

FORWARD

Welcome to the Ground Level Pre-Alpha playtest. If you want to understand why I am creating this system and the core design principles of the system I would recommend reading this. Otherwise, you may skip to the cover page.

Ground Level is a tabletop RPG best played with four to six people wherein one player acts as a game master who controls the game world and what is possible within it. The other players assume the role of characters who act within this world. This will be familiar to people who have played popular tabletop RPGs such as Dungeons and Dragons and Pathfinder.

Ground level seeks to iterate on other popular roleplaying systems by addressing complaints frequent players of the systems have. This is accomplished by designing around the following core principles.

- **Decisions in combat are complex and meaningful:**

Many combat systems in tabletop RPGs involve players making 1 or 2 actions in a turn. While this made for some very fun and immersive systems, it can also be very limiting for players. Pathfinder 2.0 addressed this issue by creating a 3 action system, however, players ran into the problem of having a “rotation” where they would do similar things every turn because they are the optimal choice in combat. Ground Level utilizes a 3 action system similar to pathfinder 2.0, but there are systems in place that disincentive or even punish players for thoughtlessly performing their “rotation” every turn. This hopefully creates a system where every turn feels more meaningful and mentally challenging.

- **Decisions in character creation are impactful and not straightforward:**

In other systems, when creating character classes, the designers of those systems created obvious paths and builds they expect players to follow to create balanced, fun to play characters. This is excellent for new players, but to players that have been playing RPGs for many years, system mechanics like feat trees in D&D 3.5e or the paths in many classes for D&D 5e grew old quickly and severely limited player expression in character creation. A goal of Ground level is to give players a sandbox when creating characters where they can find and invent their own synergies and character themes. This has a drawback of players either deliberately or accidentally creating underpowered characters or particularly power hungry players overshadowing other members of the group, but it is my opinion that these problems are more easily solvable than the problems caused by limited character creation because they are present in players and not the text.

- **A focus on Positioning and Space:**

This design principle requires more context than the others. Personally speaking, my favorite kind of games outside of the tabletop are fighting games because they stimulate a feeling of controlling and interacting with space relative to opponents. Despite nearly all popular tabletop RPGs using a grid system for movement, it is my opinion that none of them make full use of the opportunities granted by such a system. This is because of the homogenized speed of characters, homogenized range of characters, and static penalty for flanking. Ground Level introduces a system of prepared attacks, which incentivize players and enemies to consider their position in

combat and spend resources to "lock down" spaces. This is like the "opportunity attack" system in other games, but by costing a more valuable resource it makes players consider whether threatening an area is worth it. In addition, Weapons and certain class features grant players unique ways to interact with space on the battlefield that differentiate them from other characters.

- **Complexity VS Depth:**

Every popular modern tabletop RPG is very complex and very deep. Complexity here refers to the number of systems and rules players must memorize or improvise to play the game. Depth refers to the intricacy of decision making and the number of factors that apply. The goal of Ground Level is to maximize depth and limit complexity while preserving the essential experience tabletop RPGs offer. This is accomplished by limiting the amount and intricacy of systems in the game while making the results of those systems very meaningful to the state of the game.

- **Valuing fun in systems over realism:**

Many games design systems that, above all else, try to immerse the player. This is an admirable goal; however it has a tendency to create bloated systems that are satisfying in terms of reality but not in terms of raw game mechanics. Ground level trusts its players enough to suspend their disbelief for systems that allow for outlandish feats and interactions in the name of a more fun and satisfying game from a numbers viewpoint. This is aided greatly by the alien setting of Ground Level, as it may be more excusable for the bugs of the expanse to perform inhuman feats.

- **Keeping Numbers Small**

The decision to keep numbers small is complementary to the idea of a less complex game, but the primary reason to keep numbers small is to increase accessibility. D&D, Pathfinder, and related systems require nearly a full suite of polyhedral dice. This is standard or even exciting for advanced players, but new players often don't know what dice to use or are simply overwhelmed. Ground level uses 2 dice: a d6 (regular dice) and a d4 (attack dice). Small numbers also add greater feedback. Because each increase of 1 on a scale of values is a larger proportional increase towards the goal of reducing a creature's HP or succeeding on a check, players will have more immediate feedback on how impactful their actions are. In more simple turns, players will be more excited that their attack did 2 damage instead of 1 because an increase of 1 is more meaningful. Finally, and more importantly, small numbers make addition and subtraction faster which facilitates a game where there can be a multitude of modifiers applied to 1 roll of the dice.

The reason the design goals are listed is expressly for play testers. If a system in the game conflicts with one of the above design goals, please bring it up wherever you found this document.

I appreciate the time you took to read an exhaustive and frankly unnecessary forward. I look forward to making Ground Level the game it has the potential to be – Michael, Lead Designer

GROUND LEVEL

Version 0.1 playtest

HOW TO PLAY

What is a TTRPG?

TTRPG stands for table top role playing game. As the name would suggest, in a tabletop roleplaying game, players gather around a table, or virtual table, and play a game involving the portrayal of different characters or *roles*. How TTRPGs are normally played is with 1 player acting as a Game Master who is in charge of the fictional world the game takes place in and the remaining players acting as players who controls a character that responds to the fictional environment in a way appropriate for this fictional character. Ground Level is a TTRPG played with pen and paper. The Game master, hereby referred to as GM, plans a series of possible events and through narration, drawing maps, and rolling dice subjects their players to these planned and often unplanned events. If the system works well, this is a fun activity for everybody involved.

The Game Master's Responsibilities:

As a Game master, you are largely responsible for the fun of the players under your gameplay session. Before each session it is expected for you to plan a loose itinerary of events for your players to experience. This may include challenges, traps, combat, mystery, narrative, and character interaction, but it is important not to exert too much control over your players. In order for your players to become immersed in their character it is important to give them the freedom, within limits, to create their own adventure. Improvisation is the most important tool in the GM's toolkit. Communication outside of game time is also important for a GM to ensure the game is fun for all of your players. It may be the GM's responsibility to change the tone, difficulty, or rules of the game to make the game more enjoyable.

The GM also has final say on all rules disputes. Best practice for rules disputes is to create a ruling on the spot and have that ruling be law until a player or the GM has downtime to look up the actual rule.

Even though it may feel like the interaction between players the GM is adversarial, especially when damage is involved, always remember that your job as a GM is to create a game and narrative that is fun to experience and "rocks fall everyone dies" is simply frustrating.

The Player's Responsibilities:

Players in Ground Level assume the role of a character. This character is represented by a sheet of paper known as a character sheet that displays their stats, equipment, and abilities, however, a character is not just a set of numbers on a sheet of paper. Characters are "characters" in the theater of tabletop play. Characters have motivations, personality, and ideals often very different from the player controlling them. Characters can change both physically and internally just like characters in any work of fiction, and it is up to the player to embody these fictional characters to the best of their ability.

Players need to remember that they are not alone. Ground level recommends four to six players per group. For the game to be fun for everyone, characters need to interact with other characters both in combat and outside of combat, and players need to give their fellow players room for their characters to shine, especially when there are players with differing levels of experience.

Types of Play:

Play can be broken up into 2 phases: adventure phase and combat phase.

During the adventure phase characters are free to interact with the world any way the GM sees fit. Time during the adventure phase moves at whatever pace the Gm needs it to move. It may be important to

know what a character is doing down to the second, or it may make sense to skip days or months of time. Movement in the adventure phase is unstructured, so creatures can move where they are trying to go without worrying about their speed.

During the combat phase, players take discreet turns performing *actions* allotted by the game. These actions come with an action cost. Unless modified by a unique game mechanic, players have 3 actions per turn they may spend how they see fit. Non-player-characters and enemies are also beholden to this action system. For more specifics of the combat phase see the *Combat* section of this document.

Playing with numbers:

Ground level includes several effects that reduce, increase, or otherwise alter something by *half*, so the question is, what do you do if the result isn't a whole number. The answer is *round down*. The logic behind this is simple if you consider this example; if your character can run 3.6 units in 6 seconds, can they run 4 units in 6 seconds? Obviously no, but they can run 3 units in 6 seconds.

CHARACTER CREATION

The most essential part of any roleplaying game is the character. In Ground Level your characters take the role of adventurers. For whatever reason they decided that the quiet life isn't for them, and they are willing to face the dangers of the world. As adventures travel, they will learn and progress into becoming more effective versions of themselves. This is represented by experience points. When reaching certain milestones (see below), adventures will *level up*. At first level, adventures gain 1 race, 1 class level, 1 talent, and 1 Feat. At every level thereafter, adventurers gain 1 ability point and 1 class level as well as whatever is in the rewards row (see below) for that level. This will be either a feat or a trait.

Each character belongs to a race. At level 1 a character gains everything listed under the classes "stats" section (see *races*) and a number of racial traits

Ability points can be assigned to any of the basic abilities, agility, fortitude strength, or wisdom, however, *an adventurer's highest ability score must not be greater than twice the sum of the rest*. For example, 6, 2,1, 0 is a valid stat line, but 6, 1, 1, 0 is not.

Feats are combat oriented abilities granted to the player at every odd level. Upon reaching an odd level, a player may choose any feat they qualify for, See *table: feats*.

Talents are largely non-combat-oriented abilities granted at every even level and level 1. Upon reaching an even level, a player may choose any talent they qualify for, See *table: talents*.

Skills represent your character's ability to perform largely out-of-combat tasks that must be learned. Skill points are gained at every level. A maximum of 2 skill points may be assigned to a given skill per level. This limit is not affected by feats, talent, racial traits, or class features.

An adventurer may select any class to gain a class level in giving them the listed benefits from that level in the class. Levels in any given class must be completed sequentially. i.e. an adventurer cannot gain abilities from the second level of a class before completing the first. Abilities toward the end of a class tend to be more powerful, however it may be worth it to take a small number or "splash" of levels in another class to shore a weakness or complete a combo. In some cases, it may be viable to split levels almost evenly between classes.

Level	EXP	rewards
1	-	feat, talent, racial traits
2	25	talent
3	60	Feat
4	120	Talent
5	210	Feat
6	335	Talent
7	500	Feat
8	700	Talent
9	950	Feat
10	1205	Talent
11	1510	Feat
12	1875	Talent

13	2305	Feat
14	2805	Talent
15	3380	feat
16	4035	Talent
17	4775	Feat
18	5605	talent
19	6530	feat
20	7555	talent

CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES:

Ability scores:

There are 4 basic ability scores. They are agility, fortitude, strength, and wisdom. In addition, there are 2 secondary ability scores, perception, and charisma.

Agility: Agility represents how fast and dexterous your character is. In addition to adding to your defense, each point of agility you possess increases your initiative by 1 and speed by 1 (to a maximum speed from agility of 10) Characters with little agility may find themselves lagging behind their teammates in combat and have difficulties traversing the dangerous environment the world has to offer.

Fortitude: Fortitude embodies hardiness and resilience to physical damage. Each point of fortitude increases your HP and Defense by 1. Creatures heal a number of HP equal to their Fortitude score after a full night's rest. Characters with little fortitude will take a lot of damage and have less HP to absorb that damage.

Strength: Strength represents not only your physical strength, but prowess in combat. Strength is added to your attack roll when attacking, and greater strength increases your carry weight. Characters with little strength will find themselves making tough decisions on what they can equip and carry and will have to either cast spells or find another way to be effective in combat without strength based attacks.

Wisdom: Wisdom is the embodiment of your common sense, intelligence, and resilience in the face of mental attacks. Wisdom is the basis for the mental defense stat and is used for any skill that requires either academic knowledge or lived experience. Characters with little wisdom will be extremely susceptible to mind controlling effects and will have to rely on their party for important knowledge about the environment and enemies.

Perception: Perception determines how good you are at sensing things in your environment, and is determined predominantly by race, but can be increased with talents and class features. When making a perception check, roll a d6 and add your perception modifier.

Charisma: Charisma is a measure of your social skills and will help determine how likely NPCs are to trust, believe, and befriend you. Charisma is utilized often outside of battles and can be used in creative ways to avoid battles entirely. Charisma can be increased with talents and certain racial traits.

Defenses:

Defense: Defense is a secondary stat that decreases damage from incoming physical attacks. Defense is equal to your agility score + your fortitude score + armor. Certain armors will cap the maximum defense from agility. There are ways to increase your defense in combat such as using a (defend) action.

Mental Defense: Your mental defense is equal to 2+ your wisdom score. Spells and effects that attack mental defense must meet or exceed mental defense to have any effect at all.

Resistances: It is possible for a player character to acquire resistance. Resistances decrease the damage taken by a specific damage type by a flat number equal to the resistance.

HP: "HP" or "hit points" represent the physical condition of your character. Your total maximum hit points without temporary modifiers are equal to the default HP granted by your race + a number of HP

from your class + your fortitude score. Reducing a creature's fortitude attribute does not reduce their HP until they have rested.

Speed: Your character's speed is equal to your base speed from race + your agility score. The speed bonus from agility may not exceed 10. Your speed can be reduced by difficult terrain. Speed on difficult terrain is halved. Some examples of difficult terrain are torso deep water, a floor covered in glue, bramble, or whatever other nasty terrain your GM can throw you in. Unless a creature is completely immobilized, the minimum speed for a creature is 1.

Carry weight: Carry weight is measured in pebbles. A character with a strength of 0 can carry 20 pebbles unencumbered. This value is increased by 10 for each point of strength you have. It is possible to carry twice your carry weight, but you gain the *slowed* condition from being encumbered, halving your movement speed. You may not perform any actions except moving until you are no longer encumbered.

Initiative: Initiative determines who moves first in combat. The initiative stat is simply equal to your agility score. When rolling initiative add 1d6 to your agility score.

SKILLS AND ABILITY CHECKS

Skills:

Skills describe a creature's ability to do things that may be expected from an adventurer. Each skill will have 1 main attribute attached to it though it may be logical to substitute one attribute for another in special cases. Skills can be used in situations called "skill checks" and "skill contests". When making a skill check roll 1d6 then add the number of ranks you have in the skill and add the appropriate attribute. Skill contests include 2 or more creatures. Both creatures perform a skill check and the one with the highest result succeeds. In the event of a draw, the initiator of the contest loses. Skill checks are made vs a "difficulty class" decided by the GM. Some sample difficulty classes will be listed under each skill, but ultimately the difficulty of a skill check is decided by the GM. Skill checks that involve knowing something such as the price of an object or a historical fact may not be attempted multiple times.

When a skill check is deemed necessary by the GM the GM must first decide what skill is needed from the player, then assign a difficulty class. Below are what you can expect from a range of difficulty classes.

0-4, Reasonably Expect someone with no experience to be capable of succeeding.

5-6, difficult but not impossible without training.

7-10, Usually requires training or several character levels.

11-15, Difficult even for those with moderate training.

16-20, Requires several character levels and focus on that particular skill.

21-35, Epic feats only possible by true adventurers.

36+, Late game, difficult skill checks.

Some skills are capable of more than simple skill checks. These special actions/mechanics will be listed in the description of the skill.

Commerce (wisdom): the commerce skill describes knowledge and skill in all things financial. This includes appraising items to sell them or to determine whether a given price is fair. Commerce is

primarily a wisdom skill, but in certain cases such as convincing an NPC that a given deal is in their best interest, it may be appropriate to use charisma.

Examples of commerce:

- Determining the worth of this gold necklace you have found: Commerce (wisdom), DC: 5
- Determining if a price for a mount you are trying to buy is fair: Contest Commerce (wisdom) vs Commerce (charisma)

Intrigue (Charisma): Intrigue is the practice of deceptive communication. This skill includes both purposefully deceiving another and detecting another creature's deception.

Examples of intrigue:

- Explaining a convincing alibi to a judge: Intrigue(charisma) DC: 4
- Convincing an eager shopkeeper that a vase you found contains the spirit of a powerful warrior: Intrigue (charisma) DC: 12
- Determining that the poor forgery you are handed is fake: Intrigue (wisdom) DC: 7
- Determining that the person who bumped into you picked your pocket: Contest Intrigue (charisma) vs thievery (agility)

Diplomacy (Charisma): Diplomacy is the practice of honest communication. Diplomacy can be used to resolve situations through the act of interacting with one or both sides.

