

Guidebook for the Savage Lands

Julian Day

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1 Introduction

You wake up. Your head throbs, and your clothes drip with saltwater. Around you lie a few pieces of driftwood, the sight of which triggers a series of memories: a ship-journey from your homeland, full of promise; storm clouds on the horizon, roiling and swirling; and the screams of the sailors on the deck above as the storm caught the ship in its fury, tearing it apart without mercy.

Somehow, you survived, clinging to several planks that miraculously remained joined to form a small raft. And just as lucky, you still had all your possessions, your backpack balanced precariously at the end of the boards. Drifting over the cold sea, you ate sparingly, and drank even less. Eventually, your water ran out, and, fighting a fever, you drifted into unconsciousness, expecting to awake on the other side.

But it was not to be. You stand on the rocky beaches of a small island, your raft shattered against the rocks. To the north-west, you can see the ruins of some sort of keep or fortification. Closer to you, nestled to the north, is a small village, smoke billowing from the short chimneys of the sod huts. On the eastern outskirts, you can see a graveyard, and beyond that, a small orchard. And at the south-eastern tip of the island, some sort of rocky outcropping holding out against the sea.

You left in search of adventure: monsters were returning, creatures of myth and legend becoming startlingly real. Your friends set sail a year earlier, carrying their possessions on their backs, seeking their fame and fortune. You said your goodbyes, certain that, for one reason or another, you were unlikely to see them again.

After that year, the wanderlust took you, too. You took what you could carry, selling the rest. A small sailing ship offered passage for a handful of ivories, so long as you stayed out of the way. You jumped at the opportunity, and now you stand, dripping and exhausted, on the shores of a place so small you don't recognize it from any map.

The world is huge, and this is but a small island. But first things first: you need to find a boat.

2 Your Character

Characters in *Savage Lands* are created by selecting a sex, race, class, and deity. A character's sex is purely for flavour, and has no effect on gameplay. But a creature's race and class are much more important. They determine starting statistics, skills, and equipment, and have a large impact on the difficulty of the game. The choice of deity will one day become important, but for now, all deities behave the same and so it does not matter which one is selected.

2.1 Races

The races of *Savage Lands* range from diminutive to massive, and each race has its own strengths and weaknesses. Some make great warriors, while some are better suited for magic or thievery; there are others that are more neutral and can work with any class. The races of *Savage Lands* are listed below.

- **Humans** live throughout the world, in the centre lands, on islands large and small, making their homes in cities and settlements, outposts and camps. They are short and tall, fair and dark, settled and nomadic, but always adaptive, always resourceful, and always able to make the most of any situation. **Initial Skills:** Boating, Carrying, Detection, Fishing, Foraging, Hiding, Swimming, Short Blades, Bludgeons, Daggers, Spears, Rocks, Slings.
- **Wood Elves** retreated into the forests millennia ago, building their civilizations in the treetops and branches. Within the woods, they blend in with their surroundings, their clothing dyed deep shades of green and brown. Wood Elves are skilled archers, and are known for their devotion to swordsmanship. **Initial Skills:** Archery, Awareness, Carrying, Detection, Forest Lore, Herbalism, Night Sight, Swimming, Long Blades, Bows.
- **Mountain Elves** live high up in the mountains, far above the rest of the world. They are stockier than other elves, and even many humans, fortified by a life in the thin, cold air. Mountain Elves typically wear animal skins, and craft weapons out of the tools at hand, making use of stone, animal bones, and the little wood at hand. **Initial Skills:** Archery, Awareness, Carrying, Detection, Mountain Lore, Mountaineering, Night Sight, Spelunking, Swimming, Bludgeons, Rocks, Slings.
- **Snakelings** are the product of black magic, wielded by some unknown sorcerer many thousands of years ago to fuse man and serpent. The resultant creatures horrified the world: standing nearly as tall as men, the creatures have the scales and head of an enormous snake, with the remaining features human in appearance. Cast to the fringes of the world, Snakelings band together in fens and marshes, hunting under darkness with barbed spears and javelins, generations of isolation filling their minds with a black and heavy hate. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Boating, Carrying, Detection, Marsh Lore, Night Sight, Swimming, Spears, Thrown Spears.
- **Fae** are the remnants of the so-called faerie folk that lived in the world far before the elves. They require neither food nor drink, but enjoy both, holding great feasts deep within ancient forests. Time has brought down the Fae, and few remain. Those that do tend to travel together in caravans through the most inhospitable of terrain, keeping their company close and blocking out the rest of the world. Fae are stealthy tricksters, and tremendously skilled with magic. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Carrying,

Detection, Escape, Forest Lore, Herbalism, Magic, Night Sight, Stealth, Daggers.

