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Version 0.1 "Kettgard"

A role-playing game by Nicolas Haase

Introduction

Ambersteel is a role-playing game, requiring a **game master** (henceforth referred to as the **GM**) and at least one **player** to play.

On the spectrum of *narrative-driven*, *game-y* and *simulationist*, **Ambersteel** aims for the region between *game-y* and *narrative-driven*, while leaning more towards *game-y*.

- Combat is a risky affair and requires tactical and strategic thinking, or the readiness to retreat, when things go awry. When a character suffers **injuries**, they are in *serious trouble*.
- Players are also expected to manage resources, such as their character's health and possessions. Character's are neither *damage sponges*, nor *item vacuums*.
- **PC** change and roleplaying are embedded into the rules. There are no classes or other arbitrary restrictions on what a character can do. **Attributes** and **skills** improve as they are used, incentivising experimentation.

While each player only controls a single character, the **GM** is in control of every single non-player character (**NPC**), the world and the story. A player character is abbreviated as **PC**.

The system is designed to fit a low to medium fantasy medieval setting. Player characters may be special, but they're far from heroic. Combat is deadly and magic is powerful, yet risky. The rules are designed to be as intuitive and simple as possible, while complex enough to allow players to make meaningful choices.

Most rules will have a certain degree of vagueness to them. This is at least partially deliberate. The situations that can come up during play are simply too varied and numerous to be possible to completely cover with rules, without requiring epic tomes filled to the brim with highly specific rulings for highly specific situations. Instead, the game relies on the **GM** to arbitrate in every situation. The descriptions in the rules here should serve as a point for orientation for the **GM**. How they interpret the rules, is how they're to be understood.

But this is not an *adversarial* game. The **GM** and the players work *together* to tell a compelling, interesting, humorous, tense, etc. story. Ultimately, the **GM**'s job is to provide interesting conundrums to the players and their job is to provide interesting answers, in-line with what their characters believe. What's important to remember is that the **GM** is a *player*, too. They're here to have fun and enjoy their time at the table, too.

Another important aspect of **Ambersteel** is that character's abilities grow over time. There are neither character classes, nor character levels. Skills and attributes improve as they're being used in tests. Characters have long-term and short-term goals and beliefs, which drive them onward and which change over time.

How to Play

As **Ambersteel** is a **roleplaying game**, there are certain rules and expectations of both players and **GM**.

In some places, where distances are concerned, both feet and meters are noted as units. What attentive readers will notice, is that the conversion between the numbers won't always be correct. This is a deliberate decision to make the math easier, whenever a grid (or *battlemat*) is used in play. One square on the grid should represent either a three foot, or one meter square. Furthermore, a single, ordinary human, should occupy an entire such square.

Dice

Ambersteel uses a **dice pool** system of **six-sided dice** (henceforth referred to as **D6**) to resolve **tests**. *Dice pool* means a variable number of dice will be rolled, based on a character's **attributes**, **skills**, boons and circumstance of the situation they're in.

The following types of dice come into play:

- **D2** - two-sided dice; or a coin
- **D3** - three-sided dice
- **D4** - four-sided dice
- **D6** - six-sided dice
- **D10 (D100)** - two ten-sided dice

Before the Game

Before anyone can start to play, the players have to **create their characters**. Ideally, this process should be done in cooperation with the **GM** and each other, to make sure the character concepts fit into the world and planned narrative. Also, it is advisable to design characters that will work well together, as a group.

The Session

This is the time, when the magic happens. The players and **GM** have come together and begin or continue the story.

Fate points cannot be awarded during play and neither can cards be bought from the **hand of fate**. However, players and the **GM** should take note of every situation they believe a **PC** (their own included) could have earned a **fate point**.

After the Session

After a playing session is done, the players and **GM** should stick around to discuss which players earned **fate points**. This is where players are nominated for **fate points**, by each other and by the **GM**. If everyone agrees,

the **fate points** are awarded. Players can and should lobby for their **fate points**, but shouldn't beg. If most everyone else says no, then that decision stands. That doesn't mean there is no point in discussing the matter further, but such a discussion shouldn't be forced.

Also after the session, players and the **GM** discuss whether a **PC** should lose an **instinct**, because they have acted against it or haven't gotten to play it out at all.

Any time in between sessions, players can spend **fate points** to buy cards (boons) from the **hand of fate**.

Tests

Whenever the outcome of an action or situation is uncertain, a **test** may be called for by the **GM**, in order to resolve it.

As a basis for a test, either an **attribute** or **skill** is used.

Either a **six** or a **five** rolled on a single die counts as a **positive**. Other values are considered **negatives**. **Positives** are required in order to succeed a test.

The **positives** needed to succeed a test, is determined by the **GM**, via a mechanism called **obstacle** (henceforth referred to as **Ob**). The test can only succeed, if at least as many **positives** are rolled, as the **Ob** named by the **GM**.

*For example, to succeed a test at **Ob 3**, at least three **positives** must be rolled. Any less, and the test outcome is a failure.*

To resolve an **attribute test**, the number of **D6** indicated by the *attribute level* (the number next to the attribute) must be rolled.

To resolve a **skill test**, the number of **D6** indicated by the **skill level** (the number next to the skill), plus the number of **D6** indicated by the related **attribute** must be rolled.

For every test, one of three outcomes is possible:

- **Complete Success:** There are enough or even more than required **positives**.
- **Partial Success:** There are not enough **positives**, but more than none.
- **Complete Failure:** There are no **positives**, only **negatives**.

Types of Test

There are the following types of tests. The **GM** decides when each type of test is appropriate.

Binary Test

The outcome of the test is either a **complete success** or **complete failure**. A **partial success** is treated as if it were a **complete failure**.

Stepped Test

A stepped test is really just a series of **binary tests**. This allows for finer-grained results, while still not behaving like a **graduated test**.

This type of test is useful for situations where the **GM** decides to create very fine *time slices* and allow more chances for success. This makes it easier to allow a **PC** to *fail forward* or prevent a *one roll to end it all* situation.

*For example, a **PC** is attempting to cross a suspension bridge, but upon setting foot on the bridge, the ropes holding it up, suddenly snap. The **PC** can make an **acrobatics** test, to try and quickly jump off and back onto solid ground. They fail, and get to make another **acrobatics** test at greater **Ob**, to try and grab a root sticking out of the ground beneath the bridge. They fail again! As a last chance for that **PC** to survive, the **GM** asks one of the other players if their character will attempt an **acrobatics** test at high **Ob**, to try and grab their falling ally's hand in a daring rescue. Finally, their ally succeeds and the **PC**'s life is saved.*

Obviously, such a situation should not arise often, as stepped tests can quickly grow exasperating.

Graduated Test

The outcome of the test is graduated. That means, the number of **positives** rolled during the test factor into the outcome. This is called the **degree of success**.

*For example, when crafting a work of art, the number of **positives** achieved may result in a more impressive piece, which can then be sold at a higher price or which could make for a more impressive gift.*

On the other hand, failure doesn't have to be absolute. The degree of failure can allow for a "failing forward" - a success, but with complications, whose severity depends on the number of failures.

Creative Test

Also known as a **skill challenge**, this type of test asks the player(s) to pick and justify the skill(s) and attribute(s) to use in a given situation. Players are encouraged to think creatively, come up with and describe their solutions.

Whether the attribute(s) and skill(s) in question can apply to resolve the situation at hand, lies at the **GM**'s discretion.

Opposed Test

Also known as a *versus test*, this type of test occurs, when two characters come into opposition. Who wins, and by how much, is determined by comparing the number of **positives** of each character. The one with the most **positives** is the winner.

In order to even stand a chance of winning an **opposed test**, the **attacker** has to also achieve a **complete success**.

If there is a tie, the **defending** character is considered the winner.

The terms of **attacker** and **defender** refer to the character initiating and the character reacting to the **opposed test**, respectively.

*For example, a character tries to sneak past another, the sneaking character will have to succeed a **stealth** test, while the other character will have to succeed an **observation** test. If the result is a tie, the one making the observation test is considered the **defender**, and wins.*

If a tie occurs in which a **defender** cannot be clearly determined, the result is a deadlock and neither side gains anything.

Advantage & Disadvantage

Certain situations may warrant a character getting **advantage** or **disadvantage** to a test they have to make.

Advantage grants +1D6, while **disadvantage** forces -1D6 to the test in question. **Disadvantage** cannot cause less than 1D6 to be available for the test. In other words, **disadvantage** cannot reduce the number of dice to roll to less than 1.

A player may argue for their **advantage** in a situation, but only once, with a clear statement. Dancing around, trying and hoping to somehow convince the **GM** with vague descriptions immediately disqualifies your character from getting **advantage**. Arguing with the **GM** over their decision *also* immediately disqualifies your character from getting **advantage**.

Providing Assistance

Characters can help each other in tests. In order to help with a test, a character must know a relevant **skill** and the one being helped must accept the help.

Helping in a test works much like **forking** a skill. The character being helped receives +1D6 to roll for each *character* helping them. The number of relevant skills a helping character has is irrelevant. Just one is enough to allow them to help and only one +1D6 is granted by the helping character. Which skill is used to help with, matters, however.

If a **PC** is helping another, their player must describe *how* they're using their relevant skill to help.

*For example, a **PC** is currently using their **thievery** to lockpick a door. Their allied **PC** is helping, by using their **observation** skill to keep an eye out for guards, which allows the one on the door to work without having to constantly look over their shoulder. The **GM** finds that description agreeable and allows the use of the skill to help.*

Ultimately, whether a skill is appropriate to help with is determined by the **GM**.

Helpers Learn

A character helping in a test, also gains **progress** towards the **skill** they've helped with. The outcome of the test for the character they helped, is their own outcome.

If the character who was helped succeeded their test, the helper also gains a successful test to mark on their skill.

Time

Not all tests are created equal - some actions require more time than others.

While the **GM** decides on how much time a given test will need, the following guidelines should provide a good basis.

