Player’s Primer

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This book is designed to provide a friendly introduction to various aspects of Rise so you can more easily follow along in your game. However, it is light on specific rules and details. In general, it assumes that you are using a character sheet that someone else in the game is responsible for creating and maintaining. For a more detailed explanation of Rise's rules and character customization, see the separate Comprehensive Codex. The GM will also have a Tome of Guidance, which has advice for running the game and rules for various monsters and challenges that you may face.

What Is Rise?

Rise is a tabletop role-playing game, or TTRPG. In Rise, you play as a specific character in an imaginary universe. Your character can try to do anything you can describe in a world that the game master, or GM, creates. Of course, you won't always succeed. Usually, your character will go on adventures with other characters, each of which is played by other players. Together, you will create and experience a story with the Game Master, or GM, who defines the universe that the player characters inhabit.

How to Play - The Short Version

When you are learning Rise, you should generally focus on roleplaying as your character in a fantasy universe. The GM can provide details about the expected tone of the game and the universe your character inhabits. For example, they should be able to help you understand whether they expect the game to be fundamentally silly, serious, or both. There isn't a correct answer to that sort of stylistic question, but everyone should be on the same page about what they want.

Sometimes, when your character tries to do something particularly interesting, the GM will ask you to roll to see if you succeed. When that happens, roll a ten-sided die, or d10, and tell them the result. They may ask you to add a relevant number based on how good your character is at that thing. If they do, find that statistic on your character sheet and add that number to what you rolled on the d10. Your character will succeed if your result is high enough, and otherwise will fail. The GM will describe what happens in either case.

If you get into combat, you don't need to keep perfect track of what the other players are doing. Just be able to describe what your character wants to do when the GM asks, such as attacking or running away. You may take damage from enemy attacks. Damage reduces your character's hit points. If those reach zero, your character may become vitally wounded. Try to avoid that.

Attacking is basically the same as taking any other action with a chance of failure. Generally, you'll have at least one ability on your character sheet that does damage. You roll d10, add a relevant number, and see if it is high enough. If you succeed with the attack, you'll generally roll damage. Damage is the only common roll in Rise that doesn't always use a d10. Your character sheet should tell you what dice you roll to deal damage.

That's the absolute minimum information you really need to get started, as long as you have a helpful GM and fellow players. Over time, you'll get used to playing your character, both in terms of their personality and in terms of the rules. If you want to learn more about how Rise works, you can keep reading!

Chapter 2

How to Play

Saying What Your Character Does

There are two basic modes that you can use to describe how your character acts. You can describe in general terms what you want them to do, and let the GM figure out how to translate that into game mechanics. Alternately, you can say that you're using a specific ability or game mechanic, and let the GM figure out how that affects the narrative universe.

Either approach is generally reasonable. Some people tend to prefer using one mode more often, and some GMs generally prefer to hear one mode. When in doubt, communicate at your table!

Describing Actions

With this style of communication, you describe what you want your character to do. For example, you can say that your character steps out of their room in the inn and walks over to knock on a friend's door. Although Rise has rules that could govern some aspects of that scenario, such as an Awareness check to see if your friend notices you knocking, you wouldn't usually reference those rules explicitly. Even in the unlikely scenario that your friend doesn't notice you knock the first time, you can just knock again, so there's no point in worrying about the details. If something seems reasonable, it probably is, and you don't need to worry about the fiddly bits.

Sometimes, when you describe what your character tries to do, the action has a narratively relevant chance of failure. Instead of knocking on the door to say hi, you might only have time to bang on it once to warn your sleeping friend about an attack from assassins. In that case, there's some chance that your friend is sleeping too deeply to notice the noise the first time you knock. You could try knocking again, just like in the first scenario, but in this scenario that failure would cost you valuable time to survive the attack. In that scenario, you would roll a die to determine whether you succeed in your action - or in this case, whether your friend would succeed in their attempt to notice you.

Using Specific Abilities

Instead of describing broadly what you want to have happen, you might choose one of a list of clearly defined abilities that your character can use. Every character has specific abilities unique to them, such as a wizard's spells or a fighter's maneuvers. There are also a number of simple abilities that anyone can use, such as the grapple or trip abilities. These universal abilities attempt to adequately describe a wide variety of reasonable improvised actions that you might try to use in combat.

Explicitly defined abilities have rules for determining what happens when you use them. Some abilities, such as attacks in combat, require rolling dice to determine how effective they are. You can use your character's abilities at any time, not just in combat. Abilities such as the create water or distant hand spells can be used to solve other kinds of problems entirely.

Rolling Dice

When you need to determine whether something succeeds or fails, you roll a die. This can happen as part of using a specific ability that tells you exactly what to roll, or because you tried to narrate your character taking an action that has a dramatically relevant chance of failure. In either case, you'll roll a single ten-sided die, also known as 1d10. You'll add some modifier that represents how skilled your character is at the particular thing that they are trying to do. At the GM's discretion, they may also give the roll an extra bonus or penalty based on the circumstances that your character is in. If your die roll is high enough, your character succeeds at whatever they were trying to do. Otherwise, your character fails, which may sometimes have additional consequences.

In Rise, it's entirely possible for characters to be so skilled that they succeed at what they are trying to do even if you roll a 1. Likewise, there are tasks that are so obviously impossible for your character that they cannot possibly succeed. In those cases, there's no reason to roll! Of course, the GM is the final arbiter of whether rolling is necessary. They may have information that the players do not.

In some cases, you roll multiple dice at once. This generally happens when you deal damage in combat. A collection of dice is called a dice pool. Dice pools are written with the number of dice, followed by "d", followed by the size of dice to roll. For example, 2d6 means you roll two six-sided dice.

Making Checks

A check is a roll that you make to try to accomplish a task. For example, climbing a wall or remembering an obscure piece of trivia

may require a check. Unlike an attack, the difficulty of a check is not measured by the defense of another creature or object. Instead, it depends on the task itself.

To make a check, roll 1d10 and add your modifier with the check. You compare that result to a difficulty value that represents the difficulty of the task. The more difficult the task, the higher the difficulty value will be. If your result is equal to or higher than the difficulty value, the check succeeds. This usually means you accomplish a task successfully. Otherwise, the check fails. This usually means that nothing happens, though sometimes there are specific consequences for failure.

Critical Success

If your check result is at least 10 higher than the difficulty value, your check is a critical success. Some checks have a special effect on a critical success. For example, a critical success while climbing means you move twice as quickly.

Standard Difficulty Values

Most checks are made against a fixed difficulty value that represents how hard the task is. Detailed rules for determining difficulty values in specific circumstances can be found in the Expanded Skills chapter from the Tome of Guidance. However, most of the time, it's not worth the effort to consult charts and tables to figure out how hard a task is. Instead, you can estimate it based on the guidelines below.

- Easy (DV 0): Only an exceptionally incompetent or impaired person could possibly fail a DV 0 check. For example, this includes walking on rough ground without tripping (Balance) or noticing that a yelling, red-faced person is angry (Social Insight).
- Average (DV 5): A typical human with no relevant skills should still succeed at a DV 5 check without much issue. However, it would be possible to fail in a stressful situation where time is limited if the person had no relevant training. For example, this includes climbing a ladder (Climb) or hearing the topic of a nearby conversation in a crowded bar (Awareness).
- Hard (DV 10): A typical human with no relevant skills might succeed at a DV 10 check, but only if they were very lucky or had a lot of time on their hands. An experienced practicioner might fail infrequently in stressful circumstances, but a world-class expert would never fail. For example, this includes swimming in fast-moving water (Swim) or providing first aid to mitigate a barely lethal wound (Medicine).
- Very Hard (DV 15): Only an experienced practicioner could succeed at a DV 15 check, and they would still need to get lucky if they were in a rush. Even a world-class expert at the peak of real-world human potential could fail, but only rarely. For example, this includes picking a well-made lock (Devices) or holding your breath for eight minutes while staying still (Endurance).
- Almost Impossible (DV 20): A world-class expert like an Olympic medalist could succeed at a DV 20 check if they were lucky or patient. Succeeding consistently at tasks of this difficulty requires superhuman capabilities. For example, this includes climbing a weathered natural rock wall without equipment (Climb) or squeezing through a space with a diameter of only half a foot (Flexibility).
- Impossible (DV 25+): No real-world human can succeed at a DV 25 check. This sort of feat is only possible for high-level Rise characters who have explicitly surpassed ordinary limitations. For example, this includes running at full speed along a slack rope (Balance) or climbing a sheer glass pane (Climb).

Trying Again

You can think of checks as being broadly divided into two categories: checks that give you information, and checks that cause a change in the world around you. In general, you can retry checks that change your environment indefinitely until you succeed. The only major limiting factor to those checks is that failure sometimes also changes your environment in ways that may punish your failure or make it impossible to retry the check. For example, if you are trying to climb a cliff, you can keep trying until you succeed, but you may take falling damage from falling off while halfway up the cliff.

You generally cannot retry checks that give you information unless the situation changes in a way that is relevant to your check. This generally means that you must learn new information before making the check again. For example, if you've already examined a creature to determine whether they are disguised, you can't keep just keep staring that creature to make sure. However, if you splash the creature with water which washes away some makeup, you can try again now that you have more information.

In addition, checks that require a free action to make can never be made more than once for the same purpose within a round.

Opposed Checks

An opposed check involves multiple creatures competing to get the highest result. In case of a tie, all tied creatures roll again to break the tie. Usually, the creature with the highest result succeeds, while all other creatures either fail completely or simply succeed less effectively depending on the situation.

Some opposed checks involve multiple creatures using the same skill to see who does the best job. For example, a climbing race up a wall might involve each participant rolling a Climb check, or you might make a Strength check to hold a door closed while another creature tries to shove it open. Alternately, it can involve creatures rolling opposite skills. For example, if you are trying to hide, you roll a Stealth check opposed by the Awareness check of any creatures who could notice you.

Not all opposed checks require all participants to roll at the same time. For example, a creature who creates a disguise rolls the Disguise check at the time that the disguise is created. A creature who tries to notice the disguise would roll their Awareness check at the time they see the disguised creature.

Extended Checks

An extended check is a check that represents your character taking some action over a prolonged period of time. You cannot use abilities like desperate exertion to modify the results of an extended check. If your modifier changes over the course of the task, use your lowest modifier at any point during the task.

Hidden Checks

The GM can always make checks on your character's behalf without telling you. Generally, this is used for observation-based skills. For example, it's very suspicious if the GM tells you to make an Awareness check and then tells you that you don't see anything interesting. One of the ways a GM can avoid that is by simply rolling a check on behalf of your character and only telling you the result if you succeed.

Helping On Checks

You can help an ally make a check. To help an ally, you make a check of the same type against a difficulty value that is 5 lower than the regular difficulty value. This has the same requirements, including time and physical contact, as the check would have if you made it yourself. For example, to help an ally climb a cliff, you must be able to touch your ally to guide them up. Success means that the ally gains a +2 bonus to the check.

Multiple creatures can try to help the same person. At the GM's discretion, there may be a practical limit to how many people can assist with the same task. The bonus from multiple creatures helping does not stack. It just makes it more likely that the helping attempt will succeed.

Checks for Timed Tasks

For every 5 points by which you beat the difficulty value to accomplish a timed task, the time required is usually halved. This only applies for tasks that have a base time requirement of at least one minute, if the GM agrees that it is relevant, and if there are no other specific ways in which your result is improved with higher check results.

Defining the Undefined

This book does not attempt to include specific rules for every aspect of a realistic world. Unless defined otherwise - or if it's not worth the effort to look up Rise's exact rules in the flow of a game - you should assume that the universe works more or less like the real world does, and as long as everyone agrees that something is reasonable, it's not worth worrying about in more detail.

For example, Rise does not have specific rules for how long it takes to eat a meal, the arc that a thrown ball takes through the air, or how much extra weight a well-made chandelier can hold without breaking. It's possible to imagine situations where each of those might be important to a game, however, so you'll have to guess what would be reasonable as obscure situations arise. The Game Master has the final word when defining ambiguities like this.

Resolving Ambiguity

When the rules are ambiguous about how they apply to you and no other creature, you decide how to resolve that ambiguity. For example, if an ability causes you to remove one of your vital wounds, and you have more than one vital wound, you choose which vital wound is removed. When the rules are ambiguous in any other situation, the GM decides how to resolve that ambiguity. This includes situations where multiple creatures are relevant and situations where no particular creature is relevant.

Chapter 3

Characters

In Rise, you play as a character with a variety of unique abilities. This section provides an overview of how characters are defined. It assumes that the GM will provide a character for you or help you make your character. For full details about how to create a character yourself, see the separate Comprehensive Codex.

