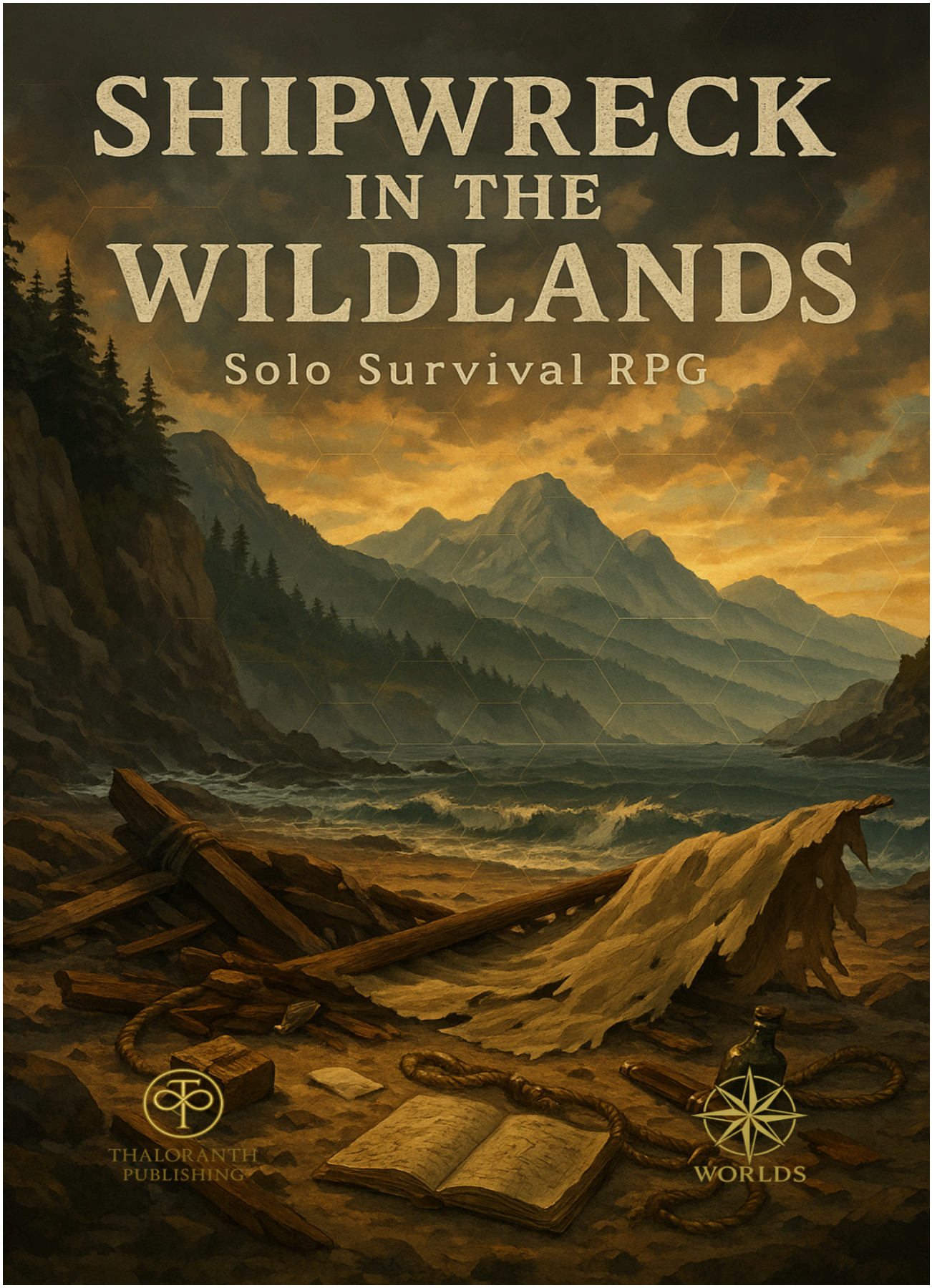
SHIPWRECK IN THE WILDLANDS

Solo Survival RPG



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Shipwreck in the Wildlands

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Introduction: Storm's End

The hurricane came from nowhere, as they always do. One moment you were watching the sunset paint the western horizon in shades of amber and rose, the next you were clinging to whatever you could find as your world turned to chaos. The ship groaned and screamed as waves the size of buildings crashed over her deck. The wind howled like a living thing, hungry and cruel.

Now you lie face-down in the sand, saltwater burning your lungs, driftwood and debris scattered around you like the bones of your former life. Behind you, the sea continues its endless assault on the rocky coast. Ahead stretches an alien landscape of dense forests, rolling hills, and distant mountains shrouded in mist.

Welcome to the Wildlands.

This is not a story of heroes destined for glory. This is a tale of survival against the indifferent forces of nature, of learning to thrive in a land that cares nothing for your civilized ways. You begin with nothing but the clothes on your back and whatever skills you carried from your old life. Everything else – shelter, food, fire, safety – you must earn through cunning, determination, and no small amount of luck.

The Wildlands stretch before you, vast and untamed. Somewhere in those forests, reclusive Sylvani tend their hidden groves. In remote clearings, isolated human communities eke out harsh but independent lives. Ancient ruins hold secrets from civilizations lost to time. But first, before any of that matters, you must answer the most basic question of all: will you survive the night?

Welcome to Shipwreck in the Wildlands

Shipwreck in the Wildlands is a solo survival roleplaying game that drops you into the wilderness with nothing but your wits and will to live. Based on the narrative-driven mechanics of Legends of Thaloranth, this game strips away the comfort of civilization and challenges you to build a new life from scratch.

Unlike traditional adventure games focused on combat and treasure-hunting, Shipwreck emphasizes the fundamental challenges of wilderness survival: finding water, building shelter, making fire, and foraging for food. As you master these basics, you'll begin to explore the Wildlands themselves, uncovering hidden communities, ancient secrets, and perhaps even a way home.

This is a game about transformation. You begin as a castaway, helpless and dependent on luck. Through experience and determination, you can become a wilderness expert, equally at home in forest glade or mountain cave. The person who eventually escapes the Wildlands – if you do – will be fundamentally different from the one who washed ashore that first terrible night.

How to Use This Game

Shipwreck in the Wildlands uses a streamlined version of the Legends of Thaloranth system, designed specifically for solo play. You'll need only a few simple tools to begin your survival story:

A character sheet to track your skills and progress A six-sided die for oracle rolls and random events This book as your guide through the mechanics and the world A notebook or journal to record your discoveries and track the passage of time The most important tool, however, is your imagination. This game provides the framework, but you provide the story. Every decision you make, every risk you take, every small victory against the wilderness adds another page to your personal legend of survival.

What You Need to Play

To begin your journey as a castaway in the Wildlands, gather these simple materials:

One six-sided die for oracle rolls and weather determination A notebook or journal for tracking progress and discoveries Something to write with A quiet space where you can focus on your survival story This book to guide you through the world and its challenges

The beauty of solo roleplaying lies in its simplicity. You need no other players to coordinate with, no complex scheduling, no lengthy setup. When the mood strikes – whether you have twenty minutes or two hours – you can return to your struggle for survival in the Wildlands.

Some players prefer to maintain detailed journals of their experiences, chronicling each day's challenges and discoveries. Others keep simple notes about resources found and skills learned. Play in whatever style brings you the most enjoyment. The Wildlands will be waiting whenever you're ready to continue your story.

Your story begins now. The storm has passed, the sea has retreated, and you lie alone on an unknown shore. The sun is setting, and you have perhaps an hour of daylight left. What will you do first?

Chapter 1: Core System

Shipwreck in the Wildlands uses a streamlined version of the Legends of Thaloranth system, specifically adapted for solo wilderness survival. The core mechanics emphasize narrative flow over complex calculations, meaningful choices over random chance, and character development through experience rather than predetermined advancement.

This chapter covers the essential mechanical foundations you need to play: how skills work, how to resolve challenges, how your character grows stronger, and how to manage the resources that keep you alive in the wilderness.

Pure Skills Framework

Unlike traditional roleplaying games that combine attributes and skills, Shipwreck uses a pure skills system where your character's abilities are defined entirely by learned competencies. This reflects the reality of wilderness survival, where knowledge and experience matter more than raw physical gifts.

Skills represent everything your character knows how to do, from swimming and climbing to reading weather patterns and negotiating with suspicious hamlet dwellers. As your character survives longer in the Wildlands, they develop new skills suited to their harsh environment.

Skill Levels and Competence Skills are rated from 0 to 5, representing increasing levels of mastery:

Level 0: No training or experience Level 1: Basic competence, can handle simple tasks Level 2: Solid ability, reliable in normal conditions Level 3: Advanced skill, effective even under pressure Level 4: Expert level, teaches others and handles extreme challenges Level 5: Master level, legendary competence setting regional standards

Most characters begin with civilized skills at levels 1-3, reflecting their pre-shipwreck training and experience. Wilderness skills must be learned through practice and necessity.

Civilized Skills These represent knowledge and abilities from your character's life before the shipwreck.

Physical Skills: Athletics: Swimming, climbing, running, lifting, physical endurance

Social Skills: Persuasion: Convincing others through logic, charm, or shared interests Trade: Commerce, value assessment, resource management Intimidation: Projecting authority or threat to influence behavior

Mental Skills: Academics: History, geography, languages, natural philosophy Medicine: Anatomy, disease, injury treatment, basic surgery Investigation: Systematic searching, evidence analysis, logical deduction Tactics: Military strategy, planning, organizational thinking

Specialized Skills: Seamanship: Navigation, weather prediction, ship handling Crafting: Working with tools and materials to create useful objects Streetwise: Criminal networks, urban survival, social situation reading

Wilderness Skills These abilities must be learned through experience in the Wildlands. No character begins with wilderness skills - they represent adaptation to your new environment.

Survival: General wilderness competence covering basic needs Foraging: Plant and small animal food gathering techniques Weather Reading: Predicting storms and seasonal changes Herbal Medicine: Using wild plants for medical treatment Beast Lore: Understanding animal behavior and ecology Camouflage: Hiding from predators and moving unseen Trapping: Constructing and deploying animal snares Archery: Bow hunting and wilderness ranged combat

Learning New Wilderness Skills: Cost: 3 XP to gain a new wilderness skill at Level 1 Requirements: Must have practical need and practice opportunity Time: Minimum one week of focused practice per skill level

Difficulty Classes and Resolution

All challenges in Shipwreck are resolved using the same basic formula:

Skill Level + Modifiers vs Difficulty Class (DC)

If your total equals or exceeds the DC, you succeed. If not, you fail or achieve only partial success. This simple system keeps play moving while providing meaningful consequences for character choices.

Standard Difficulty Classes: Easy: 5 - Simple tasks with room for error Moderate: 8 - Standard challenges requiring competence Challenging: 12 - Difficult tasks testing your abilities Hard: 15 - Expert-level challenges with serious consequences Extreme: 18 - Master-level tasks requiring exceptional skill Legendary: 20+ - Nearly impossible feats requiring perfect conditions

Modifiers adjust the base difficulty based on circumstances: Favorable Conditions: -1 to -3 (good weather, proper tools, assistance) Poor Conditions: +1 to +3 (storms, damaged equipment, fatigue) Time Pressure: +1 to +2 (rushed work, emergency situations) Previous Experience: -1 (familiarity with specific challenge)

Example: Building a shelter with Crafting skill Level 2 Base DC: 8 (moderate challenge) Good materials available: -1 Severe weather approaching: +2 Final DC: 9 Result: Need 9 or higher total (Skill 2 + Modifiers must equal 7+)

Challenge-Based Experience System

Character advancement in Shipwreck comes through overcoming meaningful survival challenges rather than defeating enemies or completing quests. This reflects the reality that wilderness survival teaches through necessity and practice.

Experience Points represent your character's growing competence and adaptation to Wildlands conditions. Each survival challenge overcome makes you slightly more capable of handling future difficulties.

Earning Experience Points XP is awarded for completing specific survival challenges that test your competence and advance your story.

1 XP Challenges (Basic Survival): Find Fresh Water: Locate a reliable water source Build Basic Shelter: Create protection from elements Forage a Meal: Successfully find edible plants or food Navigate Safely: Move 1 hex without injury or getting lost Treat an Injury: Successfully heal wounds or illness Make Fire: Start fire in difficult conditions Craft Basic Tool: Create useful implement from available materials

2 XP Challenges (Advanced Survival): Survive Severe Weather: Endure storm, extreme heat, or cold Defeat or Evade Predator: Handle dangerous wildlife encounter Craft Weapon: Make effective hunting or combat tool Discover Significant Location: Find cave, ruins, or vantage point Successful Hunt: Kill game animal for substantial food Navigate Difficult Terrain: Cross swamp, climb cliff, ford river Preserve Food: Successfully smoke or dry meat for storage

3 XP Challenges (Major Milestones): Establish Base Camp: Create semi-permanent settlement Contact Other Survivors: Find and communicate with others Discover Civilization: Locate inhabited settlement or escape route Survive 7 Days: Complete first week milestone Master Environment: Gain deep knowledge of local area Rescue Achievement: Save another survivor or help group

4 XP Challenges (Epic Accomplishments): Escape the Wildlands: Successfully reach safety or civilization Become Wilderness Expert: Master multiple survival skills Lead Survivor Group: Organize and guide other castaways Uncover Ancient Secret: Discover significant Wildlands mystery

Some challenges can be repeated (basic survival needs), while others represent one-time achievements (major milestones). The system rewards both daily competence and significant accomplishments.

Spending Experience Points XP can be spent immediately after earning or saved for larger purchases. Character advancement is flexible and responds to your survival experiences.

XP Costs: 1 XP: Increase any existing skill by 1 level 3 XP: Learn a new wilderness skill at Level 1 4 XP: Gain a special advantage or unique ability

Skill Advancement: Existing skills can be improved through practice and experience Each level increase costs 1 XP regardless of current level Skills can advance to maximum Level 5 Wilderness skills require practical experience before advancement

Learning New Skills: Only wilderness skills can be learned after character creation Requires 3 XP investment plus practical learning opportunity Must have genuine need and practice time (minimum 1 week) Teacher or extensive trial-and-error experimentation required

Special Advantages: Unique benefits reflecting specialized training or natural adaptation Examples: Enhanced night vision, resistance to cold, animal empathy GM discretion required, should reflect character experiences Cost: 4 XP per advantage

Example Character Advancement: After first week: Earned 8 XP from various challenges Spending Options:

- Learn Survival skill (3 XP) + improve Athletics (1 XP) + improve Crafting (1 XP) = 5 XP spent
- Save remaining 3 XP for future wilderness skill or skill improvements
- Character now has basic wilderness competence plus improved physical abilities

Action Points System

Action Points represent your ability to push beyond normal limitations during critical moments. In wilderness survival, these moments of extra effort often determine success or failure in life-threatening situations.

Your daily AP pool reflects your physical conditioning, mental focus, and learned efficiency in survival tasks. Managing this resource wisely becomes crucial for long-term survival.

Action Point Pool and Recovery Daily AP Pool: (Highest 2 Skills + 5) This formula ensures that more experienced characters have greater reserves while giving everyone a meaningful pool to manage.

Example: Character with Athletics 3 and Medicine 2 has 10 AP daily Advanced Character: Survival 4 and Crafting 3 has 12 AP daily

AP Recovery: 2 AP per hour of rest (not necessarily sleep) Full recovery after 8 hours of sleep Comfortable shelter: +1 AP recovery per rest period Good nutrition: +1 AP recovery per day Poor conditions: -1 AP recovery per rest period

Recovery reflects the importance of adequate rest and proper self-care in wilderness survival.

Survival-Focused AP Uses

Resource Management: Conserve Supplies (1 AP): Make food or water last 1 additional day Emergency Rationing (2 AP): Stretch supplies 2 extra days at cost of fatigue Preserve Resources (2 AP): Successfully preserve food for future storage

Exploration and Movement: Careful Movement (1 AP): Move through hex with +2 caution bonus Forced March (3 AP): Travel additional hex beyond normal daily limit Backtrack Safely (1 AP): Return to explored hex avoiding known hazards

Environmental Interaction: Weather Preparation (2 AP): +2 bonus to resist weather effects for one day Hazard Avoidance (1 AP): Automatically detect and avoid one environmental danger Quick Shelter (3 AP): Build emergency shelter in half normal time

Skill Enhancement: Skill Boost (1 AP): Add +2 to any survival-related skill check Extra Effort (2 AP): Retry failed skill check with +1 bonus Careful Work (2 AP): Take extra time for +2 bonus to crafting tasks

Discovery and Investigation: Scavenge Bonus (1 AP): +2 to Investigation when searching for resources Detailed Search (2 AP): Thorough area examination for +3 Investigation bonus Follow Leads (2 AP): Pursue clues with +2 bonus to related checks

Recovery and Healing: Natural Healing (2 AP): Use wilderness medicine to recover 2 HP Rest Efficiently (1 AP): Reduce fatigue recovery time from 8 to 4 hours Mental Fortitude (1 AP): Resist fear, despair, or panic effects

Strategic AP management becomes essential for wilderness survival. Experienced survivors learn to balance daily efficiency with emergency reserves.

Health and Condition Tracking

Wilderness survival creates constant low-level stress on your character's health and mental state. Tracking these conditions helps maintain realistic consequences for survival choices.

Health Points represent your character's physical resilience and ability to withstand injury, illness, and environmental stress.

Health Point Calculation: Starting HP: 10 + (Athletics skill level) Characters with higher Athletics have greater physical resilience HP represents overall health rather than just injury resistance

Health Loss Sources: Injury: Accidents, falls, cuts, animal encounters Exposure: Weather damage, hypothermia, heat exhaustion Illness: Contaminated water, spoiled food, disease Fatigue: Overwork, insufficient rest, poor nutrition Starvation: Extended periods without adequate food Dehydration: Lack of clean drinking water

Health Recovery: Natural Healing: 1 HP per day of adequate rest and nutrition Medical Treatment: Medicine skill checks can accelerate healing Herbal Remedies: Wilderness medicine provides healing bonuses Comfortable Conditions: Good shelter and food improve recovery Poor Conditions: Harsh weather and inadequate supplies slow healing

Condition Effects: Healthy (Full HP): No penalties, optimal performance Injured (75% HP): -1 to all physical activities Wounded (50% HP): -2 to all physical activities, movement limitations Seriously Hurt (25% HP): -3 to all activities, requires immediate medical attention Critical (1-2 HP): Barely conscious, unable to perform complex tasks Unconscious (0 HP): Requires immediate rescue and medical treatment

Mental State and Morale Wilderness survival creates psychological stress that affects decision-making and performance. While not tracked with specific numbers, morale influences narrative outcomes.