- (Near) instantaneous: Combat actions, recalling knowledge, noticing things in passing.
- A matter of minutes: inspecting an environment, quickly skimming the contents of a book, persuading someone in conversation, first aid.
- A matter of hours: Simple crafts, surgery, scrutinizing an environment, researching something simple/not obscure, engaging in lengthy and difficult negotiations.
- A matter of days and months: Complex crafts and artistry, researching a complex or obscure subject.

Fewer Tests Are Better

This section is primarily directed at the **GM**. The short of it goes as follows:

Only have a player make one test per scene/situation, as long as the scene/situation doesn't change significantly.

*For example, a **PC** is trying to sneak past two guards huddled around a campfire. If they succeed their **stealth** test, the **GM** lets them sneak all around the camp, without making them do multiple tests, as long as the situation doesn't change significantly. One of the guards getting up to take a pee behind a tree somewhere shouldn't be such a change, even if that happens to be the tree the **PC** is hiding behind. On the other hand, if the guards pick up torches and start actively looking for intruders, for whatever reason, then the situation changes significantly. Another **stealth** test would be warranted.*

*A **PC** succeeds an **acrobatics** test to climb a wall. Thus, it is established that the **PC** can climb that wall. Whenever they attempt to climb that wall in the future, they simply succeed, with no test needed. Unless, of course, if the wall got taller since the last attempt.*

Of course, how many tests are appropriate in a given situation is entirely the **GM**'s decision to make.

Character

A character is a representation of a sentient creature in the game world. They're an amalgam of **attributes**, **skills**, **ambitions**, **beliefs & instincts** and of course their **possessions**.

Attributes

Attributes describe a character's basic, inherent abilities.

The value of an attribute indicates the number of **D6** to roll for a test of that attribute. Attribute values typically range from 2 to 6 for ordinary human characters.

Physical Attributes

These numbers represent a character's basic physical abilities.

Agility [Agi]

Determines how nimble, fast and flexible a character is. Any action that requires a character to move very precisely, will require agility.

Endurance [End]

Governs how long a character can endure physical strains.

For every point in endurance, a character raises their **Exhaustion Threshold** by two.

Perception [Perc]

Governs a character's ability to passively quickly pick up on fine and fleeting details in their environment or on objects and other characters.

Also governs the ability to perceive under difficult conditions such as dim light and fog, or noisy and smelly environments.

Strength [Str]

Governs a character's strength - the ability to lift, throw and break heavy and sturdy things. Such as skulls. Also governs the **carrying capacity** of a character.

Each point in strength raises the **carrying capacity** of the character by 3.

Toughness [Tough]

Governs the **injury threshold** of a character.

For every point in **toughness**, a character gains **+2 maximum HP** and raises their **carrying capacity** by 1.

For every two points in **toughness**, a character raises their **Inj.** limit by 1.

Mental Attributes

These numbers represent a character's basic mental abilities.

Arcana [Arc]

Governs a character's ability to control magic flow, sense magic and withstand magic-exertion effects.

Also used to resist negative magic effects.

For every point in arcana, a character raises their **maximum spell intensity** by one and their **exhaustion resistance** by one.

Intelligence [Int]

Governs a character's ability to reason and analyze.

Wisdom [Wis]

Governs a character's understanding of and ability to recall knowledge.

Social Attributes

These numbers represent a character's basic social abilities.

Empathy [Emp]

Governs a character's ability to read and understand another's emotions and intentions.

Oratory [Ora]

Governs a character's ability to convincingly speak with and before others. Also used to manipulate others.

Will [Will]

Governs a character's ability to withstand persuasion, intimidation, charm or terror.

Advancing Attributes

Whenever a **PC** uses an attribute in a **test**, the outcome must be noted.

Advancing an attribute requires:

- $N * N / 2$ (rounded up) **complete successes**.
- $N * N$ **partial successes** or **complete failures**.
- Where N is the current level of the attribute.

*A character has a **strength** attribute at level 1.*

*To advance their attribute to level 2, they would need $2 * 2 / 2 = 2$ **complete successes** and $2 * 2 = 4$ **partial successes** or **complete failures***

*A character has a **will** attribute at level 3.*

*To advance their attribute to level 4, they would need $3 * 3 / 2 = 5$ **complete successes** and $3 * 3 = 9$ **partial successes** or **complete failures***

Skills

A skill is any acquired knowledge and experience regarding a specific subject.

All of a character's skills have a value attached to them, which indicates the number of **D6** to use when testing that skill.

Skills can be improved over time. Every time a roll for a skill is made, the outcome will be noted. Whenever a certain threshold of successes and failures is passed, the skill improves. Both a certain number of successes *and* a certain number of failures must be accumulated to grow a skill.

Skill Forking

For every skill a character knows (= is not currently still learning), and they are currently testing a skill that is thematically related, they can **fork** that skill into their test, granting them **+1D6** for their test.

Imagine a large forked rivermouth. One of the forks feeding into it is also a large river, which represents the skill primarily being tested. The other, smaller forks of the river represent the supporting skills. They all combine together at the rivermouth. A primary and supporting skills flow together into the test!

*For example, if a character is testing their **thievery** skill at level three and they also know **stealth**, they can **fork** their **stealth** skill into their **thievery** test. Any number of skills can be **forked** into a test, but each **fork** only grants **+1D6**. For the **thievery** test above, it doesn't matter if the character is at **stealth** level one or five or nine-thousand. They only get a **+1D6** to their **thievery** test. So in this case, if the **GM** agrees, the player gets to roll **4D6** for their test.*

Which skills can be **forked** into a particular test is up to the **GM**. If a player is performing a test, they can lobby for the use of the skills they want to **fork** into their particular test, but ultimately, if the **GM** says no, that decision is final.

*Back to the **thievery** example. Let's assume a **PC** is trying to quickly unlock a door using their **thievery**, because they're being chased by guards and desperately need to get away. They could argue to fork their **stealth** skill into the test, but ultimately, what use is **stealth** when you've already been detected? Unless you can make yourself unseen somehow, the **GM** should rule that **stealth** cannot apply in that situation.*

Intent & Action

The players drive the story and the action. When deciding on what to do, make sure you state the **intent** of your action, like "I will make that person work for us!".

Then, the **GM** will need to know how you aim to follow up on your intent. Describe the **action** you will take. The clearer, the better. "I will tell them of our exploits and how well we get paid!", is a good response and allows the **GM** to conclude you're trying to **persuade** the other character. Even better would be something like "I will *persuade* them by telling them of our exploits and how well we get paid!" That leaves no room for doubt *how* you wish to achieve your goal.

Of course, how appropriate a certain skill is for the resolution of a given situation, is ultimately up to the **GM** and the specifics of the situation itself.

Learning Skills

Whenever asked to test a skill a **PC** does not yet know, it will be added or progressed in the *currently learning* section of the character sheet.

A skill in learning can only be tested with their related **attribute**. If multiple attributes are listed for a skill, you can choose which one to test with.

The outcome of a test gets noted on the skill it was made for, not the attribute actually used for the test.

Advancing Skills

Whenever a **PC** uses a skill in a **test**, the outcome must be noted.

Advancing a skill requires:

- $2 + N * 2$ **complete successes**.
- $4 + N * 3$ **partial successes** or **complete failures**.
- Where N is the current level of the skill.

A character has a **nature** skill at level 1.

To advance their skill to level 2, they would need $2 + 1 * 2 = 4$ **complete successes** and $4 + 1 * 3 = 7$ **partial successes** or **complete failures**

A character has a **medicine** skill at level 4.

To advance their skill to level 5, they would need $2 + 4 * 2 = 10$ **complete successes** and $4 + 4 * 3 = 16$ **partial successes** or **complete failures**

Practice

It is possible to advance skills *passively*. Whenever a large period of time is spent outside of active adventure, **PC's** can practice a skill of choice.

A **PC** can only actively practice one **category of skills**. For every **cycle** that passes of active practice, the **PC** can roll a **test** of a skill of the corresponding category.

Skill Category	Cycle
Physical	3 Weeks

Skill Category	Cycle
Social	2 Week
Knowledge	3 Months
Craftsmanship	2 Months

A **PC** spends seven weeks practicing their **fighting**, while waiting for their comrade to recover from their **injuries**. **Fighting** being a physical skill, the cycle for tests is 3 weeks. In this case, 2 tests can be made and their outcomes noted.

Teaching

Much like it is possible for a character to **practice** on their own, they can also be taught by another, who knows more than them.

Both teacher and pupil must actively spend time together, furthering the pupil's skill. The rules for cycle and test are the same as with **practice**. The cycles noted in the table below are used instead.

Skill Category	Cycle
Physical	2 Weeks
Social	1 Week
Knowledge	2 Months
Craftsmanship	1 Months

Skill List

The following list does not and cannot aim to be a complete listing of all possible skills in game. Adding new skills as necessary will have to be done by the **GM**.

Some skills have a list of **skill abilities** that a character unlocks, if they reach a certain level in that skill. A **skill ability** has one or more effects and one or more conditions that restrict when they're applicable.

Using a **skill ability** counts as an **action**.

For a human, a skill at level 10 represents absolute mastery. It is possible to go higher than that, but only with great effort. The average level a human could reasonably have in a skill they've been practicing for months, should be around 3 or 4. Only years of experience allow for a 5 or higher. Anything higher than 5 should be considered excellence.

Physical skills

These skills have a dominant physical aspect and are directly tied to a character's *physical attributes*.

Acrobatics (Agi)

Performing acrobatic feats, such as jumping and climbing, without inuring oneself in the process.

Instrument-Playing < instrument > (Agi)

Playing an instrument of choice.

The instrument in question must be noted.

Melee Defence (Agi)

Skill at defending oneself in close-combat.

Fighting (Str)

General fighting expertise.

Ranged Defence (Agi)

Skill at evading projectiles.

Stealth (Agi)

Moving silently and performing actions undetected.

Swimming (End)

Swimming, as opposed to drowning.

Thievery (Agi)

Pickpocketing and lockpicking.

Observation (Perc)

Actively looking out for and detecting hidden things or characters.

Path-finding (Perc)

Orienting oneself in the world.

Finding and following tracks.

Riding (Emp)

Riding and controlling a mount.

Rune-Using (Agi)

Skill at using **magic runes**.

Sailing (Str)

Steering and maintaining a naval vessel.