Species

There are seven common species.

- Human: Common and capable of anything
- Dwarf: Slow and steady, with famous beards
- Elf: Graceful, frail, and extraordinarily long-lived
- Halfling: Short and laid-back
- Kobold: Small and reptilian, with draconic ancestry
- Mixed: Highly variable
- Orc: Strong and intimidating

Attributes

There are six fundamental attributes. A character's attributes have broad effects on many aspects of their statistics.

- Strength: Muscle and physical power
- Dexterity: Hand-eye coordination, agility, and reflexes
- Constitution: Health and stamina
- Intelligence: Learning, reasoning, and versatility
- Perception: Observation, awareness, and precision
- Willpower: Mental resilience and magical potential

Combat Statistics

There are five main combat statistics.

- Accuracy: This affects how likely you are to hit with attacks.
- Defenses: These affect how likely you are to avoid being hit by attacks.
- Hit points: This affects how much damage you can take without suffering vital wounds.
- Injury point: If your hit points drop below your injury point, you are injured. This has no direct effects, but some attacks against you are more effective if you are injured.
- Power: This affects how much damage you deal with attacks. You have two types of power: magical ✨ power and mundane power.

Resources

There are three main resources.

- Attunement points: This affects how many spells and items you can benefit from simultaneously. It typically comes from wearing armor.
- Fatigue: This affects your accuracy and checks. It typically comes from using special abilities.
- Insight points: This affects how many special abilities you know, such as spells and maneuvers.

Narrative Customization

A character also has an alignment, age, appearance, and similar traits that anchor them in the world. Generally, these do not have any mechanical effects, but they are an important part of designing a complete character. For details, see Alignment, page **??**, Personal Appearance, page **??**, and Backgrounds, page **??**.

Classes

Each character has at least one class. A character's class has a significant influence on their special abilities and narrative style. The eleven classes are briefly summarized below.

- Barbarians are primal warriors who draw power from their physical prowess and unfettered emotions.
- Clerics are divine spellcasters who draw power from their veneration of a single deity.
- Druids are nature spellcasters who draw power from their veneration of the natural world.
- Fighters are highly disciplined warriors who excel in physical combat of any kind.
- Monks are agile masters of "ki" who hone their personal abilities to strike down foes and perform supernatural feats.
- Paladins are divinely empowered warriors who exemplify a particular alignment.
- Rangers are skilled hunters who bridge the divide between nature and civilization.
- Rogues are skillful and versatile characters known for their ability to strike at their foe's weak points in combat.

- Sorcerers are arcane spellcasters who draw power from their inherently magical nature.
- Votives are pact spellcasters who draw their power from a dangerous deal made with extraplanar creatures.
- Wizards are arcane spellcasters who study magic to unlock its powerful secrets.

Skills

Skills represent the myriad of talents that people can have, such as cooking or swimming. Each character is trained in a certain number of skills from their class and Intelligence. The twenty-four skills are summarized below.

- Awareness: This represents your ability to observe things which you might otherwise fail to notice.
- Balance: This represents your ability to maintain your balance and poise in difficult circumstances.
- Climb: This represents your ability to climb obstacles.
- Craft: This represents your ability to construct objects from raw materials.
- Creature Handling: This represents your ability to influence non-sapient creatures.
- Deception: This represents your ability to lie or otherwise mislead people without being caught.
- Deduction: This represents your ability to make logical deductions based on evidence.
- Devices: This represents your ability to to manipulate mechanical devices such as locks, traps, and other contraptions.
- Disguise: This represents your ability to create disguises to conceal the appearance of creatures or objects.
- Endurance: This represents your ability to persevere through physical trials.
- Flexibility: This represents your ability to escape bindings and move through small areas by contorting your body.
- Intimidate: This represents your ability to intimidate and coerce people into doing what you want.
- Jump: This represents your ability to jump.
- Knowledge: This represents your understanding of particular aspects of the world.
- Medicine: This represents your practical understanding of how to tend to the wounds of living creatures.
- Perform: This represents your ability to create particular forms of entertainment.
- Persuasion: This represents your ability to convince people to think what you want them to.
- Profession: This represents your practical understanding of a particular profession.
- Ride: This represents your ability to ride and control horses and other mounts.
- Sleight of Hand: This represents your ability to pick pockets, palm objects, and perform other feats of legerdemain.
- Social Insight: This represents your ability to read body language and emotion.
- Stealth: This represents your ability to escape detection while moving or taking large-scale actions.
- Survival: This represents your ability to take care of yourself and others in the wilderness, including the ability to follow tracks.
- Swim: This represents your ability to swim.

Chapter 4

Combat

The world of Rise can be a harsh one, and not all disagreements can be resolved peacefully. At some point, you will be forced to enter combat. This chapter explains how combat works in Rise. The combat rules also generally cover situations where time and precise positioning are important, even if they do not involve violence.

Attacking and Defending

When you use an offensive ability, you will have to make an attack. To make an attack, roll 1d10 and add your accuracy with the attack. That should be written on your character sheet in the attack's description. If you get a 10, add 10 to your result and roll the d10 again, adding the new result to your total. If you get a 10 again, keep rolling until you get a number less than 10, then sum all of the rolls. This is called "exploding".

Your attack result is compared to your target's relevant defense. There are five defenses: Armor, Brawn, Fortitude, Reflex, and Mental. Each attack specifies what defense the target uses to avoid the attack.

There are four possible outcomes for an attack: a critical hit, a regular hit, a glancing blow, and a miss.

- Critical hit: Your attack result is at least 10 higher than the target's defense. A critical hit deals double damage, and may have other special effects.
- Hit: Your attack result meets or exceeds the target's defense. The ability has its normal effect.
- Glancing blow: Your attack result was too low, but only by 1 or 2. The ability deals half damage, and doesn't have any special effects other than damage.
- Miss: Your attack was too low by 3 or more. The ability has no effect unless it specifically says it does.

This process works in the same way when enemies attack you. The GM may ask you what your defenses are when attacking you.

Dealing and Taking Damage

If you hit with a damaging attack, you roll the damage dice for that attack, sum them all together, and tell the GM the result. Many abilities also add a flat amount to the damage result. The GM will track that damage and tell you what effect it had.

When you take damage, the damage reduces your hit points. If your remaining hit points are at or below your injury point, you are injured. Some attacks have detrimental effects on you while you are injured. If you are dealt damage that reduces your hit points below 0, you gain one or more vital wounds.

While you have vital wounds, you suffer penalties based on the wound. If you gain more than one vital wound, you can die. The GM can explain how vital wounds work in more detail if it comes up. Vital wounds can only be removed with an 8 hour rest, or with some rare abilities.

Tracking Time in Combat

Combat takes place in a series of rounds, which represent about six seconds of time. Each round of a combat is divided into two phases: the movement phase and the action phase. After both phases are complete, the round ends and the next round begins.

During the movement phase, everyone can use a move action. Move actions can be used to move, but not to attack. During the action phase, everyone can use a standard action and a minor action. Most abilities require a standard action, including all normal attacks. Minor actions are less common, and are typically used as part of

the text of specific abilities. There are also free actions, which aren't generally used for specific player abilities. You can take any number of free actions during both the movement and action phase.

You and your fellow player characters will take turns during each phase, but you can act in any order among yourselves. The GM might ask each player in turn what they plan to do, or players could decide for themselves what they want to do and tell the GM whenever they have decided. It depends how the GM wants to run the game.

While your characters take actions, your enemies will also take their own actions. Their actions resolve simultaneously with your actions. The GM will typically tell you what your enemies did after all of the players have finished their actions.

Movement

As a move action, your character can move up to their speed along the ground. Most characters have a movement speed of 30 feet, but your character sheet will tell you your speed. You tell the GM which location you want to move to, or which creature you want to move next to. If you move during the action phase, you can sprint, which doubles your movement speed. Enemies will still get a chance to attack you from your original position even if you move during the action phase, so you can't dodge attacks that way.

You might be playing with a gridded battlemap with figures for each character, or you might be just imagining the world. Movement on a grid or hex map is typically more precise and tactical, while purely mental scenes tend to be more loose about exact distances and positioning. As usual, talk to your GM about what you each want from the game.

Universal Combat Abilities

Your character sheet will have some abilities unique to your character written on it. In addition, there are a variety of things that every character can do in the world. These won't generally be written on your sheet explicitly because they are the same for everyone. However, it can be useful to know that they exist. If you find yourself using one of these abilities often, consider adding it to your character sheet.

- Charge: Move and make a strike with a weapon, but suffer a brief −2 penalty to defenses afterwards.
- Desperate Exertion: Reroll any attack or check with a +2 bonus, but you gain two fatigue levels.
- Escape Grapple: Stop being grappled.
- Grapple: Start grappling with a foe.
- Maintain Grapple: Continue grappling with a foe as a free action.
- Recover: Regain half of your maximum hit points and remove all conditions. However, you gain two fatigue levels, and you can only do it once per fight.
- Shove: Push a foe up to half your speed.
- Sprint: Move at double speed. Costs one fatigue during the movement phase, but is free during the action phase.
- Total Defense: Gain a +2 bonus to all defenses this round.
- Throw: Throw a creature or object you're holding.
- Trip: Knock a foe prone *(half speed, −2 Armor and Ref)*.

Using Abilities

Ability Descriptions

Abilities are typically written in the following form:

Ability Name Usage time
Tags: Ability tags, such as Attune or Fire

This section will explain who or what the ability affects, and how those targets are affected. Many abilities cause you to make an attack.

Hit: This describes the effect that the ability has against a target that you successfully hit with it.

Critical hit: If the ability has a special effect on a critical hit, that effect is described here.

Miss: Some abilities still deal half damage even when they miss.

Magical and Mundane Abilities

Every ability is either magical ✨ or mundane. Magical abilities use Willpower to determine their power, while mundane abilities use Strength. If an ability has a ✨ next to its name, it is magical. Otherwise, it is mundane.

Ability Range

Many abilities only work within a particular distance from you. This maximum distance is called the ability's range. There are five common ranges: Short *(30 ft.)* range, Medium *(60 ft.)* range, Long *(90 ft.)* range, Distant *(120 ft.)* range, and Extreme *(180 ft.)* range. Any ability with a range requires both line of sight and line of effect unless otherwise noted.

Line of Sight

You have line of sight to something if you can see it. Glass does not block line of sight, but darkness and fog can.

Line of Effect

You have line of effect to something if you could touch it with a really long pole. Glass blocks line of effect, but darkness and fog do not.

Targeted Abilities

If an ability affects a specific number of creatures or objects, it is called a targeted ability. Targeted abilities require you to have line of sight and line of effect to all targets. Every targeted ability has a range.

Area Abilities

If an ability affects everything of a certain type within an area, it is called an area ability.

Area Types

There are three common area types. If an area's type is not mentioned, it is a burst.

- Burst: Has an immediate effect and then ends.
- Emanation: Has a duration based on a specific creature or object. If the source of the area moves, the area's effect moves with it.
- Zone: Has a duration based on a location. Some zones can be moved after being created, but that movement is not tied to a specific creature or object.

Measuring Areas

Areas are always measured from a point of origin, which must be a grid intersection. An area's size defines the extent to which it extends out from its point of origin, whether as a radius or as a length. All four of a square's corners must be within an area for that square to be in the area.

When using an area ability, you must have line of sight and line of effect to its point of origin. The ability's range measures the maximum distance to its point of origin. If it does not have a range, its point of origin must touch your space.

There are six common area sizes: Tiny *(5 ft.)*, Small *(15 ft.)*, Medium *(30 ft.)*, Large *(60 ft.)*, Huge *(90 ft.)*, and Gargantuan *(120 ft.)*.

There are five common area shapes. If an area's shape is not mentioned, it is a sphere.

- Cone: A 90 degree arc, measured by length. A cone's height is normally 5 feet.
- Cylinder: A circle with a height, measured by radius. A cylinder's height is normally equal to its radius.
- Line: A straight line, measured by length. A line is normally 5 feet wide and 5 feet high.
- Sphere: A sphere, measured by radius.
- Wall: A straight line, measured by length. A wall's height is normally equal to half its length, and its width is essentially zero. A wall is always a zone, not a burst or an emanation.

Dismissal

When an ability is dismissed, all of its lingering effects immediately end. Unless otherwise noted, all magical ✨ abilities with a duration can be dismissed, but mundane abilities cannot be dismissed. You can dismiss abilities as a free action that requires only mental effort.