Positive Morale Factors: Adequate shelter protecting from weather Reliable food and water sources Successful completion of survival challenges Contact with other friendly inhabitants Discovery of interesting locations or useful resources Progress toward long-term goals

Negative Morale Factors: Repeated failures in essential survival tasks Severe weather without adequate protection Extended isolation without social contact Loss of important equipment or supplies Injuries or illnesses affecting capability Lack of progress toward escape or permanent settlement

Morale effects appear through roleplay and narrative choices rather than mechanical penalties. Low morale might lead to taking unnecessary risks, avoiding difficult challenges, or making poor decisions during stress.

Resource Management

Wilderness survival requires careful management of multiple resources beyond just food and water. These resources determine your capability to handle challenges and improve your long-term prospects.

Equipment Condition: Tools and equipment degrade through use and environmental exposure Regular maintenance required to prevent failure at critical moments Replacement parts and materials must be found or crafted Backup equipment essential for tools critical to survival

Supply Stockpiles: Food preservation allows building reserves for winter or emergency Water storage reduces daily gathering requirements Fuel stockpiles ensure fire availability during wet weather Medicine supplies prepare for injuries and illness treatment

Knowledge Resources: Map information about local geography and resource locations Understanding of seasonal patterns and optimal timing Relationships with local inhabitants providing assistance Cultural knowledge enabling communication and trade

The Core System provides the mechanical foundation for survival storytelling without overwhelming complexity. These rules fade into the background during play, supporting narrative flow while ensuring meaningful consequences for character choices and realistic challenges from wilderness survival.

Master these basics, and you'll have everything needed to begin your transformation from helpless castaway to capable wilderness survivor. The Wildlands await your first test of skill and determination.

Chapter 2: Character Creation

Creating your castaway is the first step toward survival in the Wildlands. Unlike traditional fantasy heroes born to destiny, your character begins as an ordinary person thrust into extraordinary circumstances. They possess skills learned in civilization, carry memories of their former life, and harbor dreams of either returning home or building something new in this untamed land.

Your character's background determines not only their starting abilities but also their perspective on the wilderness. A merchant will approach survival differently than a sailor, a scholar differently than a soldier. These differences create unique stories and varied paths through the same basic challenge: staying alive.

Survivor Backgrounds

Your background represents your character's life before the shipwreck. It determines your starting skills and provides context for how you interpret and respond to wilderness challenges. Choose the background that most appeals to you, or roll a six-sided die if you prefer to let fate decide.

Merchant You lived by trade and negotiation, moving goods between cities and understanding the value of everything. Your skills lie in appraisal, persuasion, and managing resources efficiently. Starting Skills: Trade (2), Persuasion (2), Academics (1) Background Insight: You instinctively evaluate the worth and utility of everything you find. You know how to make limited resources stretch further through careful rationing and planning.

Sailor The sea was your home, and ships your workplace. You understand weather, navigation, and the fundamentals of survival in harsh conditions. The wilderness may be alien, but hardship is not. Starting Skills: Seamanship (2), Athletics (2), Weather Reading (1) Background Insight: You can read natural signs that others miss – wind patterns, cloud formations, and seasonal changes. Your sea-trained body is already accustomed to physical hardship.

Scholar Knowledge was your trade, whether in universities, libraries, or noble courts. You possess broad learning about the natural world, though little practical experience applying it. Starting Skills: Academics (3), Medicine (1), Investigation (1) Background Insight: You know the theory behind many survival techniques and can identify plants, animals, and natural phenomena that would mystify others. Your challenge lies in translating knowledge into action.

Artisan You worked with your hands, creating useful things from raw materials. Whether blacksmith, carpenter, or weaver, you understand how to shape the world to meet your needs. Starting Skills: Crafting (2), Athletics (1), Trade (1), Investigation (1) Background Insight: You see potential tools and materials where others see only debris. Your trained eye can assess the structural integrity of shelters and the quality of materials.

Soldier Military service taught you discipline, endurance, and the importance of preparation. You understand tactics, can push through pain, and know how to maintain equipment under difficult conditions. Starting Skills: Athletics (2), Medicine (1), Intimidation (1), Tactics (1) Background Insight: You approach problems methodically and maintain hope even in desperate situations. Your military training helps you stay calm and organized when others might panic.

Wanderer You never stayed in one place long, whether as a traveling performer, messenger, or simple drifter. You picked up bits of knowledge from many places and developed keen instincts about people and places. Starting Skills: Persuasion (1), Athletics (1), Investigation (1), Streetwise (1), Survival (1) Background Insight: You adapt quickly to new situations and trust your instincts about danger. Your diverse experiences give you creative solutions to problems.

Civilized Skills

These represent knowledge and abilities your character possessed before reaching the Wildlands. Everyone begins with some combination of these skills, reflecting their education, profession, and life experience.

Physical Skills Athletics: Swimming, climbing, running, lifting heavy objects, and physical endurance. Essential for moving through difficult terrain and handling the physical demands of wilderness survival.

Social Skills Persuasion: Convincing others through logic, charm, or appeal to shared interests. Useful for gaining cooperation from any people you encounter and calming frightened animals.

Trade: Understanding of commerce, value assessment, and resource management. Helps with rationing supplies and evaluating the worth of found materials.

Intimidation: Projecting authority or threat to influence behavior. Can be used to drive off scavengers or assert leadership if you encounter other survivors.

Mental Skills Academics: Broad knowledge of history, geography, languages, and natural philosophy. Provides background information about plants, animals, weather patterns, and potentially the Wildlands themselves.

Medicine: Understanding of anatomy, disease, injury treatment, and basic surgery. Critical for treating wounds, preventing infection, and maintaining health in harsh conditions.

Investigation: Systematic searching, evidence analysis, and logical deduction. Essential for finding resources, tracking animals, and uncovering the secrets of discovered locations.

Tactics: Military strategy, planning, and organizational thinking. Helps with efficient exploration, resource allocation, and preparing for potential dangers.

Specialized Skills Seamanship: Navigation, weather prediction, and ship handling. Provides crucial understanding of natural patterns and survival techniques learned at sea.

Crafting: Working with tools and materials to create useful objects. The foundation for building shelters, making tools, and fashioning equipment from salvaged materials.

Streetwise: Understanding of criminal networks, urban survival, and reading social situations. Surprisingly useful for understanding predator behavior and navigating complex social dynamics.

Equipment and Salvage

You begin with only what you managed to grab during the shipwreck or what washed ashore near your landing point. Roll a six-sided die three times on the Salvage Table to determine your starting equipment, or choose three items that make sense for your character's background.

Personal Items (Roll 1-2) Waterlogged Journal: Your personal writings, now barely legible but still meaningful to you. Can be used for tinder when dry, or to record your survival experiences.

Family Memento: A piece of jewelry, carved token, or small portrait that survived the wreck. Provides comfort during difficult moments and motivation to survive.

Professional Tools: A small set of tools related to your background – merchant's scales, scholar's magnifying lens, artisan's carving knife, or similar. Limited use but familiar and comforting.

Ship's Equipment (Roll 3-4) Length of Rope: Thirty feet of ship's rope, slightly frayed but still strong. Essential for climbing, building shelters, and securing equipment.

Canvas Tarp: A section of sail or protective covering, torn but serviceable. Can be used for shelter, water collection, or improvised clothing.

Iron Tools: A ship's hammer, prying bar, or similar metal tool. Useful for construction, breaking apart debris, and potentially as a weapon if necessary.

Water Barrel Fragment: Broken but repairable container that could hold water with some work. Critical for water storage once restored.

Provisions (Roll 5-6) Ship's Biscuit: Hard, preserved bread that survived the wreck. Provides one day's worth of food but is your only reliable nutrition until you find more.

Fishing Line and Hooks: Basic fishing equipment that could provide ongoing food if you can reach suitable water.

Small Knife: A utility blade for cutting, carving, and food preparation. Essential for many survival tasks and potentially your most valuable tool.

Flint and Steel: Fire-starting equipment that still works despite the water. Absolutely critical for warmth, cooking, and safety.

Additional Salvage Beyond your initial three items, the wreckage site contains additional materials you can recover through exploration and effort. These require time and investigation to locate, but provide essential resources for long-term survival.

Scattered nearby are fragments of the ship's structure – broken planks, torn canvas, metal fittings, and pieces of cargo. Some may be immediately useful, others might become valuable later as you develop the skills to work with them effectively.

The shoreline itself offers resources: driftwood for fuel, seaweed that might be edible, pools among the rocks that could contain fresh water or useful sea life. Your first challenge is determining which of these natural offerings are safe and beneficial.

Personal Goals and Motivations

Beyond mere survival, your character needs deeper motivations that will drive them through the long, difficult process of adapting to the Wildlands. These goals provide direction for your story and help you make decisions when faced with difficult choices.

Immediate Goals Return Home: Your primary desire is to escape the Wildlands and return to civilization. Every action is measured against this ultimate objective.

Find Other Survivors: You believe others from your ship may have survived, and finding them becomes your driving mission.

Establish Safety: You focus on creating a secure, comfortable existence in the Wildlands, accepting that this may be your permanent home.

Long-term Aspirations Master the Wilderness: You want to become truly competent in this environment, learning skills that would amaze your former civilized self.

Uncover Mysteries: The Wildlands hold secrets – ancient ruins, hidden communities, or strange phenomena that call to your curiosity.

Build Something New: Perhaps this disaster is an opportunity to create a life better than what you left behind.

Personal Flaws and Challenges Every survivor carries weaknesses that complicate their struggle. These flaws create internal conflict and difficult decisions that enrich your story.

Homesickness: You struggle with despair and longing for your former life, making it difficult to focus on immediate survival needs.

Civilized Prejudice: You view the wilderness as inherently inferior to civilization, making it harder to learn from and adapt to natural environments.

Physical Limitation: An old injury, chronic condition, or simple lack of physical conditioning creates ongoing challenges.

Social Difficulty: Whether arrogance, shyness, or cultural misunderstanding, you struggle to connect with others when you do encounter them.

Dangerous Curiosity: You compulsively investigate interesting discoveries, even when caution would be wiser.

Resource Hoarding: Scarcity makes you possessive and unwilling to take necessary risks with your supplies.

Your character begins this story broken and lost, cast up on an alien shore with nothing but fragments of their former life. Through the choices you make and the challenges you overcome, they will be transformed into something new – perhaps something stronger and more capable than they ever imagined possible.

The person who eventually escapes the Wildlands, or chooses to make them home, will barely resemble the frightened castaway who first opened their eyes on that desolate beach. Your story is the tale of that transformation.

Chapter 3: The Two Pillars

Survival in the Wildlands rests on two fundamental pillars of activity: Social interaction and Exploration. Unlike the civilized world where combat often resolves disputes, the wilderness demands different approaches. Here, understanding replaces violence, and discovery becomes more valuable than conquest.

These two pillars shape every aspect of your survival story. Through Social challenges, you learn to communicate with the Wildlands' inhabitants – both human and animal. Through Exploration, you uncover the resources, knowledge, and locations necessary for long-term survival. Mastering both pillars transforms you from helpless castaway to capable wilderness dweller.

Social Pillar: Communication and Understanding

The Social pillar encompasses all forms of communication and relationship-building in the Wildlands. This ranges from reading animal behavior to earning the trust of reclusive communities, from calming panicked creatures to negotiating with suspicious hamlet dwellers.

In the wilderness, social skills take on new dimensions. Persuasion becomes the art of convincing a bear to leave your campsite rather than investigate your food stores. Intimidation means projecting confidence to discourage predators without provoking attacks. Investigation includes reading the behavioral signs that reveal whether an animal is sick, aggressive, or simply curious.

Animal Communication Most wildlife encounters in the Wildlands are social rather than combative. Animals react to your presence, body language, and behavior in predictable ways. Understanding these patterns can mean the difference between a peaceful coexistence and a dangerous confrontation.

Reading Animal Intentions requires Investigation or Academics skills. Success reveals whether a creature is: Curious but cautious: Will observe from a distance but flee if approached Territorial: Will give warning displays before attacking if you don't retreat Hungry: May follow you hoping for food, or size you up as potential prey Protective: Defending young or territory, highly aggressive but won't pursue if you leave Sick or Injured: Unpredictable behavior, may be dangerous or pitiful

Influencing Animal Behavior uses various social skills depending on your approach: Persuasion: Calm movements and soft sounds to reduce fear or aggression Intimidation: Loud noises, aggressive postures, or demonstrating you're not easy prey Deception: Hiding your scent, moving quietly, or disguising your intentions

Many survival situations involve convincing animals to leave you alone rather than fighting them. A bear investigating your shelter might be discouraged by confident shouting and pot-banging.

Wolves trailing your scent might be deterred by leaving obvious signs of human presence rather than trying to hide.

Human Community Relations The isolated settlements of the Wildlands maintain their independence through wariness. Strangers represent potential threats – raiders, disease carriers, or simply additional mouths to feed during scarce times. Gaining acceptance requires patience, useful skills, and understanding of frontier social dynamics.

Initial Contact with human communities involves Persuasion or Investigation: Persuasion: Approaching openly with hands visible, speaking of peaceful intentions Investigation: Observing from a distance to understand community structure and needs Academics: Recognizing cultural signs, trade goods, or social hierarchies

Building Trust requires demonstrating value to the community: Offer useful skills they lack: Medical knowledge, craft techniques, or outside information Respect their customs: Follow social protocols, defer to authority figures Prove reliability: Complete small tasks successfully before requesting major assistance Share resources: Contribute food, materials, or labor without expecting immediate return

Hamlet dwellers judge outsiders by practical criteria. Can you contribute to community survival? Do you respect their way of life? Will you cause problems with their neighbors or attract dangerous attention? Proving yourself useful and trustworthy matters more than charm or noble intentions.

Sylvani Encounter Protocols The forest-dwelling Sylvani present unique social challenges. Their communities remain hidden through careful selection of who may find them. Contact typically occurs only when the Sylvani choose to reveal themselves, usually to individuals who demonstrate proper respect for natural environments.

Gaining Sylvani Attention requires specific behaviors: Environmental Respect: Camping without damaging vegetation, properly disposing of waste Cultural Sensitivity: Recognizing sacred groves, following forest protocols Demonstrated Need: Being lost, injured, or in genuine distress rather than mere curiosity

Sylvani Communication emphasizes non-verbal elements: Patience: They observe extensively before making contact Honesty: Deception is easily detected and permanently damages relationships Reciprocity: Gifts and assistance must be balanced over time Environmental Harmony: Actions must align with forest preservation

Sylvani communities possess extensive knowledge of wilderness survival, herbal medicine, and hidden locations throughout the Wildlands. Their assistance can dramatically improve your survival prospects, but their friendship must be earned through genuine understanding of their values and way of life.

Exploration Pillar: Discovery and Resource Management

The Exploration pillar encompasses everything related to moving through, understanding, and exploiting the Wildlands environment. This includes navigation, resource gathering, shelter construction, and the systematic investigation of new locations.

Exploration challenges test your ability to read the landscape, identify opportunities and dangers, and make efficient use of your time and energy. Every hex you enter presents new possibilities for discovery, but also new risks that must be carefully evaluated.

Environmental Assessment Before entering any new area, skilled survivors learn to read the signs that reveal what they might find there. This assessment guides decisions about whether to explore thoroughly, pass through quickly, or avoid an area entirely.

Terrain Analysis uses Investigation or Academics: Water Sources: Following animal trails, reading vegetation patterns, identifying watershed areas Resource Availability: Recognizing soil quality, seasonal plant growth, mineral indicators Danger Signs: Fresh predator tracks, territorial markings, unstable ground conditions Weather Patterns: Understanding how local geography affects storms, temperature, and seasonal changes

Each terrain type presents characteristic opportunities and challenges: Coastal Areas: Shellfish and seaweed for food, but exposure to storms and limited shelter materials Dense Forests: Abundant building materials and protection from weather, but limited visibility and navigation difficulties Mountain Regions: Caves for shelter and mineral resources, but dangerous terrain and extreme weather River Systems: Reliable water and travel routes, but crossing difficulties and flooding risks

Effective exploration requires balancing thoroughness with efficiency. Spending days carefully searching a single hex might reveal valuable resources, but at the cost of time that could be used reaching more promising areas.

Resource Identification and Gathering The Wildlands provide everything necessary for survival, but recognizing and properly harvesting these resources requires specific knowledge and techniques. Misidentification can waste time, damage equipment, or even prove dangerous.

Plant Identification uses Academics or Investigation: Edible Species: Distinguishing safe foods from poisonous lookalikes Medicinal Herbs: Recognizing plants useful for treating injuries and illness Construction Materials: Identifying woods suitable for tools, shelter, or fuel Seasonal Availability: Understanding when different resources become available

Safe Foraging requires systematic approaches: Start with easily identified, low-risk species Test unfamiliar plants carefully in small quantities Learn seasonal patterns to maximize gathering efficiency Understand sustainable harvesting to preserve future resources

Water Location and Purification involves multiple skills: Investigation: Following geographic and biological indicators to find sources Academics: Understanding filtration, boiling, and other

purification methods Crafting: Building filtration systems from available materials Medicine: Recognizing signs of contaminated water

Many Wildlands resources require processing before use. Raw plant fibers must be prepared for rope-making. Tree bark needs proper harvesting and treatment for construction use. Even clean water benefits from purification when your health depends on avoiding any risk of illness.

Shelter Construction and Improvement Building adequate shelter represents one of the most important exploration challenges. Your shelter protects you from weather, provides a secure base for other activities, and serves as a psychological anchor in an alien environment.

Site Selection uses Investigation and Tactics: Natural Protection: Finding locations sheltered from prevailing winds and storms Resource Access: Proximity to water, building materials, and food sources Safety Considerations: Avoiding flood areas, unstable ground, and predator territories Strategic Position: Visibility for signaling, defensibility, and escape routes

Construction Techniques involve Crafting and Athletics: Foundation Preparation: Clearing ground, drainage, and structural support Wall Construction: Using available materials efficiently and weather-resistant techniques Roofing Systems: Creating protection from rain and snow using local resources Interior Organization: Maximizing space efficiency and comfort

Shelter improvement continues throughout your survival story. Initial constructions focus on basic protection from elements. Later improvements add comfort, storage space, and specialized work areas. Advanced shelters might include features like root cellars, workshops, or defensive elements.

Navigation and Route Planning Moving efficiently through the Wildlands requires understanding both large-scale geography and local terrain features. Poor navigation wastes precious time and energy while potentially leading you into dangerous situations.

Landmark Recognition uses Investigation or Academics: Natural Features: Mountains, rivers, distinctive rock formations, and vegetation patterns Artificial Markers: Ruins, old roads, boundary stones, and settlement signs Seasonal Changes: How landmarks appear different in various weather conditions Distance Estimation: Judging travel times across different terrain types

Route Planning involves Tactics and Seamanship: Efficient Pathfinding: Balancing distance with terrain difficulty Resource Opportunities: Planning routes to pass through areas with needed materials Weather Considerations: Timing travel to avoid storms or seasonal difficulties Safety Margins: Building flexibility into plans to handle unexpected obstacles

The hex-based structure of the Wildlands makes navigation manageable, but each hex contains internal complexity that affects travel time and success. A forest hex might offer easy passage along game trails, or present nearly impenetrable undergrowth depending on the specific location and season.