- **Dwarves** live deep within mountains, far below the naturally-occurring caverns and caves that serve as the entranceways. They carve their cities from the rock itself, and mine the mountains for its ore. They are short, about two-thirds the size of men, but stocky, and disproportionately strong. Dwarves are skilled with axes, hammers and crossbows. **Initial Skills:** Carrying, Detection, Disarm Traps, Mountain Lore, Night Sight, Smithing, Spelunking, Axes, Bludgeons, Crossbows.
- **Goblins** are short, cunning humanoids with sharp features and sharper teeth. They live in small tribes on the outer islands, though recently they have been spotted closer and closer to the centre lands. Despite their smaller size, they are ferocious creatures, afraid of nothing. They wear ratty, tattered clothing, and are skilled with their sharp, curved blades. **Initial Skills:** Carrying, Detection, Disarm Traps, Dungeoneering, Escape, Hiding, Stealth, Swimming, Short Blades, Thrown Daggers, Slings
- **Ogres** are huge and thickly-built, with the strength of many men. Though they are often seen with goblins, and share those creatures fierce nature, they are not nearly as intelligent. Ogres make up for this with a tremendous strength and fortitude. They are often seen wearing scraps of armour plundered from their kills, and prefer great clubs and hammers above all else. **Initial Skills:** Carrying, Combat, Detection, Foraging, Hunting, Intimidation, Skinning, Tanning, Bludgeons.
- **Giants** are even older than the elves, and warred with the faerie folk when the world was still young. Massive and tremendously strong, they stand twice as tall as the tallest man. They live in the outer reaches of the world, where their settlements are constantly under attack by goblins and ogres, whom they hate. Giants prefer large, stone clubs, though when these are unavailable, a small tree will often do. **Initial Skills:** Carrying, Combat, Detection, Intimidation, Mountain Lore, Bludgeons, Rods and Staves, Thrown Bludgeons.
- **Gnomes** are tiny creatures that live in caverns and caves, and have since recorded time. They stand even shorter than dwarves, and are much less strong. They are intelligent and quick; gnomes love riddles and puzzles, and have a deep affinity for magic. In combat, they prefer knives, daggers, and small swords. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Carrying, Detection, Disarm Traps, Dungeoneering, Mountain Lore, Spelunking, Short Blades, Daggers, Rocks.

In addition to these races, there are a number of additional races not available to player characters: animal, construct, demon, divine, dragon, humanoid, insect, jelly, monster, plant, undead, and spirit.

2.2 Classes

A character's class represents its background or occupation. There are many possibilities: powerful warriors, mighty wizards, holy pilgrims; but also skilled smiths and artisans, street-hardened pugilists, and the ubiquitous adventurer. Class influences a character's starting statistics and equipment, and grants its own set of initial skills.

