than ranged weapons, due to the fact that they have a lot of weight attached to them. Whenever you wield a melee weapon, add 2 to your attack rolls.

Ranged

Ranged weapons trade damage for being able to inflict injuries from a safer distance away. Light ranged weapons have a range of 30 ft, and heavy ranged weapons have a range of 60 ft. You can attack targets within outside of that range, but have a bane to the attack for every 10 feet beyond the range listed.

Ranged weapons come with drawbacks, however. All ranged weapons require two hands unless specifically noted otherwise, and you cannot attack if you move more than half your movement speed (rounded down), and vice versa.

Damage Type

Bludgeoning

Bludgeoning weapons use raw force to inflict damage, and therefore take the most advantage of high Might. Examples of bludgeoning weapons include war hammers and clubs. Whenever you wield a bludgeoning weapon and use the Might stance, add 3 to your attack roll.

Piercing

Piercing weapons use knowledge of your opponents maneuvering to inflict damage, and therefore take the most advantage of high Cunning. Examples of piercing weapons include rapiers and weapons that use arrows. Whenever you wield a

piercing weapon and use the Cunning stance, add 3 to your attack roll.

Slashing

Slashing weapons use accuracy and dexterity to inflict damage, and therefore take the most advantage of high Agility. Examples of slashing weapons include swords and halberds. Whenever you wield a slashing weapon and use the Agility stance, add 3 to your attack rolls.

Special

Some weapons have multiple ways they can inflict damage, such as halberds. In this case, choose its two primary ways of dealing damage. Whenever you attack using one of their corresponding stances, add one to your roll.

Armor

Armor works by increasing your defense rolls, making it harder for damage to get through to do you harm.

Heavy Armor

Add 6 to your defense rolls. Your move speed decreases by 30 feet.

Medium Armor

Add 4 to your defense rolls. Your move speed decreases by 20 feet.

Light Armor

Add 2 to your defense rolls. Your move speed decreases by 10 feet.

No Armor

No effect

Shields

You must have free hands available to wield a shield (e.g. Wielding a light melee weapon in the other hand). Shields can only be used in conjunction with light weapons.

Heavy Shields

Add 2 to your defense rolls. Your move speed decreases by 10 feet.

A large shield and fast reflexes has the potential to protect you from large area attacks or hidden archers. If you are targeted by an opportunity attack, you may spend your action to throw up your shield, adding 2 to your defense roll.

Light Shields

Add 1 to your defense rolls. Your move speed decreases by 5 feet.

Magic

There are two different types of magic, both of which can be mixed, matched, or ignored for any setting.

The first system, integrated with the mage position, is spell magic. Spell magic involves a sorcerer casting spells with the flick of their hands and some magic words. There is no time element to it, it is fast, it is dangerous, and it is perfectly viable in the middle of combat. You should use this magic system if you have a setting in which elemental magic is aplenty and frequently used in combat.

The second system uses ritual magic. Ritual magic is a darker, more sinister magic, as you can achieve nearly any effect you can imagine, given enough time and a properly large sacrifice. It is slow, and more suited to cults and NPCs than players. You should use this magic system if you don't want players to be using magic as much, but want a basic framework for magic's usage by evil doers.

Lore

Both systems have some simple lore associated with them, required to make some of the mechanics make sense.

Spell Magic and Attunement

Spell magic uses an elemental system, where clean magic comes from within, and allows you to mostly affect inanimate things, only harming people indirectly. For some reason, targeting people with spells directly is impossible without paying a price. Here are some possible explanations:

- Living things behave like repellent magnetics, buffering away magic that is directed at them
- You must know a creature's true name to target it
- Everyone at birth is treated to resist direct magic attack.

Instead, spells work by indirectly harming others, where the spell caster creates a harmful effect, and it situationally will damage others.