Discovery and Investigation The Wildlands contain hidden locations, forgotten ruins, and natural wonders that provide unique opportunities for prepared explorers. Finding these special places requires systematic investigation combined with willingness to take calculated risks.

Systematic Search techniques use Investigation and Athletics: Grid Patterns: Covering areas thoroughly without missing important features Sign Reading: Following subtle indicators toward points of interest Vertical Exploration: Investigating caves, climbing to elevated viewpoints Methodical Documentation: Recording discoveries for future reference

Many significant discoveries require multiple visits to fully understand. An ancient ruin might yield basic shelter on first exploration, reveal hidden chambers during subsequent investigations, and finally disclose its greatest secrets only to persistent and knowledgeable explorers.

Hidden locations often protect themselves through natural concealment or deliberate camouflage. Sylvani groves use magical concealment that reveals itself only to worthy visitors. Human settlements rely on difficult access routes and careful positioning to avoid unwanted attention. Even natural features like caves or springs might be hidden behind vegetation or difficult terrain.

The successful exploration of special locations frequently requires combining multiple skills and approaches. Finding a hidden Sylvani grove might involve tracking unusual animal behavior, recognizing subtle environmental signs, and then approaching with appropriate cultural sensitivity. Each discovery becomes a puzzle requiring patience, observation, and respectful persistence.

Integrating the Two Pillars

Mastery of the Wildlands comes through understanding how Social and Exploration pillars reinforce each other. Social connections provide information that guides exploration choices. Exploration discoveries create opportunities for social interaction. Your growing reputation affects how others respond to your presence, while your expanding knowledge makes you more valuable as an ally or trading partner.

A successful survivor learns to see every encounter as both a social opportunity and an exploration challenge. Meeting a nervous hamlet trader becomes a chance to gather information about regional resources while also building relationships that might provide future assistance. Discovering a new water source creates opportunities to help other travelers while also establishing your credentials as someone with valuable local knowledge.

The two pillars ensure that your survival story remains rich and varied. Days focused primarily on exploration still involve social decisions about how to approach wildlife or respond to signs of human presence. Social encounters often reveal new exploration opportunities or provide crucial information about navigating regional challenges.

Through mastering both pillars, you transform from an outsider struggling against the Wildlands into someone who understands and works with the natural and social environment. This transformation represents the heart of your survival story – the journey from helpless castaway to capable wilderness dweller.

Chapter 4: Survival in the Wildlands

Surviving in the Wildlands requires mastering four fundamental needs: water, food, shelter, and safety. These form the foundation upon which all other activities depend. Without reliable access to clean water, you'll die within days. Without adequate shelter, exposure will claim you during the first severe storm. Without understanding the dangers around you, a moment's carelessness can end your story permanently.

This chapter provides the mechanical framework for addressing these survival challenges. Each need presents specific difficulty classes, skill requirements, and consequences for failure. Understanding these systems allows you to make informed decisions about risk, resource allocation, and long-term planning.

The Four Essentials of Survival

Water: Finding and Purifying

Water represents your most immediate survival need. In temperate climates like the Wildlands, dehydration becomes life-threatening within three days. Finding reliable water sources and ensuring their safety requires constant attention and proper technique.

Finding Water Sources Skill Check: Investigation + highest relevant background skill Base DC: 8 (coastal areas with frequent rain) Modifiers: Terrain: Forest +0, Hills +2, Mountains +4 Season: Spring -2, Summer +0, Autumn +2, Winter +4 Weather: Recent rain -3, Drought conditions +5 Success: Locate water source within one hour of searching Failure: No source found, must continue searching or try different area

Natural water indicators include animal trails leading away from feeding areas, green vegetation in otherwise dry landscapes, and geographic features like ravines or depressions where water might collect. Sound often reveals hidden streams or springs before visual confirmation.

Water Purification Raw water in the Wildlands may contain harmful bacteria, parasites, or mineral contamination. Proper treatment prevents illness that could prove fatal when medical help is unavailable.

Boiling Water Skill Check: Survival + Academics Base DC: 5 (with existing fire and container) Modifiers: No fire: +8 (must build fire first) Improvised container: +3 Fuel scarcity: +2 Success: Water purified and safe to drink Failure: Water remains contaminated or container damaged

Filtration Systems Skill Check: Crafting + Investigation Base DC: 10 Materials Required: Sand, charcoal, cloth or similar filtering material Time Required: 2 hours to construct, 30 minutes per gallon filtered Success: Removes visible contaminants and improves taste Failure: System ineffective, water remains questionable

Natural Purification Skill Check: Academics + Medicine Base DC: 12 Time Required: 24 hours in sunlight Success: UV light kills most harmful organisms Failure: Water remains contaminated, time wasted

Water Storage Preserving clean water for future use prevents repeated daily searches and provides security during travel or bad weather.

Container Creation Skill Check: Crafting + Athletics Base DC: 8 (simple containers), 12 (waterproof containers) Materials: Animal skins, plant materials, or salvaged items Time Required: 3-6 hours depending on complexity Success: Functional water storage Failure: Container leaks or fails quickly

Food: Foraging and Hunting

Food provides the energy necessary for survival activities. While humans can survive weeks without food, prolonged hunger severely impairs physical and mental performance. The Wildlands offer abundant food for those who know where and how to look.

Plant Foraging Identifying edible plants requires knowledge of local species and careful attention to seasonal availability. Mistakes can result in illness, poisoning, or wasted time gathering inedible materials.

Safe Plant Identification Skill Check: Academics + Investigation Base DC: 8 (common, easily identified species) Base DC: 12 (less common species requiring careful examination) Base DC: 18 (rare species or those with poisonous lookalikes) Modifiers: Familiar terrain: -2 Seasonal availability: -2 to +4 depending on timing Poor visibility: +2 to +5 Success: Correctly identify edible species and gathering locations Failure: Waste time, or worse, gather dangerous plants

Successful foraging typically yields one day's food per four hours of gathering during favorable seasons. Spring and summer provide abundant fresh greens, fruits, and vegetables. Autumn offers nuts, seeds, and root vegetables that store well. Winter foraging requires extensive knowledge and provides minimal nutrition.

Efficient Gathering Skill Check: Athletics + Survival Base DC: 6 (abundant season and good location) Time Required: 2-4 hours Success: Gather sufficient food for 1-2 days Failure: Limited food gathered, more time required

Small Game Hunting Hunting requires patience, skill, and appropriate tools. Small game like rabbits, birds, and fish provide more reliable protein than attempting to take large animals without proper weapons.

Trap Construction Skill Check: Crafting + Tactics Base DC: 10 (simple snares), 15 (complex trap systems) Materials Required: Cordage, triggering mechanisms, bait Time Required: 1-2 hours per trap Success: Functional trap ready for deployment Failure: Trap fails to work or alerts prey to danger

Trap Deployment Skill Check: Investigation + Survival Base DC: 8 (well-traveled game trails) Time Required: 30 minutes per trap placement Success: Trap properly positioned for maximum effectiveness Failure: Poor placement reduces chances of success

Checking Traps Roll daily for each deployed trap: Simple Snare: Success on 4-6 (d6), provides small game Complex Trap: Success on 3-6 (d6), provides larger game or multiple catches Failed traps may need repair (Crafting DC 8) or relocation

Fishing Where water permits, fishing provides reliable protein with relatively simple equipment.

Basic Fishing Skill Check: Athletics + Seamanship Base DC: 8 (good fishing spots), 12 (marginal waters) Equipment Required: Line, hooks, and bait Time Required: 2-4 hours Success: Catch sufficient fish for one day's protein Failure: No catch, bait consumed

Fish Preservation Skill Check: Survival + Medicine Base DC: 10 (smoking or drying) Time Required: 6-12 hours depending on method Success: Preserved fish lasts 5-7 days Failure: Fish spoils quickly, may become dangerous to eat

Shelter: Protection from the Elements

Adequate shelter protects you from weather extremes, provides psychological security, and creates a base for other survival activities. Shelter requirements vary dramatically with season and local weather patterns.

Site Selection Choosing the right location for shelter affects construction difficulty, effectiveness, and long-term viability.

Optimal Location Assessment Skill Check: Investigation + Tactics Base DC: 8 Considerations: Drainage: Avoid flood-prone areas and standing water Wind Protection: Natural windbreaks reduce heating requirements Material Access: Proximity to construction materials Water Access: Reasonable distance to reliable water source Safety: Avoid obvious predator territories or unstable ground Success: Identify excellent shelter site Failure: Suboptimal location creates ongoing problems

Basic Shelter Construction Emergency shelters focus on immediate protection from weather. More permanent structures require additional time and materials but provide superior comfort and security.

Lean-to Shelter Skill Check: Crafting + Athletics Base DC: 8 Materials Required: Sturdy branch framework, covering material Time Required: 2-3 hours Protection: Adequate for mild weather, partial protection from rain Success: Functional emergency shelter Failure: Unstable structure or poor weather protection

Debris Hut Skill Check: Crafting + Athletics Base DC: 10 Materials Required: Framework poles, extensive insulating material Time Required: 4-6 hours Protection: Good insulation, effective in cold weather Success: Warm, dry shelter suitable for extended use Failure: Poor insulation or structural problems

Advanced Shelter Systems More complex shelters provide superior protection and comfort but require significant time investment and construction skills.

Log Cabin Construction Skill Check: Crafting + Athletics Base DC: 15 Materials Required: Suitable logs, chinking material, roofing Time Required: Several weeks of work Tools Required: Cutting implements, lifting assistance Protection: Excellent protection from all weather Success: Permanent, comfortable shelter Failure: Structural problems requiring repair or reconstruction

Shelter Improvement Basic shelters can be enhanced over time to provide better protection and comfort.

Weatherproofing Skill Check: Crafting + Investigation Base DC: 8-12 depending on shelter type Materials: Clay, moss, bark, or salvaged materials Success: Improved weather protection and comfort Failure: Materials wasted, limited improvement

Heating Systems Skill Check: Crafting + Academics Base DC: 12 (simple fire pit), 18 (sophisticated heating) Safety Consideration: Fire safety DC 10 or risk shelter fire Success: Effective heating without fire hazard Failure: Ineffective heating or dangerous fire risk

Safety: Understanding and Avoiding Dangers

The Wildlands contain numerous threats to unwary survivors. Understanding these dangers and taking appropriate precautions prevents accidents that could prove fatal when help is unavailable.

Predator Awareness Large predators pose the most obvious threat, but understanding their behavior usually allows peaceful coexistence rather than confrontation.

Predator Sign Recognition Skill Check: Investigation + Survival Base DC: 8 (obvious signs), 15 (subtle indicators) Signs Include: Tracks, scat, territorial markings, feeding remains Success: Identify predator species and recent activity Failure: Miss important warnings of predator presence

Predator Deterrence Skill Check: Intimidation + Athletics (loud noises, aggressive display) Skill Check: Persuasion + Investigation (calm retreat, non-threatening behavior) Base DC: 10-15 depending on predator species and circumstances Success: Predator withdraws without incident Failure: Predator approaches, escalating danger

Environmental Hazards Natural dangers like unstable terrain, flash floods, or extreme weather can be more dangerous than predators because they provide less warning.

Hazard Recognition Skill Check: Investigation + Academics Base DC: 8 (obvious dangers), 15 (subtle environmental risks) Weather Hazards: Recognize approaching storms, temperature changes Terrain Hazards: Identify unstable ground, flood risks, avalanche zones Seasonal Hazards: Understand how dangers change with weather patterns Success: Identify and avoid environmental dangers Failure: Stumble into hazardous situations

Emergency Response When prevention fails, proper emergency response can prevent minor problems from becoming survival-threatening disasters.

Injury Treatment Skill Check: Medicine + Investigation Base DC: 8 (minor injuries), 15 (serious trauma) Equipment: First aid materials, improvised medical supplies Success: Prevent infection, promote healing Failure: Injury worsens, potential complications

Weather Emergency Shelter Skill Check: Survival + Athletics Base DC: 12 (emergency shelter construction) Time Limit: Must complete before exposure becomes dangerous Success: Adequate protection from severe weather Failure: Inadequate protection, continued exposure risk

Learning Wilderness Skills

Characters begin with civilized skills but must learn wilderness-specific abilities through experience and practice. This learning process represents one of the most important aspects of character development.

Skill Learning Requirements New wilderness skills cost 3 XP to acquire at basic level (Skill Level 1). Learning requires both practical experience and sufficient time for practice and experimentation.

Minimum Learning Conditions: Direct Need: Must face situations requiring the skill Practice Time: Minimum one week of focused practice per skill level Teaching or Trial and Error: Either instruction from knowledgeable source or patient experimentation

Skills Available for Learning: Survival: General wilderness competence, covering basic needs Foraging: Plant and small animal food gathering Weather Reading: Predicting storms and seasonal changes Herbal Medicine: Using wild plants for medical treatment Beast Lore: Understanding animal behavior and ecology Camouflage: Hiding from predators and moving unseen Trapping: Constructing and deploying animal snares Archery: Bow hunting and wilderness ranged combat

Accelerated Learning Certain conditions allow faster skill development: Expert Instruction: Learning from Sylvani, experienced hamlet dwellers, or other masters reduces time by half Desperate Need: Life-threatening situations where the skill is essential provide intensive learning opportunities Natural Aptitude: Characters with related background skills learn complementary wilderness skills more easily

Practice and Mastery Even after acquiring basic wilderness skills, continued practice improves effectiveness and unlocks advanced techniques.

Skill Improvement Beyond initial learning, wilderness skills improve through regular use and XP investment: 1 XP per skill level increase (same as civilized skills) Advanced techniques become available at higher skill levels Specialization options open for focused character development

Environmental Adaptation Extended time in the Wildlands gradually improves your physical and mental adaptation to wilderness conditions.

Acclimatization Benefits After surviving specific time periods, gain permanent advantages: One Month: +1 bonus to all weather-related survival checks Three Months: +1 bonus to foraging and navigation checks Six Months: +1 bonus to predator awareness and deterrence One Year: +1 bonus to all wilderness survival checks

These bonuses represent your body's adaptation to outdoor life and your mind's growing understanding of natural patterns and cycles. They stack with skill bonuses but apply specifically to wilderness survival situations.

Seasonal Survival Challenges

The temperate climate of the Wildlands creates dramatically different survival challenges throughout the year. Understanding and preparing for these seasonal variations often determines long-term survival success.

Spring Challenges Spring brings renewal but also unique difficulties as weather patterns shift and resources change.

Muddy Conditions DC Modifier: +2 to all movement and construction activities Duration: 4-6 weeks during snow melt and spring rains Effects: Slower travel, difficult construction, increased disease risk

Unpredictable Weather Weather changes rapidly, requiring constant alertness and flexible planning. Daily Weather Check: Roll d6 1-2: Severe conditions (storms, freezing temperatures) 3-4: Normal spring weather (cool, occasional rain) 5-6: Favorable conditions (mild, clear)

Summer Advantages Summer provides the most favorable survival conditions but creates different resource management challenges.

Abundant Resources Foraging DC: Reduced by 2 due to plant abundance Construction Materials: Readily available, reduced gathering time Daylight Hours: Extended time for daily activities

Heat Stress During hot periods, increase water requirements and add fatigue risks for prolonged outdoor work.

Autumn Preparation Autumn represents crucial preparation time for winter survival. Failure to prepare adequately can prove fatal during the harsh winter months.

Preservation Activities Food Preservation DC: 8-12 depending on methods and available materials Fuel Gathering: Stockpiling firewood and other heating materials Shelter Improvement: Weatherproofing and insulation before cold weather

Resource Abundance Final harvest opportunities before winter scarcity: Nut and Seed Gathering: Major protein and fat sources for winter storage Root Vegetable Storage: Long-lasting carbohydrate sources Medicine Plant Gathering: Final opportunity to gather healing herbs

Winter Survival Winter represents the ultimate survival challenge, testing all skills and preparations developed during earlier seasons.

Extreme Cold Effects All outdoor activities: +2 DC increase Food Requirements: Increased caloric needs for warmth Fuel Consumption: Constant fire required for survival

Limited Resources Foraging: +4 DC increase, minimal food available Water: May require melting snow or breaking ice Daylight: Reduced time for outdoor activities

Survival in the Wildlands demands constant learning, careful planning, and respect for natural forces beyond human control. Master these fundamental systems, and you'll transform from helpless castaway into capable wilderness dweller. Ignore them, and the Wildlands will claim another victim to add to their long history of broken dreams and bleached bones.

Action Points in Survival

Action Points represent your ability to push beyond normal limitations during critical survival moments. In the wilderness, the difference between success and failure often comes down to extra effort applied at crucial times.

Action Point Pool Your daily AP pool equals: (Highest 2 Skills + 5) This represents your combination of physical conditioning, mental focus, and learned efficiency in survival tasks.