Shield (End)

Expertise at defending oneself using a shield.

Weapon < weapon type > (Str/Agi)

Expertise at handling a weapon of a specific type.

Weapon-Throwing < weapon type > (Str/Agi)

Expertise at throwing weapons of a specific type.

Social Skills

These skills have a dominant social aspect and are strongly related to a character's *social attributes*.

Animal Handling (Emp)

Gaining an animal's trust, directing and commanding it, as well as training it to obey commands.

Commanding (Will)

Speaking commands others will respect and follow to the letter.

Level	Name	AP	Ob	Effect(s)	Condition(s)
3	Unquestionable Command	2	+2	An ally of choice, gains +1 D6 on their next test.	Ally not in combat; Ally can hear the command.
4	Spur	2	+2	An ally of choice, gains +1 AP .	Ally in combat; Ally can hear the command.

Deception (Ora)

Telling lies, acting in a way so as to deceive another character into believing something untruthful.

Intimidation (Will)

Intimidating another character into doing something.

This should also in large part be based on appearance, strength and reputation.

Persuasion (Emp)

Persuading another character to think differently about something.

Knowledge

These skills have a dominant mental aspect and are strongly related to a character's *mental attributes*.

Architecture (Int)

Analysing and planning buildings. Discerning weak points in a structure.

Alchemy (Arc)

The ability to brew alchemical potions, create powders, mixtures and other substances, as well as the ability to tell these things apart.

Brewing (Wis)

The brewing of alcoholic beverages.

Geography (Int)

Knowledge about the geography of the world. Used to recall the location of places in relation to each other.

Heraldry (Int)

The ability to tell noble houses apart and to know their heraldry.

History < subject > (Wis)

Knowledge about past events and locations.

Specific historical knowledge should be noted.

Language < language > (Int)

Speaking and understanding a specific language. The language in question must be noted.

Law and politics (Int)

The ability to understand laws and politics, as well as the ability to direct politics.

Leatherworking (Agi)

Producing crafts with leather as the primary material.

Magic School < School > (Arc)

Knowledge and experience in a specific **magic school**.

Mathematics (Int)

The ability to work with numbers. Useful for anyone handling large sums of money, but also for engineers and architects.

Mechanics (Int)

Understanding, designing and maintaining complex mechanical machines and devices.

Nature (Int)

The ability to tell flora and fauna apart and to know of their attributes, such as what is edible or poisonous or how to hunt a deer, and so on.

Mysticism and Religion (Wis)

Knowledge about religions, legends and myths. May be used to recall knowledge about mythical creatures, artifacts and locations, as well as understand the local religion more easily.

Medicine (Int)

Diagnosing and treating injuries and non-magical afflictions.

Implies an understanding of anatomy, whereas past experiences with the creatures treated should be noted.

Reading and Writing < language > (Int)

The ability to both read and write in a specific language.

The language in question must be noted in addition to this skill.

Surgery (Int)

The ability to invasively treat ailments without making things worse for the patient.

Tanning/Skinning (Agi)

Taking the hide off a creature undamaged.

Warfare (Wis)

The ability to understand and direct large-scale combat movements, as well as understanding what makes defences effective and how to circumvent them. Also governs knowledge about sieges and siege equipment.

Woodcrafting (Agi)

General working with wood, where particular knowledge isn't required.

Craftsmanship

All craftsmanship requires a mix of physical and mental attributes, for the purpose of creating a wide variety of things.

Armor smithing (Str)

The ability to make armor from metal.

Artistry (Emp)

The ability to paint and draw well, as well as a general sense of aesthetics.

Blacksmithing (Str)

The ability to create every-day items from metal.

Bow-Making (Agi)

The ability to craft bows and crossbows.

Carpentry (Agi)

The ability to shape wood to craft predominantly wooden things.

Clothesmaking (Agi)

The ability to make comfortable, well-fitting and decorated clothes.

Cooking (Dex * Perc * Wis)

The ability to cook well. Poor cooks are prone to losing ingredients due to burning them or overcooking them to the point of inedibility.

Engineering (Int)

The ability to plan and construct complex mechanisms and devices.

Fishing (End)

The ability to efficiently catch fish.

Fletching (Agi)

The ability to efficiently craft arrows, bolts and javelins.

Leatherworking (Agi)

The ability to create leather objects.

Masonry (Str)

The ability to shape stone to craft predominantly stone-based things.

Rune Carving (Arc)

The ability to carve **magic runes**.

Weapon smithing (Str)

The ability to make weapons from metal.

Ambitions, Beliefs & Instincts

While all characters are expected to have *ambitions*, *beliefs* and *instincts*, **PCs** are special, because for them, these concepts are cemented through rules and mechanics.

Ambitions, **beliefs** and **instincts** can not change during a game session. They can only be changed in-between.

Whenever a player plays to their **ambitions**, **beliefs** and **instincts** in certain ways, they earn **fate points**.

It is the **GM's** role, to create interesting situations, which can *challenge* the **beliefs** and **instincts**, or even **ambitions** of the **PCs**. However the players and **PCs** react, can earn them **fate points** and will drive the story forward.

Ambition

Every **PC** must have one **ambition** - a life-fulfilling long-term goal to pursue. This can be anything from "found a family" to "become king of the world!". No matter how unrealistic, an **ambition** is a primary driver for a character, to guide them onward. The important part is to think *big*. Something easily achievable would make for a dull **ambition** and defeat the point of it.

An **ambition** is not expected to change often. An ideal **ambition** would accompany a character a long time.

Beliefs

A player also has to decide on three **beliefs** for their character, which represent short-term goals and expectations of the character and their player. A belief should not be a triviality, but instead a goal that requires some considerable effort on both the character's and player's part to achieve.

A belief must be based on the events and circumstances affecting the character in game.

*For example, a **PC** learns of a conspiracy against their lord during the session. After the session, they decide they'll change one of their **beliefs** to "I will uncover the plot against my lord!"*

Beliefs can also target other **PCs**. You can either set a belief to help or even change your fellow **PC**. Be mindful though, your belief should not be *too* drastic.

*For example, a **PC** learns their ally is a member of a secretive and dangerous cult. After the session, the player determines the new belief "I will get my ally to leave that dangerous cult!" Whether successful or not,*

*this belief, in play, will create an **interesting conflict** between the two **PCs**.*

Beliefs are expected to change frequently, commonly from session to session. But not so frequent as to make achieving them impossible.

Instincts

Much like **beliefs**, a player must determine three **instincts** for their character.

An **instinct** represents an automatic reaction from the character, given a situation that triggers it. They can be seen as "if/then" and "always/never" statements. These can either be beneficial or detrimental to the character.

- A detrimental **instinct** acts as a *troublemaker* and allows earning **fate points**.
- A beneficial **instinct** acts as *insurance*, but doesn't allow earning **fate points**.

*For example: "Whenever someone praises the state religion, I start ranting against it." - This is a detrimental **instinct**, as the **GM** can use that to cause the **PC** trouble.*

*Another example: "Whenever a lethal fight breaks out, I have my weapons in hand!" - This is insurance, that even when the **PC** narratively might not have their weapons at the ready, they will, in fact, have them at the ready.*

Ideally, an **instinct** should be (ab-)usable by the **GM**, to get the **PC** into *trouble* easier. This is to be taken with a wink, though. A **GM** is expected to craft an *interesting* story and thus create *interesting* conundrums for the players and their characters, with a realistic chance for the players and their characters to maneuver themselves back out of trouble.

Instincts are expected to change whenever a character (decides) to act against them. A **PC** cannot keep an instinct they keep contradicting.

Health & Exhaustion

Every character has **Hit Points (HP)** and a maximum number of **Injuries (Inj.)** they can endure, before they die.

Whenever a character is hurt, the **damage** that has been inflicted upon them is deducted from their **HP**. When their **HP** reach zero, they suffer an **Inj.** and their **HP** is reset to their **maximum - N*2**, where *N* is the number of **Inj.** they currently have. So, in other words, for every **Inj.**, a character loses 2 maximum **HP**. Any **HP** past zero overflow, so the damage dealt isn't lost.

When **Toughness** is reduced, still only 2 maximum **HP** are deducted.

Outside of combat, a successful **medicine** test can restore all currently missing **HP** of a character.

Injury

An **injury (Inj.)** is a serious health impediment of a character. Every character has a maximum number of **Inj.** they can endure. If they reach their maximum number of **Inj.**, the character dies. **PCs** are an exception, who instead arrive at **death's door**.

Whenever a character suffers an **Inj.**, a **D100** must be rolled and the corresponding result from the **list of injuries** added to the character.

Whenever a character is brought to at least half their maximum number of **Inj.** (rounded down), they must succeed a **toughness** test, or else suffer +1 **exhaustion**.

An **Inj.** can reduce **attributes** and impose other restrictions. An **attribute** cannot be brought down to less than 1, by **Inj.**

There are three possible states of an **Inj.**: **active**, **patched up** or **treated**

Only an **active Inj.** imposes negative effects.

An **Inj.** can be **patched up** via **medicine**:

- If the attempt is a complete success, the **Inj.** is **patched up**.
- If the attempt is a partial success or a complete failure, the **Inj.** remains **active**.

An **Inj.** can be properly **treated** via **surgery**:

- If the attempt is a complete success, the **Inj.** is **treated**.
- If the attempt is a partial success, the **Inj.** is not **treated**, but another attempt can be made.
- If the attempt at is a complete failure, the **Inj.** becomes permanent. It cannot be **treated** via **surgery** anymore.
- Only one **surgery** attempt can be made every 24 hours.

All currently **treated Inj.** can be removed/recovered from, by spending **ND4** weeks in recovery, where *N* is the current number of **treated Inj.**

List of Injuries

How many times a **debility** can be suffered, can be limited. In the table below, the *max* is the maximum number of times the **debility** can be suffered by the same character. If there is a slash (/), there is no limit. If a roll would result in an already maxed out **debility**, pick the next **debility** below it, instead.