Chapter 5

Items and Equipment

Items are divided into five broad categories:

- Weapons are typically used to make strikes. Weapons come in many forms, and can have very different uses in combat.
- Armor is worn or wielded to protect yourself. There are two types of armor: body armor and shields.
- Apparel items are worn on the body, but unlike armor they have no intrinsic defensive properties. Rings, cloaks, and all manner of other worn items are considered apparel. Only magical ✨ apparel items have mechanical significance.
- Implements are typically held while casting spells or using other magical abilities. Only magical ✨ implements have mechanical significance.
- Tools are used to achieve an effect instead of worn on the body. Potions, traps, and magic bags are all tools.

Wealth and Item Ranks

The worth of an item can be measured with money, or with the more abstract concept of an item's rank. Money is typically measured with gold pieces, or gp. An item with a given rank is typically worth a certain number of gold pieces, as shown in the table below. Consumable items are worth a fifth as much as a permanent item of the same rank.

Rank	Power	Typical Permanent Item Price	Typical Consumable Price
0	0	10 gp or less	2 gp or less
1	2	40 gp	10 gp
2	4	200 gp	40 gp
3	6	1,000 gp	200 gp
4	8	5,000 gp	1,000 gp
5	10	25,000 gp	5,000 gp
6	12	125,000 gp	25,000 gp
7	14	625,000 gp	125,000 gp

Weapons

Weapons are used to make strikes in combat. Your class determines which weapons you are proficient with.

Each weapon deals a specific amount of damage if you hit with it. Weapons can also have other special properties to change how you use them. For example, many weapons grant a small accuracy bonus, and some weapons are ranged or can be used to attack multiple creatures at the same time. There are too many unique weapons to even summarize them here. Your character sheet should indicate what weapons you have, and how they modify your attacks.

Armor

Armor protects you from incoming attacks. Body armor has two main effects: it increases your Armor defense, and it increases your durability. Shields only increase your armor defense, and they require a hand to use. Your class determines which armor you are proficient with.

There are three main types of armor.

- Light: Not very protective, but has few penalties. Typically useful for characters with a high Dexterity, since they can dodge more easily while wearing it.
- Medium: Reasonable for most characters to use, with solid protection and only minor penalties.
- Heavy: Extremely protective, but heavy body armor reduces your speed by 10 feet. Proficiency with heavy armor is relatively rare.

Magic Items

There are a vast array of magical items that exist in Rise. If you find a magic item, the GM should explain what it can do, assuming that you can identify it. In order to use magic equipment, you have to attune to it, which costs one of your attunement points. Magic tools, like permanently glowing rocks or bags of holding, don't require attunement.

Other Items

There are many other items that you might find or use on your journey. Rise doesn't define specific rules for many regular items that exist in the world, like backpacks or ropes. Talk to your GM about what makes sense for you to have in your game.

Chapter 6

The World

Rise does not attempt to define a single geography with specific countries and locations that is shared between all games. It is common for GMs to define their own setting when running a game, and that freedom is important. However, the universe of Rise does differ in a number of important ways from the real world. The fundamental assumptions that Rise makes about its fantasy world are:

- Magic is commonly known but rarely understood.
- Elite people and monsters have vastly more physical and magical personal power than normal people.
- When you die, your soul goes to an afterlife where deities exist.
- Spiritually similar things are attracted to each other by a fundamental force called "affinity"

These core elements are ambiguous about some details, and GMs are encouraged to fill in those details as they see fit. Of course, a GM has absolute power, and can create a world that changes any number of these assumptions. However, doing so can significantly change the tone of the game and create logical inconsistencies, so it should be done carefully.

Magic

The world of Rise is a magical place. Many people are capable of using magic to perform feats that would be impossible in the real world. Not everyone is capable of magic, of course. It's reasonable to assume that about ten percent of the civilized people in the world have a magical ability of some kind. In some societies, such as a feudal human-dominated society with a large number of commoners and serfs, the percentage of people with magic can be lower. However, this is balanced by the existence of other societies that tend to be more magical, such as elven communes in deep forests. Even in low-magic societies, everyone knows that magic exists, and almost everyone has observed something magical at some point in their lives.

People can have magical abilities for a wide variety of reasons. There are three main categories to explain why people can access magic: intrinsic magic, learned magic, and gifted magic. Each class with magical abilities belongs to one of these groups. Characters with magical feats are free to choose any of those three explanations for their feats. The explanation does not have to be the same as for any other magical abilities they possess. For example, a cleric may be gifted their magical cleric abilities because they worship a particular deity, but they may also be naturally telepathic.

Some people are simply intrinsically magical. They may require training and experience to improve their natural magical talents, but they had magical capabilities before doing any training. This intrinsic magic can come from magical ancestry, unusual birth circumstances, magical experimentation, exposure to powerful magic, simple random chance, or any number of other sources. This is the standard explanation for sorcerers. In addition, this is the most common explanation for the magical abilities of monsters.

Some people gain access to magic through personal training or research. These people find ways to tap into some pre-existing magical property of the universe and manipulate it at their command. This is the standard explanation for monks, rangers with the Beastmaster archetype, rogues with the Bardic Music archetype, and wizards.

Some people are gifted magic by their association with powerful magical entities or forces. They offer worship, allegiance, or their souls, and are granted magical power in exchange. This is the standard explanation for clerics, druids, paladins, and votives.

Personal Power

The median person in the world of Rise is not particularly more or less capable than the median person in the real world. Training can help people improve their skills, but as in the real world, anyone who tries to improve themselves through training and practice eventually reaches an upper limit to their potential. However, unlike in the real world, people in Rise can reach beyond their ordinary limitations. By defeating powerful foes and performing great deeds that influence the world around them, people can gain levels, which allows them to reach new heights of power. At high levels, people can perform clearly superhuman feats that would be impossible for ordinary humans, even without the influence of magic.

People in Rise wouldn't usually talk about "levels" as a discrete concept ranging from 1 to 21. They would perceive the world as a spectrum, and the specific divisions would be more subtle. However, they would be aware that some people are fundamentally stronger and more skilled than others. Individual scholars or scholastic groups may create their own concepts in-universe to categorize and explain the phenomenon of levels, since the growth of personal power over time is observable and studiable. However, those in-universe concepts would never exactly replicate the metagame concept of a level.

It is common for people in positions of political power to also wield unusually large amounts of personal power. High level individuals can be savvier, wiser, and more persuasive than any ordinary human. They are more likely than low-level individuals to be able to gain political power through whatever means they see fit, and more likely to maintain their hold on that power. In addition, political power can grant further opportunities for performing great deeds, which helps those in power to gain levels and stay ahead of any competition.

The fastest path to acquiring personal power does not come from pursuing political power. It comes from adventuring. Adventurers can defeat powerful monsters, help towns in need, and otherwise have a significant personal influence on the world. In the process of these adventures, they can amass personal power much more rapidly than ordinary people. Of course, adventuring also has an unusually high risk of death. Even worse, people who die while adventuring often leave their corpse in the middle of nowhere - in a monster's stomach - which prevents them from being resurrected without incredibly rare magic. Adventurers must constantly seek out new challenges to test their limits, or else they will stagnate and stop acquiring personal power, so it is never a sustainable long-term activity. There are many people in the world who were adventurers at some point in their past, and everyone is familiar with the concept, but active adventurers are still unusual.

Deities and Afterlifes

When a humanoid creature dies in Rise, they know beyond a shadow of a doubt that they will go to an afterlife. Most likely, they know exactly which afterlife they will go to, either as a result of their alignment or their worship of a particular deity. In that afterlife, they will live again for as long as they want, though they cannot leave without being magically resurrected. People are confident that this is true because deities have told them so, and deities are provably real. Also, rare and powerful magic can be used to communicate with people in their afterlife, or even to physically travel to an afterlife plane.

It is an undisputed fact that Rise is filled with a wide variety of deities of varying power and influence. They divinely empower their clerics to act on their behalf. Many people know, through some chain of connections, someone who chose to become a cleric and was quickly rewarded with divine magic far beyond anything

they could previously do on their own. Everyone has heard legends of deities intervening more directly in the world even without a cleric, though these stories are rare and few have experienced them firsthand.

There are five Spiritual Planes, with one plane for each primary alignment. People generally know that the five planes exist, and have an expectation of where they will go. In particular, it is well known that the Abyss, where evildoers go after death, is much less pleasant than the other afterlife planes. One of the reasons that some people worship evil deities is to gain a promise of safety, since evil deities protect their worshippers from demonic torment in the afterlife. It is also said that demons only torment the weak-willed, and that those who escape demonic torments are free to live in hedonistic luxury. There is truth in this, though there are far more people who are confident that they would rule proudly in the Abyss than people who succeed.

A list of specific well-known deities is given in Table 6.1: Deities. The many minor deities worshipped by monsters are not listed here. Of course, the GM may use their own custom pantheon.

Affinity

Affinity works in essentially the same way as gravity, but it is more selective. Gravity attracts all matter to all other matter, and its strength is proportional to total mass. Affinity attracts similar souls to other similar souls, and its strength is proportional to the strength of the souls. It has no effect on things without souls, and it is generally weaker than gravity, but operates at a longer distance.

While alive, creatures are affected by the pull of affinity, but it is so weak compared to gravity that it is essentially impossible to observe or measure. When a creature dies and a soul is severed from its body, the pull of affinity usually becomes the strongest force acting on the untethered soul. This pulls the soul towards the Spiritual Planes that it is most connected to. It passes through the Astral Expanse on the way, but since it has no physical substance, it is unharmed by the journey.

The similarities that determine how affinity affects a soul are complex and multifaceted. Alignment is a factor, but personal choice is also significant, such as worshipping a particular deity in life. The most powerful form of affinity comes from formal, magically enforced ownership, such as a votive who has pledged their soul to a soulkeeper.

The Spiritual Planes are forged from the souls of eons of living creatures. They are incredibly powerful sources of affinity, and they act most powerfully on their most powerful inhabitants - deities. In a sense, deities are actually prisoners of their home planes. They have virtually unlimited power within that plane, but affinity prevents them from using that power directly elsewhere. This is why deities must channel their power through other agents, like angels and clerics. The bond of affinity that clerics forge with their deity allows deities to send a small part of their power across the vast distance between the Spiritual Planes and the Material Plane.

Sympathetic Magic

Sympathetic magic, which relies on similarities between distant targets, uses principles similar to affinity. However, it can affect objects which do not themselves have souls. Because affinity is a pulling force, it is generally easier to draw distant effects to you with affinity than it is to act directly on distant targets, and the same applies to sympathetic magic. For example, the conjoined conjuration – Ventus spell conjures wind from Ventus to the caster's location. That is much easier than sending air from your location to Ventus.

Cosmology

The universe of Rise can be generally divided into three parts: the Material Plane, the Spiritual Planes, and the Astral Expanse. The Material Plane consists of a central sun and a number of planets orbiting that sun. Everything in the Material Plane is essentially ordinary matter, and it generally obeys real-world physics.

The Spiritual Planes are made from essentia, which is the residue left behind when souls decay into nonexistence. They are shaped by the deities that have lived there since the dawn of civilization. When mortal souls die, they travel to an appropriate Spiritual Plane for their afterlife. Deities often reside in highly unique territories that may have impossible physical properties such as inverted gravity. However, the Spiritual Planes generally function like the real world unless otherwise specified.

The Astral Expanse is entirely different. Unlike the Material Plane and Spiritual Planes, the Astral Expanse has four spatial dimensions. The Material Plane and Spiritual Planes are three-dimensional projections within the four-dimensional space of the Astral Expanse. Anything entering them is compressed into three dimensions. That is why they are called "planes", like a plane is a two-dimensional object within a three-dimensional space.

It is impossible for mortals to reach the Spiritual Planes by normal means. To do so, they would have to move through the fourth spatial dimension. Imagine that there are two pieces of paper resting flat on different shelves. You could make each paper as long and wide as you want, but they would never intersect each other, because they are parallel. To move from one piece of paper to the other, you would have to move in a third dimension: vertically. In the same way, you could fly in any direction for any length of time and never reach the Spiritual Plane.