Ritual Magic

Ritual magic is much looser, with nearly endless possibilities to do anything you want. However, due to the time and blood payments required for the magic, it implies that the magic is being granted from someone or something. What this is is up to you. Here are some possible explanations:

- The god of the dead grants wishes to those who pay
- Demons below trade pieces of your soul for power
- Life is power, and there must be an equal exchange between effect and cost, so the payment is required to achieve balance

Attunement

By attuning to different elements, you have some basic power over those elements. There are two levels of attunement for each element, each of which grant you various abilities.

Fire

With a basic level of attunement to fire, you gain the following abilities:

- You can create small flames in your fingertips, enough to light flammable objects. You can put out similarly sized flames with your fingers.
- You can produce handfuls of ash, suet, or smoke.
- You can sense any fire nearby, including how much, its direction, and intensity.
- Your hands are immune to the effects of fire.

With an advanced level of attunement to fire, you gain the following additional abilities:

- You can ignite or put out small, flammable items within arms reach without having to touch them.
- You can shape fire and smoke into shapes and patterns.
- You can sense fire within a mile, including how much, its direction, and intensity.
- You take half the damage you normally would from fire.

Air

With a basic level of attunement to air, you gain the following abilities:

- You can produce small pockets of air or wind in your hands, enough to be felt across a room.
- While falling through air, you can move 5 feet horizontally for every 5 feet fallen, and you take half fall damage, rounded down.
- You can produce or remove any smell in the air around you.
- You can sense any air nearby, including how much, its direction, and any substances within it.

With an advanced level of attunement to air, you gain the following additional abilities:

- By touching your hand to a bare chest, you can cause the air to leave their lungs, causing the target to begin to suffocate.
- While in the air, you can glide 10 feet horizontally for every 5 feet fallen, and you take a quarter fall damage, rounded down.
- You can sense all air within a mile, including its direction, and any substances within it.

Water

With a basic level of attunement to water, you gain the following abilities:

- You can produce or destroy handfuls of water. Water you create cannot quench thirst.
- You can cause water you touch to freeze. This cannot effect water within living things.
- You can produce handfuls of fog or mist in your hands, which move under your will. They obfuscate anything within them.
- You can sense any water nearby, including how much, its direction, and any substances within it.

With an advanced level of attunement to water, you gain the following additional abilities:

- You can create and manipulate up to a square foot of fog or mist. Objects created with mist look real until the viewer sees something to the contrary.
- By snapping your fingers, you can completely freeze all water nearby. This cannot effect water within living beings.
- You can sense all water within a mile, including how much, its direction, and any substances within it.

Earth

With a basic level of attunement to earth, you gain the following abilities:

- You can create and mold small, very simple objects of stone, dirt, or clay in your hands.
- You can draw shapes in, write words on, or change the color of stone, dirt, or clay you touch.
- Your hands (and ONLY your hands) can pass through solid stone.
- You can sense any nearby dirt, stone, and clay, including how much, its direction, and layout.

With an advanced level of attunement to water, you gain the following additional abilities:

- You can convert any non-living, single material, easily hand held object into stone.
- You can sense all dirt, stone, and clay within a mile, including how much, its direction, and layout.

Ether

With a basic level of attunement to ether, you gain the following ability:

- You can detect the presence of nearby magic

With an advanced level of attunement to water, you gain the following additional ability:

- You can sense the nature and details of any magic nearby

Spells

Spells allow you to do fantastical things, but at the cost of low damage and low survivability. In order to understand your spells, you'll need to understand the terminology first.

Adjacent

Any squares on the grid touching each other are adjacent.

Ongoing/Immediate

Ongoing spells last until the end of combat, and cannot be willingly dispelled unless you leave combat (and lose all your adrenaline dice). Immediate spells occur once, and never again.

Point

The corner of a space; where four spaces meet.

Radius

Most ranges are measured as a radius, either from the spell caster or a point they see. When calculating radius, a creature is considered inside the range of effect if every corner of the square is within the range.

When measuring radius from a space, measure from each corner of the space.

Space

A 5 by 5 foot square in combat, shown as a 1" by 1" square on the grid.