Range D100	Injury	Max	Description
0 - 5	Cosmic Fortune	/	Luck is with you! You suffer no debility !
6 - 10	Butchered Arm	2	-1 Agility ; Actions and equipment requiring two hands cannot be used. If incurred twice, any actions requiring arm movement is impossible.
11 - 15	Broken Leg	2	-1 Agility ; Max movement of 3'/1m; If incurred twice, actions involving movement are impossible.
16 - 19	Skull Fracture	1	-1 Intelligence ; -1 Wisdom
20 - 24	Concussion	/	-1 Intelligence ; -1 Perception

Range D100	Injury	Max	Description
25 - 30	Punctured Lung	/	-1 Endurance
31 - 36	Infection	1	-1 Toughness ; Within a day, the character will contract an illness . This will happen, even if the Inj. is treated.
37 - 42	Fractured Rib	/	-1 Toughness
43 - 48	Nasty Wound	/	+1 Bleeding
49 - 54	Broken Nose	1	-1 Perception ; Cannot smell;
55 - 60	Maimed Ear	/	-1 Perception ; Cannot hear;
61 - 66	Knocked Senseless	/	-1 Perception
67 - 72	Torn Tendon	/	-1 Strength
73 - 79	Mental Trauma	/	-1 Will
80 - 94	Tremors	/	-1 Arcana ; Agility
95 - 100	Cosmic Misfortune	1	Disadvantage on all tests.

Exhaustion

Exhaustion is the measure of a character's maximum physical and mental strain they can endure.

If a character's exhaustion reaches their threshold, they become **dazed** from over-exertion.

Exhaustion is gained through performing **exhausting actions**, carrying **exhausting equipment** or suffering **injuries**. **Exhausting actions** are any actions that are physically or mentally taxing, such as:

- Attacking
- Acrobatics (jumping, climbing)
- **Casting Magic**

Exhaustion gained from **exhausting actions** can be reduced by resting. A full rest of at least six uninterrupted hours will fully clear any exhaustion gained from **exhausting actions**.

Exhaustion gained from **exhausting equipment**, can be reduced, by dropping the equipment in question and resting for a short while, at the **GM's** discretion. A character trying to carry more than they can endure, should

not immediately fall unconscious, mind you. Apply common sense - the character in question would probably try to carry the extra equipment, only find out right away it is simply too much for them.

Status Effects

Characters can have one or more **status effect(s)** affecting them. A **status effect** can have positive or negative effects on the character.

Dazed

A **dazed** character begins their turn with -2 **AP**.

Grappled

A **grappled** character is unable to move and suffers -1 **melee defence**, for as long as they are **grappled**. A **grappled** character can break free, by **completely succeeding** a **strength** test against the other character grappling them.

Death's Door

Death's door is a state only a **PC** can enter and represents their final battle with death.

A **PC** at **death's door** must succeed at least one **toughness** test out of a possible of three. If they never succeed, they perish, irrevocably.

- If the character is at **death's door** during **combat**, they must make a **toughness** test at the end of every round.
- If the character is at **death's door** out of **combat**, they must make a test every minute.

A character can be helped out of **death's door**, if all of their **active Inj.** are **patched up** or **treated**. For every **active Inj.** that is **patched up** or **treated**, the character gains one more attempt to succeed a **toughness** test.

Illness

An illness can affect a character over a period of time and cause various negative effects.

Illness can be contracted in a variety of ways, although most of them involve an open wound exposed to bacterial breeding grounds, such as bogs, sewers, mass graves and trash dumps. Or from something ingested, such as spoiled or poisoned food.

When a character is about to contract an illness, they must make a **toughness** test:

- On a **complete success**, the illness is shrugged off.
- On a **partial success** or **complete failure**, the illness is contracted and will immediately apply its effects to the character.
- If they contracted the illness, determine which one by rolling a **D100** and picking the corresponding illness from the **list of illnesses**.
 - Once the illness has been determined, its duration and severity must also be rolled.

Most illnesses have a duration, during which their effects are active and after which, all ill-effects go away. In some cases, an illness may have a duration of "until cured", which means it will never go away, if not treated.

Treatment of an illness is possible through **medicine** or **surgery**. Which skill is required, will be noted on the illness. Treatment will often be able to reduce the ill-effects and sometimes to remove the illness, altogether. A

treatment attempt can only be made once every 24 hours.

Any illness, that when treated has its duration reduced, can only have its duration reduced once. If a treatment would also suspend any ill-effects, that would still be applicable. That way, treating an illness which already had its duration reduced can still be useful.

List of Illnesses

Range D100	Name	Duration	Effect	Treatment
0 - 7	Strength Sap	1D10 + 3 Days	The muscles atrophy, despite any physical exercise. If not treated quickly, the victim will quickly find themselves unable to move, at all. -1D3 strength ; -1D3 agility ; Max 6'/2m movement distance.	medicine ; Reduces the duration by 2D4 days.
8 - 15	Lung Fever	1D10 + 1 Days	The victim finds themselves easily winded, even by simple acts, such as walking to the privy at night. -(1D3 + 1) endurance .	medicine ; The ill-effects are suspended for 24 hours.
16 - 23	Bleeder's Curse	1D10 + 1 Days	The victim sweats uncontrollably and has watery stools, thus dehydrating rapidly and losing consciousness frequently. -1D4 toughness ; dazed .	medicine ; Reduces the duration by 1D10 days and suspends the ill-effects for 24 hours.
24 - 31	Jazz-Hands	1D10 + 3 Days	The victim can't stop the tremors in their arms. Any action requiring precise movements is impossible. -1D3 agility ; -1D4 arcana .	medicine ; The ill-effects are suspended for 24 hours.
32 - 39	Brain Rot	2D10 Days	The victim's mind dulls. They find it difficult to form coherent thoughts. -1D3 intelligence ; -1D3 wisdom .	medicine ; The ill-effects are suspended for 24 hours.
40 - 47	Feeble Tounge	1D10 + 3 Days	The tounge flops and waggles around uncontrollably. Speech is impaired. -1D3 oratory .	medicine ; Reduces the duration by 2D4 days.
48 - 55	Wound Fever	Until cured	Injuries of the victim refuse any treatment. Any Inj. of the victim can be patched up , but not treated .	medicine ; Reduces the duration by 1D10 days.
56 - 63	Filth Fever	1D10 + 1 Days	The victim coughs uncontrollably and violently, with awful-smelling breath. -1D3 oratory ; -1D3 endurance .	medicine ; Removes the illness on the next day.

Range D100	Name	Duration	Effect	Treatment
64 - 71	Amber Curse	2D10 Days	The victim finds it difficult to feel the flow of magic through their body. -1D4 arcana ; -1D3 to any magic skills and rune-using .	Conventional methods cannot treat this illness.
72 - 79	Coldness of Heart	1D10 + 1 Days	The victim feels distant, as if they were only spectators in their own body. -1D4 empathy ; -1D3 will .	medicine ; Reduces the duration by 2D4 days.
80 - 87	Rot Plague	4D10 Days	The skin starts developing a nasty rash, before flaking off. Not only unsightly, the bare flesh underneath smells like it's rotting. -1D3 endurance ; -(1D3 + 1) toughness .	surgery ; The ill-effects are suspended for 24 hours.
88 - 95	Organ Mold	Until cured	Causes an injury every day it is active.	surgery ; The illness is removed within a day.
95 - 100	Red Death	Until cured	The victim starts bleeding from all of their orifices, with no end in sight. Causes 1 bleeding every day it is active.	surgery ; The illness is removed within a day.

Damage Types

All damage inflicted, is inflicted with a certain type of damage.

Damage Type	Description
Slashing	Usually inflicted by any sort of cutting/slashing weapon, like a sword, or a talon.
Piercing	Usually inflicted by any sort of stabbing weapon, like a spear, or an animal's stinger.
Bludgeoning	Inflicted by light blunt weapons and unarmed attacks. Bludgeoning causes non-lethal damage. It inflicts exhaustion instead of injuries .
Crushing	Usually inflicted by any sort of heavy blunt weapon, like a hammer, or an animal's tusks.
Burning	Inflicted by extreme heat.
Freezing	Inflicted by extreme cold.
Poison	Usually represents a damage over time effect .
Acid	Dissolves anything it touches, or perhaps just organic matter.

Damage Over Time

Also known as *damage over time* or *status effect*, these are **damage types**, which inflict injuries over a set period of time.

Every **damage over time** has an **intensity level**. The intensity governs how many injuries a afflicted character/creature suffers and at which intervals.

Damage Type	Description
Bleeding	One point of damage per intensity level, per round of combat , or every minute.
Poisoned	One point of damage per intensity level, per round of combat , or every minute.

Damage Resistances

Some creatures can resist certain **types of damage** naturally, while others may cover themselves in armor to the same effect.

How much **damage** is resisted, depends on the specifics of the creature or character and their **equipment**.

Possessions & Equipment

A character may have things on their person, such as worn equipment, as well as the things they *own*.

Money

Money is generalized as **crowns**, with no regard for regional currencies. The following table gives a brief overview of the value of **crowns**.

Keep in mind most of the really expensive things are usually paid for not in **crowns**, but rather in favors, fealty or rare items.

Cost Range	Goods	Services
1-10	Unprocessed foods; Very common things	Simple Lodgings; Sending a message a short distance with a messenger; Peasant's and hireling pay
10-50	Low to medium quality alcoholic drinks; A proper, warm meal; Simple tools and items; Simple weapons, like a dagger or woodcutter's axe; Plain clothes or cloth; Farm animals; Somewhat common things	Lodgings in a private room; Private services; Simple equipment repairs; Travel by carriage or stagecoach; A simple guard's pay
50-100	Light armor; Decorated clothes; Weapons; Shields; Fine drinks; Lordly meals; Decorative silver things; Low-quality gems; Horses; Books and Scriptures; Uncommon things	Medical services; An elite guard's pay
100-500	Medium to heavy armor; Well-made weapons; Decorative gold things; High-quality gems; Carefully bred war-steeds; Small building in a large city; Rare things	
500-1000	Decorated armor; Decorated well-made weapons; Large building in a large city; Magic runes ; Very rare things	

Carrying Capacity

Characters have **item slots** that determine how much they can carry. How many **item slots** they have, is determined by their **strength**. The number of **item slots** a character has is referred to as the **carrying capacity**.