Table 6.1: Deities

Deity	Alignment	Domains
Gregory, warrior god of mundanity	Lawful good	Law, Protection, Strength, War
Guftas, horse god of justice	Lawful good	Good, Law, Strength, Travel
Lucied, paladin god of justice	Lawful good	Destruction, Good, Protection, War
Simor, fighter god of protection	Lawful good	Good, Protection, Strength, War
Ayala, naiad god of water	Neutral good	Life, Magic, Water, Wild
Pabs Beerbeard, dwarf god of drink	Neutral good	Good, Life, Strength, Wild
Rucks, monk god of pragmatism	Neutral good	Good, Law, Protection, Travel
Vanya, centaur god of nature	Neutral good	Good, Strength, Travel, Wild
Brushtwig, pixie god of creativity	Chaotic good	Chaos, Good, Trickery, Wild
Camilla, tiefling god of fire	Chaotic good	Fire, Good, Magic, Protection
Chavi, wandering god of stories	Chaotic good	Chaos, Knowledge, Trickery
Chort, dwarf god of optimism	Chaotic good	Good, Life, Travel, Wild
Ivan Ivanovitch, bear god of strength	Chaotic good	Chaos, Strength, War, Wild
Krunch, barbarian god of destruction	Chaotic good	Destruction, Good, Strength, War
Sir Cakes, dwarf god of freedom	Chaotic good	Chaos, Good, Strength
Mikolash, scholar god of knowledge	Lawful neutral	Knowledge, Law, Magic, Protection
Raphael, monk god of retribution	Lawful neutral	Death, Law, Protection, Travel
Declan, god of fire	True neutral	Destruction, Fire, Knowledge, Magic
Mammon, golem god of endurance	True neutral	Knowledge, Magic, Protection, Strength
Kurai, shaman god of nature	True neutral	Air, Earth, Fire, Water
Amanita, druid god of decay	Chaotic neutral	Chaos, Destruction, Life, Wild
Antimony, elf god of necromancy	Chaotic neutral	Death, Knowledge, Life, Magic
Clockwork, elf god of time	Chaotic neutral	Chaos, Magic, Trickery, Travel
Diplo, doll god of destruction	Chaotic neutral	Chaos, Destruction, Strength, War
Lord Khallus, fighter god of pride	Chaotic neutral	Chaos, Strength, War
Celeano, sorcerer god of deception	Chaotic neutral	Chaos, Magic, Protection, Trickery
Murdoc, god of mercenaries	Chaotic neutral	Destruction, Knowledge, Travel, War
Ribo, halfling god of trickery	Chaotic neutral	Chaos, Trickery, Water
Tak, orc god of war	Lawful evil	Law, Strength, Trickery, War
Theodolus, sorcerer god of ambition	Neutral evil	Evil, Knowledge, Magic, Trickery
Daeghul, demon god of slaughter	Chaotic evil	Destruction, Evil, Magic, War

Planar Rifts

Planar rifts are places where the fabric of a plane has "folded" to directly connect two distant locations within a single plane. The two locations on either side of the rift are physically next to each other, so travel through a planar rift is not magical. It just involves walking from one side of the rift to the other.

On their own, planar rifts generally disappear within a few days. This time can be extended with the stabilize planar rift ritual. Some extraordinary planar rifts last for years without magical intervention. The forge planar rift ritual is the only way to create a planar rift, and the planar rifts created in that way are temporary.

Demiplanes

In addition to the main three categories, there may also exist smaller planes scattered throughout the Astral Expanse. These demiplanes may be composed of ordinary material, essentia, or both, and they can have widely varied properties. Most demiplanes were created for particular purposes by beings of great power, though some simply came into existence through unknown means.

Soulforged Creatures

The Spiritual Planes have native inhabitants, but they are not born in the same way as creatures of the Material Plane. Angels, demons, devils, and other such creatures are made from the essentia of their corresponding Spiritual Plane. They are called soulforged creatures because they are made of essentia, which comes from souls. Most such creatures do not have their own souls. They are agents of deities and other powerful figures, used to enforce their will.

When a soulforged is destroyed, its essentia is absorbed by the plane it is on. This is one reason that soulforged creatures rarely leave their home plane, since dying on other planes is a net loss of essentia to their creators. If a soulforged has a soul and a strong will, the soul travels to its home plane like mortal souls do. It can generally make a new body for itself within a week if it died on another plane, or within a day if it died on its home plane. Soulforged that die without a soul, or with a soul too weak to reconstitute itself, do not reform.

Realm Traits

Specific areas can have unusual traits. Effects that change how physics or magic work in a particular area are called realm traits. It is common for the divine dominion of deities to have special realm traits chosen by the deity. Unusual realms can also exist naturally in any Spiritual Plane. Esoteric realm traits are less common on the Material Plane, but some planets or magical areas have unusual traits.

Atmosphere

The atmosphere in a realm can take one of the following forms:

- Air: The realm has breathable air suitable for humans. This is the default for all locations unless otherwise specified.
- Vacuum: The realm has no atmosphere at all. At the end of each round, everything in the realm takes 10 cold damage unless it is protected from the cold.
- Unbreathable: The realm has an atmosphere, but creatures that need air are unable to breathe it.

Gravity Direction

The direction of gravity in a realm can take one of the following forms:

- Massive: Gravity pulls towards object based on their mass, as it does in the real world. This is the default for all locations unless otherwise specified.
- Fixed: Gravity points in a fixed direction and with a fixed strength at all locations in the realm.
- Absolute directional: Gravity points in a consistent direction according to a rule that applies equally to everything on the realm, but which is not in a fixed direction. For example, a realm filled with floating spheres where gravity always points towards the closest sphere, but the strength and direction of gravity does not depend on the mass of the spheres, has absolute directional gravity.
- Subjective: Each creature in the realm chooses the direction of gravity for that creature. The realm has no gravity for unattended objects and mindless creatures. You can control gravity in a subjective gravity realm using the control gravity ability.

Control Gravity Minor action

You can only use this ability while in a realm with subjective gravity.

Make a Willpower check with a difficulty value of 10. Success means that you choose the direction of gravity that applies to you in your current realm. Alternately, you can choose for gravity to not apply to you.

Failure means you gain a +2 bonus to the next *control gravity* ability you use in your current realm. This bonus stacks with itself and lasts until you succeed with this ability.

Gravity Strength

The strength of gravity in a realm can take one of the following forms:

- Normal Gravity: Gravity is about the strength of Earth. This is the default for all locations unless otherwise specified.
- None: There is no gravity in the realm. The weight of all objects is reduced by one weight category. Even while weightless, objects still have mass, so heavy objects can still slow your movements. The range limits of ranged weapons are quadrupled. Falling damage is impossible. A creature that jumps continues at the same rate indefinitely.
- Light: Gravity is about half the strength of Earth. The weight of all objects is halved. The range limits of ranged weapons are doubled. The horizontal and vertical jump distances for all creatures are doubled. Falling damage is halved.
- Heavy: Gravity is about twice the strength of Earth. The weight of all objects is doubled. The range limits of ranged weapons are halved, to a minimum of 5 feet. The horizontal and vertical jump distances for all creatures are halved. Falling damage is doubled. All fly speeds have a height limit of 5 feet, and gliding is impossible.
- Extreme: Gravity is about four times the strength of Earth. The weight of all objects is increased by one weight category. The range limits of ranged weapons are reduced to one quarter of their normal value, to a minimum of 5 feet. The horizontal and vertical jump distances for all creatures are also reduced to one quarter. Falling damage is quadrupled. Flying and gliding is impossible.

Light

Various realms are illuminated in different ways. Unless otherwise specified, this only determines whether there is an ambient source of light. It does not affect the behavior of other sources of light, such as torches or a sun. A realm can have multiple simultaneous

traits that change its light.

- None: There is no ambient source of light in the realm. This is the default for all realms unless otherwise specified.
- Fixed Source: There is a single constant source of light in the realm.
- Mobile Source: There is a single source of light in the realm that moves around it, illuminating different parts of the realm at different times.
- Universal: All parts of the realm, even indoors, are constantly illuminated with either shadowy illumination or bright illumination. Total darkness is impossible without magic.
- Suppressed: All sources of light are downgraded to one step, to a minimum of either total darkness or shadowy illumination. This means bright illumination becomes shadowy, and brilliant illumination becomes bright.

Magic

Some realms have strange effects on the use of magic. A realm can have multiple simultaneous traits that change its magic.

- Normal: Magic functions normally. This is the default for all realms unless otherwise specified.
- Suppressed: Whenever a creature in the realm uses a magical ability as a standard action, minor action, or elite action, it must roll 1d10 + its rank. If the result is less than 10, the ability fails with no effect. This does not affect other types of magical abilities, such as passive magical abilities.
- Siphoning: Creatures in the realm have no attunement points, and they immediately deattune from all of their effects as soon as they enter the realm.
- Nullified: Creatures in the realm have no magical abilities of any kind. Magic items in the realm have no effect and cannot be attuned to.

Temperature

Some realms have unusual temperature effects. A realm can have multiple simultaneous traits that change its temperature.

- Normal: Temperature is determined normally. This is the default for all realms unless otherwise specified.
- Warm: The realm has a minimum ambient temperature that it reaches if left alone, even indoors. Specific locations can still be cooled with effort.
- Siphoning: The realm siphons heat away. Sources of heat, such as fire, still have their normal temperature. However, that temperature is lost quickly as it radiates. It takes approximately four times the normal amount of heat to warm an area. Some realms may siphon heat more or less intensely.

Planets of the Material Plane

The Material Plane consists of planets orbiting a central sun, named Sol. Each planet has its own composition and structure, and many are inhospitable for normal humans. It is possible to fly through space between the planets, though space is extremely dangerous, so magical transportation is much more common. Each planet is listed below in order of its distance from the sun.

Terra

Terra is an unusually large planet with intense gravity. Many of its inhabitants are adapted to the experience, but it is challenging for newcomers.

The surface of Terra is almost devoid of air, burning hot during the day, and freezing at night. Its variable and harsh conditions make it inhospitable to almost everything. Instead, creatures on Terra live underground in its sturdy rock. A labyrinthine series of mostly airless tunnels weave their way through the planet. Some underground cities even contain air, which is carefully controlled to prevent it from escaping.

Deep tunnels on the plane can lead to gems, diamonds, and rare metals like mithral. However, the dense rock and airless environment make successful mining difficult. In addition, earthquakes periodically reshape the environment by collapsing old tunnel systems and constructing new ones. The deepest tunnels are blisteringly hot, and terminate in vast oceans of magma.

Terra has the following nonstandard realm traits:

- Gravity: Heavy.

Ignis

Ignis is a burning planet with a thick atmosphere. It is hot enough to light ordinary wood on fire within minutes. Instead of rivers of water, it has rivers of lava, and firestorms frequently illuminate the sky. Unlike Terra, the planet's surface is generally a mixture of sand and glass, so tunneling to escape the hostile conditions is infeasible. There are a few enclaves that maintain slightly more liveable temperatures through magical means, but they are rare.

Nexus

Nexus is an Earth-like planet inhabited by humanoid creatures and covered in a mixture of biomes. Almost all fantasy adventures typically start on this world, and many never leave it. The name of this planet may change in a particular campaign setting, or there may be multiple separate planets that fit this general description.

Luna / Arcadia

Luna is a moon of Nexus. Although it appears barren and lifeless from Nexus, like the real life moon, that is an ancient magical illusion. In reality, Luna is a verdant paradise ruled by fae, who call it Arcadia. This is not common knowledge, but it is also not a closely guarded secret. A DV 15 Knowledge (local) check is enough to know Luna's true nature. Even people who do not know about the illusion generally know that fae are associated with Luna.

Ventus

Ventus is a gas giant with powerful winds and frequent storms. It does not have an ordinary surface, though the air becomes thicker as you descend into its depths in a way that eventually renders all travel impossible. The vast majority of creatures on Ventus can fly,

though there are flying cities where landbound creatures from other worlds can reside.

Aqua

Aqua is a water planet with an ocean that is up to a hundred miles deep. Its surface is covered in a thick layer of ice, and creatures adapted to the cold live on its surface. The deepest depths of the ocean terminate in a mysterious ice-like substance that seems to exist despite the warmth of the water. Towering underwater mountains break up the underwater landscape, though they rarely reach above the ice cap.

Powerful currents sweep through the ocean, but much of it is calm, and many forms of aquatic life abound in the water. Magnificent underwater cities are carved from huge rocks that float peacefully suspended in the water, or are embedded into mountains. Though the sun is distant and diffused by the surface ice, the ocean is warmed by extensive underwater vents. Simple creatures akin to plankton feed on the energy from those vents and form the base of the ocean's food chain. Many of them are bioluminescent

Space

The space between planets is vast and hostile to travellers. It is almost entirely empty, though asteroids and comets may pass by on rare occasions. There are no creatures native to space.

Space has the following nonstandard realm traits:

- Atmosphere: Vacuum.
- Gravity: None. If you are sufficiently close to a planet, you begin experiencing its gravity, but most of space is devoid of gravity for practical purposes.