Segment

This is the line between two adjacent spaces on the grid

Spell List

Fire

Wall of Fire
Inferno
Ward of the Fire Mage
Meteor Strike
Fire Fist
Incite Rage
Heatwave
Steam Fissure
Blinding Sun

Air

Misty Illusions
Storm's Wrath
Twister
Gale
Steam Fissure
Fog Bank
Chilling Wind
Sand Storm
Lightning Ward
Wave of Lightning

Water

Misty Illusions
Storm's Wrath
Steam Fissure
Fog Bank
Chilling Wind
Deluge
Grasp of the Ice Witch
Brain Freeze
Mass Confusion
Cloud of Poison

Earth

Meteor Strike
Wall of Stone
Ravine
Tremor Stomp
Earthquake
Earthen Shackles
Liquify
Sandstorm

Ether

Scatter
Blinding Sun
Mass Confusion
Incite Rage
Portal
Time Slow
Time Twister
Cardinal Direction
WarpSpace

Spells

Blinding Sun

Ongoing

You produce a sphere of bright white light that blinds those around it. Choose a point within eyesight. Anyone within 10 feet gains 2 levels of blindness at the beginning of each turn. For every 10 feet further you are from the point you gain one fewer level of blindness.

Amplify: Blindness +1

Brain Freeze

Ongoing

You place an enchantment over a nearby area, slowing everyone's thoughts. Choose a point within eyesight. Everyone in a 10 foot radius of that point gains 3 levels of dazed at the beginning of their turn, or whenever they enter the area.

Amplify: Radius +5 feet, dazed +1

Cardinal Direction

Ongoing

You conform the world around you to uniform rigidity. All creatures within 30 feet of you (including yourself) can only move back and forth in one direction each round (no diagonals).

Amplify: Radius +15

Chilling Wind

Immediate

A bone chilling breeze passes by. Everyone within 5 feet of you loses their next action. If the temperature is already below freezing, everyone's 3 levels of slowed.

Amplify: Radius +5

Cloud of Poison

Ongoing

You create a large, poisonous cloud of gas in the air that slowly drifts away from you. Choose a point within eyesight. A cloud of noxious gas appears around you in a 5 foot radius. Each turn, it moves 5 feet closer to the point you chose. Anyone who enters or starts their turn in the gas takes 1 damage and gains a level of poisoned.

Amplify: Radius +5, damage +1, poisoned +1

Deluge

Immediate

A river of water rushes by, sweeping people away. Choose a 10 foot by 20 foot section of the map. Anyone in that area is swept to one of the 10 foot sides of the rectangle, and lands prone. The water puts out any fire in that area.

Amplify: Each dimension +10

Earthen Shackles

Immediate

The ground reaches up and anchors those above it. Choose a point you can see. Everyone within a 5 foot radius gains 2 levels of slowed.

Amplify: Radius +5, slowed +1

Earthquake

Ongoing

You cause the ground beneath you to stutter and quake. Everyone within 30 feet of you, including you, gains 3 levels of off-balanced, and falls prone if they take the dash action (they fall after dashing). If you are underground, everyone takes an additional level of off-balanced.

Amplify: Radius +10, off-balanced +1

Fire Fist

Ongoing

Your hands erupt into flame. Whenever you hit an enemy with an unarmed melee attack, they gain a level of on-fire.

Amplify: On-fire +1, but you also take a level of on-fire.

Fog Bank

Ongoing

Clouds of fog billow up around you. Choose 2 connected, unoccupied segments. A wall of fog grows up there. Creatures behind the wall are completely obscured to those on the other side, but can freely pass through the wall.

Amplify: Segments +1

Gale

Ongoing

You cause a powerful wind to pick up. Choose a direction. At the beginning of each player's turn, that player is pushed 10 feet in that direction. The range of projectile weapons fired downwind is doubled, and halved when fired upwind.

Amplify: Pushed +5

Grasp of the Ice Witch

Ongoing

Your hands freeze over, giving you an icy grasp. Whenever you hit an enemy with an unarmed melee attack, they gain a level of restrained and cannot make more than one attack roll until the end of the next round.