- **Adventurers** travel the world, seeking to make money and a name for themselves. While they lack the raw strength of Warriors, the stealth and cunning of Thieves, or the great learning of Wizards, they nonetheless have characteristics of all three, and are well-prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Boating, Dungeoneering, Escape, Fishing, Foraging, Hiding, Jumping, Spelunking, Stealth, Short Blades, Long Blades, Bludgeons, Daggers, Spears.
- **Apothecaries** prepare potions, salves, and remedies, assisting physicians by providing their medical materials. This training gives apothecaries a practical knowledge of medicine and healing. In addition, many dabble in hedge magic and cantrips, providing some practical magical knowledge while remaining focused on the duties of their trade. Apothecaries start with a complete knowledge of potions. **Initial Skills:** Bargaining, Brewing, Cantrips, Carrying, Herbalism, Literacy, Medicine, Papercraft, Scribing, Bludgeons.
- **Archers** are combatants skilled with ranged weapons such as bows, slings, and crossbows. While others can also learn these weapons effectively, Archers can maintain their accuracy over much greater distances. Though they possess some of the skill of Warriors in close combat, their focus is on ending the danger before it gets too close. **Initial Skills:** Archery, Awareness, Bowyer, Detection, Escape, Fletchery, Hiding, Jumping, Daggers, Bows, Crossbows, Rocks, Slings, Thrown Spears.
- **Artisans** are creative folk who craft jewellery, clothing, and other useful items. With training, they can focus their efforts and craft truly spectacular creations. Artisans learn their trade after apprenticing to a master crafter for many years, and with their training complete, are finally ready to make their way. **Initial Skills:** Bargaining, Carrying, Crafting, Detection, Jeweler, Papercraft, Scribing, Skinning, Tanning, Weaving, Daggers.
- **Merchants** travel from place to place, always looking to sell their wares. In their travels, they learn a great many things about their merchandise, and are experts at identification. Each merchant begins his or her travels with encyclopedic knowledge of one of the following pairs of categories: wands and potions, rings and amulets, or scrolls and spellbooks. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Bargaining, Cantrips, Carrying, Detection, Herbalism, Jeweler, Lore, Bludgeons, Whips.

- **Minstrels** are itinerant musicians. They are instrumentalists and singers, learned in the rudiments of almost any form of music. Others find them quite charismatic and charming. Minstrels are often able to stir and sway their audiences on the strength of a particularly good performance. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Detection, Hiding, Leadership, Literacy, Lore, Music, Scribing, Stealth, Daggers.
- **Nobles** are born of privilege and money. Lords and Ladies, Kings and Queens, Thanes and Chiefs; all are examples of the fortunate nobility. A life free from hard labour allows nobles to focus their efforts on leadership and military training, to better lead their people to victory. **Initial Skills:** Boating, Detection, Escape, Herbalism, Intimidation, Leadership, Literacy, Religion, Scribing, Swimming, Short Blades, Long Blades, Bows, Crossbows.
- **Oracles** possess a keen sense of the future and present, and can see things that others can't: happiness, true love, long life; but also hexes, illnesses, and death. As favoured creatures of fate, they are immune to bad luck and curses. Their predictions have an almost unfailing accuracy, which causes Oracles to be both respected and feared. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Blind Fighting, Cantrips, Detection, Literacy, Magic, Night Sight, Papercraft, Religion, Scribing, Rods and Staves, Mystic Magic.
- **Pilgrims** are devout followers and messengers of the divine. They seek enlightenment through travel, devotion, and prayer. They carry their life on their back, travelling from place to place, rarely staying long. They are favoured by the Nine, who grant them the ability to learn divine mysteries written down by monks and priests throughout the ages. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Detection, Dungeoneering, Herbalism, Literacy, Lore, Magic, Religion, Scribing, Swimming, Bludgeons, Spears, Divine Magic.
- **Pugilists** are fighters who focus solely on unarmed combat, relying on their fists and instincts to get them out of trouble. Quick-witted and nimble, they eschew the trappings of any armour heavy enough to hinder their movements. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Blind Fighting, Combat, Detection, Dungeoneering, Foraging, Intimidation, Stealth, Swimming, Unarmed.
- **Rovers** are solitary figures who spend the majority of their lives in the wild. At home far from civilization, rovers can be found in the highest peaks, deepest forests, and darkest caves. They spurn a life of comfort and prefer instead a life outdoors, surviving in the most inhospitable parts of the world. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Beastmastery, Bowyer, Desert Lore, Detection, Fishing, Fletchery, Foraging, Forest Lore, Herbalism, Hiding, Hunting, Leadership, Marsh Lore, Mountain Lore, Mountaineering, Skinning, Swimming, Tanning, Axes, Bows, Rocks, Slings.