Examples of diplomacy:

- Breaking up a bar fight before blows are exchanged: Diplomacy (charisma) DC: 6
- Convincing a group of nervous onlookers to help you defend their town: Diplomacy (charisma) DC: 9
- Convincing a lord that your cause is more worth his time than your lying competition : Contest Diplomacy (charisma) vs intrigue (charisma)

Forage (wisdom): The forage skill is used to survive outside of civilization through hunting, tracking, and proper identification of flora and fauna. Forage can also be used to produce food while a party is adventuring. The required DC for a days' worth of food in an area with ample opportunity and given ample time is 3 per person provided for.

Examples of Forage:

- Correctly identify common creature tracks: Forage (wisdom) DC: 5
- Determine if a given plant is safe to eat: Forage (wisdom) DC: 5
- Attract a small, buried worm to the surface with vibrations: Forage (wisdom) DC: 8

Handle creature (charisma): Handle creature is the art of interacting with unintelligent creatures to your benefit. This is especially useful for practitioners of mounted combat and farmers, but it can be just as useful for adventurers given the right circumstances.

Examples of handle creature:

- Convince an aggressive wild animal to stop attacking: Handle creature (charisma) DC 10
- Convince an aggressive wild animal to stop attacking with a gift of food: Handle creature (charisma) DC 6
- Calm a spooked mount: Handle animal (charisma) DC 5
- Ride a docile mount bareback: Handle animal (charisma) DC 8

Healing (wisdom): The healing skill is a summary of knowledge and practices for treating wounds without the help of magic. Healing can be used to raise a creature with the “dying” condition to 1 HP. This takes 10 minutes of healing and the DC for the check is equal to the fallen creature’s negative HP. This may only be attempted once per creature.

Examples of healing:

- Determine if a creature is below 50% HP: Healing (wisdom) 8
- Correctly identify a common disease: Healing (wisdom): 6

Knowledges (wisdom): the knowledge skill simulates your character’s knowledge of certain subjects. Knowledge skills can be used outside of combat to gather information about places, people, or things, or in combat during the preparation phase and after the preparation phase at the cost of 1 action.

- **Society:** Society includes knowledge of current events, politics, and the layouts of large settlements.
- **Creatures:** Creatures include knowledge about the creatures of [] friendly or aggressive. Knowledge (creatures) can be used to determine the behaviors and properties of beasts but is not a substitution for forage when it comes to tracking.
- **Warfare:** Warfare includes knowledge of the armies of the major nations of [], their soldiers, and their tactics as well as general military strategy and the usage and construction of weapons.
- **Arts:** Arts includes knowledge of the history and methods of art. Knowledge of the arts can also be used to determine the place of origin or even particular artist behind a piece.
- **History:** History is the generalize knowledge of the history of [] and it’s kingdoms
- **Terrain:** Terrain includes knowledge of geography both micro and macro. Knowledge (terrain) can also be used to navigate using the stars or common landmarks.
- **Magic:** Magic includes knowledge about the theory and implementation of invocations. Determining the name and effect of a particular spell has a DC of 6+ the spell level. Knowledge of magic can also be used to determine the effect of a magic item that has already been used.

Stealth (agility): Stealth is the ability to move without detection, avoid traps, and hide in plain sight. Disguises also utilize stealth.

Using stealth to hide: Hiding takes 1 action, and there must be some way to hide such as darkness, cover, or loose objects to hide behind. To hide, make a stealth skill check. All targets can contest the stealth with a perception check immediately and again on their turn. If your stealth check is higher than a target’s perception check, you are hidden from them. While hiding, moving away from whatever you are using to hide reveals you.

Other examples of stealth:

- Walk over a simple trap you can see without triggering it: Stealth (agility) DC 6
- Using stealth to hide a trap: Contest stealth (agility) vs perception
- Using a disguise to bypass a lazy guard: Contest Stealth (charisma) vs perception

Thievery (agility): Thievery is the art of physical deception, but it also extends to cover any fine manipulation of fingers to interact with people or devices such as lockpicking and sleight of hand.

Examples of thievery:

- Picking a simple lock with proper tools: Thievery (agility) DC 7
- Picking a master lock with proper tools: Thievery (agility) DC 15
- Disabling a simple trap: Thievery (agility) DC 5
- Picking an aloof passerby's pocket: Contest Thievery (agility) vs intrigue (charisma)

Performance (charisma): Performance is creating and performing some sort of art. It can be dancing, painting, singing, playing musical instruments, etc. Performance can inspire your allies, distract your enemies, or earn a living providing you are good enough. A creature's performance is tracked separately for each type of art. For example, a creature with 3 ranks in performance to dance still has 0 ranks when using performance to sing.

Examples of performance:

- Playing music in public well enough to earn some pity donations: performance (charisma) DC 6
- Playing music in public well enough to draw a crowd: Performance (charisma) DC 8
- Painting a work of art worthy of purchase: Performance (agility) DC 11

Ability checks:

Often, interacting with your environment will include actions that are not covered under skills, but are too difficult, high stakes, or heroic to be role played without the need for a roll. For example, breaking down a door, or climbing a sheer cliff face without gear. These situations may require an ability check. An ability check uses 1d6 plus one attribute to attempt to beat a DC determined by the GM. Below are rules for some common ability checks, but depending on the situation, an ability check may need to be issued outside of these situations or not issued for one of the situations listed. Ultimately, it is at the GM's discretion when an ability check is necessary and what the DC will be.

Balance (agility): Whether balancing on an oil slick or a tightrope, keeping your footing is the responsibility of agility. When maintaining balance, an agility ability check must be rolled every round at the beginning of the round or the balancing creature falls. Below are some examples of the expected difficulty for balancing, but a given check may fall between or exceed the difficulty categories.

Effortless DC 2: A stranger bumps into you on the street and you need to keep your footing.

Easy DC 5: Catch yourself when stepping onto a greasy floor.

Moderate DC 7 : Stand up straight in intense wind.

Difficult DC 10: Cross a tightrope with a moderate breeze.

Heroic: DC 12 : Cross a tightrope covered in grease.

Impossible DC 24 : Cross a greased tightrope in a monsoon.

Climbing (strength): Sometimes the only way around is over. Climbing takes 3 actions, and the number of tiles you climb is determined by your strength score. On a successful climb check, a creature may move a number of tiles along a surface equal to the smaller number between their speed and their strength attribute (minimum 1). On a failed check the climber must make an immediate check to catch themselves, upon failure they lose grip and begin to fall. Below are some examples of the expected difficulty for Climbing, but a given check may fall between or exceed the difficulty categories.

Effortless DC 2: successfully hold onto a rope as it is lifted.

Easy DC 5: Climb an easy rock face with plenty of grips.

Moderate DC 7 : Climb an icy mountainside with the correct equipment.

Difficult DC 10: Climb the side of a building with only windows and the occasional loose brick to hold.

Heroic: DC 12 : Jump off one mossy swinging vine and grab another in midair.

Impossible DC 24 : Scale a perfectly smooth rock face with only 2 pitons and your hands.

Destruction (strength): *It's just one of those days*. Breaking objects is similar to attacking. It takes 1 action, and the formula for destruction is $1d6 + \text{weapon damage} + \text{strength score}$. Every stationary object has a break DC determined by the GM that, when exceeded by a destruction check, breaks, and becomes useless. Moving objects in combat such as weapons and shields cannot be targeted by a destruction check. Below are some examples of Break DCs for common objects.

Effortless DC 2: A pane of glass

Easy DC 5: Chopping wood

Moderate DC 7 : A weak door

Difficult DC 10: A sturdy wagon wheel

Heroic: DC 12 : Bend iron (reasonably)

Impossible DC 24 : A 1 twig thick block of granite

Intimidation (charisma): There's more than one way to prevent a fight. Intimidation can be used to scare your enemies when diplomacy is ineffective. Intimidation as a skill check is meant for use outside of combat where its effectiveness is limited. As such, it is up to the GM to create a reasonable DC for intimidate ability checks. To use intimidation in combat, refer to *domineering* under *feats*.

Lifting (strength): Carry weight describes how much a character can carry, but it's reasonable to expect a character can lift much more if they don't intend to keep what they lift. A character can lift something a number of pebbles equal to $1d6 + 20 + 2 \times \text{Strength}$. This costs 3 actions.

Swimming (strength): Of the ways to move in The Great Expanse, swimming is by far the least common. A weak swimmer might find themselves in peril when faced with unusual situations. Swim checks are made at the beginning of your turn. A successful swim check can raise the swimmer 1 tile or maintain their current position. A creature descends 1 tile when failing a swim check. To determine the effects of drowning, see *suffocation* under *additional rules*. Below are some examples of the expected difficulty for Climbing, but a given check may fall between or exceed the difficulty categories.

Effortless DC 2: Tread water.

Easy DC 5: Swim upstream in a slow river.

Moderate DC 7 : Stay above water while another creature is trying to pull you down.

Difficult DC 10: Swim upstream in deep rapids.

Heroic: DC 12 : Swim in honey.

Impossible DC 24 : Swim to the edge of a massive vortex.

Jumping (agility): Jumping is an essential tool for the adventurer, and it's far better than flying for short bursts of movement. A creature can jump a number of tiles in any direction (including upward) equal to $1d6 + \text{agility}$. Jumping Requires 2 actions.

THE GREAT EXPANSE

Mythos:

From an ancient tome:

Before time itself, there existed the maelstrom. A land of wonton chaos and violence filled with monstrous creatures, ever expanding in frenzy and vigor. The maelstrom's overwhelming rampage was so great that it could no longer sustain its own wrath and the maelstrom erupted in a massive flash of light. This light decimated the terrain leaving only a scorched barren wasteland in its wake. The creatures of the maelstrom were eradicated, save for our first ancestors who cowered from the light underground. For an eon things were still as the souls of the destroyed maleficent creatures swarmed until slowly the swarms started to breathe new life of their own.

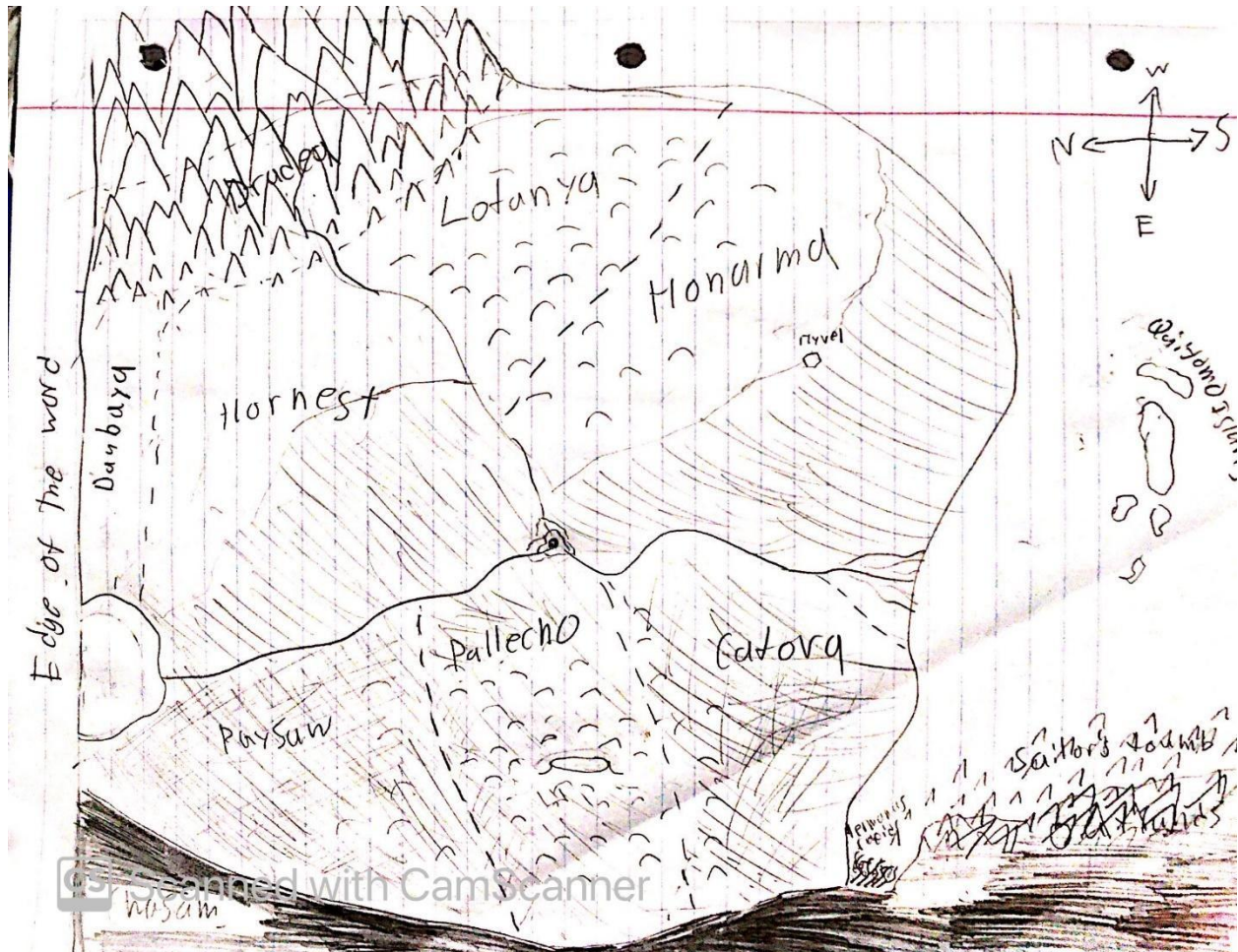
The first was Xer who birthed the sun and bestowed light upon the land, Then Came Jun who filled the sky with stars. However, Jun realized that his wondrous creation was useless, for the sun stayed fixed in place, so no matter the time, the sky looked the same. Jun begged Xer to allow the sun to set so he may view his magnificent project, and Xer agreed in exchange for a gift. "Create a new star in the image of my exquisite creation so I may have something to look at when my sun is away." Then Jun bestowed upon her the moon, but she was not content. "The land below us is barren and the creatures are simple." "Help me raise my brood so that we might have something worth watching over." and so he did. Then from the souls still swirling in the sky, the second generation of gods appeared. Floressa the goddess of plants who gave our ancestors shelter and food, qualla the god of water who let the barren soils sustain life, Jertoo the goddess of bugs who awakened our intellect, Skinty the goddess who let our small minds dream what we cannot see, and Kazadan the god who bestowed the world magic.

These gods continued to breed, with each new generation granting the surface dwellers new facets of life until there were no more monstrous souls in the sky. Some fear that the maelstrom still lurks deep underground and one day it may be unleashed upon the surface, but no signs of such cataclysm have appeared to bugs of the land.

The Great Expanse:

The Great Expanse is a large piece of land surrounded by natural borders. To the south, an endless ocean. To the east, a chasm which gives way to an inhospitable land of jagged spires and grey skies. To the West, more ocean and titanic mountains. And to the north, a sheer cliff that extends higher than eyes can see which no bug has ever scaled. Walking nonstop, only stopping to sleep and eat, it would take 100 days to walk from the edge of the world to the oceans deep. Since the first intelligent bugs emerged from the soil there has been conflict between various tribes over land, resources, and later, religion and nation. The results of such conflicts are 9 nations with often undefined or disputed borders. It is here where adventures in Ground Level take place.

[World Map Extremely rough draft:]



Provinces:

Catora:

Catora is a densely forested land sparse in settlements as the majority of its citizens live underground. The eastern half of Catora receives constant rainfall from the outlands resulting in a rainforest which slowly gives way to the tall hardwood forests of northern Catova. Catova is a land both rich in lumber and minerals and new ships with precious metals often leave the ports, so naturally a large population of pirates quick to seize the opportunity. Under the surface thousands of tunnels both active and abandoned dating back to the beginning of borrar society span nearly the whole length of the continent. Most Catovan towns and cities reside in large underground caves. Residents of these caves have cultured fungus and worms for hundreds of years which are used as both a food source and the primary source of lighting through the extraction of bioluminescent dyes.