Amplify: Restrained +1

Heat Wave

Immediate

A debilitating wave of heat passes through the area. Everyone within 100 feet of you gains 2 levels of dazed and weakened.

Amplify: Dazed +2, weakened +2

Incite Rage

Immediate

Choose any number of creatures in sight and within 20 feet of you. They each gain 2 levels of enraged.

Amplify: Radius +10, enraged +1

Inferno

Ongoing

You cause an uncontrollable fire to erupt all around you. Choose two unoccupied spaces that contain flammable materials within sight. They erupt into flame. At the end of each round, they spread to all adjacent spaces with flammable materials. Anyone who enters or ends their turn in the fire takes a level of on-fire. The fire stops spreading at unnatural speeds when you end the spell, but the fire does not cease to exist.

Amplify: The fire's spreads an additional time at the end of each round.

Lightning Ward

Ongoing

You create an area of crackling energy, hurting and energizing those inside. Choose a point within sight. Everyone within 5 feet of that point is affected by this spell. Whenever someone enters or begins their turn inside the ward, they take 2 damage. Then, for every 2 damage they take, they gain one adrenaline die.

Amplify: Radius +5, damage +1

Lightning Wave

Stance Required, Ongoing

You summon forth a wall of lightning that crackles at speed across the ground away from you. Choose 5 line segments in straight line that share a border with yourself. At the end of each round, the wall advances 4 spaces directly away from you. You must make an opportunity attack using your chosen stance against anyone the line passes over. If they are wearing metal armor or are standing in water, you have advantage on the attack.

Amplify: Segments +2, AD +1

Liquify

Ongoing

You turn the rock around you into an unstable liquid slew. Choose a point within eyesight. If anyone ends their turn within 5 feet of that space, they begin sinking into the ground. While in the ground, they gain 1 level of restrained at the beginning of each turn. They may spend 10 feet of movement or dash to remove the restrained condition.

Amplify: Radius +5

Mass Confusion

Immediate

You cast a spell of confusion in an area, sending strange and conflicting thoughts into the minds of those caught within the ward. Choose a point you can see. Everyone in a 20 foot radius gains a level of confusion.

Amplify: Radius +10, confusion +1

Meteor Strike

Immediate

A meteor begins falling from the sky, potentially dealing enormous fiery damage to anyone unfortunate caught underneath. Choose a point within sight. A meteor appears in the sky and appears to begin falling

towards that point. At the end of the next round, the meteor lands. The meteor deals 15 damage in a 20 foot radius. Everyone in the blast takes 3 levels of dazed, of-balanced, and weakened.

Amplify: Radius +20 feet, damage +10, rounds until impact +1.

Misty Illusions

Ongoing

You create a large, dynamic scene in the air. No one can see through it or realize that it is an illusion until they have interacted with it in some way, at which point the illusion fades from their sight. Choose 2 spaces. If it is already misty around you, you may double the number of spaces of illusion.

Amplify: Spaces +2

Portal

Ongoing

Choose two unoccupied spaces within sight. A portal in each space opens up, leading to the other. All spaces adjacent to one portal are adjacent to the other, and the portals provide line of sight. Momentum and relative direction remain constant.

Amplify: Portals +1

Ravine

Ongoing

The ground splits open upon your direction. Choose 4 connected, unoccupied spaces. A 10 foot deep hole opens in those spaces.

Amplify: Spaces +2

Sandstorm

Ongoing

You cause a brutal sandstorm to whirl around. Choose a point you can see. All area within 5 feet is enveloped in the storm. The storm provides half cover

from projectile attacks, and deals 1 damage to anyone who enters or begins their turn in the storm.

Amplify: Radius +5, damage +1

Scatter

Immediate

Everyone within 30 feet of you teleports up to 10 feet in a direction of your choice to another unoccupied space. Vertical movement costs double.