Example: A character with Athletics 3 and Survival 2 has 10 AP per day (3+2+5=10)

Action Point Recovery AP regenerates through rest and proper self-care: 2 AP per hour of rest (not sleep) Full recovery after 8 hours of sleep Comfortable shelter: +1 AP recovery per rest period Good nutrition: +1 AP recovery per day Poor conditions: -1 AP recovery per rest period

Survival-Focused AP Uses

Resource Management Conserve Supplies (1 AP): Make food or water last longer Effect: Extend rations for 1 additional day through careful rationing Skill Check: Survival DC 8 Success: Resources stretched without nutritional loss Failure: Resources depleted with no benefit

Emergency Rationing (2 AP): Stretch supplies for multiple extra days Effect: Extend rations for 2 additional days at cost of fatigue Consequence: -1 to all physical activities until properly fed Duration: Until full nutrition restored

Preserve Resources (2 AP): Successfully preserve found food for future use Skill Check: Survival + Medicine DC 10 Success: Food preserved for 5-7 days storage Failure: Food spoils quickly, preservation materials wasted

Exploration and Movement Careful Movement (1 AP): Move through hex with extra caution Effect: +2 bonus to avoiding dangers and detecting threats Trade-off: Reduces movement speed by half

Forced March (3 AP): Push through difficult terrain or adverse weather Effect: Gain +1 hex movement beyond normal daily travel Skill Check: Athletics DC 12 Success: Extra distance covered without exhaustion Failure: Gain fatigue condition, -1 to all checks until rest

Backtrack Safely (1 AP): Return to previously explored hex using known safe routes Effect: Automatically avoid known hazards and take optimal path Benefit: Reduces travel time and eliminates most random encounter risks

Environmental Interaction Weather Preparation (2 AP): Gain resistance to weather effects Effect: +2 bonus to resist weather-related challenges for one day Application: Prepare gear, select optimal shelter, time activities efficiently

Hazard Avoidance (1 AP): Automatically detect and avoid one environmental danger Effect: Negate one failed hazard detection check per day Use: When Investigation check fails to notice dangerous terrain or conditions

Quick Shelter (3 AP): Build emergency shelter in half normal time Skill Check: Crafting + Athletics with +1 bonus Effect: Complete shelter construction in 1-2 hours instead of 3-6 Risk: -1 to shelter quality unless skill check succeeds by wide margin

Skill Enhancement Skill Boost (1 AP): Add +2 to any survival-related skill check Application: Any check related to wilderness survival Limitation: Must be declared before rolling Stacking: Cannot combine multiple skill boosts on same check

Extra Effort (2 AP): Retry a failed skill check with +1 bonus Application: Most survival-related checks Limitation: Only one retry per failed check Timing: Must be used immediately after failure

Careful Work (2 AP): Take extra time for +2 bonus to crafting or building tasks Effect: Improved quality results from patient, methodical work Time Cost: Doubles normal task completion time Application: Construction, tool-making, or complex survival tasks

Discovery and Investigation Scavenge Bonus (1 AP): Get +2 to Investigation checks when searching for resources Effect: Enhanced awareness and systematic searching technique Application: Searching wreckage, foraging, or exploring new areas

Detailed Search (2 AP): Thoroughly examine area for +3 Investigation bonus Effect: Comprehensive search revealing hidden features Time Cost: Requires full exploration of current location Risk: Increased exposure to weather and potential dangers

Follow Leads (2 AP): Pursue discovered clues with +2 bonus to next related check Effect: Maintain focus and momentum when investigating discoveries Application: Tracking animals, following trails, investigating ruins

Memory Palace (1 AP): Perfectly recall details from previously visited locations Effect: Access detailed information about past discoveries Application: Navigation, resource planning, avoiding previous mistakes

Recovery and Healing Natural Healing (2 AP): Use herbs and natural methods to recover health Skill Check: Medicine + Survival DC 10 Effect: Recover 2 HP using wilderness medical techniques Materials: Requires access to appropriate medicinal plants

Rest Efficiently (1 AP): Recover from fatigue faster through proper rest techniques Effect: Remove fatigue condition with 4 hours rest instead of 8 Application: Proper positioning, shelter use, and energy conservation

Tend Wounds (2 AP): Provide enhanced medical care Effect: +2 bonus to Medicine checks when treating self or others Application: Treating injuries, preventing infection, managing chronic conditions

Mental Fortitude (1 AP): Resist fear, despair, or panic effects Effect: Automatically succeed on one morale or mental resistance check Application: Maintaining hope during severe weather, dangerous situations, or isolation

Strategic AP Management Daily planning becomes crucial for AP efficiency. Consider your priorities: Morning: Use AP for exploration enhancements and hazard preparation Midday: Apply AP to resource gathering and construction tasks Evening: Reserve AP for emergency responses and healing needs

Emergency Reserve: Always maintain 2-3 AP for unexpected survival crises Long-term Planning: Balance daily AP use with multi-day project requirements Seasonal Adaptation: Winter survival requires more conservative AP management

Action Points transform survival from mere chance into strategic resource management. The survivor who masters AP usage gains significant advantages in efficiency, safety, and long-term success. However, overuse leads to exhaustion and vulnerability, making wise management essential for long-term survival.

Survival in the Wildlands demands constant learning, careful planning, and respect for natural forces beyond human control. Master these fundamental systems, and you'll transform from helpless castaway into capable wilderness dweller. Ignore them, and the Wildlands will claim another victim to add to their long history of broken dreams and bleached bones.

Chapter 5: The Wildlands Geography

The Wildlands stretch across the western end of the northern continent, a vast wilderness bounded by the massive Wyrmspire River to the east and the endless ocean to the west. This untamed region encompasses diverse terrain types, each presenting unique challenges and opportunities for the prepared survivor.

Understanding the geography of your new home proves essential for long-term survival. Each terrain type offers different resources, requires specific skills, and presents characteristic dangers. Learning to read the landscape allows you to plan efficient routes, locate necessary materials, and avoid unnecessary risks.

The hex-based structure of the Wildlands makes navigation manageable while preserving the complexity of wilderness travel. Each hex represents roughly one day's careful travel for a survivor on foot, though difficult terrain or thorough exploration can extend this time significantly.

Hex-Based Exploration

Movement and Travel Standard movement through the Wildlands follows predictable patterns based on terrain difficulty and exploration intensity.

Normal Travel: One hex per day Allows basic observation of terrain features and resource availability Provides opportunity to notice obvious dangers or points of interest Requires no special skills but offers limited detailed knowledge

Careful Exploration: Half hex per day Systematic search of terrain for resources and hidden features Higher chance of discovering concealed locations or valuable materials Uses Investigation skills to maximize discovery potential Recommended for areas with high resource potential

Forced March: Two hexes per day Requires 2 AP expenditure and Athletics check (DC 12) Increased fatigue and reduced awareness of surroundings Risk of missing important resources or walking into dangers Useful for reaching specific destinations quickly

Route Planning Efficient travel requires understanding how different terrain types affect movement speed and resource availability.

Terrain Movement Modifiers: Ocean: Impassable without boat construction Coastal Rocky: Normal movement, limited resources Light Forest: Normal movement, good resources Dense Forest: Careful exploration recommended, excellent resources Grassland/Hills: Fast movement possible, limited resources Mountain: Slow movement, specialized resources, high danger Rivers: Crossing challenges, excellent water access

The geography of the Wildlands creates natural travel corridors and barriers that influence exploration patterns. River valleys provide easier travel but may flood seasonally. Mountain passes offer the only routes through high terrain but become impassable during winter storms.

Terrain Types and Their Challenges

Coastal Regions The rocky coastline where your journey began offers both opportunities and limitations for long-term survival. While the sea provides some resources and potential rescue visibility, coastal areas face constant weather exposure.

Coastal Resource Opportunities: Shellfish gathering from tidal pools (Investigation DC 8) Seaweed collection for food and materials (Survival DC 6) Salt extraction from evaporated seawater (Crafting DC 10) Driftwood collection for construction and fuel (no skill check required)

Coastal Challenges: Constant wind exposure increases heating requirements Limited shelter materials beyond salvaged driftwood Fresh water sources often brackish or contaminated Storm exposure with little natural protection

Coastal hexes provide excellent visibility for signaling potential rescue ships, making them valuable for long-term base establishment despite resource limitations. The regular sound of waves also masks human activity from predators but can interfere with detecting approaching dangers.

Light Forest Regions Areas of scattered woodland and clearings offer balanced resources and moderate survival challenges. These hexes provide good access to construction materials while maintaining reasonable movement speeds.

Light Forest Resources: Mixed hardwood and softwood for construction (Crafting materials available) Diverse plant foods throughout growing season (Foraging DC 8-10) Small game hunting opportunities (Trap deployment DC 8) Natural shelter sites among trees and rocky outcrops

Light Forest Navigation: Clear sightlines allow reasonable navigation Game trails provide easier movement routes Seasonal changes affect visibility and resource availability Stream beds often mark hex boundaries

Light forest hexes often contain the best balance of resources and accessibility, making them prime locations for establishing base camps. The mixed terrain provides options for different survival strategies while avoiding the extreme challenges of more specialized environments.

Dense Forest Regions Heavy woodland areas offer the richest resource base in the Wildlands but present significant navigation and movement challenges. These hexes likely contain Sylvani settlements and ancient ruins hidden beneath the forest canopy.

Dense Forest Advantages: Excellent protection from weather and observation Abundant construction materials of all types Rich foraging opportunities year-round (Foraging DC 6-8) Fresh water sources common Natural concealment for shelters and camps

Dense Forest Challenges: Navigation difficulty without clear landmarks (Navigation DC 12-15) Limited visibility makes predator detection harder Undergrowth impedes movement and increases travel time Easy to become lost without proper orientation techniques

Dense forest exploration requires patience and systematic approach. The rich resources justify careful investigation, but the navigation challenges make these areas dangerous for unprepared travelers. Establishing clear trail markers becomes essential for safe movement.

Hidden locations in dense forest include Sylvani groves, ancient ruins, and natural features like springs or caves. Discovery often requires multiple visits and attention to subtle environmental signs.

Grassland and Hill Regions Open country provides fast travel and excellent visibility but offers limited resources for long-term survival. These hexes serve primarily as travel corridors between more resource-rich areas.

Grassland Characteristics: Fast movement across open terrain Excellent visibility for navigation and threat detection Limited construction materials (mainly grasses and occasional trees) Seasonal water availability depending on rainfall

Grassland Resources: Edible grasses and roots (limited nutritional value) Small burrowing animals for trapping Occasional stream crossings with good water Natural stone outcrops for tool materials

The open nature of grassland hexes makes concealment difficult but allows efficient travel between other terrain types. These areas work well for temporary camps during travel but lack resources for permanent settlement.

Seasonal changes dramatically affect grassland utility. Spring and summer provide adequate water and some food resources. Winter renders these areas nearly uninhabitable without substantial resource stockpiles.

Mountain Regions The Ironfang Mountains present the most challenging terrain in the Wildlands but offer unique resources unavailable elsewhere. Mountain hexes require specialized skills and equipment for safe exploration.

Mountain Resources: Mineral deposits for tool-making (Investigation DC 12-15 to locate) Cave systems providing excellent shelter (if properly prepared) Alpine plants with medicinal properties (Academics DC 15 to identify) Clear water sources from snowmelt and springs

Mountain Dangers: Extreme weather conditions and rapid temperature changes Rockfall and avalanche risks in certain seasons Altitude effects on physical performance Limited food resources requiring hunting or foraging skills

Mountain exploration demands careful preparation and appropriate timing. Summer provides the best access, while winter makes most mountain areas life-threateningly dangerous. Proper equipment and shelter become essential rather than merely helpful.

Cave systems in mountain hexes offer superior shelter but may house dangerous animals or present other risks. Each cave requires careful investigation before occupation.

River Systems Waterways provide crucial resources and transportation routes but create significant crossing challenges. River hexes often mark natural boundaries between different terrain types.

River Advantages: Reliable fresh water access Transportation potential with proper boats Rich fishing opportunities (Fishing DC 6-10) Fertile soil supporting diverse plant life

River Crossing Challenges: Skill Check: Athletics + Seamanship Base DC: 8 (calm water), 15 (rapids or flood conditions) Seasonal Variations: Spring flooding increases difficulty Equipment: Rope and flotation devices reduce DC by 2-4

Rivers provide natural navigation aids but also create barriers to movement. Seasonal flooding can make crossing impossible, requiring detours or extended delays. Planning routes must account for river access points and crossing opportunities.

Some river hexes contain islands or wide, shallow areas that simplify crossing. Others feature narrow gorges or swift currents that make crossing extremely dangerous without proper preparation.

Hidden Locations and Secrets

Sylvani Groves These sacred sites remain hidden through both natural concealment and Sylvani magic. Discovery requires specific conditions and approaches rather than simple exploration.

Grove Discovery Requirements: Environmental Respect: Demonstrate proper forest etiquette over multiple visits Cultural Sensitivity: Show understanding of Sylvani values through actions Genuine Need: Present circumstances that warrant Sylvani attention Investigation Skills: Notice subtle signs of Sylvani presence

Sylvani Grove Benefits: Advanced wilderness education from knowledgeable teachers Access to rare medicinal plants and materials Potential long-term alliance with powerful forest community Protection during extreme weather or dangerous circumstances

Sylvani communities evaluate potential visitors carefully before revealing themselves. Aggressive behavior, environmental damage, or purely selfish motivations prevent discovery regardless of investigation skills.

Human Settlements Isolated hamlets exist throughout the Wildlands, maintaining independence through careful concealment and self-sufficiency. These communities welcome useful strangers but remain suspicious of potential threats.

Settlement Discovery: Investigation Check: DC 12-15 depending on concealment level Signs Include: Smoke, cleared areas, modified vegetation, tool marks Approach Considerations: Peaceful intentions, visible hands, respectful distance

Settlement Interaction: Initial Contact: Persuasion DC 12 to establish peaceful communication Trust Building: Demonstrate useful skills and respectful behavior Trade Opportunities: Exchange knowledge, materials, or services Long-term Relations: Potential for permanent community membership

Human settlements provide access to specialized knowledge, manufactured goods, and social contact after extended isolation. Each community has unique needs and customs developed through years of frontier survival.

Ancient Ruins Scattered throughout the Wildlands are remnants of previous civilizations, offering shelter, materials, and occasionally dangerous mysteries. Ruins require careful investigation to assess both opportunities and risks.

Ruin Investigation: Initial Assessment: Investigation DC 10 to evaluate structural safety Detailed Search: Investigation DC 12-18 depending on ruin complexity Hidden Features: Multiple

searches may reveal concealed areas Historical Knowledge: Academics DC 15 provides context about builders

Ruin Resources: Worked stone for construction projects Metal artifacts potentially useful as tools Sheltered areas suitable for habitation Historical artifacts with trade or cultural value

Some ruins contain active dangers like unstable structures, trapped areas, or resident creatures. Others hold valuable resources or information about the Wildlands' history. Each ruin presents a unique puzzle requiring careful evaluation of risks versus potential rewards.

Larger ruin complexes may require multiple visits to explore thoroughly. Initial discoveries often reveal only surface features, while hidden chambers or underground areas require specific skills or equipment to access safely.

Strategic Geography

Understanding the broader geographical relationships helps with long-term planning and route selection for major expeditions or escape attempts.

Regional Patterns: Coastal areas provide visibility but limited resources Forest regions offer rich resources but navigation challenges Mountain areas contain unique materials but extreme dangers River systems provide transportation and boundaries

Seasonal Considerations: Spring: Flooding affects river crossings and low-lying areas Summer: Mountain passes become accessible, optimal travel conditions Autumn: Resource gathering opportunities before winter scarcity Winter: Extreme weather makes mountain areas impassable

The Wyrmspire River forms the eastern boundary of the Wildlands, representing the ultimate goal for survivors seeking to return to civilization. Reaching and crossing this massive waterway requires extensive preparation and likely cooperation with local communities.

Natural travel routes follow river valleys and pass through mountain gaps, creating predictable movement patterns. Understanding these routes helps with both personal navigation and predicting where other travelers might be encountered.

The geography of the Wildlands creates a complex survival puzzle where success depends on understanding and working with natural patterns rather than fighting against them. Each terrain type offers both opportunities and challenges, requiring adaptability and careful planning to navigate successfully.

Weather patterns, seasonal changes, and natural resources all follow geographical logic that rewards careful observation and patient learning. The survivor who masters the geography of their new home gains tremendous advantages in efficiency, safety, and long-term planning capability.

Chapter 6: Inhabitants & Encounters

The Wildlands are far from empty. Hidden beneath the forest canopy, scattered across remote clearings, and dwelling in ancient places of power, various communities have made this untamed region their home. Understanding these inhabitants – their customs, needs, and ways of life – can mean the difference between finding crucial allies and making dangerous enemies.

Each group you might encounter has adapted to wilderness life in different ways. Some embrace the natural world completely, while others maintain fragments of civilized life in remote outposts. Your approach to these encounters shapes not only immediate outcomes but also your long-term prospects for survival and eventual escape.

Sylvani Enclaves

The forest-dwelling Sylvani represent the oldest continuous inhabitants of the Wildlands. Their communities exist in harmony with the natural environment, hidden through careful selection and subtle magic that conceals them from casual discovery. Contact with Sylvani requires patience, respect, and demonstration of worthiness.

Sylvani Culture and Values Sylvani society revolves around balance, preservation, and the careful stewardship of natural resources. They view the forest as a living entity deserving protection rather than mere raw materials for exploitation.

Core Sylvani Values: Environmental Harmony: All actions must preserve or enhance natural balance Sustainable Living: Taking only what is needed, giving back more than consumed Ancient Wisdom: Respecting traditional knowledge and proven methods Community Cooperation: Individual needs subordinated to group welfare Selective Contact: Interactions with outsiders carefully evaluated and limited

Understanding these values proves essential for positive Sylvani contact. Actions that demonstrate environmental respect improve your chances of discovery and acceptance. Behaviors that damage the forest or show disregard for natural balance make Sylvani contact impossible regardless of other factors.

Locating Sylvani Groves Sylvani settlements remain hidden through both natural concealment and magical protection. Discovery requires specific conditions rather than simple exploration skills.

Prerequisites for Discovery: Environmental Respect demonstrated over multiple forest visits No evidence of unnecessary environmental damage Genuine need for assistance or knowledge Peaceful intentions and non-threatening behavior

Discovery Indicators: Skill Check: Investigation + Academics DC 15 Modified by: Previous environmental behavior (+2 to -5) Signs Include: Unusually healthy vegetation, subtle path markers, musical sounds, beneficial magical effects

Discovery Process: Initial Signs: Notice unusual forest features suggesting Sylvani presence Waiting Period: Remain in area respectfully, demonstrating peaceful intentions Sylvani Evaluation: Hidden observers assess your character and motivations Contact Decision: Sylvani choose whether to reveal themselves

The discovery process often takes several days or multiple visits. Rushing or demanding contact prevents discovery. Patience and genuine respect for the forest environment are essential prerequisites.

Initial Contact Protocols When Sylvani choose to reveal themselves, proper behavior during first contact determines future relationship possibilities.

Appropriate First Contact Behavior: Remain calm and still when Sylvani appear Speak quietly and avoid sudden movements Show respect for their forest home Explain your circumstances honestly Request permission before taking any actions

Sylvani First Contact Assessment: Immediate Threat Evaluation: Are you dangerous to their community? Environmental Impact: Do your survival methods harm the forest? Cultural Compatibility: Can you learn to respect Sylvani ways? Mutual Benefit: Might relationship prove beneficial to both parties?

Initial contact typically involves a single Sylvani representative who evaluates your character through conversation and observation. This individual has authority to make basic decisions about immediate assistance but not long-term relationships.

Building Sylvani Relationships Positive relationships with Sylvani communities develop through consistent demonstration of compatible values and useful contributions to forest welfare.

Relationship Building Activities: Environmental Restoration: Repairing damage caused by previous visitors Knowledge Sharing: Teaching useful skills while learning Sylvani techniques Resource Contribution: Providing materials or labor for community projects Cultural Learning: Demonstrating respect for Sylvani customs and traditions

Sylvani Assistance Potential: Advanced Wilderness Training: Learning optimal foraging, shelter, and navigation techniques Herbal Medicine Knowledge: Understanding medicinal plant properties and preparation Hidden Location Information: Directions to safe paths, water sources, and resource areas Seasonal Guidance: Understanding weather patterns and optimal timing for activities Protection During Emergencies: Shelter and assistance during extreme weather or danger

Sylvani relationships develop slowly but provide invaluable wilderness knowledge. Their assistance can dramatically improve survival prospects while teaching sustainable methods that preserve long-term resource availability.