- **Sages** are scholars. They study the seen and unseen to the exclusion of all else. Sages are thin and frail. Living alone, they often withdraw from society to devote their lives to study. As they increase their knowledge and edge closer to enlightenment, they gain access to the arcane and divine, the mystic and the primordial. **Initial Skills:** Brewing, Cantrips, Detection, Herbalism, Literacy, Lore, Magic, Papercraft, Religion, Scribing, Weaving, Arcane Magic, Divine Magic, Mystic Magic, Primordial Magic.
- **Seafarers** are drawn to the open water. They make their living traveling the rivers and oceans, spurning a life on land. The weather hardens them, and they are better able to withstand the rigors of cold. Fishers, pirates, and sailors are all examples of Seafarers. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Boating, Combat, Detection, Fishing, Foraging, Marsh Lore, Oceanography, Skinning, Swimming, Tanning, Spears.
- **Shepherds** are among the weakest and most lowly in society. Tending to their flocks, or those of others, they live at the fringes of civilization, eeking out a living from the land. They are not strong in combat, nor with magic, but some have said they enjoy a special status with the divine. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Detection, Fishing, Foraging, Herbalism, Skinning, Swimming, Tanning, Rods and Staves.
- **Smiths** are artisans of iron and steel. Using their bellows, hammers, and anvils, they are able to improve upon weapons and armour, able to turn the most mediocre example into a masterpiece. From spending a lifetime in front of the forge, they are bothered little by great heat. **Initial Skills:** Bargaining, Carrying, Combat, Detection, Fishing, Intimidation, Mountain Lore, Skinning, Smithing, Tanning, Bludgeons.
- **Thieves** are nimble and fleet of foot. They specialize in the redistribution of wealth, either to themselves, or to others. Loosely organized into guilds, they learn early on how to pick pockets, open locks, scale walls, and deal with traps. It is said that they are so stealthy that their nefarious activities, such as graverobbing, are hidden from the Nine themselves. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Carrying, Detection, Disarm Traps, Dual Wield, Escape, Hiding, Hunting, Jumping, Spelunking, Stealth, Thievery, Short Blades, Daggers, Thrown Daggers.
- **Warriors** include soldiers, barbarians, nomads, and sell-swords. Some learn their skills by military training, while others learn simply through survival. Coming from many walks of life, they all have skill in close combat. **Initial Skills:** Blind Fighting, Boating, Bowyer, Carrying, Combat, Detection, Fletchery, Hunting, Intimidation, Swimming, Axes, Bludgeons, Daggers, Rods and Staves, Spears, Unarmed, Whips, Bows, Rocks.
- **Witchlings** practice a primordial, chaotic magic. From a young age, they find themselves able to channel the latent energies of the world. Misunderstood and often marginalized, Witchlings often live apart from society, separated by the blessing and curse of their abilities. **Initial Skills:**

Awareness, Brewing, Cantrips, Detection, Foraging, Forest Lore, Herbalism, Literacy, Lore, Magic, Marsh Lore, Scribing, Swimming, Whips, Primal Magic.

- **Wizards** are students of the arcane. Often apprenticing at a young age, they spend years reading ancient tomes, learning spellcraft, brewing potions, and imbuing wands and staves with magical powers. They are often seen in the company of some sort of familiar. **Initial Skills:** Awareness, Brewing, Cantrips, Detection, Herbalism, Literacy, Lore, Magic, Paper-craft, Scribing, Weaving, Daggers, Arcane Magic.

2.3 Deities

There are nine deities within the world of *Savage Lands*, collectively referred to simply as, “the Nine”. Though the motives and actions of the divine can never be neatly categorized by mortal men, it is believed that three are largely good, three remain neutral, and three are deeply evil.

2.3.1 The Good

- Empress of the Heavens, **Celeste** created the universe, crafting the galaxies and stars. She watches the world from high above, where centuries pass like seconds. Her domains are magic and creation. Throughout the existence of the universe, she has waged countless battles against the horrors of Scaedugenga. Celeste grants her worshippers +1 Intelligence.
- Appearing to his followers as a great knight armoured in shining plate and wielding a flaming blade, **Aurelion** governs strength, chivalry, and honourable combat. He is husband of The Lady, and is in constant struggle with the forces of black Urgoth. Followers of Aurelion gain +1 Strength.
- Wife of Aurelion, **The Lady** is seen in the form of an impossibly beautiful and radiant woman. She loves life, love, light, and music. The Lady is the kindest and gentlest of the pantheon, and bestows +1 Charisma to her worshippers.