Amplify: Radius +10, teleportation distance +10

Steam Fissure

Ongoing

You force fissures open in the ground around you, producing geysers of scalding steam from the depths beneath you. Choose 8 unoccupied spaces within eyesight. If anyone ends their turn on one of those spaces, they take 10 damage as a geyser of steam erupts, scalding them.

Amplify: Spaces +4

Storm's Wrath

Ongoing

You trigger an enormous downpour in one area. Choose a point within eyesight. Everyone in a 10 foot radius of that point has partial cover from projectile attacks, and the ground is difficult terrain in that area. If it is already raining, affected targets have half cover instead.

Amplify: Radius +5

Time Slow

Ongoing

Time slows down around you, giving those outside the effect more time to react to what's happening. Everyone within 20 feet of you (including yourself) gains a level of restrained.

Amplify: Radius +10, restrained +1

Timetwister

Immediate

You unwind time. Everyone within 20 feet of you (including yourself) is teleported to wherever they started this turn.

Amplify: Radius +10

Tremor Stomp

Immediate

You stomp the ground, sending a shockwave radiate outwards from you. Everyone in a 10 foot radius of you falls prone and takes 1 damage. Prone people are unaffected.

Amplify: Radius +10, damage +1

Twister

Ongoing

A coiling tornado touches down, throwing people aside as it travels across the ground. Choose a five foot square within sight. All area there is effected. Projectiles are thrown aside if they pass through, and anyone who enters is thrown 10 feet in a direction of your choice and lands prone. Each turn it moves 10 feet in a random direction (GM rolls 1d8).

Amplify: Size +5, distance thrown +5

Wall of Fire

Ongoing

Fiery walls blast up from the ground around you. Draw a straight line 20 feet in length. A wall of fire grows up there. Anyone who enters or begins their turn in the fire takes 2 levels of on-fire.

Amplify: Segments +2, on-fire +1

Wall of Stone

Ongoing

Stone walls shoot up from the ground around you. Draw a straight line 20 feet in length. A wall of rock grows up there, 10 feet high.

Amplify: Segments +2

Ward of the Fire Mage

Ongoing

You place a ward over an area causing anyone taking damage within the ward to ignite into flame. Choose a point within sight. Whenever someone within 5 feet of that point is hit with an attack, they gain a level of on-fire.

Amplify: Radius +5, on-fire +1

Ward of Weakness

Immediate

Mystical wards weaken those nearby. Choose a point you can see. Whenever someone takes damage within 10 feet of the ward, they gain 2 levels of weakness.

Amplify: Radius +10, weakness +2

Warpspace

Ongoing

Certain spaces become areas of warped space. Choose 6 unoccupied spaces within sight. Each space ceases to exist. It costs no movement speed to cross that space, and all spaces adjacent to a warped space are considered adjacent to all other spaces adjacent to that and any other connected warped spaces.

Amplify: Spaces +3

Word of Misery

Immediate

You speak a word of utter despair, invoking mass despair in an area. Everyone within 10 feet of you gains 2 levels of dispirited.

Amplify: Radius +10, dispirited +1

Ritual Magic

With ritual magic, no magic is clean. However, it is available to everyone—at a price. In order to conduct magic, first determine how powerful its effects are. Consult with your GM, and find its power level in the table below.

Effect	Sacrifice	Time
Inconsequential	Spilt blood, small animal	10 minutes
Minor	Limb, larger animal	1 hours
Average	Human life	1 day
Strong	Dozens of human lives	1 week
Very Strong	Hundreds of lives, a dragon	1 month
Legendary	Thousands of lives, multiple dragons	5 years
World Shattering	Hundreds of thousands of lives	A lifetime

Then, in order to conduct the magic, you must consult with whatever source of magical knowledge exists within the world. This could mean remaining in trance while learning from the voice in the darkness, or it may mean uncovering forbidden books and rituals.

Once you have the knowledge of how to perform the ritual, you must spend the time and produce the sacrifice. The sacrifice must occur at the end of the ritual, and the time spent conducting the ritual involves continuous chanting by at least one person during the entire procedure. Additional people can shorten the time requirement, since the time required

is measured in man-hours, not single, continuous time spent.