Daubaya:

The smallest and least populated nation of Lumina, Daubaya is a land of dense red clay filled soil perfect for construction and cultivation of several crops and livestock. The most remarkable features in Daubaya are the cities situated upon the edge of the world which are at least partially carved into the cliff themselves. The square clay buildings stretching several stories high are a marvel to behold for foreigners and traders.

Dradea:

Dradea's mountainous terrain certainly does not offer a simple life, but this did not stop ancient horizons from finding a home in the treacherous terrain. The limitations offered by steep cliffs and strong winds are made up for by the captivating views and more importantly, difficulty for foreigners to attack. Society in Dradea is largely separated, sometimes with days of travel between settlements in a single community. What larger towns do exist are governed by local monasteries. These monasteries are often beautiful ancient structures, but few choose to walk the long rocky footpaths or fly over the windy valley between mountains to reach them.

Honarma:

The largest country in the expanse; a result of war expanding its borders far past its natural boundaries. Southern Honarma is mostly flat with splatters of forests and grassy clearings broken up with farms and estates which slowly gives way to grasslands and rolling hills. Hyvel stands as the crowning jewel of Honarma. Most of the city is encased by a massive hexagon wall. From outside these walls, a bug could see the peak of the queen's opulent palace. Inside the walls the buildings stretch up to 15 stories and during peak hours crowds can get so thick a bug couldn't even stretch their wings. Despite the crowding, the city is kept extremely clean and crime free by a platoon of civil workers.

Hornest:

Hornest is the largest country of lumina, however this size is misleading because roughly ½ of the country is barely hospitable desert. The majority of Hornest's population live in villages in the south-east where the trees are thicker and other resources more plentiful. Hornest is unfairly known for being rich with bandits, which can probably be attributed to the large swaths of unsettled land and the large number of abandoned forts and settlements resulting from the ongoing war between Lumina and Honarma.

Lotanya:

The saying goes, "If you enter Lotanya you never leave". This is because even if you leave, the serenity of the wind gently blowing through the flowery hills never fades from your mind. Audians even create large decorative structures that produce harmonious notes when the wind blows at certain angles so all of a bug's senses can be at peace. The same wind is used to power mills for the assortment of grains produced in Lotanya. Their towns are smaller than average, existing mostly as stopping points for travelers and places where the bugs farming the land or herding their flocks can stock up on what the soil won't provide. When a town meeting is called, an organ arrangement is played which can be heard throughout the local area and potentially even to neighboring towns. Recent memories of Lotanya's are filled with the fire of warfare as Honarmans serving the capital have captured a third of the difficult to defend nation.

Pallecho:

Pallecho's landscape is rolling tree covered hills wrought with caves and rivers, but you might be convinced otherwise if you move closer to civilization where the forests have been demolished in service of farms, ranches, and neatly organized silk farms. Many would consider this land unremarkable except for the huge plateau Glaesta in the center of the nation where the rich and beautiful live. The land atop the plateau is filled with parks, mansions, and well-kept estates. As a result of the great wealth disparity, bugs in the lowlands have virtually no governing body to enforce their safety, so they are forced to farm silk and dyes for the little protection Glaesta will provide or stick to large groups to fend off outlaws.

Paysaw:

The land of Paysaw is covered in tall dark forests, and the deeper you descend into the country the larger and more separated these trees become until it becomes a flat, barren, leaf covered ground with large wooden spires ascending to the heavens. The denizens of Paysaw do not take this for granted, creating everything from homes to entire villages in the branches of these trees. (with lifts of course for wingless bugs and pack animals). The unique living conditions in the treetop result in a diet of fruit and small arthropods for most. Paysaw is seen amongst bugs as a land of knowledge and creation and technological contributions from the universities of Paysaw have had a major part in Lumina's success as a megastate.

Quitomo Islands:

Quitomo is a group of tropical islands far off the southern coast of Honarma including several active volcanoes. The islands are a source of sugar, tropical fruits, and coral from the surrounding reefs which is an expensive curiosity for landlocked nobles. Many of the ancient settlements of Quitomo have been forced to modernize as industry increased, causing a serious divide in the native population whether the increased control from the mainland is welcome. Pirates and exiled prisoners alike take residence in small islands surrounding the nation, eventually forming their own minor cities of freedom and crime.

Rattlecrossing:

Rattlecrossing is the heart of The Great Expanse and the patron city of adventures, traders, and the displaced. The city sits atop a river crossing and various streams and offshoots weave through the city streets creating twisted uneven streets. The soft ground below forces buildings below a certain height so the city expanded outward much faster than upward. Travelers come from across the expanse to trade goods or seek fellow adventurers to party up with, or to simply escape the war threatening their lord's property.

Economy:

While trade based economies certainly exist in secluded areas of The Great Expanse the majority of the region uses standard currency made from minuscule shiny mites called silverbugs. Silverbugs are found all over the region but remain rare enough to be fashioned into currency because they have never bred in captivity. Currency has 2 denominations, husks and chips. Husks are the slightly concave iridescent top shells of silver bugs typically etched with 1 or several bank symbols. Chips are made from the much smaller underbelly plate and are worth exactly one tenth of a husk. The typical salary for a low skilled worker such as a farm hand or squire is 2.5 Husk per day.

Measurement:

As bug society advanced, the need for standard units of measurement arose. Eventually scholars and tradesmen agreed upon standardized systems for length and weight. The unit "Twig" is used for length. 1 twig is two-thirds of a real life meter. In game that is equal to 1 third of a tile or approximately the height of a small creature. "sticks" are 1 hundredth of a twig and "branches" are 100 times the length of a twig. For weight, the "Pebble" was decided upon. It is believed the unit got the name from a rock by the side of a road somewhere, but in reality, the official "pebble" is an iron billet inside a bank in Rattlecrossing. One pebble is approximately equal to a British pound. Larger units for weight are "stones" which are 10 pebbles and Boulders which are "1000" pebbles.

RACES

Apiates:

Description:

The Apiates are a group of average to small sized, two winged bugs whose most obvious features are a pale fuzz growing around the neck and legs and obvious black and yellow coloring. Their large abdomen's have a sharp stinger that is rarely used for combat nowadays.

History and Society:

The Apiates were among the first races to be awakened by the gods. Their homeland Honarma was rich in every resource required to sustain life, ample food, fresh water, and fertile soil. Nearly immediately, the city of Hyvel was founded. The majority of Apiate society lies within the ancient city. It's a constant hub for commerce and arts and the permanent residence of the Apiate Queen. Apiates believe their queen to possess the reincarnated soul of the goddess Bevia, and devout followers of the queen refer to themselves as Beivs. Apiate history is wrought with nearly constant war as they used their numbers and organization to expand their empire. Eventually they would find their mortal enemy in the Horneist who resembled the Apiates in color and shape but refused to accept the queen's divinity. Most Apiates spend their lives in Hyvel working in factories or as artisans, but they are permitted leave whenever they wish. Perhaps the least common reason to leave Hyvel is exile which can occur for making slights against the queen (a heinous offense).

Relations:

The largest conflict on The Great Expanse will eternally be the holy war between Apiates and Lunamates, however, their war with Lumina hasn't stopped Honarma from colonizing a majority of the available land in the south eastern quadrant of the Great Expanse. This puts them at odds with the Borrers and Audians who they both have rocky peace agreements with. The other races are generally accepted in Apiate society so long as they respect the customs and ideals of the land. The relation between individual Apiates and the other races of the Expanse will depend wildly on if an Apiate identifies as a Beiv. Apiates are generally liked for their artistic ability and cuteness by non lunamates, but how hard an Apiate pushes Bevia can be a determining factor if 2 bugs get along. Exiled and non-believers get the benefit of avoiding this but will be hated or simply avoided by the faithful.

Stats:

HP: 9

Ability points :2

Perception: 1

Charisma: 1

Speed: 3 , Normal flight

Size: Medium, Small

Racial Traits: All Apiates start with a stinger and one "Creed"

Stinger: The Apiates stinger is a deadly weapon used in antiquity as a last ditch effort to take down an already wounded opponent often at the cost of the user's life. Using a stinger is an attack that costs 3 actions. The stinger has a base weapon damage of 0, and upon dealing damage with a stinger, the stinger ejects from the body in a gruesome fashion dropping the Apiates HP to 0 and dealing 3 poison damage

to the target every round till the venom is removed or the target dies. An Apiate may only drop their stinger once Even if they manage to recover afterwards.

- o Creed: Artist: Apiates have a long history in the arts of painting and sculpture, and in Hyvel artistry is considered an invaluable profession. +2 wisdom , +1 perception, +1 perform (fine art), and +1 knowledge (arts)
- o Creed: Dancer: The tradition of dance runs deep in apiate society. Apiates who train in traditional dancing get +2 agility, +1 charisma, and +1 perform (dance) when dancing.
- o Creed: Outcast: Outcast Apiates are those who were raised outside of Hyvel. Most outcasts come from parents who have forsaken the Queen's rule Outcasts gain +1 strength, +1 fortitude and +1 skill point.
- o Creed: Queen's guard: a sizable proportion of Apiates join the queen's royal army and are officially trained to protect Hyvel and it's interests gaining +1 strength, +1 fortitude, +1 knowledge (war), and proficiency in either Rapier or glaive
- o Creed: Royal: The royal family in Hyvel is massive, and everyone in the royal family is required to undergo the full royal schooling which involves +1 wisdom, +1 agility, +2 knowledge (society) , and + 1 knowledge (history).
- o Creed: Worker: Worker Apiates have spent a considerable time in the honey distilleries or another manual labor job thus gaining +1 agility, +1 fortitude , +1 knowledge (commerce), and +1 skill point

Audinans: (grasshopper + cricket)

Description:

Audinans have thick bodies and are distinctly rectangular in shape. Their legs make up more than 2/3 of their total height making them excellent runners and jumpers. They span from bright green to brown to rusty red and can have very bright saturated patches of color on their exterior.

History and Society:

The majority of Audinans are born in the nation of Lotanya, a small venerable windy nation of grasslands and rolling hills. This beautiful fertile land has been the target of many invasions, but Lotanya always holds due to a lineage of great spellcasters and generals who consistently win against the much larger invading armies. Society in Lotanya revolves around music. Every year the high orchestra meets in the city of Grattassa to hear the music of performers from across Lotanya. The artist with the best composition and performance is permitted to join the orchestra which governs the country. Any Audinan growing up in their home country is taught the importance of music starting when they are larva. Audinans are not restricted to Lotanya however, and many decide to leave to become adventurers so they may become immortalized as a hero in one of their nation's great masterpieces. Others leave to find a quiet part of the world free from the constant noise of their homeland.

Relations:

Audinan songs have spread across the great expanse, as has the reputation of the wondrous land of Lotanya which is currently experiencing an uneasy peace. Audinan adventures are fairly common across the expanse, so most bugs will treat them no differently than any other adventurer who wanders through their door. Audinan bards however are constantly surrounded by people excited to hear what wonderful music they have brought with them on their journey.

Stats:

HP: 8

Ability points: 3

Perception: 1

Charisma: 1

Speed: 5

Size: Medium

Racial Traits: Audians start with "Leaper" and "Perfect pitch" and may choose 1 additional racial trait.

- Leaper: Audians are particularly good at jumping. They add 2 to the number of tiles they can jump (*see ability checks*)
- Perfect Pitch: Audians have naturally good musical ability, and they gain +2 perform (music)
- Deadly Buzz: With training, certain Audians can vibrate overlapping plates of carapace to create an extremely distracting buzzing sound. This takes the form of the Buzz action: *Buzz (3 actions):* every target within 12 tiles that can hear you receives a -1 to defense.
- Brooding: With ancestry stemming from the large open space of Lotanya, some Audians have no trouble finding inner peace. Brooding audians heal twice as much after a full night's rest.
- Pathfinder: Audians make for naturally trail blazers and good adventures. +2 Perception and +2 Forage.

Borrers:

Description:

Borrers are a species of variable size, though mostly wingless and smooth bugs that are universally between brown and black. As they mature into adults their bodies will take one of 3 forms: the nimble worker, the stocky soldier, or the winged noble.

Society.

For most of history the Borrers society was divided by class. Workers were considered lesser than soldiers and nobles held most of the power only subservient to the empress. All the Borrers served the nation of Catova using their digging technology and expertise to create tunnels and caverns to hold their underground society. However, with the help of the newly united Lunimate army, a revolution occurred and the empress along with most of the nobles were killed. In its place the newly instated empress abolished the class system and restructured Catova into a society by and for the workers. Catova now sells their digging service to any nation willing to pay for it. Life underground can be challenging though, so many Borrers decide to leave Catova in search of a new life on the surface.

Relations:

Catova after its liberation has become a hotspot for activity and commerce. Richer cities and nations are free to employ Catovan companies to develop tunnels and above ground structures and often do so because it's hardly a competition on who could do it better. Borrers are a fresh face in the world of bugs, as their liberation from tyrannical rule came later than the introduction of any other race. They are typically viewed positively as their stereotypes involve a strong work ethic and positive attitude

Stats:

HP: 9

Ability points:3

Perception: 1

Charisma: 1

Speed: 4

Size: Large, Medium*

Racial Traits: Borrers gain Deepsight, lifter, Eusocial, and must choose between "worker, soldier, and noble"

- **Nobile:** Nobles are medium size and gain +1 wisdom and average flight
- **Soldier:** Soldiers are large size and gain +1 strength, +1 HP, and mandibles they can use as a weapon with a weapon value of 1
- **Worker:** Workers are medium and gain +1 agility and +1 skill point
- **Eusocial:** Borrers have a natural talent for teamwork. Borrers with this trait grant a +1 when helping others or receiving help with a skill check.
- **Lifter:** Borrers have +4 PB carry weight
- **Deepsight:** Borrers have darkvision (see *additional rules: vision*).

Drillbys:

Description:

Drillbys are frail species with thin bodies and especially long legs. They possess elongated mouthparts that span to the center of their thorax, and they are usually a muted brown or black and occasionally have brightly colored spots. They have 2 long wings, thin arms and abdomen, and a smattering of fine hairs all over their body.

Society:

Drillbys hail from the island of Qitomo where they remained uncontacted for centuries. When ships became strong enough to reach their jungle island the invaders were attacked and had their hemolymph drained by the defending army. Centuries later more peaceful arrangements were arranged and Drillbys started to establish themselves on the mainland, but the stigma of savage vampires has not fully faded. Their reputation from years past often forces Drillbys on the mainland to form groups of similarly ostracized bugs which causes them to quickly make strong bonds within their community.

Relations:

The inhabitants of Qitomo have made it very clear that they would not take kindly to foreign invaders, so the island exists now as slowly expanding ports and trading hubs offering exclusive fruits and spices to foreigners in exchange for quality metals. How a particular bug views drillby's depends on their vulnerability to xenophobia. On average bugs tend to be less trusting, but many are sympathetic to their plight, and even more are vehemently against them.

Stats:

HP: 7

Ability points: 4

Perception: 1

Charisma: 0

Speed: 3 , Normal flights

Size: Small

Racial traits: All drillby start with the syphon trait and 1 additional trait

- **Siphon:** Drillbys can make a normal attack with their sharp proboscis; it has a weapon damage of 1 and counts as a light weapon for class features that interact with them. In addition Drillbys can make a 3 action attack called siphon witch, in addition to doing normal damage, does 2 damage which are not affected by any defense or damage reduction. When attacking another creature this way (excluding plants and constructs) the Drillby restores 2 HP and reduces their mental defense by 1. A full night's rest restores 1 mental defense.
- **Sneaky:** Drillby's dark coloration, gentle flying, and small hands make them master sneaks. **+1 Thievery, +1 stealth.**
- **Aerodynamic:** Drillby's shape lets them slip through the air faster than the average bug. **+1 speed, Good Flight**

- Friendly: These drillbys refuse to let their history define them gaining +2 charisma and +1 diplomacy

Horizoned: (mantis dragonfly hybrid)

Description:

Horizoned are tall brightly colored insects with triangle shaped heads adored with 2 massive eyes that come in many forms. Horizoned arms are lined with barbs that snag onto soft materials, and they have 4 long wings on their back.