Most things will take up one **slot**, which equals something around 5lb./2kg, but some particularly large and/or heavy items can take up more **slots**. How many **slots** an item takes up, is referred to as **bulk**.

*An item with **bulk 2** takes up 2 **item slots**.*

So, while most items, such as tools, a day's rations, or books have only 1 **bulk**, armor and weapons typically have more.

Up to 100 **crowns** can fit into one **slot**.

*A **PC** has 56 **crowns**, those all go into 1 **slot**. Their ally is significantly wealthier, with 314 **crowns**, which take up 3 **item slots**.*

It is up to the **GM** to decide on when something is *too heavy* to carry for the character in question.

Weapon Types

Weapons can have one or more of the following **weapon attributes**:

- **Long Reach**: Allows attacking a target two squares (6'/2m) away.
- **Range Only**: Implies a weapon cannot be used against any targets adjacent to self.
- **Prefer Range**: +2 **Ob** to using the weapon against an adjacent target.

Weapons can have one or more of the following **effects**:

- A **counter-attack** is a reaction that allows a fighter being attacked to attack their attacker.

Unarmed

Sometimes, your own body is your greatest weapon. Fists and feet can cause a surprising amount of damage.

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Punch, kick, headbutt	2	2 Bludgeoning	/
1	0	Grapple	2	/	Requires a successful opposed strength test. If completely successful The target is unable to move and suffers -1 melee defence while grappled. Someone grappled can attempt to break free with an opposed strength test, on their turn.

Short Blade

Any short, one-handed blade. Examples: shiv, dagger, Shortsword

- One-handed
- Bulk: 1

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Slash	2	2 Slashing	/
0	0	Stab	2	1 Piercing	/

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
3	+2	Target weak-spot	3	3 Piercing	/
3	+2	Artery cut	3	2 Slashing	+1 bleeding to the target (if it can bleed).

Long Blade

Any long blade, including long one-handed blades. Examples: arming sword, bastard sword, Longsword

- One-handed or two-handed
- Bulk: 2

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Slash	2	2D4 Slashing	/
0	0	Stab	2	1D6 Piercing	/
3	+2	Mordhau-Strike	2	1D4 Crushing	/
4	0	Fencer-Stance	3	/	Self enters a defensive fencing stance. They gain +2 melee defence and can counter-attack with a slash .

Great Blade

Any very long, two-handed blade. Examples: sword of war, greatsword, Zweihänder

- Two-handed
- Long Reach
- Bulk: 3

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Slash	2	2D6 Slashing	/
0	0	Stab	2	1D6 + 1 Piercing	/
3	+2	Mordhau-Strike	3	1D6 Crushing	/
4	+1	Heavy Blow	3	1D6 Slashing and 1D4 Crushing	+1 exhaustion to self.

Axe

One-handed axes. Examples: hatchet, dane axe, woodcutter's axe

- One-handed
- Bulk: 2

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Hack	2	2D6 Slashing and 1D3 Crushing	/

Great Axe

Two-handed axes. Examples: bearded axe, double-sided axe

- Two-handed
- Bulk: 3

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Hack	2	3D6 Slashing and 2D3 Crushing	/
3	+2	Savage Slash	2	2D6 Slashing	+2 bleeding to the target (if it can bleed).

Spear

Any one or two-handed short piercing polearms. Examples: short-spear, boar-spear

- One-handed or two-handed
- Bulk: 2
- Prefer Range

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Stab	2	1D8 Piercing	/
2	+2	Spear wall	3	/	Whenever any character moves into a square adjacent to self, can attack that character with a stab .

Lance

Any one or two-handed long piercing polearms. Examples: pike, lance

- Two-handed
- Bulk: 4
- Long Reach
- Prefer Range

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Stab	2	1D8 Piercing	/
3	0	Couched Lancing	3	/	Requires self to be mounted on horse-back (or similar creature). Self must move at least 15'/5m in a straight line, past the target, allowing them an attack dealing 3D10 Piercing damage to the target.

Polearm

Flexible polearms with a focus on slashing. Examples: halberd, bardiche, poleaxe

- Two-handed
- Bulk: 4
- Long Reach

- Prefer Range

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Slash	2	3D4 Slashing	/
0	0	Stab	2	1D8 Piercing	/
4	+2	Cleave	3	1D10 Slashing to two targets adjacent to each other and self.	/

Club

Simple, improvised bludgeoning weapons. Examples: wooden club

- One-handed
- Bulk: 2
- Bulk: 2

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Clobber	2	2D4 Bludgeoning	/
3	+2	Knockout Blow	3	2D6 Bludgeoning	/

Small Crusher

One-handed, heavy crushing weapons. Examples: flanged mace, warhammer, flail, morning star

- One-handed
- Bulk: 2

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Smash	2	1D6 Crushing	/

Large Crusher

Two-handed crushing weapons with a dedicated *impact zone* on the weapon head which directs more force into the target. Examples: grand-mace, polehammer, two-handed flail

- Two-handed
- Bulk: 3

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Damage	Effect
0	0	Smash	2	1D8 Crushing	/
3	+2	Mighty Smash	3	1D10 + 2 Crushing	+1 exhaustion to self. +2 exhaustion to target (if it can be winded).

Short-Bow

A short distance ranged weapon, shooting arrows.

- Two-handed
- Bulk: 1
- **Range Only**

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Distance	Damage	Effect
0	0	Loose	2	30'/10m	3D3 Piercing	/
0	+2	Loose	2	60'/20m	2D3 Piercing	/
0	+4	Loose	2	90'/30m	1D3 Piercing	/
4	0	Double shot	3	30'/10m	3D3 Piercing	Can attack twice and thus deal its damage to two different targets, or the same target twice.
4	+2	Double shot	3	60'/20m	2D3 Piercing	Can attack twice and thus deal its damage to two different targets, or the same target twice.
4	+4	Double shot	3	90'/30m	1D3 Piercing	Can attack twice and thus deal its damage to two different targets, or the same target twice.

Longbow

A long distance ranged weapon, shooting arrows.

- Two-handed
- Bulk: 2
- **Range Only**

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Distance	Damage	Effect
0	0	Loose	2	30'/10m	3D4 Piercing	/
0	+1	Loose	2	60'/20m	2D4 Piercing	/
0	+3	Loose	2	90'/30m	1D4 Piercing	/

War-Bow

A very deadly long distance ranged weapon, shooting arrows.

- Two-handed
- Bulk: 2
- **Range Only**

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Distance	Damage	Effect
0	0	Loose	3	30'/10m	3D6 Piercing	+1 exhaustion to self.
0	+1	Loose	3	60'/20m	2D6 Piercing	+1 exhaustion to self.
0	+2	Loose	3	90'/30m	1D6 Piercing	+1 exhaustion to self.

Crossbow

A deadly medium distance ranged weapon, shooting quarrels.

A long distance ranged weapon, shooting arrows.

- Two-handed
- Bulk: 2
- **Prefer Range**

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Distance	Damage	Effect
0	0	Loose	3	30'/10m	3D6 Piercing	/
0	+1	Loose	3	60'/20m	2D6 Piercing	/
0	+3	Loose	3	90'/30m	2D4 Piercing	/

Firearm

A very deadly short to medium distance ranged weapon, shooting musket balls that can even penetrate armor.

A long distance ranged weapon, shooting arrows.

- Two-handed
- Bulk: 2
- **Prefer Range**

Skill	Ob	Attack	AP	Distance	Damage	Effect
0	0	Shoot	3	30'/10m	3D6 + 4 Piercing	/
0	+3	Shoot	3	60'/20m	2D6 + 3 Piercing	/
0	+5	Shoot	3	90'/30m	2D6 + 2 Piercing	/

Armor Types

Armor reduces damage to its wearer by a flat amount. By how much, is specific to each armor type. Some armors can have special protections or effects.

Tight Armor

A set of light armor that doesn't impede the wearer by much. Commonly represents a gambeson or thick cloth vest.

- Bulk: 2

Reduce Damage

4 **Slashing**

3 **Bludgeoning**

2 **Crushing**

Medium Armor

A set of medium armor with a good balance of protection and weight. Commonly represents a gambeson underneath a mail hauberk. Optional mail mittens. Common headgear: arming cap, mail coif or any non-full helmet.

- Bulk: 3

Reduce Damage**7 Slashing****4 Bludgeoning****3 Piercing****2 Crushing****Heavy Armor**

A set of heavy armor with excellent protection, at the cost of encumbering the wearer greatly. Commonly represents a full suit of plate armor.

- Bulk: 4

Reduce Damage**10 Slashing****5 Bludgeoning****4 Piercing****3 Crushing****Amberite Plate**

A set of heavy armor with excellent protection, even against magical attacks, at the cost of encumbering the wearer greatly. Commonly represents a full suit of **Amberite**-lined plate armor.

- Bulk: 4
- Prevents magic-casting by the wearer

Reduce Damage**10 Slashing****5 Bludgeoning****4 Piercing****3 Crushing****3D4** Magical**Shield Types**

Shields are items that provide passive bonuses to **melee defence** and **ranged defence** and require one free hand to use. This implies they cannot be used at the same time as a two-handed weapon.

Buckler

A small, round shield commonly held as far from the body as possible, to deflect small or stabbing weapons with ease. Helps only little against heavy blows, however. And don't expect to deflect arrows with this, either.

- Bulk: 1

Defensive Bonus

+1 **melee defence**.

+2 **melee defence** against **stabbing** attacks.

Round Shield

A medium-sized, round shield made from tough wood and leather, which offers decent protection against most attacks, while not encumbering the wielder too much.

- Bulk: 2

Defensive Bonus

+2 **melee defence**.

+2 **ranged defence**.

Heater Shield

A tough and heavy metal shield, which offers great protection, while still being somewhat manageable to wield.

- Bulk: 3

Defensive Bonus

+3 **melee defence**.

+3 **ranged defence**.

Kite Shield

A large, kite-shaped shield, which can protect every part of the fighter, from the shoulder down to the feet. Its weight makes it difficult to react to attacks quickly, however.

- Bulk: 4

Defensive Bonus

+4 **melee defence**.