Additionally, the final sacrifice must be done with a blade of nightglass, which acts as the call to the magic to pull it into the world. As the ritual is cast, the nightglass is expended, and disappears.

Running the Game

This section was written for the GM to aid them in running the game. It mostly contains rules for running encounters and guiding them through encounter design.

Complications

The exact nature of the complication is up to you. However, these charts can be used to randomly determine (d6) how the narrative complicates in different situations.

Social Encounter

1	Initialize hostility
2	They demand more in return
3	They need something first now
4	They mistake your intent
5	They remember you...
6	Nothing happens

Running Combat

Hordes

When running a horde of creatures, such as minions of a monster, or an unruly crowd, it is best to treat all of the creatures as one entity. Minor wounds should represent killing a few of the horde, whereas major wounds represent the killing of large swaths of them.

Events and Clocks

Sometimes players will try to achieve something that requires more than a single skill check. Other times, you will want to represent ticking doom, or an event that will occur if action is not taken by the players. In these cases, the activity should use a clock. Clocks are a mechanic that create better pacing and tension in games, and are well suited to a variety of different types of events.

Creating a Clock

Whenever an event will take more than a single turn to complete—by the players or other characters, it doesn’t matter—it’s a good idea to use a clock. A clock is a visual tool—a simple circle divided into some number of sections that represent the steps and relative difficulty of achieving the end result of an event. More difficult, harder to achieve things should have clocks with more sections, while easier things should use smaller clocks. Draw (or place, if you have physical ones) the clock in front of your players so everyone can see.

When making a clock, be sure that it is relevant to the players. A faction that the players have not been interacting with and have no stake in does not need a clock—the GM has narrative control and should just decide when it achieves its goals. However, if the faction is hated by the players, and the players have a large stake in the outcome of the faction’s efforts, then a clock would be appropriate.

Tick, tick, tick...

After determining the difficulty of the clock, figure out the conditions for progress along the clock. This could be something like “the players roll a successful skill check to persuade the queen” or something like “the players don’t take any action to

stop the encroaching spies that day”. Either way, make sure that you have some idea for what you imagine to be the most common circumstances for the clock to tick forward.

Then, abide by it. As those predetermined events occur, fill in a section of the clock. As the GM, you are welcome to pause, remove, or fill in additional sections of the clock, but make sure the players understand why they are occurring. If the clock ever fills up, then the end event occurs—the players persuade the queen to send her troops to war, the spies uncover incriminating evidence, or whatever else you had set out for the clock.

Improvising

NPCs

Creating an NPC

Non-player characters, or NPCS, are vital to running a game, and the more engaging and interesting they seem, the more players will enjoy them. Luckily, creating NPCs on the fly isn’t too difficult. Obviously, you can create NPCs in advance of a session, and you probably should if they are very important, but ideally you will have to do this very little. If you do, you can follow the same rules for improvising an NPC, but perhaps spend more time flushing out details.

Four key features make up an engaging NPC:

- Name
- Distinct physical feature
- Goal or purpose
- Relation or obligation with someone or something else in the world

- Then, if you are intent on creating the NPC in advance, you should also come up with their hook.

The NPC’s name is what ties all of their features to a single thing in player’s memory, so it should feel “right” for whoever this NPC is. Although name generators exist online, customizing them for the exact NPC you are imagining is difficult, and opening up a website and waiting for it to load can be disruptive. One way you can solve this is by making large name lists in advance of games, but that requires more prep, which we are trying to avoid. For this reason, we use syllable charts. Different types of cultures and races have different naming conventions, but they frequently have similar sounds in them. I’ve put together the syllable chart I use in my game, though you are welcome to expand upon it. To use it, just combine any syllables you like to quickly make a name.