History and Society:

The Horizoned have lived relatively undisturbed in the mountains for a millennium. They are typically the most pious of the races and frequently descend from the mountains of Dreadea on pilgrimages to other sites considered sacred. Horizoned society in their homeland revolves around reverence to the gods, and the monasteries in each town handle the town's security and education. Non-believers are tolerated in their society with the understanding that the soul of non-believers will be reincarnated into something less desirable such as a worm or mite and that is their choice to make.

Relations: The mountains of Dreadea pose little value to the kingdoms of The Expanse, and horizoned immigrants and adventures are rarer than average. Bugs living near religious monuments may be accustomed to seeing horizoned, but aside from the odd shopkeeper or priest, most do not have much experience. Some bugs may treat horizoned with reverence because they assume they are on some sort of religious quest, while more secular bugs may scoff at the notion, failing to recognize if a particular horizon is especially religious.

Stats:

HP: 8

Ability points: 4

Perception: 1

Charisma: 1

Speed: 3, Good flying

Size: Medium

Racial Traits: Horizoned get "Grappler" and one type of eyes.

- Grappler: Horizoned get a +1 bonus on grapple attempts and attempts to maintain a grapple
- Cloudy eyes: These Horizoned were born with a rare birth defect leaving their eyes covered in an opaque film. The film on their eyes leaves them blind but their senses shift, and they gain blindsight 8 (see *additional rules : vision*)
- Fiery eyes: These eyes are bright orange with a hard exterior and a tiny yellow opening. These strange eyes give the Horizoned darkvision (see *additional rules: vision*).
- Gleaming eyes: These Horizoned have soft eyes with a white exterior and a dark black area in the center. These give Horizoned a +2 to perception.

Lunamates: (Wasps, hornets, mud daubers)

Description:

Lunamates are a group of tall two winged bugs with large heads and abdomens. Their coloration and shape depend on their lineage (see Racial traits) of which they can have a mixture, but one lineage will always appear dominant.

History and Society:

The Lunamates hail from one of the 3 nations, daubaya, Hornesta, and paysaw. These three nations were forced to find some sort of peace given their size and relative proximity, so the three nations formed a trading coalition. When the trade coalition was threatened by a full scale Apiate invasion into Honesta by the Apiates, the three nations, protecting their own interest, formed the mega state of Lumina (named as such for the ratification of the treaty of union under the full moon). The new state of lumina is a land free from oppressive governmental rule founded on the principles of freedom for all and opportunity for the entrepreneur. Bugs in lumina are encouraged to work hard and make a living for themselves, and it is this optimism that brings many bugs into the nation.

Relations:

Being the largest nation on The Great Expanse, Lumina has a share of allegiances and wars with other nations. Most notably, their involvement with the liberation of Catova has made them a great ally, whereas the war with the Beiv army has raged for centuries. It is possible for Hornest Lunamates to be confused for other races as their body shape and sometimes coloration is somewhere between a borer and an Apiate. The closer to Lumina a Luminate is, the more positively they are generally viewed as propagandic rumors about degenerate Luminates are less common.

Stats:

HP: 8

Ability points: 3

Perception: 1

Charisma: 1

Speed: 3, Normal flying

Size: Medium

Racial Traits: Lunamates Have the “Venom” trait and choose one of three lineages:

- **Venom:** The Lunamate stinger is solidly attached to their body and can be used as a weapon to inject a weak venom into their target. Attacking with the stinger takes 3 actions. The weapon has an attack value of 0 and upon dealing damage it deals 1 poison damage per turn for 3 turns.
- **Daubbian:** Daubian Lunamates have thin bodies and their small abdomens are connected to their thorax by an even thinner connecting body part. They are mostly black or dark rusty brown with orange or yellow limbs. Their small frame and coloration are reflected by +1 agility, and +1 stealth
- **Hornest:** Hornest Lunamates are the largest of the Lunamates and are distinct in their bright yellow and black bodies. +1 strength, +1 charisma

- Payan: Payan Luminates have the most average physical features of the Luminates, but are naturally wiser than average, and have aperture eyes similar to the Horized as opposed to the compound eyes of their countrymen. They have iridescent blue or green coloration in their shells. +1 wisdom, +1 perception.

Shrouded: (Butterfly/moth)

Description:

Shrouded are average sized bugs with a much higher leg to thorax ratio compared to other bugs. Their most obvious defining features are a long tongue that acts like a straw, but in rare cases is strong enough to grab things, and, of course, their 4 enormous wings which curl and drape around the body when not in use. When their wings are in use they reach nearly to the ground and all the way above the head, but their size mostly prevents them from being used for speed. These wings can be extremely beautiful or completely dull and un-noteworthy,

History and Society:

The Shrouded originally hail from the nation of Pallecho, a land consisting of the tall plateau Glaesta and the surrounding plains and forests. The area around the plateau is frequently raided and controlled by various nations, but the capital has never fallen due to its ease of defense. Shrouded society is divided by beauty. The Shrouded born with dull wings and less desirable wing shapes spend their lives in lowlands whereas beautiful Shrouded are permitted to live in the highlands. The nearly perfect divide between the beautiful and the common is accomplished mostly through public ridicule and arranged marriage. In Pallecho, a beautiful child from dull parents is a gift and when they are married will bring the family riches whereas a dull child from illustrious parents is a disgrace and nearly always orphaned. Lavish balls and parties are held in the cities on the plateau to celebrate beauty and opulence. Pallehco is the largest exporter of textiles and other, more expensive, clothing and accessories. Throughout history many Shrouded become tired of this system and become adventurers or move their family elsewhere.

Relations:

Without support from the government, the lowlands of Pallecho continue to be a host for raiders, but the nations of the great expanse either have no interest in or can't afford to try and stake that land for their own. Reactions to Shrouded depend on their looks. The less colorful (and still beautiful by most bug's standards) Shrouded are typically treated with pity from most bugs, which quickly becomes outright solidarity from those that feel like they are victims of fate. Beautiful Shrouded are reacted to with envy for their looks, hatred for their privilege, attraction to their beauty, or as an opportunity because most colorful shrouded are very rich and seducing one might be your ticket into a wealthy life.

Stats:

HP: 8

Ability points: 4

Perception: 1

Charisma: 1

Speed: 3, Normal flight

Size: Medium

Racial Traits: Shrouded must pick 1 complexion and may pick 1 additional trait.

- **Dull complexion:** The typical traits of the "dull complexion" are a combination of grey, browns, and whites in the wings and a wing shape that is either dart shaped or completely rounded. These more practical wing shapes drag in the wind less and grant +1 speed.

- Vibrant complexion: The Vibrant complexion is marked by a variety of intricate colors and patterns on the wings with basically no limits on pattern or texture. These wings are an immediate statement that a Shrouded needs to be listened to. +2 charisma
- Tough wings (*prerequisite Dull complexion*): One of the benefits of having large wings covering the body is they can be used in emergencies as a form of protection. Shrouded who have made a habit of doing this can use an open hand to gain +1 shield bonus to defense when using a *defend* action. This bonus is identical to that provided by a shield and thus, does not stack with the bonus for using a shield unless otherwise stated.
- Distracting (*prerequisite vibrant complexion*): Some tricky Shrouded have found a way to use their beautiful wings in combat. By quickly expanding them, they can appear bigger or otherwise distract their opponents into paying attention with intense colors. +2 charisma bonus when making charisma checks in combat involving intimidation or distraction.
- Hearty proboscis: Rarely, a Shrouded is hatched with a particularly strong proboscis. They can use this extra appendage to grab items and manipulate objects 2 tiles away.

Spinners:

Description:

Spinners are multi armed multi eyed bugs with much more curvy shape compared to the relatively narrow shape of most bugs. They have 2 extra sets of arms, a pair of pedipalps (tiny probes) on either side of the mouth, and most can produce a sticky rope-like substance from glands between their thorax and abdomen. (comparable to hips of a regular humanoid) All spinners can trace their legacy to one of many tribes which influences their shape, coloration, and physiology.

History and Society:

The Spinners were once a powerful race consisting of many tribes around the center of the Great expanse, but as imperialization expanded the territory of the nations of the Expanse, spinners were forced to fight for their homeland or assimilate. Now spinners are regular members of every nation, and their unique physiology allows many to become artisans, healers, and hunters.

Relations:

Long gone are the days of using traps to capture caravans. Most bugs just view spinners as regular citizens of their nation. The extra arms and past legends of bandits and trappers make spinners desirable for anybody hiring adventurer's or mercenaries. Many non-spinners find the idea of touching Spinner silk to be disgusting and will not tolerate it touching them.

Stats:

HP: 8

Skill points: 3

Perception: 1

Charisma: 1

Speed: 3

Size: Large, Medium, Small

Racial Traits: Spinners start with the "multiple appendages" and "spinner" traits, then they choose 1 tribe.

- multiple appendages: Spinners have 6 arms and 2 legs.
- Spinner: Spinners may produce up to 30 twig lengths of silk a day. This silk is slightly sticky at first but with working it can become a decent substitute for rope for a time, as it degrades much faster than rope.
- Tribe: airwalker: Members of this tribe are shades of blue and black. They possess larger than average eyes and wings which they used to drop nets on creatures on the ground made of silk. +1 Perception, Average flying.
- Tribe: gargantuar: This tribe lived in colder climates where spinner silk was less useful. Instead, they evolved coarse brown fur and grew. Gargantuar spinners lose the "spinner" ability and gain +1 Strength and +1 fortitude:
- Tribe: longstriders: This tribe of brown, long legged spinners lived in the grasslands where they used their impressive running skills to chase their quarry. +1 speed, +1 agility

- Tribe: Hourglass: This tribe of skinny black spinners with bright red hourglass shapes on their abdomen have more potent saliva than most bugs. These Spinners may bite any creature they have grappled dealing 0 damage and inflicting poison for 5 turns dealing 1 damage. Hourglass spinners may also secrete this poison on demand for use outside of a bite attack. See “poison training” in *feats*.

Wanderers: (Beetle roach hybrids)

Description: Wanderers are the most common bug in the Great Expanse. As a result, they have the most variation in shape and size. One thing they have in common is a round shape where the thorax and abdomen form 1 shape. All wanderers have wings, but most of them cannot use their wings to fly. covering their wings is a 2nd pseudo wing called an elytra. The bulkier grounded wanderers often have a natural spike, horn, or blade attached to their head. Wanderer colors range from dull browns and blacks to all manner of eccentric colors and patterns.

History and Society: Wanderers were the first bugs to gain intellect but far from the first to form society. Some historians would argue they still haven't. All wanderers descend from long lines of nomads who wandered the expanse as civilizations formed and fell. Occasionally a group of wanderers would make a permanent home in one of these burdening societies, resulting in wanderers located just about wherever other bugs are, and everywhere else for that matter. One could argue that the city of Rattlecrossing located in the center of the expanse is the wanderer's honorary homeland, as it was once a convenient trading spot where a rich wander tribe established a city as an open neutral place for all bugs struggling with the various conflicts on the expanse.

Relations: Wanders are found in nearly every society and are thusly accepted by bugs of all races, however being a traditionally nomadic race carries stereotypes. Many bugs assume wanderers they meet are adventures and looking for work or that a wanderer is not looking for company because the passing nature and small group dynamic of adventuring parties leaves many wanderers not fond of attachment.

Stats:

HP: 9

Ability points: 3

Perception: 1

Charisma: 0

Speed: 4

Size: Large, Medium, Small

Racial Traits: Wanders may choose 2 racial traits.

- **Hardened exoskeleton:** Wanderer's thick bulky exoskeleton and elytra give them +1 armor bonus to defense.
- **Flight:** Some wanderers overcome their weight and through training or genetics and gain normal flight
- **Natural weapon:** A feature common to wanderers is a hard piece of chitin extending from the head. These weapons come in a variety of shapes from sharp blades to bludgeons and may be modified and honed like manufactured weapons. These weapons count as both unarmed strikes and simple weapons for ability requirements. A Wanderers natural weapon has a weapon bonus of +1.

CLASSES:

Scout:

The scout is the master of speed and versatility. They are the class of hunters, spys, couriers, rouges, and athletes. The scout can use their extra speed to look ahead of the party for traps and ambushes or, they can use the speed in combat to set up flanks or rush to a friend in need if things turn sour. The scout also gets the second most skill points, making them just as useful outside of combat.

Skill points per level: 3

Level	HP	Class abilities
1	1	+1 speed, +1 perception, light armor proficiency, scout weapon proficiency
2	1	agile, scout training
3	2	+1 speed, special movement action
4	1	+1 perception, scout training
5	1	agile defender, mobility
6	2	+1 speed, scout training, special movement action
7	1	Dodge X1
8	1	+1 perception, scout training
9	2	+1 speed, special movement action
10	1	scout training
11	1	lightfoot
12	2	+1 speed, +1 perception, special movement action
13	1	uncanny eyes, head start
14	1	Dodge X2
15	2	+1 speed, special movement action
16	1	+1 perception
17	1	epic class feature
18	2	+1 speed, special movement action
19	1	epic class feature
20	1	+1 perception, epic movement action, Dodge X3

Bonus speed: at first level and every third level thereafter the scout gains +1 speed

Bonus perception: at first level and every fourth level thereafter the scout gains +1 perception.

Armor proficiency: at first level, the scout gains proficiency with light armor

Weapon proficiency: at first level the scout gains proficiency in their choice of, advanced weapons with the “ranged” descriptor, advanced weapons with the “thrown” descriptor, or advanced weapons with the “light” descriptor.

Agile: Starting at level 2 scouts may add their agility to attack instead of strength for unarmed attacks, natural attacks, and attacks with light weapons.

Special movement actions: scouts move in unique ways in combat. Scouts can choose from the following special movement actions.

- Burrow (3 actions): The scout Quickly burrows into any loose material below them. The scout may stay just below the surface as long as they want. If they do not have a dig speed, they gain a dig speed of 1. The scout may try to sneak while underground to hide their location and have a +2 stealth bonus while doing so. Scouts may not attack creatures while digging instead they may perform a *surface* action. For 1 action a scout may surface and attack a creature within their range.
- Cross up(1 action): The scout jumps over, cuts, or otherwise confuses their opponent to pass through their tile without permission.
- Freefall (1 action): The scout falls a distance equal to 2 times your agility score immediately without taking falling damage.
- Summersault (2 actions): The scout jumps a distance up to their speed in a straight line. While moving in this way, the scout cannot be targeted by prepared attacks.
- Sprint (3 actions): The scout uses this action to move 5 times their speed.
- High jump (1 action): The scout may jump horizontally, with distance equal to their agility score and vertically 2 height levels. They may perform 1 action while in midair.
- Vanish (2 actions) (prerequisite: agility 8): The scout moves with blinding speed to a target location up to 2 times their speed away in any direction. Moving in this way does not trigger traps or prepared attacks.
-

Scout training: the scout can pick from any of the following abilities.

- Aerial Ace: (prerequisite: Normal flying) The scout gains Good flight allowing them to ascend or descend at the cost of 2 actions instead of 3.
- Animal companion: A scout with the animal companion ability can choose an animal to become their companion from the list in *Monster Stats: Animal companions*. The animal companion retains all of its stats from their description except HP which is equal to its base HP + the number of scout levels a scout has. In combat, an animal companion shares the same initiative as it's master, but they do not perform their own actions, instead, the animal companion follows *commands* from their master. Issuing a command to an animal companion requires 1 action. These commands are:
 - Attack: Tell your animal companion to attack a creature. The companion moves a distance up to their speed, then uses any attack or special ability in their monster stat block.
 - Defend: Tell your animal companion to hold a location. The companion may move to a tile a distance away less than or equal to their speed, then prepare (as per the *prepare* action) any attack or special ability in their monster stat block and gain 1 defense for the rest of this turn.
 - Combined attack: If the animal companion and scout are both in range for a melee attack against an opponent, they may simultaneously make their attacks. This adds the attack values of both creatures into a single attack.
 - Halt: Tell your animal companion to stay where they are. The animal companion also gains 2 defense until they begin to move.