2.3.2 The Neutral

- After Celeste created the heavens, **Vedere** created the world itself. It was by his will that the mountains were raised. The forests and grasslands are his, as are the lakes and seas, the deserts and marshes. Itinerant wanderers and those who live off the land are often worshippers of Vedere, who protects his followers by granting +1 Health.
- Once Vedere created the world, he made **Voros** its protector. Voros lives deep within the molten core, a monstrous red wyrm, breathing gases and lava from his massive jaws. Voros is often worshipped by the dwarves, and

others who live deep within the earth. Those who revere him receive +1 Strength.

- Appearing as a cloaked figure accompanied by a crow, **The Trickster** wanders the world of men, bending probability wherever he goes. He acts as an agent of neutrality. By his deeds, The Trickster balances the gains of order and chaos. His blessing grants +1 Agility.

2.3.3 The Evil

- A withered, twisted figure, **Shiver** takes the form of a bent and haggard crone. She comes in winter, on cold winds: her presence casts a pall over the landscape, a deathly chill that cannot be lifted. To her followers, she grants +1 Willpower.
- The Black Ogre, **Urgoth**, feeds off anger, rage, and hate. He seeks the destruction of all things good and holy, and leads his hordes of chaos in an ongoing struggle against Aurelion's forces. Those loyal to Urgoth receive +1 Strength.
- A teeming black horror as old as time itself, **Sceadugenga** lurks in the blackest corners of the universe, held back by the power of the rest of the pantheon. He seeks nothing less than the destruction of all creation, culminating with the deaths of all the other gods. His name is considered ill even to speak. His few followers practice in utmost secrecy, and can be identified by a bleeding black mark on their foreheads. Sceadugenga's minions receive +1 Intelligence.

It is said that, upon hearing the prayers of the most pious and devout, that the worshipped deity may decide to crown that mortal as a holy champion, providing fortification against damage and bestowing a gift of great power.

2.4 Alignment

The three alignments are Good, Neutral, and Evil. These represent sets of values that the ancient philosophers formalized in an attempt to categorize all creation.

- **Good** and the concept of "goodness" encompass those who treat others well; who have a respect for life and dignity, and those around them; and who will attempt to help others, even at a cost to themselves.
- **Evil** creatures range from the narcissistic and self-centered to the diabolical. Those who are evil lack respect for others, putting their own interests at the fore, and have few compunctions about harming others to get their own way; indeed, for some, maiming, torturing, and killing are the whole of their interests.

- **Neutral**, or unaligned, refers to those creatures and people who stand outside the neat dichotomy of good and evil. Some are mindless and unthinking: slimes, low animals, and so on, who are incapable of making moral decisions and live in a state of nature. Others are intelligent and rational creatures who make a conscientious decision to live apart from good and evil, making moral decisions only as they must. The Neutral alignment describes all of these.

A character's initial alignment is determined by the deity selected at character creation.

2.5 Statistics

A character's statistics influence many things: its ability to land or dodge blows, its hardness, its ability to deal damage or learn spells, and many other things. Statistics are displayed at the bottom of the screen

2.5.1 Primary Statistics

There are seven primary statistics: Strength, Dexterity, Agility, Health, Intelligence, Willpower, and Charisma. These have an impact on many different calculations and outcomes within the game, and are described in detail below.

- **Strength** determines how strong a character is. It affects weapon damage, as well as the ability to hit with large weapons such as great swords and huge hammers.
- **Dexterity** represents a character's physical control, and is used to determine the ability to hit with most melee and ranged weapons.
- **Agility** is a character's nimbleness, and allows it to more easily dodge attacks and other dangers.
- **Health** is a measure of a character's toughness or hardness. It affects how much damage the character can take before dying, as well as helping to resist certain unwanted statuses.
- **Intelligence** affects the ability of a character to successfully learn spells, and the number of spells that can be cast before exhaustion.
- **Willpower** also affects the ability of a character to learn certain spells. It also has an impact on the number of spells that the character can cast before exhaustion, but to a lesser degree than Intelligence.
- **Charisma** determines how easily the character sways or influences others, and also impacts whether monsters are generated as initially hostile or not.