Sylvani Trade and Exchange Sylvani communities engage in limited trade with worthy outsiders, but their economy emphasizes service and knowledge exchange rather than material goods.

Valuable Trade Items for Sylvani: Information about outside world events and developments Seeds or cuttings from useful plants not native to the Wildlands Stories, songs, or cultural knowledge from distant places Assistance with labor-intensive community projects Protection of forest areas from environmental damage

Sylvani Trade Offerings: Advanced herbal medicines and preparation techniques Detailed knowledge of seasonal resource availability Information about hidden locations and safe travel routes Temporary shelter and protection during emergencies Introduction to other Sylvani communities in distant areas

Trade relationships with Sylvani focus on mutual benefit and long-term sustainability rather than immediate material gain. They value contributions that enhance community welfare and forest preservation above personal profit.

Human Hamlets

Scattered throughout the Wildlands are small human settlements that maintain precarious independence through self-sufficiency and careful isolation. These communities welcome useful strangers but remain deeply suspicious of potential threats to their hard-won security.

Hamlet Survival Strategies Human settlements in the Wildlands survive through adaptation to local conditions and careful resource management. Each community develops unique approaches based on available resources and specific challenges.

Common Hamlet Characteristics: Population: 20-50 individuals, mostly extended families Location: Hidden clearings, defensible positions, resource-rich areas Economy: Subsistence agriculture, hunting, gathering, limited crafts Defense: Concealment, early warning systems, community cooperation Trade: Minimal contact with outside world, occasional inter-hamlet exchange

Hamlet communities prioritize survival and security above comfort or growth. Every decision is evaluated based on its impact on community welfare and long-term viability.

Locating Human Settlements Human hamlets hide through careful site selection and camouflage rather than magical concealment. Discovery requires observation skills and understanding of human settlement patterns.

Settlement Discovery Methods: Smoke Detection: Cooking fires and heating create visible smoke plumes Cleared Land: Agriculture requires clearing that's visible from elevated positions Sound Indicators: Human activity, domestic animals, tool use Trail Networks: Paths leading to water sources, hunting areas, or resource sites Modified Vegetation: Managed forests, food plants, defensive barriers

Discovery Skill Check: Investigation + Academics DC 12 Modifiers: Season: Spring/Summer -2 (more activity), Winter +2 (concealed activity) Weather: Clear conditions -1, Poor visibility +3 Elevation: High observation point -2, ground level +1 Distance: Adjacent hex -1, same hex +2

Settlement discovery often occurs gradually through multiple indicators rather than single obvious signs. Patience and systematic observation prove more effective than rapid searching.

Approach and Initial Contact Human settlements maintain security through vigilance and preparedness. Proper approach techniques prevent misunderstandings that could lead to rejection or conflict.

Safe Approach Protocol: Advance Warning: Make noise or call out from distance to announce presence Visible Approach: Move openly without attempting concealment Peaceful Signals: Hands visible, weapons secured, non-threatening posture State Intentions: Clearly explain who you are and what you want Respect Boundaries: Stop when requested, follow any instructions given

Initial Contact Skill Check: Persuasion + Social DC 12 Modifiers: Obvious weapons: +2 difficulty Injured or distressed: -2 difficulty Useful skills evident: -1 difficulty Strange appearance: +1 difficulty Group vs individual: +2 difficulty for groups

Initial contact typically involves armed guards who evaluate threats before allowing closer approach. Patience and clear communication prevent misunderstandings during this crucial first encounter.

Hamlet Integration and Trade Human settlements evaluate outsiders based on practical considerations: Can you contribute to community welfare? Will you cause problems? Can you be trusted with community security?

Contribution Opportunities: Medical Knowledge: Treating injuries and illnesses using superior techniques Craft Skills: Improving tools, weapons, or equipment quality Outside Information: News about weather, threats, or opportunities Labor Assistance: Helping with agriculture, construction, or resource gathering Defense Capabilities: Contributing to community security and early warning

Trade Possibilities: Manufactured Goods: Metal tools, weapons, cloth, or preserved foods Local Knowledge: Information about regional resources and travel routes Temporary Shelter: Guest accommodations during severe weather Introductions: Contacts with other settlements or regional groups Employment Opportunities: Joining community permanently or seasonally

Hamlet relationships develop through proven reliability and demonstrated value. Communities that accept you provide crucial support for long-term survival but expect ongoing contributions to community welfare.

Settlement Politics and Customs Each hamlet develops unique social structures adapted to their specific circumstances. Understanding local customs prevents social mistakes that could damage relationships.

Common Hamlet Social Patterns: Leadership: Elder councils, strong individuals, or consensus decision-making Work Organization: Collective projects, specialized roles, seasonal activities

Resource Allocation: Sharing systems, individual responsibility, community reserves Conflict Resolution: Mediation, compensation, exile for serious offenses Outsider Integration: Probationary periods, sponsorship systems, proving requirements

Social navigation requires observation and adaptation to local customs. What works in one hamlet may be inappropriate in another, making cultural sensitivity essential for successful integration.

Wildlife and Predators

The Wildlands support diverse wildlife populations that present both opportunities and challenges for human survivors. Understanding animal behavior, seasonal patterns, and appropriate response techniques allows peaceful coexistence with most species.

Large Predators The apex predators of the Wildlands pose the most obvious threat to unprepared survivors. However, understanding their behavior and territorial patterns usually allows avoidance of dangerous encounters.

Common Large Predators: Bears: Territorial, omnivorous, aggressive when protecting cubs or food sources Wolves: Pack hunters, intelligent, generally avoid humans unless desperate Mountain Cats: Solitary, ambush predators, extremely dangerous but reclusive Wild Boar: Aggressive when threatened, unpredictable, dangerous tusks

Predator Behavior Patterns: Territorial Marking: Scent marks, scratches, scat indicate active territories Feeding Areas: Carcass remains, disturbed vegetation show hunting grounds Seasonal Movement: Predictable patterns based on food availability and weather Threat Responses: Warning signals before attacks, defensive vs aggressive behavior

Predator Encounter Management: Detection: Investigation + Survival DC 8-12 depending on species and circumstances Avoidance: Stealth + Athletics DC 10-15 to avoid detected predators Deterrence: Intimidation + Athletics DC 12-18 to discourage predator approach Escape: Athletics + Tactics DC 10-16 to reach safety during encounters

Most predator encounters can be resolved without violence through proper understanding of animal psychology and appropriate response techniques. Aggressive confrontation should be avoided unless absolutely necessary for survival.

Small Game and Hunting Opportunities Smaller animals provide protein sources for survivors willing to learn hunting and trapping techniques. These creatures form the foundation of sustainable wilderness nutrition.

Available Small Game: Rabbits and Hares: Common, easily trapped, good protein source Squirrels and Rodents: Abundant but small, require multiple catches Birds: Seasonal availability, require specialized hunting techniques Fish: Reliable protein where water permits, requires proper equipment

Hunting Technique Requirements: Trapping: Crafting + Tactics skills for construction and deployment Tracking: Investigation + Survival for locating animal sign Patience: Time investment for successful hunting Processing: Medicine + Survival for proper meat preparation and preservation

Small game hunting provides sustainable protein but requires significant time investment and skill development. Success rates improve dramatically with experience and proper equipment.

Dangerous Wildlife Beyond large predators, the Wildlands contain various creatures that pose threats to unwary travelers. Awareness and avoidance prove more effective than confrontation.

Environmental Hazards: Venomous Snakes: Hidden until threatened, dangerous bites requiring immediate treatment Aggressive Birds: Territorial species that attack intruders near nests Disease Carriers: Animals that transmit illnesses through bites or contact Parasitic Insects: Blood-sucking species that weaken victims over time

Hazard Avoidance: Awareness: Investigation + Medicine DC 8-12 to recognize dangerous species Prevention: Proper camping, food storage, and personal protection techniques Treatment: Medicine + Academics DC 10-15 for treating bites, stings, or exposure Recovery: Appropriate rest and care following dangerous encounters

Most dangerous wildlife encounters result from human mistakes rather than aggressive animal behavior. Proper precautions and environmental awareness prevent the majority of problems.

Ancient Ruins and Mysteries

Throughout the Wildlands stand remnants of previous civilizations, offering both opportunities for discovery and potential dangers for the unprepared. These sites provide shelter, materials, and occasionally valuable artifacts, but may also contain active threats.

Types of Ancient Sites The ruins scattered across the Wildlands represent different periods and purposes, each presenting unique exploration challenges and potential rewards.

Residential Ruins: Ancient villages or individual homesteads Structural materials available for salvage Potential wells or water sources Underground storage areas Usually safe but may house wildlife

Religious Sites: Temples, shrines, or ceremonial areas Worked stone and metal artifacts Potential supernatural phenomena Hidden chambers or underground areas May contain guardian spirits or protective magic

Fortified Positions: Military outposts, watchtowers, or defensive walls Strategic locations with excellent visibility Robust construction suitable for permanent shelter Hidden weapon caches or equipment stores Potential for defensive advantages

Industrial Locations: Mills, forges, or resource processing sites Specialized tools and equipment Water access for power or processing Raw materials and finished goods Knowledge about local resource exploitation

Each ruin type offers different opportunities and requires different investigation approaches. Understanding the original purpose helps predict what resources might be available and what dangers might be present.

Ruin Investigation Techniques Exploring ancient sites safely requires systematic approaches that balance thoroughness with caution. Hasty investigation can miss valuable discoveries or trigger dangerous situations.

Initial Assessment: Structural Safety: Investigation + Crafting DC 10 to evaluate building stability Occupancy Signs: Investigation + Survival DC 8 to detect current animal residents Obvious Hazards: Investigation + Academics DC 8 to notice traps, unstable areas, or supernatural phenomena Access Points: Investigation + Athletics DC 6 to identify safe entry methods

Detailed Exploration: Systematic Search: Investigation + Academics DC 12-15 for thorough room-by-room examination Hidden Features: Investigation + Athletics DC 15-20 to locate concealed doors, chambers, or caches Artifact Identification: Academics + Investigation DC 10-18 to understand discovered items Historical Context: Academics + Investigation DC 15 to understand site purpose and history

Safe exploration takes time but prevents accidents that could prove fatal in isolation. Each major discovery warrants careful evaluation before proceeding to additional areas.

Ruin Resources and Rewards Ancient sites contain various materials and artifacts useful for wilderness survival, though condition and accessibility vary dramatically between locations.

Construction Materials: Worked Stone: High-quality building materials requiring no processing Metal Fittings: Hinges, brackets, and fasteners for construction projects Timber: Aged wood often superior to freshly cut materials Roofing Materials: Tiles, slate, or metal sheets for weather protection

Tools and Equipment: Hand Tools: Hammers, chisels, knives, and other implements Containers: Pots, barrels, boxes for storage and transport Weapons: Blades, projectile weapons, armor pieces Specialized Equipment: Items related to original site purpose

Knowledge and Information: Written Records: Books, scrolls, or carved inscriptions Maps and Diagrams: Local geography or hidden location indicators Technical Knowledge: Construction techniques, resource processing methods Historical Information: Understanding of regional history and previous inhabitants

The value of ruin discoveries often depends on your current needs and skill level. A simple metal knife might prove invaluable early in your survival story, while complex technical knowledge becomes useful only after developing appropriate skills.

Supernatural Phenomena Some ancient sites exhibit unexplained phenomena that may represent supernatural forces, residual magic, or natural effects not immediately understood. Approach such locations with extreme caution.

Common Supernatural Manifestations: Temperature Anomalies: Areas of unusual heat or cold without obvious causes Light Phenomena: Unexplained illumination, shadows, or color changes Sound Effects: Voices, music, or other sounds without visible sources Protective Barriers: Invisible obstacles that prevent access to certain areas Beneficial Effects: Healing properties, enhanced rest, or improved luck

Supernatural Encounter Guidelines: Respectful Approach: Treat supernatural phenomena with appropriate reverence Careful Observation: Document effects and patterns without immediate interference Gradual Testing: Determine safety through cautious experimentation Cultural Research: Seek information from Sylvani or hamlet dwellers about site history Emergency Protocols: Maintain escape routes and avoid permanent commitment

Some supernatural phenomena prove beneficial once understood and properly approached. Others represent dangers that require avoidance or specific countermeasures. Distinguishing between these categories requires patience and often external cultural knowledge.

Guardian Spirits and Protectors Certain ancient sites maintain active protection through supernatural guardians that respond to intruder behavior. Understanding these entities allows beneficial interaction while avoiding dangerous confrontations.

Guardian Interaction Principles: Respectful Behavior: Approach with humility and proper cultural protocols Clear Intentions: State your purposes honestly and completely Appropriate Offerings: Provide gifts or services valued by guardian entities Patient Negotiation: Allow time for guardian evaluation and decision-making Mutual Benefit: Seek arrangements that benefit both parties

Guardian relationships can provide long-term advantages including site protection, supernatural assistance, and access to hidden knowledge or resources. However, these relationships require ongoing maintenance and respect for guardian requirements.

The inhabitants and mysteries of the Wildlands create a complex social and supernatural landscape that transforms simple survival into rich storytelling opportunities. Understanding and navigating these relationships successfully can transform your experience from lonely struggle into meaningful connection with the land and its people.

Chapter 7: Oracle System

Solo roleplaying thrives on uncertainty and surprise. The Oracle System provides the element of chance that keeps your survival story unpredictable and engaging. When you need to know what the weather brings, what you discover in a new hex, or how an encounter unfolds, the oracles provide answers that guide your narrative without controlling it.

These tables serve as your silent game master, introducing complications, opportunities, and plot twists that you might never have considered. Use them when you face genuine uncertainty about what should happen next, when you want to add randomness to a planned situation, or when you need inspiration for continuing your story.

The oracles work best when you interpret their results through the lens of your current situation and established narrative. A "favorable weather" result might mean sunshine when you need to dry gear, or it could bring the fog that helps you avoid a predator. Context shapes meaning, keeping the story coherent while adding unexpected elements.

Weather Oracle

Weather dominates wilderness survival, affecting every aspect of daily life from travel speed to resource gathering efficiency. The Weather Oracle provides daily conditions that create both challenges and opportunities for adaptive survivors.

Daily Weather Determination Roll 1d6 each morning to determine the day's weather conditions. Seasonal modifiers reflect the Wildlands' temperate climate patterns.

Weather Base Results (1d6): 1: Severe Conditions - Storms, extreme temperatures, or dangerous weather 2: Poor Conditions - Rain, wind, or uncomfortable but manageable weather 3: Overcast - Cloudy, cool, with potential for weather changes 4: Variable - Mixed conditions changing throughout the day 5: Fair - Pleasant conditions with minor challenges 6: Excellent - Ideal weather for all outdoor activities

Seasonal Modifiers: Spring: +1 to roll (more favorable conditions as season progresses) Summer: +2 to roll (generally excellent weather with occasional storms) Autumn: +0 to roll (variable conditions reflecting seasonal transition) Winter: -2 to roll (harsh conditions with occasional breaks)

Severe Weather Events (Roll 1 on 1d6): Roll 1d6 for specific severe weather type: 1-2: Violent Storm - Heavy rain, dangerous winds, potential flooding 3-4: Extreme Temperature - Unseasonable heat or cold creating survival challenges 5: Dense Fog - Visibility reduced to mere yards, navigation nearly impossible 6: Blizzard (Winter only) - Heavy snow, extreme cold, life-threatening conditions

Severe weather creates immediate survival challenges requiring shelter, modified activities, or emergency responses. These events often become pivotal moments in survival stories.

Weather Effect Modifiers Different weather conditions affect survival activities with specific mechanical impacts.

Severe Conditions Effects: All outdoor activities: +3 DC increase Movement: Reduced to half normal distance Foraging: +5 DC increase (nearly impossible) Fire Making: +4 DC increase Shelter: Emergency shelter required for survival Visibility: Severely limited, navigation DC +5

Poor Conditions Effects: All outdoor activities: +1 DC increase Movement: Normal distance but increased fatigue Foraging: +2 DC increase Fire Making: +2 DC increase Construction: +1 DC increase for outdoor work Comfort: Morale challenges from persistent discomfort

Fair Conditions Effects: All activities: Normal DC Movement: Standard rates and efficiency Resource Gathering: Normal success rates Construction: Standard building conditions Morale: Neutral impact on mental state

Excellent Conditions Effects: All outdoor activities: -1 DC decrease Movement: Potential for increased daily distance Foraging: -2 DC decrease (abundant and easily found) Construction: -1 DC decrease for outdoor projects Morale: Positive impact, improved mental state Visibility: Excellent for navigation and spotting opportunities

Weather Patterns and Prediction Experienced survivors learn to read natural signs that indicate upcoming weather changes. The Weather Reading skill allows limited prediction of future conditions.

Weather Prediction Skill Check: Weather Reading + Academics DC 12 Success: Predict next day's weather category accurately Exceptional Success (beat DC by 5+): Predict weather for next 2-3 days Failure: Prediction wrong, may prepare for incorrect conditions

Natural Weather Signs: Cloud formations and movement patterns Wind direction changes and intensity shifts Animal behavior modifications Atmospheric pressure sensations Seasonal timing and historical patterns

Accurate weather prediction allows better planning of activities, resource gathering timing, and shelter preparation. Failed predictions can lead to being caught unprepared for severe weather changes.

Discovery Oracle

Exploration forms the heart of wilderness survival, and the Discovery Oracle determines what you find when investigating new areas or searching thoroughly in familiar locations.

Hex Exploration Results When entering a new hex or conducting detailed exploration of current location, roll 1d6 to determine primary discovery.

Discovery Results (1d6): 1: Danger or Hazard - Immediate threat requiring careful handling 2: Empty Area - No significant discoveries, safe but unremarkable 3: Basic Resources - Standard terrain resources in normal quantities 4: Useful Discovery - Beneficial finds improving survival prospects 5: Significant Find - Major discovery with substantial impact 6: Extraordinary Discovery - Rare find that changes circumstances dramatically

Terrain modifiers affect discovery probability: Coastal: +1 to salvage-related discoveries, -1 to food resources Dense Forest: +1 to resource discoveries, -1 to visibility-dependent finds

Mountains: +1 to mineral/cave discoveries, -1 to biological resources Grassland: +1 to visibility discoveries, -1 to shelter materials

Danger and Hazard Discoveries (Roll 1) Roll 1d6 for specific danger type: 1: Predator Territory - Signs of dangerous animal presence requiring caution 2: Environmental Hazard - Unstable ground, toxic plants, or natural dangers 3: Weather Exposure - Area particularly vulnerable to severe weather 4: Territorial Markings - Evidence of hostile human or Sylvani claims 5: Ancient Trap - Old defensive measures still functional and dangerous 6: Supernatural Phenomenon - Unexplained effects requiring careful approach

Dangers create immediate challenges but often guard valuable resources or strategic locations. Learning to handle discovered dangers safely often leads to long-term advantages.