- Move: Tell your animal companion to move to a location up to 2X their speed away. The animal companion will try to take the least dangerous route possible to this destination. If an animal companion's master is able to fight and does not issue a command during their turn, an animal companion continues to perform its last command until it is completed (such as reducing an enemy's health below 0 HP), then they will move a distance toward their master equal to their base speed in the most direct way possible without putting themselves at unnecessary risk. It may be possible for animal companions to perform commands other than those listed at the GM's discretion.
- Annoying: Increases the defense penalty granted from flanking by 1
- Call Shot: The scout calls their next attack. If it hits, they gain a +1 morale bonus to their next called shot. This effect stacks up to 3 times. If they miss a called shot, they lose any morale bonus granted from the called shot and suffer a -2 morale penalty to attack.
- Complete weapon training: The scout gains the weapon proficiency for the weapons not chosen at level 1.
- Dual wielder: The attack penalty for attacking multiple times is applied separately for each weapon you attack with.
- Expert climber: (prerequisite: Scout 3) As part of a move action, the scout can move along walls and ceilings for a distance equal to their agility score.
- Jumbled: Upon taking damage from another creature, the scout may move 1 tile.
- Multithrow: light throwing weapons do not add to or suffer the penalty for attacking multiple times in 1 round.
- Sniper: The penalty from making ranged attacks outside their best range is reduced by 2
- Skilled: +4 skill points (this may be taken multiple times)
- Skirmisher: Hitting an opponent with a ranged attack exposes them to the scout granting a +1 attack bonus on their next melee attack vs them, likewise, hitting an opponent with a melee attack exposes them to ranged attacks, granting a +1 attack bonus to your next ranged attack against the exposed creature.
- Schadenfreude: Whenever a scout or their ally reduces an enemy's HP to zero, the scout may immediately take 1 action.
- Stealth training: attacks made from stealth gain +1 attack
 - stealth training 2: (prerequisite: level 4, stealth training): attacks made from stealth gain +2 attack
 - stealth training 3: (prerequisite: level 10, stealth training 2): attacks made from stealth automatically crit
- Surrounded: The defense penalty granted by enemies for being flanked is instead a defense bonus.
- Tumble: Upon doing damage with a ranged attack, the scout may tumble 3 tiles. Moving this way does not provoke prepared attacks.
- Talented: Gain +1 feat and +1 talent (this may be taken multiple times)

Agile defender: At level 5 scouts may use 2 times their agility for defense in place of 1 times their agility and 1 times their fortitude.

Mobility: At level 5 scouts may combine an attack and move action (including a special move action) to attack at any point during a move before the move is finished. This also combines the action costs of the two actions.

Dodge: starting at 7th level, scouts may ignore the damage from a physical attack once per day (increases to 2 times at 14th level and 3 times at 20th level)

Lightfoot: at level 11, scouts can no longer be slowed down by non-mental attacks or by rough terrain.

Uncanny eyes: at 13th level scouts gain the ability to see things rendered invisible by magic .

Head start: at 13th level, scouts gain +2 initiative, and any attacks made on the first turn of battle have +3 attack.

Knight:

The knight dominates in physical combat. The knight is a high HP, high damage class that uses a variety of special techniques including the all-powerful *action surge* and *second wind* to strike their opponent down and stay in the fight longer. The knight best utilizes armor and advanced weaponry and is the only class that can use heavy armor.

Skill points per level: 2

Level	HP	Class abilities
1	2	Action surge X1, Light armor proficiency, advanced weapon proficiency
2	2	Special attack, heavy armor proficiency,
3	2	Shuffle, Combat training, second wind X 2
4	2	Action surge X2, Special attack
5	2	Combat training, weapon mastery
6	2	Second wind X 4, special attack
7	2	Action surge X3, Combat training
8	2	weapon mastery, special attack
9	2	Second wind X 6
10	2	Action surge X4, Combat training, special attack
11	2	Indomitable will , second wind X 8
12	2	weapon mastery, combat training, special attack
13	2	Action surge X5, controlling position, second wind X 10
14	2	Combat training, Indomitable will X2, special attack
15	2	second wind X 12,
16	2	Action surge X6, weapon mastery, combat training
17	2	Epic class feature, Indomitable will X3
18	2	Combat training, Ultimate attack
19	2	Action surge X7, Epic class feature
20	2	weapon mastery, Ultimate attack

Action surge: The knight gains a technique called action surge which allows them to spend an extra action on their turn. This can be used multiple times in the same turn. The knight can use this ability once a day at first level and 1 additional time per day every 3 levels thereafter.

Armor proficiency: at 1st level, the knight gains proficiency with light armor and shields. At 2nd level the knight gains proficiency in all armor

Advanced weapon proficiency: At first level the knight gains 2 of the following, proficiency in any advanced weapon of their choice or a +1 attack bonus in any simple weapon. (including unarmed or natural weapons which share this bonus) The +1 weapon bonus may only be taken once per weapon.

Special attack: At every even level, the knight may pick from any of the following special attacks they meet the prerequisites for to learn. Any special attack that requires the knight to make an attack also suffers the penalty for multiple attacks.

- All-out attack (4 actions): Attack the same target up to 4 times ignoring any penalty for attacking multiple times.
- Cleave (2 actions): Make 1 melee attack and use the attack value against every enemy at your maximum range.
- Deep breath (3 actions) (prerequisite second wind): Spend 3 actions and 1 second wind point to gain the effect of 3 second winds.
- Plunge (3 actions): fall a number of height levels and attack as you land atop your opponent. This strike gains attack equal to your height (max 3). This action inflicts fall damage to the user like a regular fall.
- Feint (1 action): Use deception to catch enemies off guard. Perform an intrigue vs intrigue skill contest against a target, then attack them. If you succeed in the contest, this strike gains +1 attack, and if you fail the strike loses 1 attack.
- Lay on hands (1 action): Spend one second wind to give an adjacent creature the effect of a second wind. This healing does not restore another knight's second wind pool.
- Rush (1 action): Make 1 unarmed attack and instead of dealing damage, push yourself and the target in a straight line up to the damage you would have done. Targets 2 sizes and above your size may not be pushed. (you may perform this attack without an available arm or natural weapon)
- Shield bash (1 action): NEEDS RULES
- Shrug off (0 actions): Once per turn, spend 1 second wind point to gain 1d4 HP.
- Tackle (1 action): Make an unarmed melee attack. This attack does not deal damage. If your attack beats the target's defense by 3, both you and the target are knocked prone. Unless otherwise stated, a prone creature is *vulnerable*. Targets 2 sizes and above over your size may not be tackled. (you may perform this attack while holding a weapon despite it being an unarmed attack)
- Defensive stance (1 action): prepare an attack as per *prepare* and gain +1 defense this turn.
- Threatening stance (1 action): prepare an attack as per *prepare* and gain a +1 attack bonus in addition to the one gained by prepare.

Shuffle: Starting at level 3, permitted the knight has not moved this turn and will not for the rest of the turn, they may move 1 tile at the cost of 0 actions. This movement does not provoke prepared attacks.

Combat training: The knight may pick from any of the following abilities they meet the prerequisites for.

- Calming presence: Using a *defend* action increases the knight's mental defense by 1 and the mental defense of any adjacent allies.
- Close combat: Unarmed attacks suffer no penalty for attacking multiple times.
 - Flurry of blows (prerequisite: close combat): after making an unarmed attack the knight gains a +1 attack bonus for the rest of the turn (this effect stacks).
- Crusher: The knight ignores the defense bonus from the use of the *defend* action.
- Determined: The knight's second wind pool is increased by 2.

- Encroaching: The knight may move 1 tile when they perform a defend action.
- Limit Breaker: The knight may make up to 2 extra actions on their turn at the cost of the same amount of actions on the next turn.
- Move like water: After making an unarmed attack, the knight gains 2 speed for the rest of the turn.
- Crowd control: The penalty for attacking multiple times only applies against multiple attacks made on the same target.
- Pin down: Dealing damage with a ranged attack reduces the target's speed by 1 (to a minimum of 1)
- Sentry: If the knight performed a defend action on their turn and they have a shield equipped, their defense against attempts to push or knock prone through physical attacks or spells increases by 3.
- Full coverage: The knight may gain the benefits from using 2 shields at once.

Second wind (1 action): The Knight may spend 1 action and 1 second wind to focus and shrug off wounds. 1 second wind heals for 1d6. Receiving healing in any way replenishes 1 point of second wind. The knight starts with 2 uses of second wind in their pool at level 3 which increases up to a maximum of 10 at level 14.

Weapon mastery: The knight may choose to either gain proficiency with another advanced weapon or boost the attack of a weapon they are already proficient in by 1. This effect stacks with itself and with the +1 attack bonus granted by the "advanced weapon proficiency" class feature granted to a simple weapon.

Indomitable will: Starting at level 11, once per day a knight may ignore the results of a successful mental attack. This increases to twice per day at level 15th level.

Controlling position: At 13th level prepared attacks made by the knight against opponents no larger than 1 size category above their own prevent the target from using any actions that move them for the rest of the round.

Ultimate attack:

(these might go away as progression shifts)

- Dire cleave (2 actions): as cleave except it hits *all* targets within range.

Technician:

The technician prefers to solve problems their way, or when all else fails, use their gadgets to escape a sticky situation. Technicians are the primary crafting class in the game and can use a variety of crafted consumables and class abilities to assist their teammates or take enemies on themselves. Technicians are a medium HP class, and they can find themselves alternating between frontline and backline depending on the situation. Technicians also gain the most skill points of any class.

Skill points per level: 4

Level	HP	Class abilities
1	1	Light armor proficiency, Consumables (3), junk
2	2	Eureka, Spontaneous creation
3	2	Observant, Surveyor, Bonus Feat/talent
4	1	Consumables (5), Skill Boost X2
5	2	Eureka, Superior Tactics
6	2	Observant, Bonus Feat/talent
7	1	Consumables (7), Skill Boost X4
8	2	Eureka, Invention
9	2	Observant, Bonus Feat/talent
10	1	Consumables (10), Skill Boost X 6
11	2	Eureka, Quick Thinking
12	2	Observant, Bonus Feat/talent Invention
13	1	Consumables (12), Skill Boost (8)
14	2	Eureka
15	2	Flow state, Bonus Feat/talent
16	1	Invention, Skill Boost X 6
17	2	Eureka
18	2	Wondrous invention
19	1	Observant
20	2	Wonderous creator

Armor proficiency: at 1st level, the technician gains proficiency with light armor and shields.

Junk: Technicians are experts at using resources from their environment, especially one's people often overlook. So long as they have the ability to do so, technicians can find a number of junk per day equal to 4+ their wisdom score.

Consumables: Consumables are unique items technicians deploy to take down their foes. Consumables are treated like any item and must be retrieved from the technician's equipment as such. At level 1 the technician gains access to 3 different lesser consumables. Starting at level 4, a technician may learn how to make upgrades for consumables they qualify for. Learning an upgrade counts as learning a new consumable for the limit of consumables known. Unless it says otherwise, multiple upgrades can be

applied to the same consumable. Crafting a consumable requires 1 action and a crafting kit and takes a number of junk found in the description for each consumable or consumable upgrade. Consumables made with junk are unreliable and deteriorate quickly, so any consumables made this way are rendered useless in 24 hours. Consumables may also be crafted using crafting talents (*see: talents*). When crafted this way, consumables are permanent.

Consumable	Junk	Prerequisites	Description	Price	Crafting
Bomb	1	-	These makeshift explosives consist of an extremely flammable material packed tightly inside a container with a fuse leading out so they can be safely thrown. Bombs are thrown ranged weapons with range(4). Bomb explosions are a physical attack with attack equal to 1d4 + wisdom score applied to all creatures in the tile with the bomb and adjacent tiles.	8 Husk	Apothecary(wisd): 8
Arcane Bomb	+1	Bomb, Technician 5	Instead of performing a physical attack, arcane bombs deal magical damage equal to the crafter's wisdom score.	17 Husk	Apothecary(wisd): 10, Enchanter
Spore bomb	+2	Bomb, Technician 5	This bomb emits a cloud of paralyzing spores. Any creatures who take damage from a spore bomb are unable to move or retrieve items for 1 turn. After being subject to this effect once, creatures are immune for 24 hours.	12 Husk	Apothecary(wisd): 12
Distraction	1	-	This cheaply-made wind up device creates an ear piercing noise deafening everybody within 20 tiles until it is destroyed or 10 turns have elapsed. A distraction has a defense of zero and an HP of 6.	4 Husk	Tinkerer(agil): 6
Fang Trap	2	-	Fang traps are large spring loaded traps about a tile wide with barbed hooks that trap creatures inside them. Fang traps can be hidden with the stealth skill. Setting a trap costs 2 actions and a creature who steps on the trap is rendered prone and cannot move until they are set free. A creature must be the same size or smaller than the trap for it to capture them and traps cost an extra scrap per tile extra in size.	10 Husk	Tinkerer(strn): 4
Flash Stick	1	-	Flash sticks are short rods made of a slow burning substance with an igniter. They create white light in a 5 tile radius around them. Flash sticks work underwater and environments not rich in oxygen.	3 Husk	Apothecary(wisd): 6
Flash Bang	+1	Flash Stick	Flash Bangs take the science behind flash sticks and use them for destruction. Upon hitting a solid surface, flash bags explode performing a mental attack against anybody in a 3 tile radius equal to the creator's wisdom score. Targets who fail are blinded and deafened for 1 turn.	8 Husk	Apothecary(wisd): 8
Polish Oil	1	-	Polish Oil is an opaque shiny substance that, when applied to any bladed or pointed weapon, grants the weapon +1 attack for 3 attacks. Applying the oil takes 1 action.	5 Husk	Apothecary(wisd): 7

Refreshing Brew	1	-	This odd tasting drink can be quaffed costing 1 action, when done, the user heals for 1d6 points of damage. Even brews crafted with crafting skills expire and become inert at the end of the day.	-	Apothecary(wisd): 4
Smokeball	1	-	Smokeballs are small wooden capsules containing an explosive dust mixture that creates a cloud of smoke. Smokeballs are a thrown ranged weapon with range (4). Upon striking a surface, a smokeball creates a cloud of smoke that is difficult to see through. To see into a tile of smoke a creature must succeed a DC 7 perception check. 2 tiles of smoke are considered opaque.	4 Husk	Apothecary(wisd): 6
Stickyflame	1	-	Stickyflame is a viscous volatile liquid that, when thrown onto a target, will ignite dealing fire damage. Stickyflame is stored in vials and is a thrown ranged weapon with range (4). If the attack roll exceeds the opponent's defense the stickyflame scores a direct hit dealing 1 fire damage at the start of the target's turn for 5 turns or until it is extinguished. Any creatures in the tile the stickyflame was thrown onto or any adjacent tiles immediately take 1 fire damage.	10 Husk	Apothecary(wisd): 7
Tanglespring	1	-	Tanglesprings are tightly wound up balls of ropes and springs that unravel and wrap around whatever they are thrown at. They are thrown ranged weapons with range(3). On hit, tangle springs wrap the opponent halving their movement speed until they succeed a DC 6 strength check to remove the spring.	3 Husk	Tinkerer(agil): 4
Bottle of time	1	-	This solution of chemicals reacts with metals to oxidize them extremely quickly. Bottles of time are thrown ranged weapons with range(4) and +2 attack. Upon dealing damage, they instead reduce the armor bonus of any metal armor the target is wearing and likewise reduce the attack of any metal weapons by 1. The "time" solution needs to be washed off before 6 hours have elapsed or the metal objects will disintegrate. Bottle of time also affects regular metal objects in a similar way to weapons.	5 Husk	Apothecary(wisd): 7

Eurekas: Part of being a successful Technician is dedicating time to an area of interest. With enough practice and time, a technician's techniques may surpass that of the layman. The Technician can choose from the following eureka's.