Spiritual Planes

The five Spiritual Planes are manifestations of the five core alignments. Elysium is good-aligned, the Abyss is evil-aligned, Concord is law-aligned, Monody is chaos-aligned, and Haven is neutral-aligned. They are made from essentia, the substance left behind when souls decompose. This makes them much more malleable than the Material Plane.

Essentia responds to the will exerted by creatures with souls. This is how deities form their divine dominions, which can have arbitrary and impossible rules and physics. Even ordinary creatures, such as the souls of mortals living out their afterlife, can create smaller changes in the world around them. As a result, individual regions within each Spiritual Plane can have widely varied traits that do not match that Spiritual Plane as a whole.

Each Spiritual Plane has roughly the same usable space as the surface of a planet, though they can have vastly different shapes.

Elysium

Elysium is a beautiful and majestic world. It is shaped like a shallow bowl. The concave side is significantly more populated, and it is what most people think of when they imagine Elysium. Mountains rise dramatically out of misty clouds, trees are massive and laden with delicious fruit, and buildings surpass the wildest dreams of mortal architects. A serene blue sky gives way to a night so lit by stars that it is almost as bright as the day. Because of the world's bowl-like structure, you can see the majestic landscape spread out in every direction even from flat ground, and the view from mountains is breathtaking.

The underside of Elysium is wreathed in fog and an endless tranquil twilight. It is a place for contemplation, serenity, and isolation.

Mortal souls inhabiting Elysium are guided and assisted by the choirs. The choirs refer collectively to all of the seraphim, cherubim, angels, archangels, and other benevolent creatures native to Elysium.

Elysium has the following nonstandard realm traits:

- Gravity: Absolute directional. At any location on the plane, gravity pulls towards the bowl's core, so creatures can walk normally on the bowl from any location. If you were exactly between the top and bottom of the bowl at any point along its breadth, you would not experience gravity. However, there are no natural tunnels that reach that deep below the surface.
- Light: Fixed and mobile sources. The "top" of the plane has a false sun that travels through the sky each day, creating day/night cycles like the Material Plane. At night, the stars so plentiful and bright that the world is almost as bright as the day. The bottom of the plane has enough stars to generate shadowy illumination.

The Abyss

The Abyss is a desolate and brutal plane. It consists of cliffs surrounding a deep central pit. The highest point of the cliffs, and their back faces, extend out into the Astral Expanse. The cliffs are jagged and broken, with large cliff shelves between elevation changes that are relatively flat. Divine dominions often take advantage of those areas, and some cliff shelves can hold entire countries.

New mortal souls generally arrive at the bottom of the pit. This gives them safety in numbers from demons and other threats, but conditions are crowded and unpleasant, so most mortals climb the cliffs to find better opportunities. Higher elevations are generally higher status, though some powerful creatures choose to live closer to the base of the pit.

With the exception of the great palaces of the Lords of the Abyss, most buildings that exist are designed for defense rather than aesthetics. The terrain is typically rocky and dull, and most of the color belongs to carcasses left behind after violent battles. All manner of nightmarish creatures stalk the Abyss. The best known of these creatures are demons and devils.

Demons are soulforged creatures that echo the emotions of mortal souls that enter the Abyss. They are chaotic creatures that are driven entirely by the primal emotion that birthed them. This makes them functionally insane, and they are almost always driven to lash out at everything around them. Rage-born demons violently attack anything they see, pain-born demons try to lessen their pain by sharing it, and so on. Some demons are naturally spawned in reaction

to mortal souls, but others are intentionally created and directed by evil deities.

Demons generally avoid attacking other demons, since they can find no gratification for their urges in attacking soulless creatures. Instead, they hunt creatures with complete souls, which generally means attacking the afterlife bodies of evil-aligned creatures who went to the Abyss for their afterlife. If they have access to ordinary mortal, they eagerly hunt them, as they are generally easier prey. Demonic incursions into other planes are devastating but fortunately rare.

Unlike demons, devils are lawful creatures with a functioning society. Devil-run cities are isolated enclaves in the general chaos of the Abyss, and many mortal souls choose to live there. The laws there are not necessarily fair or ethical, but they are scrupulously followed. Devils are far less numerous than demons, since they cannot simply spawn accidentally like demons do. Instead, every devil must be intentionally created.

Since most devils do not have souls, this requires the intervention of creatures with souls. This generally means that devils must make deals with mortals or deities. They do that when they can, since the more servants a devil has, the greater their power. The greatest prize for a devil is to gain mastery over a mortal soul. They can use its ability to manipulate essentia to create powerful servants or reshape their home in the Abyss to their liking. This makes powerful devils common soulkeepers, and they seek out votives wherever possible.

Some powerful devils leave the devil-run cities to establish their own territory. This generally requires that they must already have control of multiple mortal souls, or their territory could be reshaped by any passing mortal. A devil that can establish its own territory gains the title of Lord of the Abyss, and it is a title that almost all devils desperately crave.

The Abyss has the following nonstandard realm traits:

- Gravity: Fixed directional. Gravity pulls towards the side of the plane with the deep pit.
- Light: Fixed. A blood-red orb hovers directly over the central pit above the highest cliffs, casting bright illumination throughout the plane.

Concord

Concord is a hollow cube that is divided into a myriad of different levels and rooms. The cube is made from hardened essentia that functions like pure adamantine, except that it is self-healing when damaged and cannot be removed from the plane. Although it can bend to exceptionally strong-willed souls, it returns to its original shape and structure when not actively controlled. The boundaries of the cube are precisely aligned with the extent of the plane itself, so anything standing on the outside of the cube would be in the Astral Expanse. Each level and room is organized in a consistent way, making navigation easy once you understand the system. The center of each level is a transit hub containing stairs, mechanical lifts, and magical portals to make travel easier.

Each level has its own rules, which are clearly explained in every language at that level's transit hub. Individual rooms often have their own additional rules, which may or may not be clearly communicated. They can be as large as countries or as small as closets. Large rooms often contain natural elements, such as forests or lakes, with ecosystems that are carefully kept in balance. Corridors run through the levels to facilitate travel between rooms, except for rooms which are intentionally isolated. Although Concord itself has no intrinsic light source, its corridors are generally well-lit by magical lights, and rooms often have their own lighting.

Concord is administered and inhabited by the moirai, who are soulforged native to that plane. Each moirai is an impartial arbiter and embodiment of a specific concept, directive, or material fact. Lesser moirai represent extremely specific or obscure concepts, while greater moirai represent universal truths or fundamental forces. Constructs called telos enforce the decisions of moirai and the rules of Concord.

Concord has the following nonstandard realm traits:

- Gravity: Fixed directional. Gravity pulls towards the bottom of the cube.

Monody

Monody is a constantly shifting plane. Even its core shape contorts and changes over time. It could be a hollow sphere where everyone lives on the inside, a torus twisting around itself, a collection of small spheres, or anything else.

The essentia comprising all Spiritual Planes is malleable to some degree, but Monody is the easiest to control. Even relatively weak-willed mortals can still bend the landscape around them to suit their desires. The real challenge is in making your changes permanent. Beyond actively shaped spaces, the terrain is constantly changing. In a matter of hours, a field might grow trees that are consumed by a forest fire before vast chasms open up and consume their charred remains.

The native inhabitants of Monody are called proteans. They are amorphous creatures that can freely reshape their bodies. Individual proteans tend to have forms they prefer to use. Proteans can feel mortals attempting to change them in the same way that mortals can shape inanimate essentia, though they can ignore those commands. Sometimes proteans choose to act like terrain for a while as part of their own games.

Fae are not native to Monody, but it is not uncommon to find them there. They enjoy its malleable nature, and its constant change helps fight their tendency to become bored.

Monody has the following nonstandard realm traits:

- Gravity: Subjective. The difficulty value to change your gravity on Monody is 0 instead of the normal 10.
- Light: Mobile source. The number of lights, and their color and direction, are highly variable. They usually provide bright illumination, and less commonly provide shadowy or brilliant illumination.

Haven

Haven is a stable spherical planet. Its basic structure resembles Nexus, though it is smaller and has no moon. It has a wide variety of biomes, and is generally peaceful and has a place for anyone.

Unlike the other Spiritual Planes, Haven has no native inhabitants. However, it has more mortal souls than any other Spiritual Plane, so there are still cities for those who prefer the company of others.

Haven has the following nonstandard realm traits:

- Light: Mobile source. A glowing orb orbits the planet, mimicking the sun as viewed from Haven.

The Astral Expanse

The true shape of the Astral Expanse is beyond a mortal mind's ability to comprehend. It has empty fields of space interspersed with objects and terrain of widely varying sizes, ranging from small rocks to planets. Some of the terrain seems to be natural, while other structures seem to be carved with skill. However, everything there has strange, unnatural angles that boggle the mind. A collection of separate sculptures may all move together, revealing that they are somehow the same object. Small objects can have immense mass, and large objects can be strangely light. Tiny objects floating in midair that are almost too small to see can be sharp and immovable enough to cut anything that passes into them. Objects can fold in on themselves, disappearing entirely, or rapidly grow out of nowhere. There is no safe place in the Astral Expanse for a three-dimensional creature, even ignoring the threat of intentional attack.

There are four-dimensional creatures native to the Astral Expanse, but they are horrifying and utterly incomprehensible. They are called the precursors, because they predate the three-dimensional planes that humanoids inhabit. Precursors drift or fly around the Astral Expanse hunting for food, making travel through the Astral Expanse extremely dangerous.

As four-dimensional creatures, the precursors are essentially invincible in the Astral Expanse. Fighting a precursor is like the drawings on a piece of paper trying to do battle against an artist holding a pencil. At most, the drawings could only ever interact with the tip of the pencil touching the paper. Even if they destroyed the tip, they could never understand or harm the artist themselves. Meanwhile, the pencil can freely draw *inside* the drawings without "passing through" their outer edge. No matter how reinforced the drawing's armor might be, it is irrelevant since the pencil could tap directly on their eyes or heart. Deities are sufficiently strong and uniform in composition to survive such internal attacks, but even they can only survive, not effectively counterattack.

The precursors are unable to directly enter or interact with the Material and Spiritual Planes. The flattening effect of the planes is lethal to their four-dimensional bodies, just like compressing a person into two dimensions would be lethal. As a result, they generally give the planes a wide berth. Nonliving objects from the Astral Expanse occasionally collide with the Material Plane. Typically, they appear in empty space as bizarre and misshapen asteroids, and they are either never seen or they burn up upon entering a planet's atmosphere, making this phenomenon essentially unnoticeable. On extremely rare occasions, they may arrive close to a planet's surface, creating inexplicable eldritch ruins on the ground or in caves. These become a hotbed of precursor cult activity if they are ever discovered.

Aberrations are the closest things to precursors on the Material Plane. They arrived fully formed on Nexus within the past thousand years, and their bodies seem to operate fundamentally differently than other life. Some fear that aberrations are an attempt by precursors to invade the Material Plane, though how this would be accomplished on a larger scale remains unclear.

The Astral Expanse holds ancient monstrosities of cosmic size and power. Fortunately, they live far away from the Material and Spiritual Planes. In the same way that deities have difficulty leaving their Spiritual Plane, the cosmic force of affinity makes it difficult for precursor leviathans to leave their distant homes. Instead, they reside in a distant region of the Astral Expanse called the Eternal Void. They can still reach out through intermediaries and cultists, as deities do. On rare occasions, a precursor leviathan may try to more directly interfere with the Planes. That would be an interplanar crisis which even deities fear.

Chapter 7

What Makes Rise Different?

If you have played other tabletop roleplaying games, you may wonder what makes Rise unique. Rise has five fundamental principles that differentiate it from other TTRPGs: minimal resource management, simultaneous combat, optional complexity, unbounded scaling, and a bounded action economy.

Minimal Resource Management

Many games make use of resources like mana, spell slots, or timed cooldowns to limit how often characters can use their abilities. These systems have fundamental problems that undercut the fun and flow of a TTRPG, and Rise essentially does not use resources to limit character ability usage. In Rise, characters can cast spells or use special attacks any number of times in a row without consuming resources.

Some systems have resources that are designed to ebb and flow in the course of a typical combat. You might expend mana to use a powerful spell, and then regain mana over time by using weaker spells or fulfilling certain conditions. Alternately, you might use a spell and then wait some number of in-game turns before you can use that same spell again. This can be fiddly to track and hard to recover from if you forget what happened to your resource pool, which is why this approach is more common in video games than in TTRPGs. More importantly, this system has no clear way to handle ability usage outside of combat. It effectively gives unlimited ability usage when time is no obstacle, but only in an awkward and convoluted way. This category of system is unsuitable for Rise because it is too fiddly in combat and doesn't make sense out of combat.