+4 **ranged defence**.

Amberite Shield

An **Amberite**-lined heater shield, which offers great protection, even against magic, while still being somewhat manageable to wield.

- Bulk: 3

Defensive Bonus

+3 **melee defence**.

+3 **ranged defence**.

+3 **ranged defence** against magical attacks.

Character Creation

Imagine for the longest time of their life, your character has led an ordinary existence, until one day, something life-changing happened. Perhaps something terrible, perhaps something wonderful, but something significant that has forced them out of their comfort zone into a world full of adventure.

Creating an interesting and life-like character is a challenging, but ultimately, very rewarding task. Thinking of their existence up to the point they start adventuring, can really help with paving the path of their future and give you a good idea of what they're like, and why.

If you don't feel inspired, the following sections can provide tips and randomization tables that allow you write up a character more quickly.

The procedure of creating a character consists of the following steps:

1. Determine life path.
2. Determine name & personality.
3. Determine species, sex & appearance.
4. Determine **ambition**, **beliefs** & **instincts**.
5. Determine **attributes** & **skills**.
6. Determine **possessions**.

Determine Life Path

Where and when does the story of your character begin? Under what circumstances are they born and how were they raised? Until adulthood, did they lead a life of carelessness or did they have to fight for every scrap of food? How did they lead their life up until the point they picked up adventuring?

Answering these questions will help you figure out what your character could be like, as a person and what kinds of **ambitions**, **beliefs** and **instincts** they might develop.

If you need inspiration, the following tables might help a spark along:

Origin

Range D6	Origin
1	You were born into the life of a noble.
2	You were born as the only child of a merchant.
3	You were found as an orphaned infant and grew up in the hands of a kind foster family.
4	You were found as an abandoned infant at the doors to an orphanage.
5	You were born as the fifth child of a farmer.
6	You were born to a craftsman.

Youth

Range D10	Youth
1	You developed a passion for a craft and found a master willing to teach you his art.

Range D10 Youth

- | | |
|----|--|
| 2 | You never quite found your place in the world and never found a passion for honest work. Instead, you took to a life of lowly crime, pickpocketing and extorting what you could. |
| 3 | You spent much time with books and scrolls, reading about the world and its wonders. |
| 4 | You were drafted into the military and remained in service for a few years. |
| 5 | You went where the wind took you, doing lowly hireling pay when necessary and otherwise exploring and enjoying life as it came. |
| 6 | You preferred life in the wilderniss and either took to the hermit's life or simply camped out in the woods as much as possible. |
| 7 | You were wrongfully imprisoned for a crime you didn't commit. Or, perhaps, you did? |
| 8 | You, by chance, met a mage, who sensed your lust for power. They taught you their knowledge, in secret, whenever you were available. |
| 9 | You found yourself wanting to better the world. You helped others where possible and eventually picked up on the healing arts, perhaps even learning under a tutor. |
| 10 | You were taught by a wealthy and successful merchant (perhaps your parent) and helped with running their business for a few years. |

The Last Few Years

Range D6 The Last Few Years

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | You made an enemy you couldn't beat and were thus forced to leave town. Since then, you've been on the run. |
| 2 | You've been given an important task to carry out in secret. A piece of parchment holds your orders, but the task is simply too great for you to complete on your own. |
| 3 | You've found yourself with an insatiable curiosity and decided to go see the world and its wonders. |
| 4 | You decided to go on a pilgrimage, but were distracted from your path. |
| 5 | You swore an oath and intend to keep it. You swore to rescue someone, or bring honor to your clan, or perhaps to bring justice to a known criminal. |
| 6 | You lost someone or something you held dear. Now, you're on a quest to get it back, or your revenge. |

Determine Name & Personality

Any interesting character should have an interesting name. Whether you set a name or personality first, is entirely up to you. Although, you might prefer to delay this step until much later, once you've determined the other aspects of your character. Whichever you find easier is fine.

If you can't come up with a name, you can ask your **GM** for inspiration, since they'll likely know the world and the culture(s) your character can stem from and what kinds of names are common there.

Perhaps more important than the name, is the personality that it represents. Think about what you want your character to be like - are they very sociable? Or perhaps a taciturn brute who'd rather let their actions speak? What ideals do they have? A virtue and perhaps a vice? How do they speak? Do they stutter?

Range D10	Virtue	Vice	Speech
1	Courageous	Cowardly	Blunt
2	Courteous	Cruel	Boisterous
3	Disciplined	Greedy	Formal
4	Honest	Irascible	Gravelly
5	Honorable	Prejudiced	Mumbling
6	Humble	Reckless	Precise
7	Righteous	Wasteful	Rambling
8	Loyal	Vengeful	Dialect
9	Just	Arrogant	Stuttering
10	Merciful	Vain	Rapid-fire

Species, Sex & Appearance

Species is a bit difficult to provide a randomization table for, because the world your **GM** is running, might have different species available, than could be anticipated here. For simplicity's sake, it is assumed you are generating a human here.

Gender is personal preference, but could also be decided by a coin flip.

Range D10	Physique	Face	Skin	Hair
1	Athletic	Bloated	Scar	Bald
2	Brawny	Blunt	Birthmark	Braided
3	Corpulent	Bony	Makeup	Curly
4	Delicate	Chiseled	Tattooed	Cropped
5	Gaunt	Delicate	Weathered	Frizzy
6	Hulking	Elongated	Perfect	Long
7	Lanky	Patrician	Tanned	Ponytail
8	Stout	Pinched	War Paint	Oily
9	Short	Narrow	Pale	Wavy
10	Scrawny	Broken	Pierced	Greased

Choosing Ambition, Beliefs & Instincts

As described in the [section with the same name](#), what your character believes in and what drives them onward, is key in playing them. Don't worry too much about your first **beliefs** and **instincts**, they're expected to change frequently, anyway.

Only your **ambition** will require some thought beforehand, but even so, you don't have to plan your character's future, at all. That is the **GM**'s job, after all. But keep in mind your character's **ambition** tells your **GM**, what kind of stories you'd like to explore and what's more, how your character will fit into them.

Choosing an Ambition

At the core of every character stands their **ambition**, which is the primary force driving them. A good **ambition** should last you a long time and give the **GM** a hint what kind of story you want to explore with your character.

Talk to your **GM** about the **ambition** you want your character to have. On the one hand, it allows them to determine the kind of story you want to explore and on the other hand they can gauge whether the **ambition** is a suitable long-term goal.

Keep in mind the **ambition** you can randomly determine here is kept most basic and generic. Work with your **GM** to fill in the details.

Range D10	Ambition
1	Revenge
2	Pilgrimage
3	Wealth
4	Power
5	Fame/Glory
6	Knowledge
7	Family & Belonging
8	Atonement
9	World Betterment
10	Fire

Choosing Beliefs

Now, the time to determine your three **beliefs** has come. Yet again, your **GM** is integral in finding them. However, the other **PCs** are also of interest now. You can have **beliefs** whose subject is one of the other **PCs**. You could have the game begin with two or more of the **PCs** knowing each other.

A good **belief** has a *subject* and a well-defined *goal*. It doesn't necessarily matter if the goal is attainable, though. Unlike an **ambition**, a **belief** doesn't have to be long-term, at all. If it comes up during play, you could achieve your **belief** within the first session. On the other hand, some **beliefs** never come to fruition.

Two **PCs** begin the game knowing each other. One starts with a background as a criminal, the other as a former monk. The former monk has a **belief** stating "Stealing isn't right! I will help my friend pick up honest work!" The thief, on the other hand has the **belief** "My friend has my back, but they really need to start looking after themselves! I will teach them to be more like me."

These two **beliefs** allow these characters to come into conflict, despite their good intentions. How it will play out, no one can say. And that makes for an interesting conflict!

Choosing Instincts

Lastly, you need three **instincts** for your character. Ideally, at least one of them should allow your **GM** getting your **PC** into trouble.

Choosing Attributes

There are two methods for determining your character's attributes: manual and semi-random.

Please keep in mind the values here are for a human. Other species may have modifiers on their attributes, making them better or worse in some of them. But that depends on the world your **GM** is running.

Manual Attribute Assignment

- You can spend 20 points on your attributes.
- All attributes start at level 2.
- No attribute may have a level less than 2 nor higher than 6.
- Only two attributes may have a level of 6.

Player A. chooses manual attribute assignment - they know what kind of character they'd like to build.

They pick two attributes they want to focus on. Let's say they picked **strength** and **toughness** - a good choice for a front-line fighter and ardent protector.

This means they already spent 8 points and have 12 left.

They put some emphasis on **endurance** - also good for a fighter - and place it at level 4. They have 10 points left.

They level up **oratory** and **will** - they plan on intimidating foes, while being unyielding, themselves. Those attributes are at level 5, each. Thus, there are 4 points left.

The last 4 points are then spread out across **agility**, **perception**, **intelligence** and **empathy**, which are each now at level 3.

Thus, **arcana** and **wisdom** are left at level 2, with no more points left over to raise these attributes.

Semi-Random Attribute Assignment

- Roll 11 **D6**
- Row up your dice to form a line, then read them from one end to the other and note each value. The order in which they are written down, is the order in which they'll be applied to the attributes.
- If there are more than 2 6s, start lowering their value by one, starting from the left or the right, until there are only 2 6s left.

- Count up the total of your values and subtract that from 42.
 - If the number is negative, that's the number of levels you'll have to go down.
 - If the number is positive, that's the number of levels you'll have to go up.
- Starting from the left or right, start adjusting each value, until your attribute level total is at 42. **But** don't adjust 6s, 2s or 1s.
 - If your levels have to go down, subtract one from each value.
 - If your levels have to go up, add one to each value.
- Any 1s left have to be turned into 2s. Repeat the process of bringing values down, in order to reach a total of 42.

*Player B. prefers the semi-random assignment method. Thus, they roll 11 **D6** with the following results: 1, 6, 4, 5, 5, 4, 5, 3, 6, 3, 6*

They lower their right-most 6, so they have only 2 6s: 1, 6, 4, 5, 5, 4, 5, 3, 6, 3, 5

Their level total is currently 47 and their difference is -5. That means five values will need to be lowered.