Useful Discovery Details (Roll 4) Roll 1d6 for specific useful discovery: 1: Fresh Water Source - Spring, stream, or reliable water access 2: Shelter Site - Natural or artificial protection suitable for habitation 3: Food Resources - Abundant foraging area or small game concentration 4: Construction Materials - Quality building supplies in useful quantities 5: Salvageable Equipment - Tools, containers, or useful manufactured items 6: Information Source - Maps, signs, or evidence indicating important locations

Useful discoveries provide immediate survival benefits and often reveal opportunities for longer-term improvement of circumstances.

Significant Find Details (Roll 5) Roll 1d6 for major discovery type: 1: Hidden Cache - Concealed supplies left by previous travelers 2: Natural Wonder - Unique geographical feature with special properties 3: Ancient Artifact - Historical item with potential supernatural qualities 4: Rare Resource Deposit - Unusual materials valuable for trade or construction 5: Strategic Location - Site offering exceptional advantages for permanent settlement 6: Cultural Contact - Evidence of nearby Sylvani or human presence

Significant finds often become focal points for longer story arcs and major survival strategy decisions.

Extraordinary Discovery Details (Roll 6) Roll 1d6 for rare discovery: 1: Intact Ancient Structure - Fully preserved ruin suitable for immediate occupation 2: Magical Phenomenon - Beneficial supernatural effect offering ongoing advantages 3: Hidden Community - Discovery of concealed Sylvani grove or human settlement 4: Treasure Trove - Substantial cache of valuable trade goods or survival equipment 5: Escape Route - Clear path toward civilization or major geographical feature 6: Legendary Location - Site of historical significance with unique properties

Extraordinary discoveries fundamentally change survival circumstances and often provide major plot developments for ongoing campaigns.

Encounter Oracle

The Wildlands are not empty, and the Encounter Oracle determines what other inhabitants you meet during exploration or daily activities.

Encounter Frequency Roll 1d6 daily during exploration to determine if encounters occur: 1-3: No encounters - Day passes without meeting other inhabitants 4-5: Possible encounter - Roll on Encounter Type table 6: Definite encounter - Significant meeting requiring interaction

Dense forest and mountain areas increase encounter probability by +1 to rolls. Grassland and coastal areas decrease encounters by -1.

Encounter Types (Roll when indicated) Roll 1d6 for encounter category: 1: Wildlife Encounter - Meeting with local animal life 2: Environmental Event - Natural phenomenon requiring response 3: Discovery Encounter - Finding evidence of other inhabitants 4: Human Contact - Meeting with hamlet dwellers or travelers 5: Sylvani Presence - Indication of forest folk activity 6: Mysterious Event - Unexplained occurrence suggesting supernatural forces

Each encounter type requires different response approaches and offers different opportunities for story development.

Wildlife Encounter Details (Roll 1) Roll 1d6 for specific wildlife meeting: 1: Large Predator - Bear, wolf pack, or mountain cat requiring careful handling 2: Herbivore Group - Deer, elk, or similar animals that may indicate hunting opportunities 3: Small Game - Rabbits, squirrels, or birds suitable for trapping 4: Scavenger Animals - Creatures attracted to human activity or food sources 5: Unusual Species - Rare or exotic animals not commonly seen 6: Injured Animal - Creature requiring aid that may become ally if helped

Wildlife encounters test your understanding of animal behavior and survival skills while providing opportunities for food, companionship, or learning.

Human Contact Details (Roll 4) Roll 1d6 for human encounter type: 1: Hamlet Patrol - Guards or scouts from nearby settlement 2: Individual Traveler - Single person with their own survival story 3: Trading Party - Small group moving goods between settlements 4: Refugees - People fleeing danger and seeking assistance 5: Hermit - Solitary individual with specialized knowledge 6: Lost Person - Someone needing guidance or rescue

Human encounters offer the greatest potential for social interaction, trade opportunities, and information gathering about the broader Wildlands.

Sylvani Presence Details (Roll 5) Roll 1d6 for Sylvani encounter: 1: Distant Observation - Sense of being watched by unseen forest dwellers 2: Environmental Message - Subtle signs indicating Sylvani approval or disapproval 3: Guided Path - Discovery of trail markers leading toward beneficial locations 4: Nature's Blessing - Beneficial natural phenomenon suggesting Sylvani favor 5: Direct Warning - Clear signs indicating danger or territorial boundaries 6: Invitation - Obvious invitation to approach hidden grove or sacred site

Sylvani encounters rarely involve direct contact but provide guidance and evaluation opportunities for worthy individuals.

Complication Oracle

Survival rarely proceeds according to plan, and the Complication Oracle introduces unexpected challenges that test adaptability and problem-solving skills.

When to Use Complications Apply complications when: Activities are proceeding too smoothly for interesting storytelling You want to add tension to routine survival tasks You fail skill checks and need specific consequences You're unsure how external factors should affect your plans You want to introduce plot hooks for future adventures

Complication Categories Roll 1d6 for complication type: 1: Resource Problem - Issues with supplies, equipment, or materials 2: Time Pressure - Urgent situations requiring immediate decisions 3: Social Complication - Relationship problems or communication difficulties 4: Environmental Challenge - Natural obstacles or weather-related issues 5: Health and Safety - Medical problems or injury-related complications 6: Opportunity Cost - Beneficial discoveries requiring difficult choices

Each category creates different types of narrative tension and requires different problem-solving approaches.

Resource Problem Details (Roll 1) Roll 1d6 for specific resource issue: 1: Equipment Failure - Tool breaks or essential gear malfunctions 2: Supply Contamination - Food or water becomes unsafe for consumption 3: Theft or Loss - Important items disappear or become inaccessible 4: Overconsumption - Resources depleted faster than expected 5: Quality Deterioration - Materials prove inferior or unsuitable for purpose 6: Access Restriction - Previously available resources become unavailable

Resource problems force creative solutions and adaptation to changed circumstances.

Time Pressure Details (Roll 2) Roll 1d6 for urgent situation: 1: Weather Deadline - Severe weather approaching requiring immediate shelter 2: Seasonal Timing - Limited window for crucial resource gathering 3: Pursuit Pressure - Something dangerous following your trail 4: Injury Timeline - Medical situation requiring prompt treatment 5: Opportunity Window - Brief chance for major benefit requiring quick action 6: Social Deadline - Meeting or commitment requiring timely arrival

Time pressure creates difficult decisions between thoroughness and speed.

Social Complication Details (Roll 3) Roll 1d6 for relationship issue: 1: Misunderstanding - Communication problems creating conflict 2: Cultural Offense - Inadvertent violation of local customs or taboos 3: Conflicting Interests - Your needs opposing those of potential allies 4: Trust Issues - Suspicion or doubt affecting established relationships 5: Competition - Others seeking same resources or opportunities 6: Obligation Conflict - Multiple commitments creating impossible choices

Social complications require diplomatic solutions and relationship management skills.

Environmental Challenge Details (Roll 4) Roll 1d6 for natural obstacle: 1: Terrain Barrier - Geographical feature blocking planned route 2: Seasonal Change - Weather shift affecting ongoing activities 3: Natural Disaster - Flood, landslide, or similar emergency 4: Resource Depletion - Environmental change affecting availability 5: Territory Shift - Animal behavior changes affecting safety 6: Accessibility Problem - Previously reachable areas become inaccessible

Environmental challenges require adaptation and alternative planning.

Health and Safety Details (Roll 5) Roll 1d6 for medical complication: 1: Injury Worsening - Previous wound becomes infected or more serious 2: Illness Onset - Disease or poisoning requiring immediate treatment 3: Fatigue Accumulation - Exhaustion affecting all activities 4: Malnutrition Effects - Poor diet creating health problems 5: Exposure Damage - Weather-related health deterioration 6: Allergic Reaction - Unexpected sensitivity to local plants or materials

Health complications test medical knowledge and force attention to physical welfare.

Opportunity Cost Details (Roll 6) Roll 1d6 for difficult choice: 1: Multiple Discoveries - Several beneficial finds requiring choice of focus 2: Rescue Opportunity - Chance to help others at personal cost 3: Knowledge Exchange - Learning opportunity requiring resource commitment 4: Territory Decision - Choice between multiple viable settlement locations 5: Ally Assistance - Opportunity to aid potential allies requiring sacrifice 6: Long-term Investment - Major project offering future benefits at immediate cost

Opportunity costs create meaningful decisions about priorities and long-term planning.

Using Oracles Effectively

Oracle Integration with Narrative Oracles work best when their results are interpreted through established story elements rather than accepted as arbitrary impositions.

Effective Oracle Use: Consider current circumstances when interpreting results Build on previous oracle outcomes to create narrative continuity Use oracle results as inspiration rather

than rigid requirements Modify oracle results to fit established story logic when necessary Combine multiple oracle results for complex situations

Oracle results should feel like natural developments of your ongoing story rather than random interruptions. Good interpretation makes oracle outcomes feel inevitable in hindsight.

Frequency and Timing Overuse of oracles can make stories feel random and disconnected. Use them strategically for maximum narrative impact.

Recommended Oracle Frequency: Weather: Daily rolls maintaining environmental awareness Discovery: Only when actively exploring or searching new areas Encounter: Maximum once per day, less frequently in isolated areas Complication: When stories need tension or failed skill checks need consequences

The goal is adding uncertainty and surprise without overwhelming planned narrative development.

Collaborative Storytelling Oracles facilitate the collaborative relationship between you as player and you as narrator. They provide external input that surprises both aspects of your role.

Oracle-Driven Story Development: Allow oracle results to suggest new story directions Use unexpected results to challenge character assumptions Build longer narrative arcs from recurring oracle themes Let oracle outcomes reveal previously unknown setting elements

The Oracle System transforms solo play from predetermined narrative into genuine discovery, where you explore your character's story alongside their exploration of the Wildlands. These tables provide the uncertainty that makes each survival session a unique adventure in collaborative storytelling.

Chapter 8: Solo Play Framework

Solo roleplaying requires a different approach than group play. Without other players to interact with or a game master to guide the narrative, you must balance multiple roles while maintaining story momentum and engaging challenges. This framework provides structure for creating meaningful solo sessions that feel like complete adventures rather than disconnected survival tasks.

The key to successful solo play lies in establishing rhythms and procedures that keep your story moving forward. Whether you have twenty minutes or several hours, these techniques help you create satisfying play sessions that advance your character's survival story while maintaining narrative coherence and emotional engagement.

Daily Structure

Organizing each game day around specific phases creates natural pacing and ensures all aspects of survival receive appropriate attention. This structure prevents important activities from being overlooked while maintaining flexibility for emergent storytelling.

Morning Phase: Planning and Assessment Each game day begins with evaluation of current circumstances and planning for the day's activities.

Morning Activities: Weather Check: Roll Weather Oracle to determine day's conditions Resource Assessment: Review current supplies and immediate needs Health Evaluation: Check for injuries, fatigue, or other physical issues Priority Setting: Determine most important tasks for the day Route Planning: If traveling, select destination and plan approach

Morning Decision Points: What is most urgent: water, food, shelter, or safety? Should this be a travel day or a resource-gathering day? What weather preparations are necessary? Are there any time-sensitive opportunities or threats? What Action Points should be reserved for emergencies?

The morning phase typically takes 5-10 minutes of real time but establishes the foundation for meaningful day-long storytelling.

Midday Phase: Primary Activities The majority of each game day focuses on executing planned activities while responding to discoveries and complications.

Primary Activity Categories: Exploration: Moving to new hexes or thoroughly investigating current location Resource Gathering: Foraging, hunting, water collection, or material acquisition Construction: Building or improving shelters, tools, or equipment Social Interaction: Engaging with encountered NPCs or communities Investigation: Exploring ruins, following clues, or researching mysteries

Midday Activity Resolution: Execute planned primary activity using appropriate skills Apply weather modifiers and environmental conditions Roll Discovery Oracle if exploring new areas Check for encounters if moving through inhabited regions Spend Action Points to enhance critical activities

Most dramatic story events occur during the midday phase when your character is actively engaged with the world.

Evening Phase: Reflection and Preparation Each day concludes with securing safety, processing discoveries, and preparing for future challenges.

Evening Activities: Shelter Setup: Prepare safe sleeping arrangements Food and Water: Address basic nutritional needs Equipment Maintenance: Repair gear and organize supplies Information Processing: Record discoveries and plan future actions Experience Reflection: Consider what was learned and what challenges remain

Evening Decision Points: Is current shelter adequate for expected weather? What resources need to be gathered tomorrow? Are there injuries or health issues requiring attention? What new information changes future plans? Which skills or knowledge areas need development?

The evening phase provides natural session ending points and opportunities for character development reflection.

Night Phase: Rest and Recovery The night phase handles rest, recovery, and potential nocturnal events.

Night Events: Weather Changes: Sudden storms or temperature shifts Animal Encounters: Nocturnal predators or scavengers Security Challenges: Threats to shelter or supplies Dreams and Reflection: Character development opportunities Emergency Situations: Medical crises or equipment failures

Night Phase Resolution: Roll for potential complications if in dangerous areas Apply rest and recovery benefits for AP, health, and fatigue Check shelter effectiveness against actual weather conditions Process any triggered events or emergencies Award experience points for completed challenges

Most nights pass peacefully, but occasional night events create tension and test preparation effectiveness.

Challenge Progression

Solo survival stories work best when they follow natural progression patterns that build complexity gradually while maintaining consistent forward momentum.

Immediate Survival Phase (Days 1-7) The first week focuses on meeting basic survival needs and establishing minimal safety margins.

Week One Priorities: Secure reliable water source Build basic weather protection Establish food gathering routine Treat injuries from shipwreck Learn immediate area geography

Week One Challenges: 1 XP Challenges: Find water, build shelter, forage food, navigate safely 2 XP Challenges: Survive severe weather, craft basic tools Story Focus: Character adaptation to wilderness conditions Skill Development: Basic wilderness skills, environmental awareness

Success Metrics: Surviving each day without major health deterioration Building confidence in basic survival techniques Establishing safe base location Beginning to understand local environment

The immediate survival phase tests your character's adaptability and provides foundation skills for longer-term wilderness life.

Exploration and Learning Phase (Days 8-30) The second through fourth weeks expand beyond basic survival to systematic exploration and skill development.

Month One Objectives: Map surrounding area and identify resource locations Develop advanced survival skills through practice Seek contact with local inhabitants Investigate discovered ruins or special locations Establish sustainable resource gathering routines

Month One Challenges: 2 XP Challenges: Master environment, successful hunt, craft weapons 3 XP Challenges: Contact Sylvani or human communities, establish base camp Story Focus: Character growth and relationship building Skill Development: Specialized wilderness skills, social connections

Exploration Guidelines: Systematic hex mapping with resource notation Investigation of all discovered special locations Careful approach to potential social contacts Documentation of seasonal patterns and resource availability

The exploration phase transforms your character from desperate survivor to competent wilderness dweller.

Integration and Mastery Phase (Month 2+) Extended survival focuses on integration with Wildlands communities and mastery of specialized skills.

Long-term Objectives: Establish permanent base with advanced amenities Build relationships with multiple communities Master specialized skills like herbal medicine or advanced crafting Uncover significant mysteries or historical secrets Plan escape routes or permanent settlement options

Long-term Challenges: 3-4 XP Challenges: Major discoveries, community leadership, master-level skills Story Focus: Legacy building and long-term impact Character Development: Transformation from outsider to Wildlands inhabitant

Success in the integration phase means your character has become truly adapted to wilderness life and capable of thriving rather than merely surviving.

Long-term Goals

Solo survival campaigns work best when they build toward meaningful long-term objectives that provide direction and purpose beyond daily survival needs.

Escape and Return Goals Many survivors maintain hope of returning to civilization, creating ongoing motivation for exploration and relationship building.

Escape Route Development: Gather information about paths to civilized regions Build relationships with communities that might provide assistance Develop resources necessary for long-distance travel Acquire knowledge about seasonal timing for escape attempts

Return Preparation Requirements: Advanced navigation skills for long-distance travel Substantial resource stockpiles for extended journey Weather knowledge for optimal timing Social connections providing guidance and assistance

Escape attempts become major campaign events requiring extensive preparation and often cooperation from Wildlands inhabitants.

Settlement and Community Goals Some survivors choose to make the Wildlands their permanent home, focusing on building communities and improving local conditions.

Settlement Development: Establish permanent base with advanced construction Develop sustainable resource management systems Build relationships leading to community membership Create improvements benefiting local inhabitants

Community Leadership: Organize cooperative projects between different groups Mediate conflicts and facilitate trade relationships Introduce beneficial innovations from outside world Build reputation as valuable community member

Permanent settlement creates different but equally engaging long-term storylines focused on building rather than escaping.

Knowledge and Discovery Goals The mysteries of the Wildlands provide ongoing objectives for curious characters interested in understanding their new environment.

Research Objectives: Uncover history of ancient ruins and their builders Document Wildlands ecology and seasonal patterns Learn traditional knowledge from Sylvani and hamlet communities Map comprehensive geography of entire region

Discovery Campaigns: Investigation of specific historical mysteries Documentation projects creating valuable resources Cultural exchange programs between different communities Exploration of unmapped regions and dangerous territories

Knowledge-focused campaigns create detective-style adventures within the survival framework.

Campaign Arcs

Solo survival stories benefit from organizing longer narratives around specific themes and objectives that provide structure for extended play.

Seasonal Campaign Structure Organizing campaigns around the yearly cycle creates natural pacing and objectives.

Spring Campaigns: Renewal and Growth Focus on recovery from winter hardships Emphasis on exploration and resource gathering Introduction of new characters and communities Themes of hope, growth, and new beginnings

Summer Campaigns: Adventure and Expansion Peak activity season with maximum mobility Major exploration expeditions and discoveries Complex social interactions and relationship building Themes of achievement, cooperation, and mastery

Autumn Campaigns: Preparation and Reflection Focus on winter preparation and resource stockpiling Resolution of ongoing conflicts and relationships Major decision-making about long-term objectives Themes of maturity, responsibility, and planning

Winter Campaigns: Endurance and Contemplation Indoor activities and deep relationship development Crafting projects and skill development Storytelling and cultural exchange Themes of perseverance, wisdom, and community

Seasonal organization provides clear phases with distinct objectives and emotional tones.

Relationship-Based Campaign Arcs Building campaigns around specific relationships creates strong narrative focus.

Sylvani Integration Arc: Discovery of forest communities Learning environmental stewardship Earning acceptance through proper behavior Contributing to forest preservation efforts

Human Community Arc: Finding isolated settlements Proving worth through useful contributions Building trust and earning membership Leadership development within community

Ancient Mystery Arc: Discovery of significant ruins or artifacts Research into historical significance Unraveling supernatural phenomena Resolution with lasting impact on region

Each relationship arc provides months of focused storyline with clear progression markers.