2.5.2 Secondary Statistics

Secondary statistics are much more focused than primary statistics, and tend to have much more specific uses.

- **Evade** is used to determine whether a creature successfully avoids an incoming attack.
- **Soak** reduces the amount of damage on a successful attack, removing one point of damage per point of Soak.
- **Speed** determines how quickly a character can attack – the lower the Speed score, the sooner the character can act again.
- **Hit Points** represents a character's capacity for taking damage. When a character's hit points are reduced to 0 or lower, the character is dead.
- **Arcana Points** are a character's ability to cast spells. Each spell has a particular arcana point cost associated with it, so the higher this score, the more spells the creature can cast before exhaustion.

2.6 Skills

2.6.1 General

- **Archery**: Skill with ranged weapons.
- **Awareness†**: General feelings; sixth sense.
- **Bargaining†**: Lower prices in shops.
- **Beastmastery†**: Tame wild creatures.
- **Blindfighting†**: Fight effectively without sight.
- **Boating†**: Skill navigating on the water.
- **Bowyer†**: Craft bows and crossbows.
- **Brewing†**: Brew magic potions and moonshine.
- **Carrying†**: Carry more and heavier items.
- **Combat**: Skill with melee weapons.
- **Crafting†**: Skill at creating magical items.
- **Desert Lore†**: Knowledge of deserts and dunes.
- **Detection**: Sense the unseen, such as nearby traps or creatures.
- **Disarm Traps†**: Disassemble dangerous traps.

- **Dual Wield**†: Fight effectively with two weapons.
- **Dungeoneering**†: Ability to survive in dungeons.
- **Escape**: Flee effectively and squeeze through tight spaces.
- **Fishing**†: Catch and salt fish.
- **Fletchery**†: Create arrows and bolts.
- **Foraging**: Find more food in the wilderness.
- **Forest Lore**†: Knowledge of the woods and forests.
- **Herbalism**†: Forage for useful herbs.
- **Hiding**†: Remain unseen from hostile foes.
- **Hunting**†: Effectively hunt animals large and small.
- **Intimidation**†: Make your foes tremble and quiver.
- **Jeweler**†: Craft rings and amulets.
- **Jumping**†: Leap over obstacles and foes.
- **Leadership**†: Command allies effectively in combat.
- **Literacy**†: Required to learn spells from tomes.
- **Lore**†: ???.
- **Magic**†: Learn spells more effectively.
- **Marsh Lore**†: Knowledge about swamps and fens.
- **Medicine**†: Naturally heal wounds faster.
- **Mountain Lore**†: Knowledge of mountain features.
- **Mountaineering**: Skill at climbing tall peaks.
- **Music**†: Sway with songs and instruments.
- **Night Sight**†: Ability to see in low-light conditions.
- **Oceanography**†: Knowledge of seas and oceans.
- **Papercraft**†: Creation of paper from natural materials.
- **Religion**†: Knowledge of the Nine and their ways.
- **Scribing**†: Creation of scrolls and books.
- **Skinning**: Make useful skins from dead creatures.

- **Smithing**: Create and improve melee weapons.
- **Spelunking**[†]: Move through tight spaces with ease.
- **Stealth**[†]: Move about without being heard.
- **Swimming**: Swim through water without drowning.
- **Tanning**[†]: Turn skins into useful armour.
- **Thievery**[†]: Redistribute wealth towards yourself.
- **Weaving**: Create cloaks and clothing.

[†] – Not implemented yet.

2.6.2 Melee Weapons

All melee weapons can be categorized as one of the following weapon skills: **Axes, Short Blades, Long Blades, Bludgeons, Daggers, Rods and Staves, Spears, Unarmed, Whips, Exotic.**

2.6.3 Ranged Weapons

All ranged weapons can be categorized as one of the following ranged weapon skills: **Thrown Axes, Thrown Blades, Thrown Bludgeons, Bows, Crossbows, Thrown Daggers, Rocks, Slings, Thrown Spears, Exotic Ranged.**

2.6.4 Magic

There are four spheres of magic, which encompass all the magics of the world. These are:

- **Arcane**: Ancient powers harnessed by long-past civilizations, written down in an ancient Runic language. Arcane magic is broad, having elemental, restorative, protective, and many other types of spells. The language used to record Arcane magic is incredibly old and complicated. It requires heavy study itself, and thus the secrets of the Arcane are known only to a small few.
- **Divine**: The secrets of the Nine, written down by sages and scholars in ancient, hide-bound tomes. Divine magic is largely protective and restorative, cloaking the caster in the light and darkness of the Nine. Though it is recorded in the Runic script, the words themselves are those of the titans and archangels, gifted in dreams only to the most devout and holy.
- **Mystic**: Mystic magic allows the seer to glimpse the future in tiny glances, seeing things just before they happen: terrible afflictions, petrification, blindness, dumbness. Mystic magic, like Arcane, is written in the ancient Runic script, though its secrets are difficult to understand except for the rare folk with the gift for far sight.

- **Primordial:** Primordial magic, often referred to simply as “shadow magic”, harnesses the raw chaotic powers of the universe. It is not written down; rather, it is wielded instinctively. Primordial magic is deeply offensive, allowing its user to unleash inky black flames and roiling chaos.
- **Cantrips:** Minor magical spells. Cantrips encompass a broad spectrum of spells, from the attacking to the healing. They are relatively easy to learn, not being written in Old Runic, but they are also less effective than their counterparts in the other spheres of magic, and more expensive to cast.

2.7 Resistances

In *Savage Lands*, there are many different kinds of dangers. Bandits carry cheap knives and swords. Ogres and trolls wield massive wooden clubs. Dragons breath infernal flames, and wizards cast ancient spells. These are all represented by different damage types, and every creature is affected differently, based on race, class, current equipment, and the currently in-force spells.

All creatures in the game, not just the player’s character, have a set of resistances. Some creatures may be almost invincible when attacked with certain damage types, and may be deeply vulnerable to others.

The different damage types follow, with an example of how they are used in-game.

- **Slash:** swords, axes, etc.
- **Pierce:** daggers, spears, etc.
- **Pound:** clubs, maces, etc.
- **Heat:** fire-based spells, dragon breath, fiery weapons, etc.
- **Cold:** ice-based spells, certain undead/astral creatures, etc.
- **Acid:** certain jellies and slimes, insects, demons, etc.
- **Poison:** certain snakes and reptiles, sea creatures, demons, etc.
- **Holy:** divine magics, holy creatures, etc.
- **Shadow:** primordial magics, certain undead/astral creatures, etc.
- **Arcane:** arcane magics, certain demons, etc.
- **Lightning:** lightning-based spells, certain holy creatures, etc.

The list above is intentionally incomplete – there are many different creatures scattered throughout the world, and a well-prepared character should have preparations in place for many different possibilities, not just the most common.

3 The World

Each game of *Savage Lands* starts off on Little Island, a tiny piece of land at the edge of the world home to the people that populate Isen Dun (literally “Iron Hill”), a village perched atop a large hill. At the northern edge of the island is an old set of ruins, while an ancient stone stair sits at the southern tip.

3.1 Starting Out

Isen Dun is full of friendly inhabitants, and is a great place to start out. The ploughman maintains a public garden in the village green for the needy, and there are a number of NPCs (non-player characters) that have quests that the player can try out. But be careful — some of these quests are much more dangerous than others!

3.2 Non-Player Characters

NPCs fall into two categories:

- Those that want to kill you.
- Those that don’t want to kill you.

Philosophers have argued this dichotomy for years, and the more Hobbesian believe that the second category could simply be termed “those that don’t want to kill you just yet.” Debate rages.

Those that want to kill you should either be avoided, or destroyed, depending on your preference and the general difficulty of the thing bearing down on you. You can get a general feel for creature difficulty by using the look command (see Commands), and then hovering over another creature. In addition to telling you what the creature is, the look command will give an indication of the creature’s level, relative to yours.

3.3 Combat

The world is a dangerous place. The outer lands are home to Snakelings, Goblins, and Ogres. Monsters, formerly the stuff of ancient myth, have begun to appear once more. And priests of the dark three stalk the world like shadows, snatching the weak and unwary for blood sacrifices. What’s an adventurer to do?

Combat is a popular option.