Starting from the left, they start lowering the values, one by one: 1, 6, 3, 4, 4, 3, 4, 3, 6, 3, 5

Now, the 1 must be turned into a 2: 2, 6, 3, 4, 4, 3, 4, 3, 6, 3, 5

The new total would now be 43, which is one point too many. One value must be lowered to compensate. Player B. decides to start from the right, this time, arriving at the final values: 2: 2, 6, 3, 4, 4, 3, 4, 3, 6, 3, 4

*Thus, their final attribute levels are: 2 **agility**, 6 **endurance**, 3 **perception**, 4 **strength**, 4 **toughness**, 3 **arcana**, 4 **intelligence**, 3 **wisdom**, 6 **empathy**, 3 **oratory** and 4 **will**.*

*Perhaps this could be a very socially orientated character? With an **empathy** of 6, they'd make for a skilled diplomat, shrewd negotiator and attentive inquisitor. On the other hand, with an **endurance** of 6 and **arcana** of 3, they could become a very enduring mage. Perhaps that could be decided by a dice roll, too..?*

Choosing Skills

You can spend 15 points to *learn* skills and raise their level, with the following limitations:

- No skill can be at level 6+
- Max of 7 skills.
- No skills can be set to *learning*.
- Skills must relate to background.

Possessions

You can add things your character starts the game with. It is best to start with weapon(s), armor, shield and necessities, like food rations and torches.

However, there some limitations:

- Max 20 **bulk** total.
- Only one armor.
- Only one weapon of **bulk** 3+ OR two weapons of **bulk** 1 or **bulk** 2.
- Only one shield.

Fate Points

Fate points (**FP**) represent a meta-currency that *players* can earn and use to buy boons for their character or the group as a whole.

There are three types of **FP**: **Minor**, **major** and **ambition**.

FP are earned, by playing to one's **ambitions**, **beliefs** and **instincts**. Most **FP** are earned by a single player, but some may also be earned as a group.

Minor Fate Points

Minor Fate Points (MiFP) are the lowest valued and most common type of **FP**, most commonly earned by playing the mechanics of the game.

MiFP can be earned in the following ways:

- **Beliefs**: Playing to one's **beliefs**. This only counts *working towards* a goal set by a belief.
- **Trouble**: Playing to one's **instincts** - if they get their character, or their allies, into trouble.
- **Humor**: Stopping the table with a good bit of humor at the right time. But don't overdo it - your **GM** can only weave you a dramatic and gripping story, if you let them.
- **Specialist**: Driving the story forward, when no one else could - having the right skill to employ at the right time.
- **Helper**: Helping an ally out at a critical time - during or out of **combat**.

Major Fate Points

Major Fate Points (MaFP) take more effort from the *player* to earn, only being earned through convincing roleplaying, creative efforts and accomplishing long-term goals.

MaFP can be earned in the following ways:

- **Beliefs**: Accomplishing a goal set by a belief.
- **Achievements**: Whenever a major plot point or story arc is concluded - a great journey, uncovering a plot of assassination, fulfilling a contract to clear out a bandit camp or discovering an ancient artifact, all count as *achievements*, which earn this award **for all the players, as a group**.
- **Embodiment**: Capturing their character and personifying them, in the moment. For example, by giving a great speech, acting scared or enjoying a bitter revenge with glee, as if they were actually there and doing it.
- **Inner Turmoil**: Convincingly acting out an inner conflict that may come up when a decision that conflicts with a **belief** comes up. If the others can *feel* the gut-wrenching decision being made, this award is earned!
- **Creative Solutions**: Coming up with a very creative way to solve a problem. This may be a diplomatic solution, where the **GM** thought one impossible. Or, perhaps an unexpected use of the environment during **combat**, which earned the **PCs** a distinct advantage on the battlefield, in a way the **GM** couldn't foresee.
- **Collaboration**: Working with the **GM** to further the world and the story in creative ways and helping the **GM** out when possible. Secret plots that only one of the players is involved in, which causes gasps and applause from the other players, when the plot is finally revealed, for example.

- **The Gears:** Being *the gears*, without which nothing would move. Doing the laborious work during session, nobody wants to do, but which has to happen to keep the story moving. Always making sure to pitch the tents in the right spot, watching out for traps or doing the boring question-asking all earn this award!

Ambition Fate Points

Ambition Fate Points (AFP) are very rare and only earned through outstanding achievements.

AFP can be earned in the following ways:

- **World-Shaper:** Changing the world around oneself in a significant way.
- **Selfless:** Going above and beyond to achieve something, a betterment, not for oneself, but for others and at great cost.

Hand of Fate

The **Hand of Fate** is a deck of cards a player can draw from, using their **FP** as currency to buy cards.

A player can play any of their cards whenever appropriate. A played card is discarded.

There are no limits to how many of a given card a player can own, but they may only hoard a maximum of 5 cards at a time.

Cost	Name	Effect
3 MiFP	Single Re-Roll	Re-Roll a single negative die.
5 MiFP	Test Advantage	Gain advantage on your next/current test.
10 MiFP	Clotter	One active Inj. of choice is now patched up .
1 MaFP	Fact Check	Change a minor plot point in a way your prefer. Work with your GM to make sure it fits the narrative, but they should respect your wish. This could be something like avoiding an NPC death or changing a fact about the plot.
1 MaFP	Just a Flesh Wound	Remove or avoid one non-permanent Inj. of choice.
1 MaFP	Hastened	Gain +1 AP during your turn when in combat .
5 MaFP	Double the Fun	Double the number of dice to roll on your next/current test.
10 MaFP	Wrong Diagnosis	Remove or avoid one permanent Inj. of choice.

Cost	Name	Effect
1 AFP	Defy Death	Leap from death's door , remove 1 active Inj. of choice and be at 1 HP ; Alternatively, avoid a narratively-driven death. The GM will decide the character's alternative fate. They could be captured, very badly injured or become indebted to someone or something.
1 AFP	Yes, my liege	Work with your GM to create a follower/hireling who will now be at your command/employ.

Combat

When diplomacy fails, hostilities ensue.

Who Acts When

At the beginning of every combat encounter, the involved parties (= groups) must roll for initiative. In order to determine which party gets to act first, each party rolls a **1D6**. The party rolling the higher number, goes first. If there is a tie, roll a **1D2**. If the player party is involved, a one means they get to go first.

The involved parties act one after another. After all involved parties have had their **turn** to act, a **combat round** has passed. All members of a party act at the same time, during the party's turn.

If one party is surprised, the ambushing party gets to act for a full turn, without initiative being rolled. This is called a *surprise round*. After the surprise round, initiative is rolled and combat begins as explained above. A party is considered surprised if they were unaware of their opponents when the first attack roll happens.

As an example: this does not count for opponents standing right in front of each other in conversation, when one of them suddenly draws a dagger and attacks. The attacker can be clearly seen by the defender and thus they must both roll for initiative, to determine whether the defender can react in time.

Combat Actions

Every turn, every character gets 3 **Action Points (AP)** to spend on actions during their turn.

Any basic action, so any action not requiring a test, costs 1 **AP**. Any action requiring a test, costs 2 **AP**.

This means that generally, one attack and one movement can be made, per turn.

A character can move up to 15'/5m per **AP** spent. In **difficult terrain**, the distance moved per **AP** is 6'/2m.

Speaking or shouting a short phrase is free. If you want to have a proper conversation, that will have to take multiple rounds.

Whenever an **exhausting action** is made, the character gains one point of **exhaustion**.

If the turn is ended with any **AP** unspent, they go towards the character's **melee defence** and **ranged defence**, as +**1D6** per **AP**.

How to Attack

All attacks made against another creature or character are made as an **opposed test**.

- When attacking with a weapon:
 - It is possible to fork other weapon skills into the attack roll.
 - The **weapon skill** of choice must be rolled as a **graduated test**.
 - If it is a melee attack, the defender must roll a **melee defence graduated test**.
 - If it is a ranged attack, the defender must roll a **ranged defence graduated test**.
- When attacking with magic:
 - It is **not** possible to fork other magic skills into the attack roll.
 - The mage must roll the specific **magic school** as a **graduated test**.
 - The defender can either roll a **ranged defence graduated test...**
 - ...or they can roll a **magic school graduated test** of their own, to try and counter the attack.
- Whoever has more successes, wins the **opposed test**.
 - If the attacker wins, they can roll the **injuries** to inflict. That number is then reduced by **resistances and armor**. The final number of injuries is then applied to the defender.
 - If the defender wins or the result is a tie, the attack fails and no **injuries** are inflicted.

Types of Attack

Sometimes, simply *hitting it* isn't enough. Sometimes, more control is needed. These rules outline how a character can do more specific attacks.

Aimed Attack

An attack generally targets the center of mass (torso) of the targeted opponent.

It is, however, possible to call out wanting to attack a specific part of an opponent's body. Generally, this means that the attack must be rolled with **disadvantage**. However, the **GM** can also decide the part being targeted is fairly easy to hit, either generally or due to current circumstance, so no disadvantage is incurred.

A player may call out what effect the aimed attack is supposed to have, such as limiting their opponent's ability to stand, move, attack or whatever else the body part may be useful for. If they don't, the **GM** decides the effect.

Difficult Attack

There may be attacks that are more difficult to perform, due to current circumstance. Such attack rolls are **disadvantaged**.

An example for a *difficult attack* would be targeting an opponent with a ranged weapon when the opponent is behind cover.

Another example would be attacking backwards, at an invisible target or with a broken arm, and so on.

Easy Attack

Some attacks may be easier to perform. An **easy attack** is **advantaged**.

The following are generally considered easy attacks (but at the **GM's** discretion):

- From behind
- Against prone opponents

- Against restrained opponents

Execution Attack

The extreme version of an easy attack, the **execution attack** allows outright killing or maiming an opponent, without having to roll for an attack or for damage.

Such an attack can be carried out against any character who is unable to resist (with the exception of player characters, see **death's door**).

*An unconscious character, or one chained to the wall couldn't possibly resist and can be instantaneously killed with an **execution attack**.*

This kind of attack is only possible at the **GM's** discretion.