Personal Transformation Arcs Character development arcs focus on internal growth and skill mastery.

Skill Mastery Arc: Selection of specialized skill focus Training and practice opportunities Advanced technique development Recognition as expert by communities

Leadership Development Arc: Beginning with individual competence Building reputation through helpful actions Taking responsibility for others' welfare Becoming recognized community leader

Cultural Bridge Arc: Learning to communicate between different groups Facilitating trade and cooperation Resolving conflicts through understanding Creating lasting peaceful relationships

Personal arcs provide character development structure independent of external events.

Session Management

Individual play sessions work best when they have clear objectives and natural stopping points that maintain story momentum.

Session Length Adaptation Different session lengths require different approaches to maintain satisfying narrative progression.

Short Sessions (20-30 minutes): Focus on single primary activity Use established procedures and familiar locations Emphasize routine survival tasks with minor complications End at natural transition points like evening or weather changes

Medium Sessions (45-90 minutes): Combine multiple activities within single day Include exploration of new areas or social encounters Allow time for unexpected complications and their resolution Advance ongoing storylines through significant events

Long Sessions (2+ hours): Cover multiple days with full activity cycles Include major story developments and relationship changes Allow complex problem-solving and extended exploration Advance character development and long-term objectives

Adapting session structure to available time ensures satisfying play regardless of scheduling constraints.

Momentum Maintenance Solo play requires techniques for maintaining engagement and forward progress.

Session Continuity: Begin each session by reviewing recent events and current circumstances Establish clear objectives for the current session End sessions at dramatic moments or natural transition points Keep notes about ongoing storylines and unresolved issues

Engagement Techniques: Use oracle results to introduce unexpected developments Balance routine activities with novel challenges Focus on decision-making moments that feel meaningful Connect immediate survival needs to longer-term goals

Momentum Preservation: Avoid getting stuck in repetitive daily routines Introduce new elements regularly through exploration and encounters Build toward resolution of established conflicts and mysteries Celebrate achievements and character growth milestones

The Solo Play Framework transforms wilderness survival from random events into coherent storytelling that rewards both planning and adaptability. Through structured daily phases, progressive challenges, and meaningful long-term goals, your character's survival story becomes a complete narrative journey from desperate castaway to capable wilderness dweller.

Chapter 9: Starting Adventure - "The First Seven Days"

Your survival story begins at the moment of greatest vulnerability. You lie face-down on an unknown shore, saltwater burning your lungs, debris scattered around you like fragments of your former life. The storm has passed, but its aftermath surrounds you - broken timber, torn canvas, and the relentless sound of waves against rock.

This chapter guides you through your character's first week in the Wildlands, providing specific scenarios, challenges, and decision points that establish the foundation for longer survival

campaigns. Each day presents new urgencies while building the skills and knowledge necessary for long-term wilderness survival.

The first seven days test your character's adaptability, resourcefulness, and will to survive. Success means establishing a foothold in this alien environment. Failure means joining the countless others who have disappeared into the Wildlands' unforgiving embrace.

Day 1: Awakening to Catastrophe

The storm that destroyed your ship has passed, leaving you alone on a rocky coastline as the sun begins its descent toward the western horizon. You have perhaps two hours of daylight remaining, and the approaching night promises to be cold and dangerous.

Initial Situation Assessment You regain consciousness on a narrow beach backed by steep, rocky cliffs. The wreckage of your ship lies scattered across the shoreline and shallow water. To the north, the coastline curves away into mist. To the south, you can see what might be a river mouth. Inland, dense forest covers rolling hills that rise toward distant mountains.

Starting Condition Check: Health Status: Roll 1d6 1-2: Seriously injured - Start with 2 HP lost, require immediate medical attention 3-4: Moderately injured - Start with 1 HP lost, minor cuts and bruises 5-6: Remarkably unharmed - Full health but exhausted and disoriented

Equipment Status: Roll 1d6 three times on Salvage Table (Chapter 2) for starting gear Weather Conditions: Roll Weather Oracle - if severe weather, immediate shelter becomes critical

Your character's immediate survival depends on quick assessment and decisive action.

Immediate Priorities Assessment With limited daylight remaining, you must prioritize the most urgent survival needs.

Critical Decision: First Priority What do you address first?

Treat Injuries (if applicable): Skill Check: Medicine + Investigation DC 8 Success: Stabilize injuries, prevent infection Failure: Injuries worsen, -1 HP additional loss Time Required: 30 minutes AP Cost: Consider spending 2 AP for Natural Healing

Search the Wreckage: Skill Check: Investigation + Athletics DC 10 Success: Discover additional useful items (roll Salvage Table twice more) Failure: Find only debris, waste valuable time Time Required: 1 hour Complications: Tide may cover wreckage, dangerous debris

Find Immediate Shelter: Skill Check: Investigation + Survival DC 8 Success: Locate cave, overhang, or natural windbreak Failure: Must build emergency shelter with available materials Time Required: 30 minutes searching, 1-2 hours construction Weather Impact: Critical if severe weather approaching

Locate Fresh Water: Skill Check: Investigation + Academics DC 10 Success: Find stream, spring, or collectible rainwater Failure: No water source located, dehydration becomes urgent tomorrow Time Required: 1 hour searching Safety Risk: Moving away from known safe area

Each choice creates different consequences and opportunities for Day 2 activities.

First Night Survival How you handle your first night in the Wildlands establishes patterns and reveals character traits that influence future survival approaches.

Shelter Options Assessment: Natural Shelter Found (Investigation success): Provides basic protection from wind and rain May require improvement for comfort Could be occupied by wildlife requiring careful approach

Emergency Shelter Construction: Skill Check: Crafting + Athletics DC 10 Materials: Salvaged canvas, driftwood, stones Success: Adequate protection from weather Failure: Poor shelter, -1 HP from exposure AP Enhancement: Spend 3 AP for Quick Shelter construction

Open Air Camping: No shelter construction required Maximum vulnerability to weather and predators Automatic -1 HP loss if poor weather conditions Higher chance of wildlife encounters

First Night Events: Roll 1d6 for night complications: 1: Severe weather develops, shelter quality becomes critical 2: Nocturnal predator investigates camp, requires careful handling 3: Equipment damage from wind or salt spray 4: Restless sleep, -1 AP tomorrow from fatigue 5: Strange lights or sounds from inland, mysterious but not threatening 6: Peaceful night, full rest and recovery

Your first night's outcome affects Day 2 starting conditions and available options.

Day 1 Experience Awards: Automatic: Survive first night (1 XP) Conditional: Successfully address major injury (1 XP) Conditional: Build functional shelter (1 XP) Conditional: Locate fresh water (1 XP)

Day 2: Establishing Basics

Dawn brings clearer assessment of your situation and the opportunity to address survival needs more systematically. The urgency of the first day gives way to more careful planning and resource management.

Morning Assessment and Planning Begin Day 2 with systematic evaluation of your circumstances and immediate needs.

Resource Inventory: Catalog all available equipment and materials Assess condition of salvaged items (some may be damaged by saltwater) Identify gaps in essential survival equipment Plan priorities based on resource availability

Health and Condition Check: Assess injuries and fatigue from first night Determine impact of shelter quality on health Check for signs of dehydration or hunger Plan medical needs and treatment priorities

Environmental Evaluation: Study local geography and identify key features Assess weather patterns and seasonal indicators Note wildlife signs and potential dangers Identify exploration priorities for resource gathering

Day 2 Skill Check: Planning and Assessment Skill Check: Tactics + Investigation DC 8 Success: Efficient day planning, +1 bonus to first activity Failure: Poor planning, lose time through indecision AP Enhancement: Spend 1 AP for +2 bonus to planning check

Day 2 Activity Options With basic survival established, Day 2 focuses on improving your situation and gathering essential resources.

Water Security Priority: If water wasn't found Day 1, this becomes urgent Skill Check: Investigation + Survival DC 8 (coastal area) Success: Locate reliable fresh water source Failure: Continue dehydration, -1 HP at day's end Follow-up: May require water purification if source is questionable

Food Gathering Introduction: Begin learning local food sources Skill Check: Academics + Investigation DC 10 (coastal foraging) Success: Find enough food for 1-2 days Failure: Limited food found, hunger begins to affect performance Learning Opportunity: Begin developing Foraging skill

Shelter Improvement Project: Enhance Day 1 shelter or build better protection Skill Check: Crafting + Athletics DC 8-12 (depending on materials) Success: Improved weather protection and comfort Failure: Materials wasted, limited improvement Time Investment: 3-4 hours for significant improvements

Exploration and Mapping: Investigate immediate area systematically Skill Check: Investigation + Athletics DC 6-10 (depending on terrain) Success: Map local resources and identify exploration targets Failure: Get lost temporarily, waste time reorienting Discovery Potential: Roll Discovery Oracle for each new area explored

Equipment Crafting: Create essential tools from salvaged materials Skill Check: Crafting + Investigation DC 10 Success: Functional tool improving future activities Failure: Materials wasted, no useful result Tool Options: Simple knife, water container, or fire-starting aids

Day 2 Challenges and Complications: Weather Impact: Apply current weather modifiers to all outdoor activities Wildlife Encounters: Possible encounter with curious animals investigating camp Equipment Limitations: Lack of proper tools increases difficulty of all tasks Fatigue Management: Balance activity level with available energy

Day 2 Experience Opportunities: Find Fresh Water: 1 XP for locating reliable water source Successful Foraging: 1 XP for gathering edible food successfully Shelter Improvement: 1 XP for creating weatherproof shelter Tool Creation: 1 XP for crafting functional survival tool

Days 3-4: Building Competence

The middle phase of your first week focuses on developing basic wilderness competence and establishing sustainable routines. Emergency survival gives way to more systematic resource management and skill development.

Day 3: Resource Development Day 3 priorities shift from immediate survival to building resource security and developing essential skills.

Advanced Foraging Training: Build on Day 2 food gathering experience Skill Check: Survival + Investigation DC 8 (with previous experience bonus) Success: Gather 2-3 days of food, identify reliable food sources Failure: Limited success, continue food uncertainty Skill Development: If successful, begin learning Foraging skill (requires 3 XP investment)

Fire Mastery Project: Develop reliable fire-making capability Skill Check: Survival + Crafting DC 10 Materials Required: Tinder, kindling, and fuel wood Success: Master fire-making, gain confidence in essential skill Failure: Struggle with fire-making, continue dependence on salvaged materials Safety Consideration: Fire management DC 8 to avoid accidents

Water Storage Solutions: Create containers for water storage and transport Skill Check: Crafting + Investigation DC 12 Materials: Salvaged containers, natural materials, or animal skins Success: Functional water storage reducing daily gathering needs Failure: Inadequate storage, continue daily water gathering urgency

Exploration Expansion: Investigate adjacent areas for resources and opportunities Movement: Explore 1-2 adjacent coastal or light forest hexes Discovery Rolls: Use Discovery Oracle for each area investigated Navigation: Investigation + Academics DC 8 to avoid getting lost Mapping: Record discovered resources and landmarks for future reference

Day 4: Skill Development Focus Day 4 emphasizes developing wilderness skills through practice and experimentation.

Hunting and Trapping Introduction: Begin learning protein procurement techniques Skill Check: Crafting + Tactics DC 12 (trap construction) Materials Required: Cordage, triggering mechanisms, bait Success: Create functional traps for deployment Failure: Trap construction fails, materials wasted Deployment: Investigation + Survival DC 10 to place traps effectively

Advanced Shelter Techniques: Improve shelter beyond basic weather protection Skill Check: Crafting + Athletics DC 10-15 (depending on design) Materials: Quality construction materials, proper tools Success: Comfortable, secure shelter suitable for extended use Failure: Construction problems, limited improvement Comfort Factor: Good shelter provides rest bonuses and morale benefits

Tool Making Workshop: Create specialized tools for specific survival tasks Priority Tools: Cutting implements, digging tools, hunting equipment Skill Check: Crafting + Investigation DC 8-15 (depending on tool complexity) Materials: Salvaged metal, stone, wood, and binding materials Success: Functional tools improving efficiency of future tasks Failure: Poor quality tools that break easily

Navigation Skill Building: Develop reliable navigation techniques for safe exploration Skill Check: Investigation + Academics DC 10 Practice: Landmark identification, direction finding, route planning Success: Gain confidence in navigation, reduce getting-lost risks Failure: Continue navigation uncertainty, limit exploration range

Days 3-4 Experience Opportunities: Master Fire Making: 1 XP for reliable fire-making capability Successful Tool Creation: 1 XP for creating functional survival tool Trap Deployment: 1 XP for successfully setting hunting traps Advanced Shelter: 1 XP for building comfortable, secure shelter Navigation Competence: 1 XP for demonstrating reliable navigation skills

Days 5-7: Establishing Security

The final phase of your first week focuses on establishing security, planning for the future, and making decisions about longer-term survival strategies.

Day 5: Security and Defense Day 5 addresses safety concerns and establishes defensive capabilities for your temporary base.

Perimeter Security Assessment: Evaluate camp location for defensive advantages and vulnerabilities Skill Check: Tactics + Investigation DC 10 Assessment Factors: Visibility, escape routes, natural barriers, concealment options Success: Identify security improvements and potential threats Failure: Miss important security considerations

Predator Awareness Training: Learn to recognize and respond to wildlife threats Skill Check: Investigation + Survival DC 8 Signs to Learn: Tracks, scat, territorial markings, feeding areas Success: Gain ability to detect and avoid predator territories Failure: Remain vulnerable to wildlife encounters

Early Warning Systems: Create alerts for approaching threats or opportunities Skill Check: Crafting + Tactics DC 12 Systems: Noise makers, sight lines, animal behavior indicators Success: Functional warning system providing advance notice Failure: Limited warning capability, rely on chance detection

Emergency Protocols: Develop responses to potential crisis situations Planning Areas: Severe weather, predator encounters, injury treatment, equipment loss Skill Check: Tactics + Medicine DC 10 Success: Clear emergency procedures reducing panic and improving outcomes Failure: Limited crisis preparation, rely on improvisation

Day 6: Future Planning Day 6 focuses on medium-term planning and decisions about survival strategy.

Resource Sustainability Assessment: Evaluate whether current location can support long-term survival Factors: Water reliability, food availability, shelter potential, seasonal considerations Skill Check: Survival + Academics DC 12 Success: Clear understanding of location's long-term viability Failure: Uncertainty about sustainability requiring further investigation

Exploration Strategy Development: Plan systematic exploration of surrounding area Objectives: Resource mapping, community contact, escape route identification Skill Check: Tactics + Investigation DC 10 Success: Efficient exploration plan maximizing discoveries Failure: Random exploration missing important opportunities

Skill Development Planning: Identify priority skills for wilderness survival Considerations: Current skill gaps, available learning opportunities, resource requirements Planning Check: No skill check required, strategic decision-making Focus Areas: Choose 2-3 wilderness skills for development priority

Long-term Goal Setting: Decide on primary objectives for extended survival Options: Escape planning, permanent settlement, community integration Decision Impact: Chosen goals influence future activity priorities No Skill Check: Personal character decision

Day 7: Consolidation and Assessment The final day of your first week consolidates achievements and prepares for longer-term survival.

Week One Achievement Review: Assess progress toward basic survival competence Survival Metrics: Water security, food procurement, shelter adequacy, safety awareness Skill Development: New wilderness skills learned or begun Experience Gained: Total XP earned during first week Resource Status: Equipment condition, supply stockpiles, tool availability

Competence Testing: Demonstrate mastery of essential survival skills Water: Locate and purify water reliably Food: Gather or trap sufficient nutrition Shelter: Build adequate weather protection Fire: Create fire consistently Navigation: Move safely between known locations

Future Preparation: Stockpile resources for upcoming challenges Prepare equipment for extended exploration Plan routes to promising discovery locations Establish base camp security for temporary absence

Week One Completion Challenges: Survive Seven Days: 3 XP for completing first week successfully Master Basic Skills: 2 XP for demonstrating competence in water, food, shelter, and fire Establish Secure Base: 2 XP for creating defensible, comfortable base camp Successful Exploration: 1 XP for systematic mapping of immediate area

Beyond the First Week

Completing your first seven days marks the transition from emergency survival to sustainable wilderness living. Your character has either adapted to Wildlands conditions or discovered that survival here requires different approaches than initially expected.

Skill Development Opportunities: Use accumulated XP to learn wilderness skills (3 XP per new skill) Improve existing skills to increase efficiency and reliability Consider specialization based on successful survival strategies

Exploration Expansion: Begin systematic exploration of adjacent hexes Seek contact with other inhabitants Investigate discovered ruins or special locations Search for escape routes or permanent settlement sites

Community Contact Preparation: Develop trade goods or useful skills for exchange Learn basic cultural protocols for potential encounters Prepare gifts or offerings appropriate for different groups Build reputation as respectful and valuable ally

The first week establishes your character's survival foundation. Future weeks build on these basics to create rich storytelling opportunities involving exploration, relationship building, and the gradual transformation from desperate castaway to capable wilderness dweller.

Your first seven days end not with rescue or escape, but with the realization that survival in the Wildlands requires adaptation, patience, and respect for forces beyond your control. The person who faces the second week is already fundamentally different from the one who washed ashore seven days ago.

The Wildlands await your next decision.

Appendix: Quick Reference

This appendix provides essential game information in an easily accessible format for quick reference during play. Keep these tables handy for rapid lookup without interrupting your survival story.