Some systems have finite-use resources that are tied to the expenditure of in-game time, such as taking long rests, or session breaks. You might spend a spell slot to use a powerful spell, and then be unable to cast that spell again until your character rests for some period of time. This can be manageable from a complexity perspective if the number of unique resources is small. However, it can get dangerously convoluted if characters have a large number of separate or partially interchangeable resource pools, such as using separate pools for individual spell levels.

The real problem is that this limitation requires you to make your decisions based on not just the current situation, but also on your prediction of all future situations you will encounter before you have the opportunity to rest. This contributes significantly to the tactical complexity of deciding each individual action in combat, which slows down the pace of the game. It is also punishing to newer players who have less experience with the metagaming required to deduce how many resources an individual fight is worth. This strategic complexity is compounded if hit points are treated as an additional resource, since you now have to trade off the potential impact of one limited resource against another limited resource.

Optimization of resource usage can be unintuitive and out of character, but failure to correctly manage your resources can leave you with no useful abilities remaining. This concern can be exacerbated if some characters are extremely resource-intensive while others have no meaningful resources to track. No one likes being forced to hide from a difficult fight or take only insignificant actions while your more resource-savvy or resource-independent allies continue using dramatic and powerful abilities. It can also add stress to the party dynamics when one character frequently asks for long rests after fights because they expended resources and no one else needs to rest. This category of system is unsuitable for Rise because it creates complexity in ways that detract from the fun and narrative of a game instead of adding to it.

Rise does not use resources to limit normal actions in combat. The vast majority of spells, special martial attacks, and other abilities that affect enemies or your environment can be used any number of times. There are a small number of abilities with one-round cooldowns, and a universal ability that can only be used once per short rest. However, there is no time tracking in the system longer than "next round". Small cooldowns are a fine-grained balancing tool that allow characters to have powerful abilities which would have detrimental effects for the game if they could be used every turn.

Rise does use a single universal resource, called "fatigue", that recovers based on long rests. This allows some opportunity for characters to invest extra effort into specific difficult fights, and to become tired after a long day. Normal damage taken during a fight is easily recovered after a ten minute rest. This means that you typically don't have to track state between fights. However, a GM can prevent that rest time with multiple sequential fights to increase difficulty and drama.

Overall, Rise uses resource limitations very sparingly. This allows it to gain some of their benefits while avoiding the detrimental effects that come from making resource limitations a fundamental part of the system.

Simultaneous Combat

In most TTRPGs, combat takes place in a series of turns. When your turn comes up, you take all of your actions, and then you wait through everyone else's turn until your turn comes again. This system has one foundational disadvantage: it is very, very slow. Rise uses a simultaneous combat system that dramatically increases the pace of combat.

Imagine a typical 4-5 player game with 1-2 enemy groups using a traditional turn-based initiative system. In this scenario, you have to wait through about 5 turns before it comes back to your turn. This number can increase significantly in large-scale fights. Each of those 5 or so turns can meaningfully change the battlefield situation on its own by moving, weakening, or defeating various enemies and allies. The state of the battlefield at the end of last turn is often drastically different than the state of that battlefield at the start of your new turn. Player coordination can be challenging, since they must coordinate in the specific order assigned by the initiative system, and enemy turns can intervene to ruin coordinated plans.

In theory, every player should accurately track the unfolding battlefield state through each of the intervening turns. That would mean everyone would know what to do when their turn comes up. In practice, many players find that difficult or impossible. Instead, at the start of each of their turns, they ask or try to figure out how the situation has changed. Not everyone asks this explicitly, but it must always be analyzed anew.

Once a player understands the current battlefield state, they can finally decide their actions. This typically involves both movement and any number of sequential attacks, so there are many factors to consider. Everyone else must wait and do nothing while this happens. Once the active player has decided their actions, those actions must be fully rolled and resolved before combat can proceed. Even the next player in the initiative order may not be able to make accurate plans during this time, since the die rolls can change those plans. All of this combines to make even short combats take an hour or more, and six-person adventuring groups can feel dangerously bloated.

Rise works differently. Combat in Rise is broken up into two phases: the movement phase and the action phase. During the movement phase, all creatures move simultaneously, and no attacks are possible. Characters can declare certain simple reactive movements like "stay adjacent to this enemy" to ensure that they end up in a reasonable position regardless of enemy actions. If the movements of characters conflict in impossible ways, initiative checks can temporarily force a linear order of resolution. Each player declares their own actions in an arbitrary order as soon as they decide them, so people are not forced to wait and do nothing while slower players contemplate their choices. Player coordination is easy, since all actions are happening together.

During the action phase, players resolve their actions sequentially, but in an arbitrary order of the players' choice. This allows slower players to make their decisions when they are ready, while allowing faster players to resolve their actions first. Since movement during the action phase is rare, and enemies cannot unexpectedly move, players are typically able to decide their actions much more quickly and easily even when they have a large number of unique abilities to choose from. Once all players have resolved their actions, they learn what their enemies did. Those actions all resolve simultaneously, so enemy actions cannot interrupt player actions and vice versa. Attackers are always responsible for rolling instead of using "saving throws" or similar mechanics that force defenders to roll dice. All of this means that players can choose and resolve their actions simultaneously and efficiently, minimizing total time spent in combat while still allowing significant tactical complexity.

The start of each phase still requires a general assessment from all acting players about the current state of the battlefield, which takes just as much time as the assessment in a classic initiative system. However, the time required for this tactical analysis only increases marginally as the number of players and enemies in the game increases. This allows Rise to handle large player counts or large enemy hordes without becoming glacially slow. Combat in Rise flows by quickly, making it much easier to balance time between combat and non-combat encounters within the same game session - or to run through multiple separate, individually challenging combats without sacrificing the pace and energy of the game.

Optional Complexity

Many games operate at a consistent level of complexity. Many rules-light games are always simple, and many rules-dense games are always complex. This is a perfectly reasonable design philosophy. Among other benefits, it makes it easy to know what to expect from the game, which helps give the game a well-defined niche.

Rise is designed to allow players to choose their own level of complexity. This broadens its potential audience by allowing people

with very different play styles or tolerances for complexity to enjoy the same game together. This goal is manifested in several key ways in Rise's design:

- Core gameplay is designed to be simple.
- Character creation is deeply interconnected.
- Complexity is not tied to narrative roles.
- Character power does not require complexity.

Simple Core Gameplay

The core gameplay loop must be simple. You can contribute in combat by relying on one or two standard attacks that you use in all circumstances. In narrative situations, you can just roll the skills you have trained, and ignore other options. Engaging with the system more deeply than that is a choice, not a requirement.

Interconnected Character Creation

Character creation and build optimization is a better place to store complexity. Creating a Rise character involves a number of decisions, each of which can have nuanced ramifications on other aspects of the system. If you are just trying to build a character that matches a desired narrative, you can generally approach each decision in isolation.

For example, you can decide that your character is intelligent and agile but not very strong or durable, because that is the concept you want. That decision has consequences, such as changing how many trained skills you have and what your defenses are. If you approach each decision sequentially, each one is relatively easy to make, and doesn't require deep system knowledge. On the other hand, trying to mathematically optimize a character requires thinking about many aspects of the system at once. This results in a system that is easy to learn but hard to master.

Even for simple characters, the process of character creation is still one of the most complicated aspects of Rise. That is why Rise provides (or will provide, once that section is done) an extensive selection of premade characters for a wide variety of narrative archetypes. Each premade character includes advice for how to play that character and level them up. The premade characters make the system more accessible to people who don't want to deal with the complexity of creating a character from scratch.

Complexity and Narrative

Complexity and simplicity should not be directly connected to a character's concept or narrative. For example, it would be a bad idea to define a system where martial characters are simple and spellcasters are complicated. Both of those are rich and evocative narrative constructs. Many people who don't enjoy complexity will want to play spellcasters, and many people who enjoy complexity will want to play martial characters. Gameplay complexity must be more finely tuned and localized than those sweeping strokes.

In Rise, gameplay complexity is generally generated by acquiring a large number of increasingly situational abilities. Every class has some archetypes that grant additional abilities known and some archetypes that grant additional passive abilities. If you like having a lot of unique abilities, you can have a high Intelligence to maximize your insight points, and focus on learning spells and maneuvers that attack your enemies or have situational effects. If you like minimizing complexity, you can instead choose archetypes or learn spells that simply grant you passive benefits, and focus on one or two standard attacks that you specialize in. Some feats give you new abilities and new circumstances to pay attention to that make you more effective, while others simply increase your passive statistics and defenses.

Rise specifically handles complexity for martial characters and spellcasters slightly differently. Martial characters in Rise typically have fairly simple individual abilities. However, they can use those abilities with a variety of meaningfully different weapons. A martial character with four unique attacks and three different weapons has twelve different options in combat. In addition, martial characters can typically make better use of universal abilities, such as shoving and grappling.

Spellcasters have more complex and varied individual abilities. They also tend to have more abilities that have significant narrative effects. However, their abilities are more isolated. There is no spellcaster equivalent of martial weapons that would multiply their number of distinct abilities in combat. The result of this design is that both martial characters and spellcasters can be very simple or very complicated. However, they approach complexity in different ways, ensuring that they feel narratively distinct.

Complexity and Power

All of this customization of complexity would be mostly pointless if complexity was strongly correlated with character power. If exceptionally complicated or hyper-specialized characters were obviously and consistently more effective than other characters, it would push everyone to use those characters. Rise structures the tradeoffs between gaining raw power and gaining additional options balanced enough that neither is always superior.

There will always be some benefit from build optimization and system mastery. Players who are deeply familiar with Rise will be able to build characters with more relevant strengths and fewer relevant weaknesses. However, the gap between optimized characters and "normal" characters is limited. There will always be specific contexts where one character's mechanics are superior to another's. For example, a specialized defensive melee character may excel in a duel in a confined space. However, it may be irrelevant against cavalry archers on an open field. Characters in Rise cannot drastically change their capabilities each day, so they will always have moments to shine and moments of weakness.

Unbounded Scaling

Some systems use bounded bonuses for accuracy or other game statistics. Bounded scaling means that every character of the same power level - or in some systems, of any power level - has a similar chance of success with any given skill check or attack roll. This can frequently cause narratively inappropriate and even comical events, and Rise explicitly rejects this philosophy.

Imagine a typical party of four players, with one character being exceptionally skilled at a particular task. Perhaps the rogue is exceptionally skilled at lying, or a barbarian is exceptionally skilled at climbing. If "exceptionally skilled" only means that they have a +5 bonus on a d20 compared to +0 from the rest of the party, the exceptionally skilled character will only get the best result in the party half the time. The other half of the time, some other character with no relevant skills will meet or exceed the skilled character's result - sometimes by a dramatic margin. When failure compared to rank amateurs happens this often, it becomes hard to take seriously the idea that any character can be exceptionally skilled at anything.

Rise characters can have dramatic statistical differences between each other, even at low levels. It uses a d10 as the fundamental die, which makes every bonus more significant. In addition, a 1st-level character can easily reach a +6 bonus with a skill check that is particularly relevant to their character. This means that a skilled character can beat a party of rank amateurs 80% of the time, and at higher levels their success becomes completely guaranteed. Likewise, the difference in Mental defense between a powerful sorcerer and a cowardly rogue can allow mind-affecting attacks to almost always hit a rogue while almost never hitting the sorcerer. These statistical differences do not always grow with level, but they remain significant at every level.

One advantage of systems with bounded scaling is that it is easier to guarantee that every character is relevant in any situation. Even if your character has no useful abilities of any kind, you might sometimes succeed on important actions through sheer luck. However, this design philosophy often breaks the symmetry between magical and non-magical characters. Magical characters can often use extremely specific and powerful abilities that are impossible for nonmagical characters to duplicate. If magical characters also have similar odds of success with all generic mechanics of the game, they will almost certainly have far more influence over the narrative of the game than any nonmagical character can hope to match.

The philosophy of Rise is that it's okay for some characters to be irrelevant in specific contexts. It's good to give people time in the spotlight where their character's abilities help solve the specific problem that the group is facing when no other character could. Rise encourages that, and makes it impossible for one character to be relevant in *all* contexts. Each character has their own strengths and weaknesses, and if you try to be good at everything, you'll fall behind people who specialize in a particular area. This will naturally rotate the spotlight between different characters, allowing each player to feel relevant and important in turn.