- Artificer: A technician adds "Artifice(wisd)" to their skill list. This skill can be substituted for any crafting skill when crafting items, but the artificer must expend 2 skill points to increase artifice by 1 point.
- Bide: When rolling initiative, the technician may choose to set their initiative to zero. If they do so, on the first turn of combat they may take 4 actions.

- Concussive maintenance: The technician has +2 attack against Enemies affected by their consumables. Examples of being affected are being slowed by tangle springs or on fire from stickyflame.
 - Group Therapy(*prerequisite: concussive maintenance, level 12*): The effects of concussive maintenance apply to all allies.
- Geometry: If a technician is equal distance from 2 or more hostile creatures, they gain +1 attack per creature against them.
 - Calculus(*prerequisite geometry, technician level 8*) If a technician is equal distance from 2 or more allies above 0 hp, they gain +1 defense per ally at that distance. If there are 2 or more groups of equal distance allies, the technician gains defense from the larger group.
- Hand off: The technician may hand or toss items to any ally with an available hand for 0 actions.
- Hurry: When rolling initiative, a technician may choose to add 4 to the result. If they do so, they may only take 2 actions on their first turn.
- Inventor (*prerequisite: technician 5*): the technician gains 1 extra invention (this may be taken multiple times).
- Mass production: The technician gains 3 extra junk per day and an additional +1 for every 5 character levels.
- Precision smith: The technician is an expert of small mechanical machines. They may use the ability “disable device” which costs 3 actions and allows a technician to disable small mechanisms such as picking a simple lock or disabling a trap.
- Quick learner: The technician gains 2 points in all knowledge skills

Spontaneous Creation: In the heat of combat a technician can instantly prepare the consumables they need from the resources they have on hand, but this is wasteful. Creating a consumable with spontaneous creation takes 1 action per junk cost listed on the item and consumes two times as much junk. Progress is kept between turns for consumables with a base junk cost greater than the number of actions a technician has.

Observant: Starting at level 3 and every 3 levels thereafter, a technician can learn to imitate the moves of other classes and add them to their own repertoire. Whenever a technician gains an observant class ability, they may take 1 special action from another class such as special movement actions from scout or cantrips from invoker. If the action has prerequisites, then the technician must qualify for them.

Bonus Feat/Talent: At level 3 and every 3 levels thereafter, a technician may gain an additional feat or talent they qualify for from the list of general feats (see *feats and talents*).

Surveyor: Technician’s knowledge makes them valuable informants in combat. Beginning at level 3, a technician may roll 1 additional knowledge check to gather information about their enemies during the *preparation* phase of combat.

Skill Boost: Technicians have a reputation for being the most skilled bugs at what they do. Starting at level 4, a technician can reroll any skill roll after seeing the results or the dice. If a technician decides to

reroll, they must accept the second result. Technicians may use skill boost 2 times per day at level 2 and an additional 2 times per day every 3 levels thereafter.

Superior Tactics: By observing and dissecting combat, a Technician can predict their opponent's movements and decide the best way to dodge or take the blow. A technician with this ability may use their wisdom for defense in place of fortitude or agility starting at level 5.

Invention: The cornerstone of the technician class is their powerful inventions. Listed below are several inventions that have been approved by me (the writer), but we recommend you be creative. If you have an invention in mind that fits the setting, work with your GM, if it is not too powerful, they might allow it.

- Anchor shoes: (price 26 husks, weight 1 pebble) Anchor shoes are shoes with deployable claws on the side that eat into the surface the user is standing on and prevent all unwilling movement. Anchor shoes can be activated and deactivated at any time.
- Ceramic armor: (price 66 husks, weight 20 pebbles) Ceramic armor is composed of lightweight layered plates that completely protect the user, but after being struck, the plates deform and are no longer as effective. Ceramic has a defense value of 5, but every time it is used it loses 1 defense value. Repairing it costs 1 Husk per armor level lost and takes 6 hours.
- Instant tent: (price 15 husks, weight 3 pebbles) This disk around 1 twig in diameter can be thrown. When thrown it instantly expands into a tent capable of protecting from the elements. Any creatures huge or smaller within the tents range when it is deployed are forced to move.
- Ocular Headpiece: (price 35 husk, weight 3 pebbles) This headwear is shaped similarly to a mask that covers the top half of the face. On it are dials and levers that allow the user to not only see better but alter their vision to suit their current situation. Users of this item gain +3 perception and may use this item to view things up to 3X further away than normal at no penalty to perception. This item limits the user's peripheral vision granting -1 defense.
- Repeating Crossbow: (price 42 husk, +1 weight) Any crossbow can be transformed into a repeating crossbow. A repeating crossbow can hold up to 10 bolts and reduces the reload value by 1 until it's box is empty, and replacing a box takes the amount of time it would normally take to reload the crossbow.
- Rifling: (price 20 husk, weight -) Rifling on the inside of firearm barrels induces spin into the projectile increasing the firearm's range. Rifling can be added to any firearm, increasing the range by 2
 - Shells: (Price 5 chips, weight 1/10th pebble, *prerequisite: rifling*) Instead of the slow muzzle loading ammo of existing firearms, shells contain their own ignition method. Guns using shells must be custom made. And come in 2 varieties. The rifle costs 28 husks, has a damage of 4, range of 8, and properties reload (1), mechanical, and armor breaker 3. The Revolver costs 37 husks, has a damage of 2, range 6, armor breaker 3, mechanical, and only has to be reloaded with reload 2 every 6 shots.
 - Special shells: NEEDS RULES

- Spring shoes: (price 26 husks, weight 1 pebble) This shoe grants the user the “high jump” special movement action from the scout. In addition, users have Damage resistance 4 against falling damage and -1 speed.
- Whip sword (price 70 husks): This segmented sword is designed in a way where a rope in the center can be pulled taught and the sword forms one continuous blade. When in it’s sword mode, the whip sword is identical to a standard longsword. In the whip version it is similar to a whip but deals 1 weapon damage and lacks the “utility” feature of the whip. Switching from whip form to sword form takes 1 action. Whip swords weigh as much as longswords. A technician taking this invention gains proficiency in both the whip and the longsword.

Quick thinking: Technicians are great at recalling information even in stressful situations. When rolling a knowledge check to learn about a particular enemy they may add 4 to the result.

Flow state: When preparing for battle, a Technician may sacrifice their improved preparation phase to instead enter a mental state where they can dominate in combat. Flow state can be entered during preparation at the cost of any knowledge checks made against opponents or at the cost of 3 actions. Flow state grants +3 defense, +3 attack, and +4 mental defense.

Wondrous Invention: NEEDS RULES

Wonderous Creator: This technician has mastered the art of crafting. They can craft any consumables they know instantly as per “spontaneous creation” but no longer suffer the 2X junk cost multiplier.

Invoker:

The invoker calls upon powerful spells to quell their challenges. Invokers gain access to an ever-expanding repertoire of invocations which have a wide variety of effects such as damaging enemies, healing and protecting allies, and manipulating the will of others. However, the number of spells per day an invoker receives are limited so they must choose the proper time to use them.

Skills points per level: 3

Level	HP	Class abilities
1	1	Cantrips, Will, Rituals
2	1	Invocations
3	1	Path
4	1	Level 2 invocations
5	1	Greater cantrips
6	1	
7	1	
8	1	Rituals, Level 3 invocations
9	1	
10	1	
11	1	
12	1	Path
13	1	Level 4 invocations
14	1	
15	1	
16	1	
17	1	
18	1	Level 5 Invocations
19	1	
20	1	

Cantrips: Cantrips are special class actions that have an action cost and effect listed in “Table: invocations”. Cantrips require 1 empty appendage to use and have no limit in how often they may be used.

Will: Learning to invoke awakens a deep connection to magic in the caster. So long as they are wearing no armor, an invoker can manipulate the magic inside them to lessen the impact of blows or empower their invocations. This is represented by a resource called Will. An invoker has a pool of will points equal to their invoker level + their wisdom score.

When blocking damage with will, an invoker expends will to negate 1 damage per will point expended. This may be performed after the enemy has made their attack and the results have been declared.

When using will to empower attacks, an invoker may spend 1 will to raise the attack value of any attacking spell, the flat damage of any direct damage spell, or the DC of any spell involving an ability/skill check. Each raise in attack/DC cost 1 more than the subsequent. For example, a +1 modifier costs 1 will, a +2 modifier costs 3, and a +3 modifier costs 5.

Rituals: There is often magic that is too powerful or complex to be cast in combat, however with the proper knowledge and preparation, Invokers can conjure this magic as well. Most invocations are not learned as part of an invoker's class progression. They must instead be found in books or passed between invokers. See *Rituals* for a list of rituals and their rarity.

Invocations: An invoker knows a number of invocations (hereby referred to as spells) and has a number of spell points for each spell level they have available each day. (refer to the invocation table) Once a character runs out of spell points for a given level they may not cast spells of that level, however, known spells of a lower level can be cast with a spell point of a higher level. All spell points are restored after a full night's rest. Similar to cantrips, invocations have an action cost and effect listed in the *invocations* appendix. Invocations require 2 available appendages to cast.

Invocation table: Starting level 2, an invoker gains access to a number of invocations. This table displays the number of invocations and cantrips known for each invoker level displayed as Number of spells known / spell points for that level spell.

Invoker level	Cantrips	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
1	2	0	0	0	0	0
2	3	1 / 2	0	0	0	0
3	3	2 / 3	0	0	0	0
4	4	3 / 4	1 / 1	0	0	0
5	4	3 / 5	1 / 2	0	0	0
6	5	4 / 6	2 / 3	0	0	0
7	5	4 / 7	2 / 4	0	0	0
8	5	5 / 7	3 / 4	1 / 1	0	0
9	6	5 / 8	3 / 5	1 / 2	0	0
10	6	5 / 8	4 / 5	2 / 2	0	0
11	6	6 / 8	4 / 5	2 / 3	0	0
12	7	6 / 9	4 / 6	2 / 3	0	0
13	7	6 / 9	4 / 6	3 / 3	1 / 1	0
14	7	7 / 9	5 / 6	3 / 4	1 / 2	0
15	7	7 / 10	5 / 6	3 / 4	2 / 2	0
16	8	8 / 10	5 / 7	4 / 4	2 / 3	0
17	8	8 / 10	5 / 7	4 / 5	3 / 3	0
18	8	8 / 11	6 / 7	4 / 5	3 / 4	1 / 1
19	8	8 / 11	6 / 8	4 / 6	4 / 4	2 / 1
20	8	8 / 11	6 / 8	4 / 6	4 / 5	2 / 3

Paths: There are many paths an invoker can take to improve their mastery of casting. Invokers can choose any of the paths below at level 3 and level 12.

- Path of blasting: Upon taking this path, you are forbidden from casting any spells that do not involve making a normal or magic attack. You may replace any spells on your spell list that are ineligible, and you may spend an action on your turn to empower your next spell increasing it's damage by 1 per spell level.
- Path of blood: If you do not possess the required spell slot to cast a spell, you may sacrifice an amount of HP equal to the spell level times 2.
- Path of knowledge: +1 spell known of every spell level you can cast
- Path of perfection: Gain +1 agility, +1 strength, +1 fortitude, +1 wisdom, +1 perception, and +1 charisma
- Path of tenacity: +1 will point per day per invoker level.
- Path of beguilement: Upon taking this path, you are forbidden from casting any spells that involve dealing direct damage in any way. You may replace any spells on your spell list that are ineligible. Under this path, all spells with mental attacks gain +1 and any illusionary or mind-affecting spell has double its written duration.

Rituals: At 8th level, an invoker can use their knowledge of magic to perform powerful rituals. (See appendix [] rituals)

COMBAT

Phases of Combat:

Sometimes things don't go as planned, or go exactly as planned, and you need to fight. Once combat has been declared, there is a preliminary round called preparation. During preparation, all characters and enemies can try to learn about their opponents using 1 knowledge check. The results of the knowledge check will depend on the strength of the skill check, the target's DC, and whether the appropriate knowledge was used. If there is nothing to possibly be gained from this phase, it can be skipped.

After preparation, every creature rolls initiative. Initiative determines the order at which creatures take their turn in combat. Ties in initiative are resolved by rolling a die until a clear winner is established. After a turn order is established, combat may begin. Combat ends when nobody wishes to or can fight anymore, or one group can no longer keep up with the other fleeing group.

"Rounds" in combat refer to every creature getting 1 turn. One round represents 6 seconds of real time.

Actions in combat:

These actions are available to all creatures by default.

Melee Attack (1 action): Make an attack against a target a number of tiles away less than or equal to your weapon's range. The damage this attack deals is equal to 1d4 + strength score + the damage modifier of your weapon - your opponent's defense. This value decreases by 1 for each subsequent attack made on your turn including ranged attacks and any spells/miscellaneous actions in combat that include physical attacks. If a target is at a range where they are possible to hit, but not covered by your weapon's range interval (such as 1 tiles away for a weapon with range 2-3), you take a -2 penalty to hit.

If your attack roll results in a 4, you score a *critical hit* dealing 1 additional damage. The minimum damage dealt on a critical hit is 1.

Attacks made without a weapon are calculated in the same way. Unless otherwise specified, unarmed attacks have range 1, a damage value of 0, and no special properties.

Ranged attack (1 action): Make an attack against a creature similar to a melee attack, however the penalty for attacking at closer than optimal range is removed, and attacks may be made outside of the weapon's range for a penalty of 1 per range interval away. For ranged attacks, large stationary targets such as a specific ground tile or the side of a building have a defense of 5.

Defend (1 action): Use an action to gain 1 defense this turn. This defense bonus stacks with itself and all other defense bonuses.

Examine (1 action): Examine can be used to search for a specific item or hidden object, search an area for traps, or make a knowledge check with an appropriate knowledge skill to learn something about a target vs that target's knowledge DC. Examining an enemy can be used to determine maximum HP, 1 special ability, starting defense, or the presence of any resistances and amount of magic defense.

Move (1 action): Move a distance in tiles up to your movement speed.

Prepare (1 action): Store a melee attack to be used after your turn is over. Prepared attacks can only hit a target as they enter or exit a square within your maximum range. You may unleash this attack at any point before your next turn, at which point any remaining prepared attacks are discarded. Attacking in this way grants +1 attack power but shares the attack penalty from repeated attacks from the (attack) action.

*Question: "what about talking"? Good question, things such as talking, quickly examining a location without looking for details, breathing, and anything else that can be done simultaneously while performing difficult activities have 0 action cost, meaning they can be done freely. **It turns out the game is more fun when we can communicate.***

Additional actions in combat:

Sometimes the most basic rules for combat do not cover everything that a particular combat needs. Here are additional actions that can occur in combat.

Fly: Many creatures can fly. To fly a creature must use a fly action. A fly action raises the user straight upward 1 height level with the ground being height level 0. When determining whether flying creatures are within attack range, total range is the creature's horizontal distance from the attacker in tiles + the height differential. (for example, a creature with height 1 adjacent to a grounded character cannot be hit by a weapon with range 1, but is in range for a weapon with range 2)

The number of actions flight takes depends on what type of flying a creature has. Normal flight requires 3 actions, good flight requires 2 actions, and expert flight requires 1 action.

Sustaining a flight requires spending the normal action cost for raising one's height -1. If a creature fails to sustain their flight on their turn, they immediately begin falling. Receiving any damage renders a target unable to sustain flight.

Unless otherwise stated, upon taking damage a flying target immediately falls to the ground taking damage equal to their height -2. A creature that can fly does not suffer unwilling fall damage outside of combat.

Skill checks: The number of actions a skill check takes should be listed under skills. If a skill check has a time listed in minutes you must use 3 actions per turn consecutively until the skill check is completed. Each round is 6 seconds.