Magic

Any character with **arcana**, can cast magic. What kind of magic, depends on the **magic schools** the character knows.

While not all spells can be used offensively, those that can, will inflict **damage**, proportional to the **spell's intensity** and may cause other effects on those affected by it.

The effects of a spell do not affect the mage casting the spell, unless they suffer a **spell backfire**.

Spell Intensity

Any magic can be cast at different **intensities**. A greater **spell intensity** results in a greater effect, at a proportionally greater cost.

Maximum Spell Intensity

A mage can only cast spells at an intensity up to a maximum, called their **maximum spell intensity**. This number directly correlates to their skill in the type of **magic school** they wish to use.

This means, for every **school of magic** the mage knows, they may have a different **maximum spell intensity**.

Spell Backfire

If a test to cast magic isn't a **complete success**, the spell **backfires** and applies its effects and damage to the caster, instead. The intensity at which it hits the caster, is the number of **negatives** they rolled below the intended **intensity**.

Backfire intensity = **intensity** - **positives**

*A pyromancer with a **pyromancy** skill of 4 and **arcana** of 3 chooses to cast their magic at intensity level 4. They have to roll 4 **positives**, in order to completely succeed. They get to roll **7D6** for this test. Unfortunately, they fail, having rolled only 2 **positives**. The spell **backfires**, at an intensity of 2.*

Casting Magic

In order to cast magic, a mage has to roll a skill test in a **magic school** of choice:

- If they roll a **complete success**, the spell goes off as planned, at the intended **intensity**.
- If they roll a **partial success** or a **complete failure**, the spell **backfires**, with an intensity equal to the number of **negatives** rolled.

Any damage rolls or other effects are then made and applied to the target/self.

After that, the mage has to roll the amount of **exhaustion** they gain from casting the spell. To do so, they must roll **ND3**, where *N* is the **spell intensity** they cast the spell at.

The amount of **exhaustion** gained is then reduced by their **magic exhaustion resistance**, which is governed by their **arcana** attribute, plus their skill in the related **magic school**.

Exhaustion gain cannot be reduced to less than one. That means, whenever a mage casts a spell, they gain *at least* one point of **exhaustion**.

Magic Schools

Noted for each spell intensity, are the effects of the spell and the maximum distance, from the caster, at which the spell can be cast or the distance up to which it can have an effect.

If applicable, damage inflicted, exhaustion inflicted and other such effects, will also be noted.

Pyromancy

The summoning and control of fire. The flame being a destructive force, pyromancers enjoy little utility from their magic, beyond the ability to create light.

Injuries inflicted are of the **burning** damage type.

Spell Intensity	Damage Inflicted	Max Distance	Effect(s)
1	1D3 Burning	0	A small, controlled flame erupts and stays in the mage's hand. Alternatively, a small flame (like a candle flame) in immediate proximity of the mage is extinguished.
2	2D3 Burning	3'/1m	A moderate torch fire erupts and stays in the mage's hand. Or a torch in immediate proximity of the mage is extinguished.
3	3D3 Burning	15'/5m	A ball of fire forms in the mage's hand, ready to be flung at a nearby spot, dealing its damage in a 6'/2m radius. Or a decent-sized flame is extinguished nearby.
4	4D3 Burning	15'/5m	A static wall or column of flame erupts in a nearby spot of the mage's choosing, covering up to a 12'/4m square. Alternatively, a nearby flame (wall) is redirected.

Spell Intensity	Damage Inflicted	Max Distance	Effect(s)
5	5D3 Burning	30'/10m	Flame shoots out of the mage's hand in a steady stream, covering a moderate distance and causing its damage in a straight line. Everything caught in the line takes the damage. Or another mage's stream of flame is redirected.
6+	ND3 Burning	30'/10m	N = spell intensity; Causes a spot of the mage's choosing at moderate distance to explode, causing its damage in a radius of 15'/5m.

Cryomancy

The summoning and control of ice. Besides the frostbite, cryomancer's can inflict **exhaustion** on opponents, or freeze things, so they're harder to break.

Injuries inflicted are of the **freezing** damage type.

Spell Intensity	Damage Inflicted	Exhaustion Inflicted	Max Distance	Effect(s)
1	0	0	0	Any freezable liquid in the mage's hand immediately freezes. Doesn't work on living things. So no freezing of the blood in someone's veins, while they still live!
2	1D3 Freezing	1	3'/1m	A spot of the mage's choosing, within hand's reach, freezes over.
3	1D3 Freezing	1D3	15'/5m	An ice-shard forms from whatever liquid is in the mage's hands. It can be shot at a nearby spot of the mage's choosing. The impacted spot freezes over.
4	2D3 Freezing	2D3	30'/10m	A large ice-shard forms in the mage's hands, without requiring any liquid. It can be shot at a moderately distant spot of the mage's choosing. The impacted spot freezes over.
5	2D3 Freezing	1D6	30'/10m	A large area of the mage's choosing, at moderate distance from the mage, freezes over.
6+	N-3 D3 Freezing	1D6 + N-5	30'/10m	N = spell intensity; A torrent of ice and snow forms in a large area of the mage's choosing, at moderate distance. Anything within it, freezes over.

Restoration

The mending of injuries and treatment of diseases.

Spell Intensity	Injuries Patched Up	Max Distance	Effect(s)
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Spell Intensity	Injuries Patched Up	Max Distance	Effect(s)
1	1	0	A creature of the mage's choosing, in hand's reach, is magically healed. Removes bleeding .
2+	N	0	N = spell intensity; Up to two creatures of the mage's choosing, in hand's reach, are magically healed. Removes bleeding and poisoned .
6+	0	0	N = spell intensity; A single Inj. of choice becomes treated . Removes bleeding and poisoned .

Alteration

The alteration of physical things, to change their shape and purpose. TODO

Illusion

Creation of non-physical influences on the senses. TODO

Soul-Binding

TODO

Counter-Magic

The redirection and dissolution of magic flow. TODO

Magic Things

Abyssalite

Abyssalite is a hard and brittle mineral, that has the ability to *amplify the flow of magic*. It can only be acquired from the depths of the earth and is fairly rare.

Its surface is unnaturally smooth and covered in a fine, iridescent shine. Underneath the smooth surface, one searches for depth and color in vain. It is as though the void itself was being contained by that iridescent shell.

Abyssalite is a hard and brittle mineral, prone to shattering if too much force is applied. This makes it difficult to shape. It is also fairly heavy, which makes it difficult to lug large amounts of it around.

A decent-sized **Abyssalite** chunk has a **bulk** of 2 and grants one greater **spell intensity**, but without costing any **exhaustion**. In order to use the **Abyssalite**, the caster must be touching it.

Amberite

As magic is amplified by **Abyssalite**, its antithesis is called **Amberite**, a metal which dulls the effects of magic and slows any magic flow nearby it. The material is also known to affect magic creatures and can cause great pain in magic-users.

Weapons made from Amberite are quite popular with witch and monster hunters alike, although fairly hard to come by, due to the difficulty in amber-iron processing.

Amberite is a crystalline material, that can be molten down and shaped, like iron. It glows weakly, in the fiery orange of the name-sharing amber stone. Near the edges, the glow fades to a dull reflection, like cooling molten glass.

It only occurs naturally in a few select places in the world, where the ground offers the right conditions. Amberite grows over time, in the right environment. It can take several decades for a finger-sized crystal to grow to the size of an adult man's forearm. Attempts to cultivate it have mostly failed, as Amberite farmers have so far been unable to understand and reproduce the right conditions for it to thrive. Due to the slow rate at which it grows, an Amberite farmer may not realize the lack of growth until well into a decade later.

Prolonged exposure to Amberite causes severe ill-effects with nausea and migranes being common symptoms.

Ambersteel

Amberite can be processed into Ambersteel, which makes it a usable metal. The raw material heats slowly and must be heated over the course of several days and nights, without interruption. When it finally reaches the right temperature, it will glow white, with a purple sheen. At that point, it can be hammered into shape. Constant re-heating ensures it stays at the right temperature and a final quenching in vegetable oil ensures it retains its flexibility.

If processed outside the optimal temperature, the material quickly grows brittle and will shatter if any stress is put on it.

Due to the length of the process and the difficulty in keeping the right temperature, smiths capable of working amber-iron are rare.

Runes

Shards of **Abyssalite** can have runes carved into them, which allow magic to flow through the runes. This renders runes extremely powerful artifacts, as they can allow for near limitless magic-use, even in the hands of a non-mage.

To activate such a rune, is a difficult skill to learn, however. Even if no innate magical ability is required, an understanding of the flow of magic is. The rune must be touched in the right spots, at the right intervals, to activate successfully. Mistakes in this procedure can have disastrous results.

What's more, it takes great skill to carve the right runes, as each rune's shape and complexity depends in part on the size and shape of the **Abyssalite** shard. The only way to get it right, is to *feel* the way the rune must be shaped. Alternatively, the shard can be adjusted to be of equivalent size and shape, but this requires considerable effort, as **Abyssalite** is a tough material, prone to shattering if too much force is applied, yet resistant to the common techniques of metallurgy.

In order to craft a **rune**:

- A **rune** can only be made to cast one type of magic. So the carver has to pick one of the **magic schools**.
- The maximum **level** at which a **rune** can be created, depends on the carver's skill. The **level** of the **rune** dictates the **spell intensity** it will cast its spell at.
- The carver has to succeed a **rune carving** skill test.
 - If they fail, the carving is botched and the **Abyssalite chunk** cannot be used for another carving attempt. There is no room for mistakes.

In order to invoke a **rune**:

- A **complete success** of a **rune-using** skill test will invoke the spell of the **rune** as expected.
- A **partial success** or **complete failure** results in a **spell backfire**.

Credits

Ambersteel is not a revolution of the RPG genre and it was never meant to be. It is an amalgam and consolidation of rules I found to my personal preference, in hopes of crafting a deep, yet intuitive system.

As such, I took inspiration from other systems I have read, played and enjoyed in the past:

- **The Burning Wheel**, by Luke Crane and Dan Abram
- **Zweihänder**, by Daniel D. Fox
- **Knave**, by Ben Milton