After making a name, choose a distinct physical feature this person has. It doesn’t have to be special, but the stranger and more specific it is, the more memorable it will be (and therefore the better for tying the character together). Although descriptors like “tall,” “red-haired,” and “grinning face” are all helpful, none of them are quite as memorable as saying that his right ear is missing and you can see profuse amounts of hair growing from the backs of his hands.

Now that this NPC’s name and characteristics are solidly nailed down, it’s time to figure out what this NPC is after. This is very important. When you inevitably have to improvise a conversation between this NPC and the players, having an idea of what the NPC is after is crucial to keeping a consistent image of who this NPC is and guiding what they would say. This goal should pertain to how they want an

interaction with the NPCs to end, and should not be some lofty ideal or other irrelevant concept.

Finally, figure out an obligation this character has to the rest of the world. It should be something simple, and by no means should it need to be attached to something already in the world. This will let you use the character as a plot hook if you want and will let you adlib more behavior and dialogue.

If you cannot help yourself from making NPCs in advance of a game, it's a good idea to think of a way for how the NPC will draw the players in. NPCs are like walking plot hooks, but they can't hook anything if they don't wiggle around and look appetizing enough to get checked out, so it's a good idea to have know how the NPC is going to catch players' eyes and make them inquire in a way that will lead to whatever obligation plot hook you have planned.

Running NPCs

When running NPCs, there are several things to think about. The first is voice acting. I like voice acting because I can get in character better, but it's not for everyone. I suggest you try it in the mirror a few times alone if you are worried about trying it with your play group.

Secondly, you should consider the level of comedy in the setting, or the current moment. In order to increase the comedy of the situation, making the desires of the NPC more specific and making their efforts to achieve those goals more intense should result in somewhat comedic behavior. In contrast, speaking slower, and therefore giving yourself enough time to think about proper responses, will mean that NPCs will feel more serious. I personally like to vary my NPCs, but you should do whatever you like.

Monsters

Monsters and other adversaries provide combat challenges for players to get in the way of them achieving their goals. There is no level or challenge system for rating monsters on their difficulty, as this *Id Eternal* is designed for sandbox play, and your monsters should feel realistic for their situation. In this section, I outline how to quickly create and improvise good monster behavior.

Creating a Monster

In my opinion, this is one of the most important skills you can master. Many encounters happen unplanned, and having the skills and tools to quickly create a fun and engaging monster for the encounter goes a long way towards a fun session.

Monsters are very similar to players, though with considerably fewer fluffy bits. At its core, a monster can be as little as five stats—move speed, vigor, might, agility, and cunning. Of course, that's not a very interesting monster, but the point is that they aren't very complex—you could assign any 4 dice to anything in any way that made sense and you'd practically be done. Luckily, going from a five simple stat monster to an even cooler one isn't very hard. Below I've written out the checklist of thoughts on how to quickly create a monster

1. Figure out their three ability scores. These should simply reflect whatever the monster looks like, and unless this is something truly powerful, the dice should stay below d20s and should not have static bonuses.
2. Determine a move speed. If you want it to be slightly faster than most humans, give it a move speed of 50, and then adjust from there.
3. Figure out its vigor die. A good reference point is a d8 vigor die for humanoids.

4. Determine it's primary method of attack, and figure out what kind of ability it would use as well as any other special sorts of effects landing that attack would have.

a. Give the monster between a +3 and +7 on attacks using whichever ability it uses most. Give it between a +1 and +4 on whatever ability it uses second most.

b. If the attack would have some other effect on landing (poisoning, knocking prone, confusing), mark that down too, as well as a note on when the condition ends (default to the end of next round).

5. Determine the nature of up to three abilities that you foresee this monster using occasionally during a fight. Unlike players' minor abilities, for the sake of simplicity, monsters can use each ability up to three times, and no more than once per round.

6. Turn those abilities into simple mechanics. Easy things to exploit and incorporate are:

a. Opportunity attacks

b. Special Conditions

7. Almost done. Next determine a single use ability that this monster would have. There aren't adrenaline dice to keep track of to build up over time since that's too much work, but you shouldn't open a conflict with a finisher—it's not cinematic.