Grappling (2 actions): A creature may attempt to grapple another creature as part of combat so long as it has at least 1 available appendage. To grapple, perform an unarmed attack vs your opponent's defense neglecting any armor bonuses. Grappling a creature 1 size category larger than you suffers a -3 penalty to attack. Any larger and you may no longer attempt to grapple. Grappled creatures occupy the same square as you until they are released. The grappled creature is also considered vulnerable. Maintaining a grapple costs 2 actions and allows the grappler to spend movement actions at half speed (*via the slowed condition*) with the grappled creature. Releasing a grapple is free.

Grapple break (1 action): To escape a grapple a grappled creature initiates a strength contest with its grappler. If it succeeds, the grapple is broken. After breaking a grapple, you may attempt to counter grapple using the grapple action for free.

Stand up (1 action): Standing up from being prone takes 1 action. This counts as movement for triggering prepared attacks.

Interacting with items (1 action): Interacting with an item includes drawing a sheathed weapon, retrieving an item from an easily accessible pocket, picking an item up off the ground, or tossing/handing an item to an ally who is prepared to catch it. Dropping an item costs 0 actions.

Calculating range:

Range describes the best range for a particular weapon. When calculating whether you meet a particular range or range increment, a path must be drawn between the origin of the attack and the target.

[ATTACH EXAMPLE DIAGRAM, the point is you can't attack *through* someone standing in the way]

ADDITIONAL RULES

Using items and Appendages: Retrieving an item from the ground or from a bag requires 1 action and an open appendage to grab the item with. An “appendage” is any piece of the body capable of grabbing an object that is not currently being used for locomotion (i.e. walking or standing) Unless specifically noted using any item in combat requires 1 action as does returning an item to a bag or a sheath. Dropping a held item costs 0 actions.

Death and Dying: When a creature reaches 0 HP they are considered dying and gain the *dying* condition. A dying creature’s speed is reduced to 1 and they may not perform any (attack), (defend), or (prepare) style actions, nor any spells or actions granted by their class except crafting skills. However, they may still speak, interact with items, and perform many actions out of combat. A dying creature is considered *vulnerable*. When a creature reaches negative their max HP, they are considered dead.

Exhaustion: Most creatures need to sleep to survive. Normal adventures must sleep for at least 6 hours every cycle to gain natural healing (See Character Attributes: Fortitude) and stave off exhaustion. A character that fails to sleep gains the *exhausted* status granting -1 to all attributes (min:0) until they can properly rest. If a character does not rest for 5 days, their HP drops to 0 until they rest.

Suffocation: A creature can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to their fortitude score. After that, they start taking 1 damage for each turn they do not breathe.

Surprise rounds: If a group of creatures catches another group of creatures off guard, they get a surprise round. A surprise round takes place before combat beings and every creature who is aware of the surprise attack can roll initiative and fight as normal combat. Creatures unaware of the surprise are considered vulnerable and can take no actions. After the surprise round, combat begins as normal with the preparation phase.

Size: Ground level’s unique setting lends itself to enemy and allies of all shapes and sizes. Being a different size has no impact on stats, but it does change how a creature interacts with the space around it.

Sizes categories by diameter in number of tiles:

Miniscule	No quantifiable size
Puny	1/8 tile
Diminutive	¼ tile
Tiny	½ tile
Small	1 tile*
Medium	1 tile*
Large	1 tile*
Huge	2 tiles
Enormous	4 tiles
Gigantic	6 tiles
Titanic	8 tiles

Colossal	> 8 tiles (specified in creature description)
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Creatures of the small, medium, and large types take up the same space on the map however 2 small creatures may pass through one another and occupy the same space, medium creatures may pass through each other but may not occupy the same space, and large creatures occupy the whole tile meaning creatures cannot pass through or occupy the same space.

For tiny creatures and smaller, 1 range is subtracted from all melee attacks for each size category below small. Diminutive creatures and smaller may, within reason, maintain the same space as creatures of any size.

For huge creatures and larger, the range of any melee weapons they use is multiplied. 2X for huge, 3X for enormous, and 4X for gigantic. Colossal characters will have their size and range listed in the creature's description.

Flanking: Defending one's self from multiple directions requires dividing attention between all of the attackers. Every enemy that you are in range of after the first decreases your defense by 1 to a maximum penalty of -5.

Mounted combat: When riding a mount, you and your mount's turn is combined. Whoever has the lowest initiative between you and the mount determines your initiative. You can command the mount to take it's 3 actions how you wish (provided the mount is compliant) and you may take your actions in any order. You and your mount have separate HP and defense and if one drops to 0 or less HP the other may continue, however there may be consequences. The most common is being forcefully dismounted in which you must succeed a DC 5 agility check or be rendered prone.

Height and falling damage: Height is measured in height levels. 1 height level is roughly equal to 3 twigs or 1 tile. When falling, you take falling damage equal to the number of levels fallen -2.

Vision: Most bugs can see fine details up to 60 twigs (20 tiles) away, any further than that, they must succeed a perception ability check with DC determined by the GM. In darkness, bugs cannot see at all. A light source such as a torch or lantern may allow bugs to see out to 30 twigs (10 tiles) in darkness.

There are special types of vision that allow creatures to see or feel their surroundings when they would otherwise be blinded.

Darkvision: Creatures with dark vision can see monochromatically in dark as if it were day.

Blindsight: Creatures with blindsight feel the slightest vibrations in the ground and air to determine their surroundings. Creatures will have a specified distance they can see with blindsight.

Crafting: To craft an item, a character must perform a skill check using the appropriate crafting skill. If the result of the crafting roll exceeds the DC of the item, the item will be successfully crafted. The raw materials for crafting items is ½ of the listed price.

The time it takes to craft an item is 1 hour per 5 chips of the item's listed price. For projects that take especially long, it is expected adventures will continue their daily routine and even craft multiple other items while the item is being crafted.

If the skill check for crafting an item exceeds the item's DC by 10 the item is considered "immaculate". Immaculate items are worth double the chips and may have special properties. Immaculate weapons have +1 attack on a critical hit and immaculate armors have +1 max agility

Some crafters utilize magic while crafting to create items beyond the skill of any mundane artisan. Items crafted this way are considered "resplendent" and are worth 3 times the chips. Resplendent weapons have +1 attack and resplendent armors have +1 max agility and 1 defense.

Status effects: Status effects are temporary effects that alter the stats or available actions of a character.

- Blinded: In addition to being blind, Blind creatures cannot make any skill checks that require vision and have a -3 penalty on melee attacks and a -5 penalty to ranged attacks.
- Dying: Dying creatures are considered *vulnerable*, their speed is reduced to 1, they no longer threaten squares with their weapons, their actions are limited (*see death and dying*), and other creatures may occupy their square unless the dying creature is huge or larger.
- Feared: Feared creatures may only take 1 action on their turn and it must be to move as far away from the cause of their fear as possible.
- Frozen: Frozen creatures may not perform any actions (including 0 cost actions such as talking) and are immune to physical and elemental damage
- Prone: Prone creatures are considered *vulnerable* and in addition their speed is halved (this effect stacks with that of the *slowed* condition).
- Slowed: Slowed creatures have their speed halved for the duration of the effect.
- Vulnerable: Vulnerable characters have -2 defense and -2 attack. Vulnerable creatures are unable to threaten squares for the context of flanking.

ITEMS:

Weapons: Weapons are divided into 3 categories. Simple weapons are intuitive enough for anybody to use, and are found nearly everywhere. Anybody with class levels can effectively use simple weapons. Advanced weapons are designed to be used only by those trained to use them. A creature attempting to use a weapon they are not trained in results in that weapon having a 0 damage modifier for attacks made by the untrained creature, and no special qualities except heavy, mechanical, and stabbing.

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Weapon	Price (husk)	damage	range	hands	Weight (pebbles)	Special properties
knife	2	0	1	1	1	light
shortsword	21	1	1	1	2	
club	-	0	1	1	3	
axe	11	1	1	1	4	throwing (2)
spear	9	1	2-3	1	5	stabbing, throwing (4)
mace	11	1	1	1	6	
Greatclub	5	2	2	2	9	

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Dart	1	0	3	1	1/5	Throwing (3)
Slingshot	4	0	5	2	1	light
shortbow	12	1	10	2	2	
light crossbow	17	2	6	2	4	Mechanical, light, reload (1)
Medium crossbow	25	3	9	2	6	Mechanical, reload (1)

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Throwing knife	4	0	1	1	1/5	light, throwing (4)
Sai	19	0	1	1	1	rare, light, entangle
Sabre	22	1	1	1	1	light
Whip	11	0	3-4	1	2	entangle, utility
Arming sword	25	2	1	1	3	
Rapier	25	1	1-2	1	3	light
Flail	27	1	1	1	7	Armor breaker (1), entangle
Rope dart	3	0	1-3	2	2	rare, light, entangle

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Chain sickle	10	1	1-3	2	4	rare, entangle
Longsword	30	3	2	2	4	
Quarterstaff	8	1	1-3	2	4	light
Estoc	32	2	2	2	5	Armor breaker (2), stabbing
Glaive	28	2	3	2	8	
Halberd	32	3	3	2	9	heavy
Pike	16	2	5	2	14	Heavy, stabbing
Armor spikes			-	-		

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Bolas*	2	0	5	1	1	Utility
Sling	1	1	7	1	1	Light
Pistol	29	2	4	1	3	rare, light, Reload (3), mechanical, armor breaker (2)
Longbow	19	2	11	2	3	
Musket	31	3	7	2	10	rare, Reload (3), mechanical, armor breaker (3)
Heavy crossbow	42	5	12	2	12	Heavy, Reload (3), Mechanical

Weapon qualities:

Each weapon above has a common price, damage value, range, handedness, and weight.

- **Light:** Light weapons are less cumbersome than average and are more easily used in off hands. This has no effect on its own, but certain class features can take advantage of it.
- **Throwing:** Throwing weapons can make ranged attacks with the range listed beside “throwing” on the weapon table
- **Heavy:** Heavy weapons suffer double the penalty for being swung multiple times in 1 round
- **Stabbing:** A stabbing weapon may only do damage to 1 target per given action. If an action would result in a stabbing weapon dealing damage to multiple targets, the user may decide which target takes damage.
- **Ranged:** Ranged weapons do not apply the *flanking* debuff and require ammunition to use. The price and weight of ammunition is listed in the description of the given weapon.
- **Rare:** Rare weapons are weapons that are unusual to be possessed outside of specific circumstances. For example, it would be unusual to see anybody outside of a soldier use a firearm. In other circumstances, weapons can be rare because they are more difficult to train for and thus fell out of favor. To see if a rare weapon is right for your character, read the weapon description and decide if using that weapon would make sense for your character.

- Armor breaker: These weapons are specifically designed to pierce or bypass armor in some way. When attacking with these weapons you may ignore a number of armor points on your opponent's defense equal to the armor breaker number in the weapon table.
- Reload: Weapons with the reload require use of the "reload" action between uses. The number of actions a reload takes is displayed on the weapon table.
- Entangle: Upon dealing damage with this weapon against a target who is currently holding a weapon, this weapon tangles with or otherwise makes that weapon more difficult to use, granting a -1 attack to attacks made with that weapon. If a target is holding multiple weapons, the attacker may decide which weapon to afflict with the penalty. Attacking with this weapon again or leaving attack range removes the penalty.
- Mechanical: Mechanical weapons provide their own force and do not require their user to be particularly strong. Attacks made with mechanical weapons do not add the attacker's strength score to their attack.
- Utility: This weapon cannot deal damage, but still counts as doing damage if your attack exceeds the opponent's defense.

Weapon descriptions:

Arming sword: The arming sword is a sword in the middle ground between shortsword and longsword. This sword is the standard military sidearm because of its versatility, but it also sees use by soldiers that prefer a weapon + shield combo over a polearm.

Armor spikes: Armor spikes are weapons fixed to a target's armor or shield. They can be used in two ways. The first use is a clumsy stabbing attack with a weapon value of 0. The second use is in conjunction with a grapple where armor spikes add 1 attack to any attacks made while grappling another creature.

Axe: An axe is a shaped wedge attached to a short shaft. Axes are typically viewed as tools for chopping and splitting wood, but they can make surprisingly good weapons. The axe's size and top heavy balance makes it an effective throwing weapon.

Bolas: A bolas is 2 or more weighted balls attached by a rope or chains. It is designed to be thrown at the legs. When this weapon would successfully deal damage, it wraps around the target granting the *slowed* condition, reducing their speed by half.

Chain sickle: A chain sickle consists of 3 parts. A weighted end, a sickle, and a connecting chain. Typically, the sickle is used in one hand for defense while attacks are made at range with the weighted end, but practitioners have been known to get creative. The chain sickle is a rare weapon because, when compared to other weapons with similar reach, it provides a greater risk and difficulty to the user.

Club: Perhaps the simplest weapon, a club is anything large and heavy enough to be used as a weapon swung with enough force to deal damage.

Crossbow (light): Light crossbows are miniature versions of the more common medium crossbows that can be more easily dual wielded and concealed. While it can be fired in 1 hand, it takes 2 hands to reload.

Crossbow (medium): Medium crossbows are the most common ranged weapon in The Great Expanse because of their amazing power in the hands of an inexperienced soldier. While a medium crossbow can be fired in 1 hand, it takes 2 hands to reload one.

Crossbow (heavy): Heavy crossbows were specifically designed war weapons made for overcoming increasing developments in armor at a safe distance. They are typically operated by 2 people, but an experienced marksman can operate one on their own.

Dart: Darts are sharpened spikes less than 1 twig long designed specifically for throwing.

Estoc: Estocs are a type of 2 handed sword slightly larger than the longsword. Their defining feature is the lack of a sharpened blade because they are specifically designed to combat creatures wearing heavy armor by forcing the point between the gaps in the armor.

Flail: Flails describe any heavy weight attached by chain to a grip. While the head of a flail may vary in shape including multiple smaller weights or spikes, two common features shared by flails is the ability to wrap around armor and shields to hit more exposed areas, and the ability to get the opponent's weapon entangled in the chain of the flail after hitting them.

Glaive: A glaive is a short blade designed for cutting attached to a long pole and is typically used by guards and gladiators for its greater effectiveness against unarmored targets when compared to the halberd.

Greatclub: A club too large to be wielded in 1 hand.

Halberd: Halberds are a fusion of a spear, a hammer, and an axe atop a long wooden shaft. They are the most common weapon for those using heavy armor such as full plate.

Knife: knives are everywhere and inexpensive, so it's expected that anybody from the laborer, to the chef, to the martial arts master could have one on them. The "knife" describes blades less than half a twig long. Any longer and they utilize the statistics for a short sword.

Longbow: Longbows are a group of bows that includes any large bow, most commonly the war bows used in large battles. They may be preferable to the other ranged weapons on the battlefield because of their rate of fire especially when compared to crossbows and muskets.

Longsword: Longswords are swords too long and cumbersome to be wielded in 1 hand.

Musket: Muskets are long metal and wood weapons designed to propel a small round metal projectile at high speeds through use of an explosive powder. While the projectile fired by the musket is less heavy than a crossbow bolt, its speed makes it extremely effective against armor. Muskets are only widely used by the organized armies and ranged guards of the large kingdoms of The Expanse because for most civilians and adventures the increased cost and upkeep of a musket outweigh the benefits.

Pike: Pikes are extremely long shafts of wood with a small metal tip. They are most useful at keeping targets at bay and are usually dropped if their range is breached.

Pistol: Pistols are the smaller and less accurate child of the musket. They have favor mostly with sailors and generals, but they can be seen in the hands of more wealthy soldiers as a 1 time use sidearm in case of emergency. Pistol duels are an unfortunately common way of settling disputes between the wealthy.

Quarterstaff: The quarterstaff is a long shaft of wood slightly longer and thicker than the types used in other polearms.

Rapier: Rapiers are thin swords about as long and heavy as a longsword. They are particularly useful because their fighting style allows users to lean into their attacks and attack 1 tile out from what would be otherwise expected.