This dramatic scaling is also used to govern the power of characters over time, in addition to the power of characters relative to each other. Rise attempts to model a massive power range for player characters. They are expected to start their journeys at level 1 as little more than commoners, and by level 21 they are effectively demigods who can alter the fate of entire worlds. This is a critical part of the narrative fabric of Rise, and it is reflected in the statistics and abilities of characters. If a level 1 kobold posed even a tiny threat to a level 21 character, the mechanics of the game would sabotage the purported narrative of power and growth. In Rise, overall character power doubles approximately every two to three levels. The system takes some care to avoid bloating numbers to unwieldy levels on this journey, and the use of the d10 as the standard die helps immensely.

Bounded Action Economy

It is dangerous to give characters too many actions each turn. Each additional action a character can take increases how difficult it is for a player to decide what to do on their turn. In addition, each additional action increases the complexity of the change between the start of the turn and the end of the turn. This is especially risky with Rise's simultaneous initiative system, which combines the actions taken by all characters into a single resolution process.

Rise places significant limitations on how many relevant actions each character can take on their turn. Generally, characters can only move during the movement phase and then take one significant action each turn. Some characters can use a minor action to accomplish something useful. However, that essentially marks the end of action economy scaling, even up to the maximum level.

Detrimental effects that could deny actions are also heavily limited. Total action denial effects are only usable by high level characters, and even then they only work against weak enemies or enemies that have already been significantly damaged. Taking actions is

fun, and sitting quietly while everyone else does things can be very frustrating. Similarly, completely removing an enemy's ability to act can easily remove the tension from a fight before it's actually over.

Appendix A

Glossary

ability: An ability is a generic term for any unusual property a creature has or any special actions it can take to cause particular effects. Spells, racial traits, and the benefits from class archetypes can all be called abilities.

ability rank: An ability's rank is typically the minimum character rank required to learn or use the ability. If this is unclear, such as for unique monster abilities, use the creature's character rank.

ability tag: An ability tag describes the effects of an ability. For details, see Ability Tags, page **??**.

accuracy: The bonus added to an attack roll. For details, see Accuracy, page **??**.

action phase: The action phase is the second of two phases in a combat round. During the action phase, creatures can attack, cast spells, and take other major combat actions.

alchemical item: An alchemical item is any item created using the Craft (alchemy) skill. This includes firebombs, potions, and many other items.

alignment: Your alignment represents your general morality in broad terms. For details, see Alignment, page **??**.

allied group: Your allied group is the set of allies that you can coordinate your actions with. This group resolves its actions together, separately from other combatants. For details, see Resolving Actions, page **??**.

ally: An ally is any creature you consider an ally, and who also considers you an ally, excluding yourself. For details, see Allies and Enemies, page **??**.

archetype: An archetype is a collection of related abilities from a particular class. Each class has five archetypes. For details, see Archetypes, page **??**.

archetype rank: Your rank in an archetype determines which abilities from that archetype you have access to, and the power of those abilities. Your rank in any given archetype cannot exceed your character rank. For details, see Archetype Ranks, page **??**.

area: An area ability has a point of origin and affects all valid targets within some distance from that location. There are six standard area sizes: Tiny *(5 ft.)*, Small *(15 ft.)*, Medium *(30 ft.)*, Large *(60 ft.)*, Huge *(90 ft.)*, and Gargantuan *(120 ft.)*. For details, see Area Shapes, page **??**, and Area Types, page 11.

armor: Armor is a form of equipment that protects your body from harm. There are two kinds of armor: body armor, which you wear on your body, and shields, which you wield in a hand. For details, see Armor, page **??**.

astral beacon: An area with an astral beacon is easier to teleport to using long-distance teleportation abilities. For details, see Astral Beacons, page **??**.

attack: Any ability that requires an attack roll is an attack, even if it is used in a non-harmful way.

attack result: An attack result is the total you get on an attack roll, after taking into account any bonuses or penalties that apply to the roll.

attack roll: To make an attack roll, roll 1d10 + your accuracy with the attack. If the result equals or exceeds the target's defense, the attack succeeds. Some attacks, especially damaging area abilities, have effects even on a failed roll. For details, see Attack Rolls, page **??**.

attended: An attended item is an item currently being held or carried by a creature. Some abilities can only affect unattended items.

attribute: An attribute represents a character's capacity in a wide range of areas. There are six attributes: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Perception, and Willpower.

attunable: An effect is attunable if it can be attuned to. There are two kinds of attunable effects: effects with the Attune tag, and effects with the Sustain (attunable) tag.

attune: Some abilities last as long as you attune to them. Attuning to an ability costs an attunement point that you cannot recover as long as you maintain that attunement. For details, see Attuned Abilities, page **??**.

attuned: If you are attuned to an ability, you have invested an attunement point in it to maintain its effect. For details, see Attuned Abilities, page **??**.

attunement point: Attunement points allow you to attune to effects such as spells or items. For details, see Attunement Points, page **??**, and Attuned Abilities, page **??**.

barding: Armor designed for non-humanoid creatures is called barding. The Armor defense bonus provided by barding is 2 lower than normal. For details, see Barding, page **??**.

base class: Your base class grants you a variety of benefits. You always have a single base class, even if you are a multiclass character. For details, see Base Class, page **??**.

base speed: Each size category has a base speed that indicates

how far creatures of that size category can generally move. For details, see Base Speed, page **??**.

brawling accuracy: Your brawling accuracy is your accuracy with Brawling abilities. It uses your Strength instead of your Perception to determine your accuracy. For details, see Brawling Accuracy, page **??**.

brawling attack: A brawling attack uses your brawling accuracy instead of your normal accuracy. For details, see Brawling Accuracy, page **??**.

briefly: An effect that lasts briefly is called a brief effect. A brief effect lasts through the end of the next round after the effect was applied.

bright illumination: In an area with bright illumination, creatures can see clearly. Any effect which creates bright illumination in an area also creates enough light for dim illumination in twice that area. For details, see Vision and Light, page **??**.

brilliant illumination: In an area with brilliant illumination, creatures can see clearly. No shadows exist within an area of brilliant illumination. Any effect which creates brilliant illumination in an area also creates enough light for dim illumination in twice that area. For details, see Vision and Light, page **??**.

body armor: Body armor is a form of armor that you wear on your body. For details, see Armor, page **??**.

broken: A broken object is damaged and unsuitable for use, though it retains its general structure and can be repaired. For details, see Broken Objects, page **??**.

burrow speed: A creature with a burrow speed can move at that speed through solid ground. For details, see Movement Modes, page **??**.

burst: A burst is a type of area that an ability can have (see Area Types, page 11). A burst ability has an immediate effect on all valid targets within an area.

cantrip: Some mystic spheres have minor spells called cantrips. Anyone who has access to a mystic sphere knows all cantrips from that sphere.

carrying capacity: Your carrying capacity defines the amount of weight you can carry without penalty. For details, see Weight Limits, page **??**.

character level: Your character level is your total level, including levels from all of your classes. Whenever text refers to your "level", without specifying a particular kind of level, it means your character level.

character rank: A character's rank is a broad categorization of its capabilities, ranging from 0 to 7. Character rank is based on level, as defined in Table **??**: Character Advancement and Gaining Levels, page **??**. It is also listed in the base class table for each class, since it determines a character's maximum archetype rank (see Archetype Ranks, page **??**).

chain: An ability can specify that it chains a certain number of times. The chain starts from any primary target of the ability. Each chain allows you to choose an additional secondary target for the ability. That target must be within 15 foot range of the previous target in the chain and must not already be a target of the ability. You must have line of sight to each chained target. However, you do not need line of effect to them, and they can be beyond the ability's original range.

You can chain to objects if the ability can normally affect objects. However, they must be well-defined objects that are Gargantuan or smaller, so you can't chain off of the ground.

check: A check is a roll that you make to try to accomplish a task. If the result of your roll, including your modifier, is high enough, you succeed. Otherwise, you fail. For details, see Making Checks, page 4.

class: A character's class determines their fundamental source of power and many of their abilities. For details, see Classes, page **??**.

class skill: Each class has an associated set of class skills that members of that class often know. Your base class automatically grants you training with a specific number of skills from this list. For details, see Skills, page **??**.

climb speed: A creature with a climb speed can move at that speed while climbing, and does not suffer penalties while doing so. For details, see Movement Modes, page **??**.

close range: Weapons have two range limits: close range and long range. Attacks within a weapon's close range have no penalty. For details, see Weapon Range Limits, page **??**.

combat style: A combat style is a collection of maneuvers that some classes gain access to. For details, see Maneuver Lists, page **??**.

common language: Common languages are languages that are widely spoken. They are described in Table **??**: Common Languages, page **??**.

concealment: Concealment represents effects which make a target harder to see, such as shadowy lighting. All targeted attacks against a creature or object with concealment from you have a 20% miss chance. For details, see Concealment, page **??**.

condition: A condition is an effect that lasts on a creature until it is removed. Most conditions are standard debuffs. Player characters can remove conditions with a short rest, or with special abilities like recover (see Recover, page **??**). For details, see Ability Durations, page **??**.

Constitution: Constitution is an attribute that measures your health and stamina. For details, see Constitution, page 28.

corpse: A corpse is the inanimate, deceased body of a once-living creature. If a corpse is destroyed, it can no longer be treated as a corpse.

cover: Cover represents any obstacle that physically prevents you from striking your target, such as a tree or intervening creature. It grants a +2 bonus to Armor, Brawn, and Reflex defenses. For details, see Cover, page **??**.

critical hit: An attack that beats the target's defense by 10 or more gets a critical hit. On a critical hit, a damaging attack rolls twice as many damage dice and doubles all flat damage modifiers, unless otherwise noted. For details, see Critical Hits, page **??**.

critical success: A check that beats the difficulty value by 10 or more gets a critical success. Some abilities have special effects on a critical success.

damage: Taking damage reduces a creature's hit points. For

details, see Taking Damage, page **??**.

darkvision: A creature with darkvision can see perfectly in complete darkness. For details, see Darkvision, page 29.

dead: A dead creature's soul leaves its body. Dead creatures cannot benefit from normal or magical healing, but they can be restored to life via magic (see Resurrection, page **??**). A dead body decays normally unless magically preserved.

debuff: A debuff is a negative effect on a creature. Many debuffs are applied as conditions, but some last for longer or shorter times. For a list of debuffs, see Circumstances and Debuffs, page **??**.

deep attunement: A deep attunement ability is an Attune ability with two additional restrictions. First, it costs an extra attunement point to attune to. Second, these attunement points are not recovered until you take a short rest, even if the attunement is released. For details, see Deep Attunement, page **??**.

defeated: A creature is defeated if it dies or is incapacitated for an extended period of time (such as by being knocked unconscious). Defeating a creature generally requires inflicting a vital wound on it.

defense: A defense is a static number which represents how difficult you are to affect with attacks. There are five defenses: Armor, Brawn, Fortitude, Reflex, and Mental. For details, see Defenses, page **??**.

destroyed: A destroyed object has been damaged to the point where it is completely beyond repair. For details, see Destroyed Objects, page **??**.