Skill List and Descriptions

Civilized Skills (Starting Options)

Physical Skills: Athletics: Swimming, climbing, running, lifting, physical endurance Required for: Movement through difficult terrain, construction work, emergency situations

Social Skills: Persuasion: Convincing others through logic, charm, or shared interests Used for: Calming animals, gaining community trust, negotiating assistance

Trade: Commerce, value assessment, resource management Used for: Rationing supplies, evaluating materials, establishing exchange relationships

Intimidation: Projecting authority or threat to influence behavior Used for: Deterring predators, asserting leadership, discouraging threats

Mental Skills: Academics: History, geography, languages, natural philosophy Used for: Plant identification, weather prediction, cultural understanding

Medicine: Anatomy, disease, injury treatment, basic surgery Used for: Treating wounds, preventing infection, maintaining health

Investigation: Systematic searching, evidence analysis, logical deduction Used for: Finding resources, tracking animals, exploring locations

Tactics: Military strategy, planning, organizational thinking Used for: Route planning, resource allocation, emergency response

Specialized Skills: Seamanship: Navigation, weather prediction, ship handling Used for: Reading natural signs, predicting weather, water travel

Crafting: Working with tools and materials to create useful objects Used for: Building shelter, making tools, equipment repair

Streetwise: Criminal networks, urban survival, social situation reading Used for: Reading animal behavior, understanding territorial dynamics

Wilderness Skills (Must Be Learned - 3 XP Each)

Survival: General wilderness competence covering basic needs Foraging: Plant and small animal food gathering techniques Weather Reading: Predicting storms and seasonal changes Herbal Medicine: Using wild plants for medical treatment Beast Lore: Understanding animal behavior and ecology Camouflage: Hiding from predators and moving unseen Trapping: Constructing and deploying animal snares Archery: Bow hunting and wilderness ranged combat

Difficulty Class Reference

Standard DCs: Easy: 5 - Simple tasks with room for error Moderate: 8 - Standard challenges requiring competence Challenging: 12 - Difficult tasks testing abilities Hard: 15 - Expert-level challenges with serious consequences Extreme: 18 - Master-level tasks requiring exceptional skill Legendary: 20+ - Nearly impossible feats requiring perfect conditions

Common DC Modifiers: Favorable Conditions: -1 to -3 Poor Conditions: +1 to +3 Time Pressure: +1 to +2 Previous Experience: -1 Proper Tools: -1 to -2 Improvised Equipment: +1 to +3

Specific Activity DCs:

Water Finding: Base DC: 8 (coastal areas) Forest: +0, Hills: +2, Mountains: +4 Recent rain: -3, Drought: +5

Foraging: Common plants: 8, Uncommon: 12, Rare: 18 Spring: -2, Summer: +0, Autumn: +2, Winter: +4

Shelter Construction: Lean-to: 8, Debris hut: 10, Log cabin: 15 Good materials: -1, Poor weather: +2

Predator Deterrence: Intimidation approach: 10-15 (species dependent) Calm retreat: 8-12 (species dependent)

Weather Prediction: Next day: 12, Multiple days: 15 Clear conditions: -1, Overcast: +2

Challenge-Based XP Awards

1 XP Challenges (Basic Survival): Find Fresh Water Build Basic Shelter Forage a Meal Navigate Safely (1 hex) Treat an Injury Make Fire Craft Basic Tool

2 XP Challenges (Advanced Survival): Survive Severe Weather Defeat/Evade Predator Craft Weapon Discover Significant Location Successful Hunt Navigate Difficult Terrain Preserve Food

3 XP Challenges (Major Milestones): Establish Base Camp Contact Other Survivors Discover Civilization Survive 7 Days Master Environment Rescue Achievement

4 XP Challenges (Epic Accomplishments): Escape the Wildlands Become Wilderness Expert Lead Survivor Group Uncover Ancient Secret

XP Spending Costs: 1 XP: Increase existing skill by 1 level 3 XP: Learn new wilderness skill at Level 1 4 XP: Gain special advantage or unique ability

Action Points Reference

Daily AP Pool: (Highest 2 Skills + 5)

AP Recovery: 2 AP per hour of rest Full recovery after 8 hours sleep Comfortable shelter: +1 AP per rest period Good nutrition: +1 AP per day Poor conditions: -1 AP per rest period

Common AP Uses:

Resource Management: Conserve Supplies (1 AP): Food/water lasts 1 extra day Emergency Rationing (2 AP): Supplies last 2 extra days, gain fatigue Preserve Resources (2 AP): Successfully preserve food for storage

Movement and Exploration: Careful Movement (1 AP): +2 caution bonus in current hex Forced March (3 AP): Travel 1 additional hex per day Backtrack Safely (1 AP): Return to explored hex avoiding hazards

Environmental: Weather Preparation (2 AP): +2 weather resistance for one day Hazard Avoidance (1 AP): Auto-detect one environmental danger Quick Shelter (3 AP): Build shelter in half normal time

Skills: Skill Boost (1 AP): +2 to any survival skill check Extra Effort (2 AP): Retry failed check with +1 bonus Careful Work (2 AP): +2 bonus to crafting, double time required

Recovery: Natural Healing (2 AP): Recover 2 HP using wilderness medicine Rest Efficiently (1 AP): Reduce fatigue recovery time by half Mental Fortitude (1 AP): Resist fear, despair, or panic

Weather Oracle Table

Daily Weather (Roll 1d6): 1: Severe Conditions 2: Poor Conditions 3: Overcast 4: Variable 5: Fair 6: Excellent

Seasonal Modifiers: Spring: +1, Summer: +2, Autumn: +0, Winter: -2

Severe Weather Types (Roll 1 when weather = 1): 1-2: Violent Storm 3-4: Extreme Temperature 5: Dense Fog 6: Blizzard (Winter only)

Weather Effects on Activities: Severe: +3 DC, half movement, +5 foraging, +4 fire making Poor: +1 DC, +2 foraging, +2 fire making Fair: Normal DC Excellent: -1 DC, -2 foraging

Discovery Oracle Table

Hex Exploration Results (Roll 1d6): 1: Danger or Hazard 2: Empty Area 3: Basic Resources 4: Useful Discovery 5: Significant Find 6: Extraordinary Discovery

Danger Types (Roll 1d6 when discovery = 1): 1: Predator Territory 2: Environmental Hazard 3: Weather Exposure 4: Territorial Markings 5: Ancient Trap 6: Supernatural Phenomenon

Useful Discoveries (Roll 1d6 when discovery = 4): 1: Fresh Water Source 2: Shelter Site 3: Food Resources 4: Construction Materials 5: Salvageable Equipment 6: Information Source

Significant Finds (Roll 1d6 when discovery = 5): 1: Hidden Cache 2: Natural Wonder 3: Ancient Artifact 4: Rare Resource Deposit 5: Strategic Location 6: Cultural Contact

Extraordinary Discoveries (Roll 1d6 when discovery = 6): 1: Intact Ancient Structure 2: Magical Phenomenon 3: Hidden Community 4: Treasure Trove 5: Escape Route 6: Legendary Location

Encounter Oracle Table

Daily Encounter Check (Roll 1d6): 1-3: No encounters 4-5: Possible encounter (roll encounter type) 6: Definite encounter

Encounter Types (Roll 1d6): 1: Wildlife Encounter 2: Environmental Event 3: Discovery Encounter 4: Human Contact 5: Sylvani Presence 6: Mysterious Event

Wildlife Encounters (Roll 1d6): 1: Large Predator 2: Herbivore Group 3: Small Game 4: Scavenger Animals 5: Unusual Species 6: Injured Animal

Human Contact (Roll 1d6): 1: Hamlet Patrol 2: Individual Traveler 3: Trading Party 4: Refugees 5: Hermit 6: Lost Person

Sylvani Presence (Roll 1d6): 1: Distant Observation 2: Environmental Message 3: Guided Path 4: Nature's Blessing 5: Direct Warning 6: Invitation

Complication Oracle Table

Complication Types (Roll 1d6): 1: Resource Problem 2: Time Pressure 3: Social Complication 4: Environmental Challenge 5: Health and Safety 6: Opportunity Cost

Resource Problems (Roll 1d6): 1: Equipment Failure 2: Supply Contamination 3: Theft or Loss 4: Overconsumption 5: Quality Deterioration 6: Access Restriction

Time Pressure (Roll 1d6): 1: Weather Deadline 2: Seasonal Timing 3: Pursuit Pressure 4: Injury Timeline 5: Opportunity Window 6: Social Deadline

Health and Safety Issues (Roll 1d6): 1: Injury Worsening 2: Illness Onset 3: Fatigue Accumulation 4: Malnutrition Effects 5: Exposure Damage 6: Allergic Reaction

Health and Condition Reference

Health Points: 10 + Athletics skill level

Health Loss Sources: Injury, Exposure, Illness, Fatigue, Starvation, Dehydration

Condition Effects: Healthy (Full HP): No penalties Injured (75% HP): -1 to physical activities Wounded (50% HP): -2 to physical activities, movement limits Seriously Hurt (25% HP): -3 to all activities, needs medical attention Critical (1-2 HP): Barely conscious, limited complex tasks Unconscious (0 HP): Requires immediate rescue

Health Recovery: Natural Healing: 1 HP per day with rest and nutrition Medical Treatment: Medicine checks accelerate healing Comfortable Conditions: Good shelter improves recovery Poor Conditions: Harsh weather slows healing

Terrain Movement Reference

Normal Movement: 1 hex per day Careful Exploration: 0.5 hex per day (systematic search) Forced March: 2 hexes per day (requires 3 AP, Athletics DC 12)

Terrain Effects: Ocean: Impassable without boat Coastal Rocky: Normal movement, limited resources Light Forest: Normal movement, good resources Dense Forest: Exploration recommended, excellent resources Grassland/Hills: Fast movement possible, limited resources Mountain: Slow movement, specialized resources Rivers: Crossing challenges, water access

Hex Map Template

Use this template for mapping your exploration:

Hex Coordinates: Mark each hex with simple coordinate system Resource Notes: Water sources, food availability, shelter sites Danger Markers: Predator territories, hazardous terrain Cultural Sites: Sylvani groves, human settlements, ruins Routes: Safe paths, river crossings, seasonal restrictions Weather Patterns: Local variations, sheltered areas

Sample Hex Entry: Hex A3 - Dense Forest Resources: Fresh water spring, abundant foraging Shelter: Natural cave system (eastern edge) Dangers: Bear territory (northern section) Notes: Possible Sylvani presence (subtle trail markers) Season: Excellent foraging spring/summer, good shelter winter

Character Advancement Tracker

Track your character's growth through the wilderness survival campaign:

Starting Skills: List civilized skills and levels XP Earned: Record source and amount for each gain XP Spent: Track skill improvements and new abilities learned Wilderness Skills: Note learning progress and practice opportunities Notable Achievements: Major survival milestones and discoveries Relationships: Sylvani contacts, hamlet connections, alliances Base Development: Shelter improvements, resource caches, territory knowledge

Campaign Milestones: Week 1: Basic survival competence Month 1: Wilderness adaptation Month 3: Community integration Month 6: Regional expertise Year 1: Wildlands mastery

This quick reference provides all essential game information for smooth solo play. Keep these tables accessible during your survival sessions for rapid consultation without breaking narrative flow.

Advanced Guide Preview - Coming Soon

Your survival story in the Wildlands has only just begun. The basic guide teaches you to find water, build shelter, and navigate the wilderness safely. But what happens when survival becomes mastery? What new challenges await the experienced wilderness dweller who has moved beyond mere subsistence to true competence?

The Advanced Guide expands your Wildlands experience with deeper systems, greater challenges, and richer storytelling opportunities for survivors who have proven their basic competence and are ready for the next level of wilderness adventure.

Combat and Conflict Resolution

Not every encounter in the Wildlands can be resolved through peaceful negotiation or careful avoidance. Sometimes, survival demands direct action against threats that cannot be reasoned with or escaped from.

The Advanced Guide introduces a complete combat system designed specifically for wilderness survival scenarios. This isn't about glorious battles or heroic duels - it's about the desperate, pragmatic fighting that occurs when cornered by a hungry predator or forced to defend your hard-won shelter from raiders.

Combat Philosophy Wildlands combat emphasizes quick resolution, meaningful consequences, and realistic limitations. Every fight risks injury that could prove fatal when medical help is unavailable. Every weapon might break when replacement is impossible. Every decision to fight rather than flee carries long-term implications for your survival prospects.

Weapon Systems Craft and wield weapons appropriate to your wilderness environment:

Improvised Weapons: Transform salvage and natural materials into effective tools of defense Hunting Implements: Spears, bows, and traps that serve dual purposes Defensive Equipment: Shields, armor, and protective gear crafted from available resources Specialized Tools: Region-specific weapons adapted to local threats and materials

Combat resolution focuses on tactical decision-making, environmental factors, and the consequences of violence in an unforgiving wilderness setting.

Injury and Recovery The Advanced Guide expands the health system with detailed injury mechanics that reflect the reality of wilderness medical care:

Wound Types: Cuts, bruises, burns, broken bones, and internal injuries each require different treatment Infection Risks: Proper wound care becomes critical when antibiotics are unavailable Long-term Disabilities: Some injuries create permanent limitations requiring adaptation Recovery Time: Healing takes weeks or months, not hours or days

Advanced Crafting Systems

Beyond basic shelter and simple tools lies a world of sophisticated wilderness engineering. The Advanced Guide provides detailed systems for creating complex equipment, permanent structures, and even primitive machinery using only materials available in the Wildlands.

Master Crafting Techniques Learn to create items that would be valuable in any civilization:

Advanced Metallurgy: Smelt ores, forge tools, and create alloys using wilderness techniques Precision Engineering: Build mechanical devices, locks, and complex mechanisms Textile Production: Process plant and animal fibers into quality cloth and rope Preservation Methods: Advanced food storage, tanning, and resource conservation

Construction Projects Build structures that transform the wilderness around you:

Permanent Fortifications: Defensive walls, watchtowers, and secure compounds Water Management: Dams, irrigation, and sophisticated collection systems Workshops and Facilities: Forges, mills, and specialized production buildings Infrastructure Development: Roads, bridges, and communication networks

Each crafting project becomes a mini-campaign requiring resource gathering, skill development, and careful planning across multiple seasons.

Seasonal Campaigns and Weather Mastery

The basic guide introduces weather as a survival challenge. The Advanced Guide transforms climate into a complex strategic element that drives long-term planning and creates dramatic seasonal storylines.

Advanced Weather Systems Master the Wildlands' climate patterns through detailed understanding:

Microclimate Recognition: Understand how local geography creates weather variations Long-term Prediction: Plan activities weeks or months in advance based on seasonal patterns Storm Preparation: Advanced techniques for weathering extreme conditions Climate Adaptation: Modify your lifestyle and equipment for different seasonal demands

Seasonal Specialization Develop expertise in specific seasons that align with your survival strategy:

Spring Specialists: Master the renewal season's unique opportunities and challenges Summer Adventurers: Maximize the benefits of optimal traveling and building weather Autumn Planners: Excel at preparation and resource stockpiling for winter survival Winter Survivors: Thrive in conditions that defeat less prepared wilderness dwellers

Each seasonal focus creates different gameplay experiences and character development paths.

Advanced Social Dynamics

The basic guide introduces the Sylvani and human communities as potential allies. The Advanced Guide explores complex political relationships, cultural exchange, and the possibility of building your own influence within Wildlands society.

Political Integration Navigate the subtle politics of isolated communities:

Faction Relationships: Balance competing interests between different groups Leadership Opportunities: Rise to positions of influence within existing communities Diplomatic Missions: Serve as mediator between conflicting parties Cultural Exchange: Facilitate trade and cooperation between diverse groups

Community Building Establish your own settlement and attract other survivors:

Settlement Planning: Design communities that balance security, sustainability, and growth Population Management: Attract and integrate new residents with diverse skills Economic Development: Create trade relationships and sustainable resource production Defense Organization: Protect your community from external threats

Territory and Influence Expand your presence across multiple hexes through strategic development:

Resource Control: Manage access to valuable materials and strategic locations Transportation Networks: Establish routes and waypoints connecting distant areas Information Networks: Build communication systems spanning the Wildlands Regional Reputation: Develop recognition that opens new opportunities and relationships

Magical and Supernatural Elements

The Wildlands contain mysteries that go beyond natural phenomena. The Advanced Guide reveals deeper supernatural elements and provides systems for interacting with forces that defy normal understanding.

Ancient Powers Uncover and interact with supernatural forces left by previous civilizations:

Artifact Investigation: Discover and safely utilize magical items and devices Sacred Site Exploration: Navigate locations where supernatural forces remain active Spirit Communication: Interact with entities that inhabit special locations Mystical Phenomena: Understand and predict supernatural events and manifestations

Supernatural Allies Build relationships with entities beyond normal human experience:

Guardian Spirits: Earn protection from supernatural guardians of special locations Ancestral Guidance: Communicate with spirits of those who came before Elemental Forces: Gain cooperation from natural forces through proper understanding Divine Intervention: Attract attention from powers that take interest in mortal affairs

Personal Transformation Extended exposure to Wildlands mysteries may change your character in fundamental ways:

Enhanced Abilities: Develop capabilities that exceed normal human limitations Supernatural Senses: Gain perception abilities that reveal hidden truths Mystical Resistance: Build immunity to supernatural threats and influences Spiritual Evolution: Transform your essential nature through mystical experiences

Long-Distance Exploration

The basic guide focuses on establishing security in a limited area. The Advanced Guide opens the entire Wildlands region for exploration, revealing distant wonders and connecting to the broader world beyond.

Extended Expeditions Plan and execute journeys lasting weeks or months:

Expedition Planning: Organize complex logistics for long-distance travel Navigation Mastery: Cross unknown terrain using advanced route-finding techniques Supply Management: Maintain equipment and provisions during extended journeys Team Leadership: Guide and coordinate expedition members with diverse skills

Regional Geography Explore areas far beyond your starting location:

Mountain Kingdoms: Discover isolated communities high in the Ironfang Mountains River Networks: Follow waterways to distant regions and unknown civilizations Coastal Exploration: Travel the shoreline to investigate rumors of other lands Border Regions: Approach the edges of the Wildlands and glimpse the world beyond

Connection to Greater World Link your Wildlands experience to broader continental politics and events:

Trade Route Development: Establish commercial connections with distant civilizations Diplomatic Contact: Serve as ambassador between Wildlands and outside powers Information Networks: Gather intelligence about events affecting the broader region Cultural Exchange: Facilitate contact between isolated Wildlands communities and outside world

Character Legacy Systems

The Advanced Guide provides systems for establishing lasting impact on the Wildlands that extends beyond individual character survival.

Reputation and Influence Build recognition that transcends personal relationships:

Regional Fame: Achieve recognition throughout the Wildlands for specific accomplishments Legendary Status: Become the subject of stories told around Wildlands campfires Historical Impact: Create changes that will affect the region for generations Cultural Integration: Become permanently associated with Wildlands history and identity

Succession Planning Ensure your character's impact continues beyond their individual story:

Apprentice Training: Pass skills and knowledge to the next generation Institution Building: Create organizations that persist beyond individual leadership Cultural Legacy: Establish traditions and customs that become part of Wildlands life Physical Monuments: Build lasting structures that commemorate your achievements

Multi-Generational Campaigns Extend your Wildlands story across decades or centuries:

Family Lines: Play descendants of your original character in the same region Institutional Continuity: Continue stories through organizations you helped establish Regional Development:

Watch the Wildlands evolve through your influence Historical Perspective: Experience long-term consequences of early character decisions

The Advanced Guide transforms Shipwreck in the Wildlands from a survival story into an epic saga of transformation, mastery, and lasting impact. Whether you seek to become a legendary wilderness master, a political leader uniting diverse communities, or an explorer revealing the region's deepest mysteries, the advanced systems provide the tools for stories that span years and leave permanent marks on the Wildlands themselves.

Your survival story was just the beginning. Your legend awaits in the Advanced Guide.

Coming Soon: Shipwreck in the Wildlands - Advanced Survival Guide

Take your wilderness mastery to the next level with expanded systems for combat, crafting, politics, magic, and exploration that transform individual survival into regional transformation. Available [Publication Date].