Rope dart: A rope dart is a sharp pointed object similar to a knife attached to a rope or chain so it can be swung at range and then retrieved. The dart can be used to make melee attacks, and the rope tends to get tangled with the opponent's weapon. The awkwardness of having such a small weapon for melee combat and having to retrieve the dart after every attack turns away potential users who typically use either a polearm or throwing knives instead.

Sabre: Sabers describe any sort of medium sized curved blade smaller than an arming sword. Swords resembling scimitars and katanas also fall into this category.

Sai: Sai are short 3 tipped weapons that are used to stab with but also catch enemy weapons in cross guards. Their complications when compared to a simple knife and low damage potential when compared to war weapons leave them in a poor spot where only martial artists care for the weapon.

Shortsword: Short swords are the most common self-defense weapon for commoners due to their size, extremely efficient weight to power ratio, and ease of use when compared to advanced weapons.

Shortbow: Short bows are the most common hunting weapon and a pretty good choice for ranged combat if you have the strength to use them effectively.

Sling: Slings are long ropes with a fabric or rope basket for holding a projectile. They are swung at high speeds and then released to hit targets with surprising force. Slings are designed for use with specially designed sling bullets but can realistically throw anything that is the correct size. Using a sling to fire anything other than a sling bullet reduces the weapon damage to 0.

Slingshot: Slingshots are wrist mounted devices with an elastic material that propels a tiny projectile quickly enough to cause serious damage.

Spear: Spears are simple shafts with a pointed tip usually made of metal. They are often paired with shields or mounts as they are the only weapon with a range of 3 that can be wielded in 1 hand. With the bonus of being able to be thrown.

Throwing knife: Throwing knives are knives designed specifically for throwing. They can be used for melee combat and are identical to knives in that scenario.

Whip: A whip is a long tapering rope-like tool that is a poor weapon, but can be used for utility, intimidation, or traversal in a tough spot.

Armor:

	Armor	Price (husk)	defense	weight	Max agility
Light armor	Cloak	3	1	10 pb.	-
	Cloth Gambison	12	1	6 pb.	-

	Chain mail	22	2	18 pb	5
	Studded armor	30	2	15	6
Heavy armor	Shell armor	22	3	20 pb.	4
	Half plate	200	3	15 pb.	5
	Chitin armor	36	4	32 pb.	3
	Full plate	1000	4	20 pb.	4
Shields	Buckler		Shielding 1	2 pb.	-
	Targe		Shielding 2	10 pb.	4
	Kite		Shielding 3	15 pb.	2

Armor descriptions:

Light armors: Light armors are perfect for the cautious citizen, adventurer, or ranged unit in large combats. They take 3 actions to fully equip without help.

- **Cloak:** This borderline armor consists of many layers of heavy cloth that cover the user's body nearly completely in flowing, overlapping fabric.
- **Cloth gambeson:** Gambeson armor describes a thick padded vest with long sleeves that extends slightly below the thorax. Gambesons are often paired with open faced steel helmets with antenna holes and light protection for the legs and feet.
- **Cain mail:** Proper mail armor is a shirt of interlocking steel rings worn over gambeson armor for an extra layer of protection.
- **Studded armor:** Studded armor also known as brigandine, is made by studding small metal plates to an exterior of cloth. This forms flexible armor that is worn around the chest, arms, and legs.

Heavy armors: Heavy armors are for guards, melee units in war, and anybody who knows they are in for a fight. Heavy armors take 5 minutes to fully equip alone and 1 minute with the help of others.

- **Shell armor:** This armor is made by taking the small shells of lesser creatures and arranging them in a way to form a layered scaly armor that protects nearly the whole body.
- **Half plate:** Half plate consists of several pieces of full plate. Typically, a chest plate, pauldrons, grieves, and shin guards worn over gambeson with mail protecting all of the areas not covered in plate. Half plate is usually made from pieces of premade plate armor that approximately fits the user.
- **Chitin Armor:** Chitin armor is made from large pieces of shell from slain creatures shaped to fit a suit of armor. This armor provides great protection but is heavy and difficult to work with due to the hardness and thickness of the plates used to make the armor.
- **Full plate:** This armor covers nearly every part of the body except the wings with steel plates. Mail and thick cloth cover any possible gap. A good suit of plate is custom tailored to the individual and is just as often a status symbol as it is an implement of war.

Shields: Shields increase the effectiveness of a target's defense when used actively. Every shield comes with a "shielding" number. When making a Defend action, a shield grants 1 armor. A given shield may do

this a maximum number of times per turn equal to its shielding value. A shield must be actively held in the hand for the armor bonus to be applied.

- Buckler: Bucklers are small round steel shields approximately half a twig in diameter which are used to parry and redirect incoming blows
- Targe: The “targe” type shield includes any medium sized shield, from primitive round wooden shields to the tapered heater shields carried by cavalry. They strike a balance between the mobility of a buckler and the full body defense of a larger shield.
- Kite: Kite shields are large teardrop shaped shields usually 2.5 or more twigs tall for the average sized user. They are designed for less mobile creatures that need to hold their position such as guards or front line troops in war.

FEATS AND TALENTS

It has been decided to keep feats and talents as part of a separate table during the initial playtests as they will be continuously edited. Check the location you acquired this playtest from for these additional resources.

MONSTER STATS

Animal Companions:

Assalid (tiny) (whip scorpion + assassin fly)

Assalids are darkly colored, frail 2 winged hunters with a thin tail twice the size of their body which they use to fling acid at their prey. Their bodies are short and skinny with 2 bulbous aperture eyes atop a short protruding mouthpart. They have 6 gangly legs which they use to entangle small prey. They are often captured and trained to harvest the acid they secrete.

Attributes:

Agil: 3

Fort: 0

Strn : 1

Wis: 1

Stats:

Attack: 1 = 1(strn)

Defense: 3 = 3(agil)

Size: tiny

HP: 5

Speed: 7

Initiative: 3

Perception: 3

Mental defense: 1

Traits:

Flight(good): Assalids have good level flight (see *actions in combat : fly*)

Resistance: Acid : Assalids have resistance (1) acid.

Available actions:

- Bite (1 action): The assalid sticks a sharpened mouthpart into an enemy in an attempt to remove a chunk of flesh. This is an attack with a value equal to the Assalid's current attack value.
- Tail whip (1 action): The Assalid whips its tail at an enemy, possibly entangling an enemies' weapon. This is an attack with the *entangle* weapon property equal to the Assalid's current attack value.
- Acid Fling (1 action): The assalid uses its tail to fling acid at nearby creatures. Every creature in a cone (length 2) takes 1 acid damage.

Chilliop (small): (centipede)

Chilliops are long creatures comprised of up to 100 discrete body segments. Each segment contains 1 pair of barbed legs except the First 2 which contain the creature's mouth and a set of venomous claws respectively. The specific details such as color and shape of body segment vary greatly to match their environment.

Attributes:

Agil: 2

Fort: 1

Strn : 1

Wis: 0

Stats:

Attack: 1 = 1(strn)

Defense: 3 = 1(fort) + 2(agil)

Size: small

HP: 6

Speed: 7

Initiative: 2

Perception: 0

Mental defense: 0

Traits:

Available actions:

- Pinch (1action): The Chilliop pinches their target with both their claws attacking with a value equal to its current attack. If this attack deals damage, the target takes 1 poison damage each turn for 3 turns.

Orb Slinger (small): (spiny orb weaver)

Orb slingers are dense eight legged bugs with a single plate of armor on top which covers their insides. This top armor is white with black markings and red spines protruding from the edges. The underside of the bug contains their eyes, mouth, and legs as well as a gland that produces orbs of sticky white glue that the orb slinger throws to slow down predators and capture small prey.

Attributes:

Agil: 0

Fort: 2

Strn : 0

Wis: 2

Stats:

Attack: 0

Defense: 2 = 2(fort)

Size: small

HP: 4

Speed: 5

Initiative: 0

Perception: 0

Mental defense: 2

Traits:

Available actions:

- Gore (1 action): The orb slinger rams a creature with one of it's many spikes attacking with a value equal to its current attack
- Sticky orb (2 actions): The orb slinger throws a ball of sticky secretion at a tile. Any creature, large or smaller, that begins their turn on or passes through the sticky tile is *slowed* for the rest of the turn.

Rock Pincher (small):

Rock pinchers are creatures typically found near coastal areas. They are notorious for their delicious meaty insides and devastating claws. They have 6 stubby legs and 2 crushing claws attached to a heart or wide diamond shaped body. Their eyes sit atop stalks that can be folded into the head

Attributes:

Agil: 0

Fort: 3

Strn : 2

Wis: 0

Stats:

Attack: 2 = 3(strn)

Defense: 3 = 3(fort)

Size: small

HP: 7

Speed: 4

Initiative: 0

Perception: 0

Mental defense: 0

Traits:

Aquatic: Aquatic creatures add 5 to any strength checks involving swimming and they can breathe underwater.

Available actions:

- **pinch (1 action):** The Rock pincher forcefully pinches a creature with its claws attacking with a value equal to its current attack.

Mounts:

Isoper:

Isopers are short flat bugs with 10 pairs of legs. In the wild they are flighty, preferring to avoid any potential threat, so most intelligent bugs are more familiar with domestic isopers. Isopers raised in captivity are much more sociable and they are the preferred mount for cavalry and adventurers who don't expect to be carrying heavy loads. The shallow curve and small blunt protrusions on the armored top of the isoper is the perfect spot to affix a saddle, and isopers are easily controlled by attaching ropes to their antenna.

Attributes:

Agil: 2

Fort: 2

Strn : 2

Wis: 1

Stats:

Attack: $\underline{2} = 2(\text{strn})$

Defense: $\underline{4} = 2(\text{fort}) + 2(\text{agil})$

Size: large

HP: 18

Speed: 6

Initiative: 2

Perception: 1

Mental defense: 1

Traits:

Available actions:

- **Ram (1 action)**: The Isoper charges into its opponent. This is an attack with attack equal to the isoper's attack.
- **Sprint (3 actions)**: The Isoper breaks into an all out sprint, moving at 5 times its movement speed. The Isoper may only take 1 action on the turn after a sprint.

Armolly:

Armolly are large docile pack animals found all over The Great Expanse. Their arched backs have several overlapping armor plates, so when they curl up, their entire body is covered in armor. Wild armollies travel in packs to protect their young as they graze on grass or decaying plant matter. Selective breeding by intelligent bugs has led to a large variety of physical attributes and colors. The best specimens are sold to farmers and travelers for their impressive pulling power, and the rest are eaten.

Attributes:

Agil: 0

Fort: 4

Strn : 4

Wis: 0

Stats:

Attack: $\underline{4} = 4(\text{strn})$

Defense: $\underline{4} = 4(\text{fort})$

Size: large

HP: 22

Speed: 3

Initiative: 0

Perception: 0

Mental defense: 0

Traits:

Available actions:

- **Trample (2 actions):** The Amolly rears up then brings several pointed legs down onto its target with an attack equal to its attack.
- **Defensive curl (3 actions):** The Armolly curls into a ball to be completely covered in thick armor. While it is in a defensive curl, the armolly loses any defense from agility and gains a +3 armor bonus. While in a curl, the armolly cannot see or perform any actions aside from uncurling which takes 3 actions.

Undead:

Hollow:

Hollows are the animated corpses of shelled creatures after decay has rendered their insides empty. These walking Exoskeletons are held together with strands of magic; invisible save for a faint dot of pale violet light in every one of the corpse's eye sockets. A Hollow usually follows instructions from a master, but the rare wild hollow will attack anything in sight.

Attributes:

Agil: 3

Fort: 0

Strn : 2

Wis: 2

Stats:

Attack: $\underline{5} = 3(\text{agil}) + 2(\text{magical})$

Defense: $\underline{5} = 3(\text{agil}) + 2(\text{armor})$

Size: small, medium, or large

HP: 10

Speed: 7

Initiative: 3

Perception: 2

Mental defense: *

Traits:

Undead: Undead creatures do not need to eat, sleep, or breath. Undead creatures cannot regain health through non-magical means, and when they reach 0 HP they immediately die. Undead creatures are also immune to mental attacks.

Available actions:

- **Slash attack (1 action):** The hollow desperately claws at their target attacking with a value equal to their attack.
- **Prepare attack (1action):** The hollow may prepare attacks via the *prepare* action (see *combat: actions in combat*).
- **Defend (1 action):** The hollow may defend itself via the *defend* action (see *combat: actions in combat*) .

Shambler:

Shambles are reanimated corpses of freshly killed creatures. Their name comes from the way they slowly shamble towards their victims. Shamblers smell of rotten flesh and chirp or moan uncontrollably as they wander aimlessly looking for something to kill, and they attack anything that moves without regard for their own wellbeing.

Attributes:

Agil: 0

Fort: 4

Strn : 3

Wis: 0

Stats:

Attack: 3 = 3(strn)

Defense: 4 = 4(fort)

Size: small, medium, or large

HP: 15

Speed: 2

Initiative: 0

Perception: 0

Mental defense: *

Traits:

Undead: Undead creatures do not need to eat, sleep, or breath. Undead creatures cannot regain health through non-magical means, and when they reach 0 HP they immediately die. Undead creatures are also immune to mental attacks.

Simple: Simple creatures are incapable of planning and higher thought. They are always focused on a singular goal and may not use defend or prepare options in combat. Simple creatures under the command of other creatures are only capable of understanding the simplest commands such as “come here” and “attack that creature”.

Available actions:

- o **Grapple (2 actions):** Grapple a creature as per *grapple* (see *Combat: Actions in Combat*)
- o **Bite (1 action):** The shambler lunges forward for a bite, attacking with a value equal to their attack. Any creature killed by a shambler’s bite attack raises as a shambler in 24 hours.

RITUALS

Rituals are magic spells that require too much preparation, resources, or time to be cast as a normal spell is. Rituals can be *common*, *rare*, or *lost*. Common rituals are either common knowledge for the fledgling invoker or are readily found in libraries. Rare rituals require dedicated research from anybody wishing to practice them. Contacting a powerful invoker may be the best way to learn rare rituals. Lost rituals have been erased from public record entirely either by the passage of time or deliberately.

[example rituals. Very short list. Will add flavorful instructions to rituals but for now these are just functional]

Create Undead(rare)

Create Undead can animate the corpse of a once-living creature. Once raised, this creature will inherit either the shambler or hollow stat block of the appropriate size. Only invokers with the *raise dead* spell gain control of the creature after it has risen.

Materials:

6 candles for a medium creature, + or – 2 for every size category larger or smaller

Charcoal

Small white flower

Hemolymph from an intelligent bug

Instructions:

Time: 6 hours. Must be done in relative darkness.

Curse Creature (rare)

This ritual bestows a common curse upon a target individual such as reducing all of their basic attributes by 1, constant slowness, or reducing a creature's mental defense to 0. This curse can be creative within limits.

Materials:

Cauldron

Briny Water

10 pebbles of green moss

A large glowing mushroom

Something alive

A vial of acid

A vial of honey

Either a piece of the target individual or something they hold dear enough to consider it part of themselves

Instructions:

Time: 6 hours

Remove Curse: (common)

This ritual is used to remove the permanent effects of other weak rituals such as *Curse Creature*.

Materials:

The name of the one who cursed you

Paper

Ink

2 jars of salt

Chalk

Instructions:

Time: 30 minutes.

Purify Food and Drink: (common)

This ritual can remove rot, poison, and unfortunately some taste from food and drinks.

Materials:

Gold flakes worth 10 Chips

Warm water

Instructions:

Time: 15 minutes

Become Lich: (lost)

This ritual allows a willing bug to become undead but keep their memories and class levels. This Process irreversibly alters the lich's personality to be less caring and respectful. A lich must absorb the life energy of at least one intelligent bug every 6 months or die.

Materials:

The life essence from 10 intelligent bugs

Crystals worth ten thousand Chips

Electricity akin to a bolt of lightning

10 candles

Charcoal

A custom made stone platform

A Silver Crown for holding several expensive gemstones

The to-be litch must be able to cast 5th level invocations

Instructions:

Time: 1 minute