8. Once again, attach some simple mechanics to this. You can think of these as the fight goes on, since they should happen near the end.

Some good finishing moves are:

a. Extra damage

b. More powerful special conditions

9. Lastly, you need to know the primary goal for this monster, and whether it would sacrifice its life to achieve this goal. Most people and creatures value their own lives over most things, so will likely compromise, be bribed, or flee before they risk dying.

Remember, monsters can yell for a truce too!

Running Multiple Monsters

Running a bunch of monsters all at once can be difficult, there's no getting around it. However, there are some tricks to making it easier.

The first is to use horde and minion rules. In any fight, the first step is to decide who's important and who's not. Then, push the monsters that aren't as important into a few hordes, and treat the hordes as individual monsters. Ideally you can pare down an encounter into only 3 or 4 monster entities, tops.

If there are too many monsters for mere hordes, or the monsters are too insignificant to deserve entire stat blocks, you can also choose to treat them as elements of the terrain. When you do this, you can treat monsters as nothing more than difficult terrain that deal some pre-specified amount of damage whenever you move through a square. In cases like these, it's assumed that you are cutting your way through them, forming a path with your weapon, but there are so many that getting hit back is unavoidable.

Lastly, you can divvy larger encounters into waves. This works better when there are many important enemies, but there is some reasonable story explanation for why they aren't all able to gang up on you at once. This could be because they are physically spread out and can't reach you, or because they are already engaged with your allies and are therefore already occupied.

Making Encounters More Fun

There are a lot of things that go into making a fun combat encounter, and they greatly depend on your specific play group. However, most of them fall under either cinematics and roleplay or tactics and strategy. In this section I've compiled some of the ways that you can enhance playing in either of those styles. These tips almost always make encounters more fun.

Cinematics and Roleplaying

If players can't imagine what's going on in vivid detail, the game strays further from an RPG and towards a board game. RPGs are fun because there's roleplaying, that the RP in RPG. Therefore, make sure to include it when describing what monsters do, and encourage players to do the same when their characters do things as well. After a player lands a hit, they should describe what they did to get this hit, and perhaps where or how they got the blow in. If they attacked using agility and dealt a minor wound, maybe they say that they dodged away from the monsters flailing arm, twirled and smacked the sword across his open back, denting the metal and resulting in an audible "oof" coming from the monster.

Another way to increase the awe of an encounter is by ensuring that the major abilities of monsters are truly awe inspiring. If a monster's major ability results in more damage, be clear how and why it dealt more damage in this case. Ham it up. To increase the tension further (and perhaps affect some tactical decisions as well), have the monster wind up its attack, where it telegraphs what it's going to do by preparing the move with its actions. If you see the ogre pull back it's club and open its mouth to roar as it begins charging towards you, you know something's about to happen, and it feels more exciting.

Tactics and Strategy

The first, and perhaps the most important addition to a fun encounter is having a unique environment. From one encounter to the next, terrain can almost always change, and so long as the terrain has some sort of effect on combat, it means that it's one more thing keeping combat interesting. Walls or impassable areas, difficult terrain, inaccessible areas and highground, and dangerous areas that can damage those who enter them (such as bonfires or cliffs) all contribute to a brand new tactical puzzle to solve.

Physical terrain is not the only thing that can affect the battlefield—weather, auras, and single use items and gear scattered around can all provide further options. Scattering the tomb with ceramic vats of poison gas can result in a game of tiptoeing, a foggy cavern can shut down long ranged combat, a cursed altar can leach the life from those who wield unholy weapons, and a hanging chandelier can provide the perfect swing or death trap, depending on how you look at it.

Besides altering the environment, changing monster dynamics can also add a lot of excitement and intensity to a combat. Thought you had them beat? Well, look, here come the reinforcements. Thought that the troll was dead? Well now his chest flares red and you see him open his eyes. Surprises like these also let you balance encounters on the fly. If something turns out to be too easy, more can show up, or maybe the major ability that you were saving actually does something else more potent now.