3.3.1 General Rules

The basic internal rules for combat are:

1. Generate the “target number” - a combination of the attacker’s weapon difficulty, weapon skill, target’s evade, and other considerations.

2. Roll 1d100.
 - If the roll is 5 or less, the attack automatically misses.
 - Otherwise, if the d100 roll plus modifiers is greater than the target number, the attack is considered a hit.
 - When the d100 roll is 96–99, the attack is a *mighty blow*.
 - When the d100 roll is 100, the attack is a *critical hit*.
3. Roll damage.
 - For a regular hit, a random value is rolled using the attack's damage dice.
 - For a mighty blow, the maximum damage is taken.
 - For a critical hit, the maximum damage is taken.
4. Consider resistances. Multiply the damage by the creature's resistance to that damage type.
5. If the attack is a slaying attack that affects the creature based on its race, double the damage. Typically only certain artifact weapons will grant slaying against a race or family of races.
6. Subtract the defending creature's Soak score. For a regular hit or mighty blow, the full Soak is subtracted. For a critical hit, only a quarter of the Soak is subtracted.

3.3.2 Melee Combat

Melee combat encompasses attacking barehanded, or with a hand-held weapon. After rolling the d100 to hit, bonuses are added based on the creature's Combat score and skill in the given weapon. Additionally, if the weapon is particularly heavy, a bonus is added based on the creature's Strength score. If the weapon is not particularly heavy, or if the creature is attacking without a weapon, a bonus is added based on the creature's Dexterity. For light weapons, a penalty is applied based on drunkenness. This penalty is not applied for heavy weapons, where brute strength, not finesse, powers the blow.

3.3.3 Ranged Combat

Ranged combat adds a bonus based on the creature's Archery skill, rather than Combat, adds a bonus based on the weapon skill, and then adds a bonus based on Dexterity. A penalty is applied based on drunkenness.

3.3.4 Magical Combat

Magical combat (e.g., attacking with a Wizard's or Witchling's spells) adds bonuses based on the Magic skill and the creature's Intelligence score. Penalties are applied based on drunkenness and level of burden.

3.4 Quests

But not everything in the world wants to kill you. Some NPCs are capable of granting quests. Quests are unlocked by having the appropriate pre-requisites, and then talking to a particular NPC. Quests will show up in the list of quests (see Commands). When quests are completed, a reward is typically given — an item, skill training, etc. Quests typically provide rewards that help much more than the random items found on the dungeon floor, but tend to be dangerous, and should be taken with caution.

4 Commands

4.1 Movement and Attacking

Move using number keys, vi keys, or arrow keys. Attempting to move into a creature's tile will either attack it, if the creature is hostile, or else prompt for confirmation to attack, switch places, or squeeze past.

| | | |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 7, y | 8, k, ↑ | 9, u |
| 4, h ← | 5, s, . | 6, l, → |
| 1, b | 2, j ↓ | 3, n |

w Automatic movement

< Ascend on world map tiles, staircases, etc.

> Descend on world map tiles, staircases, etc. On a non-staircase tile, while carrying a shovel, dig.

4.2 Actions

, Pick up item.

d Drop item.

i View equipment and items.

_ Pray.

L Look at any tile currently in view.

f Fire a missile.

D Drink a potion.

r Read a scroll or a book.

\$ Display number of ivory pieces currently on hand.

e Eat a comestible.

- C** Chat with an adjacent creature.
- a** Apply a nearby terrain feature.
- q** List current quests.
- z** Cast ('z'ap) a known spell.
- B** Display bestiary information.
- v** Evoke a wand.
- K** Kick.
- O** Offer a sacrifice while at an altar.
- /** Skin a corpse.
- P** Show the current piety level.
- X** Show experience-related details.

4.3 Leaving the Game

- S** Save the game, then quit.
- Q** Quit the game without saving – the current character will be lost.

4.4 Miscellaneous

- M** View messages in the message buffer.
- W** Melee weapon information.
- R** Ranged weapon information.
- V** Game version details.
- T** Current date and time in-game.
- @** Dump character details to disk.
- F1** Show current resistance information.
- F2** Show current conduct information.
- F11** Execute a Lua statement (debug only)
- F12** Reload Lua scripts and string identifiers.