Dexterity: Dexterity is an attribute that measures your hand-eye coordination, agility, and reflexes. For details, see Dexterity, page 29.

dice pool: A dice pool is a collection of dice that are all rolled together and summed to find a result. Damage typically uses a dice pool.

difficult terrain: Difficult terrain costs an additional 5 feet of movement to move out of. For details, see Difficult Terrain, page **??**.

difficulty value: The difficulty value of a check is the check result required to succeed. It can be abbreviated as "DV".

dim illumination: In an area with dim illumination, it is more difficult to see clearly. Creatures and objects within this area have concealment, which can allow creatures to make Stealth checks to hide (see Stealth, page **??**). For details, see Vision and Light, page **??**.

disease: An affliction of the body, causing a steady deterioration over time. Diseases are not mechanically defined in Rise, though they still exist in the narrative of the world.

dismiss: When an ability is dismissed, it ends and all of its lingering effects are removed. Any magical ✨ ability with a duration can normally be dismissed as a free action, but mundane abilities cannot be dismissed. For details, see Dismissal, page 11.

dual strike: A dual strike is a strike made with two weapons at once. You treat both weapons as a single combined weapon, adding together most of their statistics. For details, see Dual Strikes, page **??**.

elite: Elite monsters are much more dangerous than standard monsters.

elite action: Elite monsters can take a special extra action every round called an elite action. Every elite monster has at least one special ability which requires an elite action to use.

emanation: An emanation is a type of area that an ability can have (see Area Types, page 11). An emanation ability has effects within an area for the duration of the ability. It emanates from a specific creature or object, rather than a location. If that creature or object moves, the emanation moves with it.

enemy: An enemy is any creature you consider to be an enemy, excluding yourself. For details, see Allies and Enemies, page **??**.

enhancement bonus: Enhancement bonuses do not stack with other enhancement bonuses, even if they are from different sources. For details, see Stacking Rules, page **??**.

essentia: Essentia is the physical substance left behind when a soul decomposes into nonexistence. This typically happens after the soul has spent centuries in its afterlife and finally loses the will to maintain its existence. It is the foundational material of the Spiritual Planes (see Cosmology, page 15).

exclude: Some effects allow you to exclude specific targets that would normally be affected by your abilities. A creature or object excluded from an ability is not considered a target of the ability, even if it is within the ability's area or otherwise would normally be affected by the ability.

exotic weapon: A rare few weapons are considered exotic weapons. They are unusually difficult to wield, and even being proficient with the associated weapon group does not grant you the ability to use an exotic weapon. Some class abilities grant proficiency with exotic weapons.

explode: When you roll a 10 on an attack roll, the die can explode. If it does, you roll it again and add the two results together to determine the total. For details, see Exploding Attacks, page **??**.

extended check: An extended check is a check that represents your character taking some action over a prolonged period of time. You cannot use abilities like desperate exertion to modify the results of an extended check. If your modifier changes over the course of the task, use your lowest modifier at any point during the task.

everything: When "everything" is used in the description of an ability, it means "all creatures and objects".

extra damage: Extra damage is additional damage added on top of an attack's normal damage. For details, see Extra Damage, page **??**.

failure chance: If you have a failure chance with an ability, you have a random chance to fail. Failure chances are rolled before miss chances and attack rolls. An ability that fails on a target has no effect on that target, even if the ability would normally deal damage on a miss. If you have multiple failure chances, only the highest one applies.

falling damage: When a creature or object falls 10 or more feet, it takes falling damage based on its weight category. This falling damage is also dealt to the surface it lands on, but not to any other creature. A Medium weight creature takes 1d8 falling damage per 10 feet fallen (maximum 30d8). For details, see Falling Damage,

page **??**.

fatigue level: A creature takes a fatigue penalty if its fatigue level exceeds your fatigue tolerance. For details, see Fatigue, page **??**.

fatigue penalty: You take a penalty to accuracy and checks equal to your fatigue level − your fatigue tolerance. When your fatigue penalty reaches −5, you fall unconscious until your fatigue penalty is reduced below −5. For details, see Fatigue Penalty, page **??**.

fatigue tolerance: Your fatigue tolerance measures the maximum fatigue level you can reach before you suffer a fatigue penalty. For details, see Fatigue Tolerance, page **??**.

fly speed: A creature with a fly speed has the ability to fly through the air. Its speed is the distance it covers in a single movement. Most creatures suffer a −4 penalty to their Armor and Reflex defenses while flying. For details, see Aerial Movement, page **??**.

forced movement: A forced movement ability can cause a creature to move unwillingly. There are two types of forced movement: push and fling. Although teleportation can cause a creature's location to change unwillingly, it is not considered a type of forced movement.

free action: A free action is one of the four action types (see Actions, page **??**). Each round, you can take any number of free actions. Free actions can be taken in any phase. For details, see Free Actions, page **??**.

free hand: A free hand is a hand or similarly dexterous appendage that is not currently being used for any purpose. Many abilities require a free hand to use. You cannot use the same hand for two different purposes in the same phase.

glancing blow: When you miss on any attack by 2 or less, it is called a glancing blow. Whenever you get a glancing blow with a damaging attack, you deal half damage. For details, see Glancing Blows, page **??**.

glide speed: A creature with a glide speed can glide through the air. It cannot fly upwards, but it can travel forward while it descends, and it descends at a significantly reduced rate. Most creatures suffer a −4 penalty to their Armor and Reflex defenses while gliding. For details, see Gliding, page **??**.

grappling: You are grappling if either a creature is grappled by you or you are grappled by a creature. For details, see Grappling, page **??**.

grounded: A grounded creature or object is standing on or otherwise supported by a stable surface that can support its weight. The surface must be at least as large as the creature or object resting on it. Some effects only work if the creature or object is grounded by a particular material, such as stone.

hardness: Whenever a creature or object with hardness takes damage, it reduces that damage by an amount equal to its hardness. Normally, only objects have hardness. For details, see Breaking Objects, page **??**.

heavy undergrowth: A space overrun with thick bushes, vines, and similar natural obstacles has heavy undergrowth. Heavy undergrowth provides concealment and is considered difficult terrain.

heavyweight: A heavyweight object has a weight category that is one category larger than the object's size category. For details, see Weight Categories, page **??**.

height limit: A height limit defines your maximum distance directly above an object at least two size categories larger than you that is free-standing and capable of supporting your weight. This is common for flying creatures (see Flight, page **??**).

hit point: Your hit points measure how hard you are to seriously injure or kill. You lose hit points when you take damage. If you run out of hit points, you gain vital wounds when you take damage instead, which can cause you to die quickly. For details, see Hit Points, page **??**.

ice crystal: Ice crystals improve the effects of some spells from the *Cryomancy* mystic sphere. You can normally have a maximum of three ice crystals. At the end of each round, if you did not gain or spend any ice crystals that round, one of your ice crystals melts. For details, see Cryomancy, page **??**.

immune: You treat effects you are immune to as if they did not exist. You cannot have or gain conditions or similar effects from sources you are immune to. For example, if you become immune to poison, you would remove all poisons affecting yourself.

improvised weapon: An improvised weapon is an object which could conceivably be used as a weapon, but which was not designed for that purpose. Common examples include doors and wine bottles. For details, see Improvised Weapons, page **??**.

initiative: When multiple creatures take mutually impossible actions simultaneously, such as racing to be the first one to a door, they must roll initiative checks to determine who completes the action first. Your initiative modifier is equal to your Dexterity. For details, see Conflicting Actions, page **??**.

injury: If your remaining hit points are at or below your injury point, you are injured (see Injury, page **??**). For more long-term consequences of taking damage, see Vital Wounds, page **??**.

insight point: Insight points can be spent to gain additional abilities or proficiencies. For details, see Insight Points, page **??**.

Intelligence: Intelligence is an attribute that represents how well you learn and reason. For details, see Intelligence, page 30.

item rank: Items have ranks indicating their approximate value and rarity. For details, see Item Ranks, page **??**.

loose equipment: Loose equipment is much more vulnerable to damage than ordinary equipment. For details, see Loose Equipment, page **??**.

key attribute: The key attribute for a skill is the attribute associated with that skill. For example, Climb is a Strength-based skill. Some skills, such as Persuasion, do not have a key attribute.

fling: A fling is a type of forced movement. It represents being thrown backwards by a single large impact. If a creature or object being flung encounters an obstacle, it and the obstacle each take 1d8 damage per 10 feet of movement remaining. For details, see Fling Effects, page **??**.

light undergrowth: A space with passable bushes, vines, and similar natural obstacles has light undergrowth. Light undergrowth

provides concealment.

lightweight: A lightweight object has a weight category that is one category smaller than the object's size category. For details, see Weight Limits, page **??**.

line: A line is an area shape that an ability can have (see Area Shapes, page **??**). A line-shaped area has a given length, width, and height. Unless otherwise stated, a line's height is equal to its width.

line of effect: You cannot target something that you do not have line of effect to. Line of effect is blocked by solid obstacles, even invisible ones. For details, see Line of Effect, page **??**.

line of sight: You cannot target something that you do not have line of sight to. Line of sight is blocked by any obstacle that blocks sight, even if that obstacle does not block physical passage. For details, see Line of Sight, page **??**.

long range: Ranged weapons have two range limits: close range and long range. Attacks beyond a weapon's close range, but within its long range, have a −4 longshot penalty. For details, see Weapon Range Limits, page **??**.

long rest: A long rest represents eight hours of relaxation or sleep. It allows you to remove all of your fatigue levels and make progress towards healing a vital wound. For details, see Long Rest, page **??**.

longshot penalty: A longshot penalty is the penalty that you take for attacking outside of a weapon's close range. It is normally a −4 accuracy penalty. For details, see Weapon Range Limits, page **??**.

magic source: A magic source defines where a creature's mystic spheres come from. There are four magic sources: arcane, divine, nature, and pact. Sorcerers and wizards cast arcane spells, clerics and paladins cast divine spells, druids cast nature spells, and votives cast pact spells.

magical: A magical ability is an ability whose origin derives from magic. Examples include spells, a dragon's ability to fly, and a paladin's ability to smite foes. For details, see Magical and Mundane Abilities, page 10.

magical power: Your magical power is your power with magical ✨ abilities. It is typically equal to half your level + your Willpower. For details, see Power, page **??**.

maneuver: A maneuver is a type of mundane ability that some classes grant access to through particular combat styles. For details, see Maneuver Lists, page **??**.

manufactured weapon: A manufactured weapon is a weapon that is external to its user's body. A natural weapon is not a manufactured weapon. Some abilities affect or require manufactured weapons instead of natural weapons.

melee: A melee ability affects targets in physical contact with its source. Typically, this involves touching a target or using a weapon that never leaves your grasp. Unless you are using a Long weapon, you can only make melee attacks against targets adjacent to you.

metallic: A creature is metallic if it is wearing metal armor or otherwise carrying a significant amount of exposed metal. This includes any body armor with a metal material type. It also includes exposed metal objects or parts of objects that are no more than two size categories smaller than the creature. This includes most weapons with any metallic components. It does not include creatures who have small amounts of metal safely stowed in larger containers, such as a common amount of coins or metallic tools stowed in a coin purse or backpack.

Similarly, an object is generally considered metallic if it has an exposed piece made of metal that is no more than two size categories smaller than the object as a whole.

midair: Most creatures are unsteady *(−2 accuracy, Armor, Brawn, Ref)* while they are in the air and unable to touch the ground and move normally. This applies even if the creature has a fly speed or glide speed. However, it does not apply to creatures who are native to the air, such as birds and monsters with no defined walk speed. It also does not apply to creatures who intentionally jump until after they begin falling, which happens at the end of the round. This means you can jump into the air during the movement phase and attack in midair during the action phase without becoming unsteady.

minor action: A minor action is one of the four action types (see Actions, page **??**). You can take one minor action each round during the action phase. For details, see Actions, page **??**.

miss chance: If you have a miss chance with an attack, you have a random chance to miss with the attack. You roll the miss chance first, and if it causes you to miss, you do not roll an ordinary attack roll. In general, only targeted attacks can have a miss chance. If you have multiple miss chances, only the highest one applies.

move: When you move, you usually travel a distance equal to your speed. See Movement and Positioning, page **??**, for details. For specific move actions, see Movement Abilities, page **??**.

move action: A move action is one of the four action types (see Actions, page **??**). You can use one move action during the movement phase of each round. Almost all move actions change your location on the battlefield. For details, see Movement and Positioning, page **??**.

movement mode: A movement mode is a method of moving from one location to another. The most common mode is a walk speed. For details, see Movement Modes, page **??**.

movement phase: The movement phase is the first of two phases in a combat round. During the movement phase, creatures can take move actions (see Movement and Positioning, page **??**). The movement phase is followed by the action phase.

multiclass: A multiclass character can gain access to archetypes and other abilities from multiple classes. For details, see Multiclass Characters, page **??**.

mundane: A mundane ability does not originate from a magical source. Mundane abilities have a natural explanation, such as a weapon attack or a barbarian's rage. Unless otherwise indicated, all abilities are mundane.

mundane power: Your mundane power is your power with mundane abilities. It is typically equal to half your level + your Strength. For details, see Power, page **??**.

mystic sphere: A mystic sphere is a collection of thematically related magical effects that includes both spells and rituals. For details, see Spell Lists, page **??**.

natural weapon: A natural weapon is a weapon that is part of a

creature's body. For details, see Natural Weapons, page **??**.

object: An object is something with physical substance that is incapable of meaningful motion or agency. Some objects, such as ordinary plants, are living, but most objects are nonliving.

object manipulation: The weight and accessibility of an object determines the action required to manipulate it. For details, see Manipulating Objects, page **??**.

obstacle: An obstacle is anything that blocks free movement. Normally, both large objects and enemies are obstacles, but allies are not. For details, see Obstacles, page **??**.

Perception: Perception is an attribute that describes your ability to observe and be aware of your surroundings. For details, see Perception, page 32.

phase: A phase is part of the combat round. There are two phases: the movement phase and the action phase. For details, see Phases, page **??**.

planar rift: A planar rift is a location where the boundaries between planes are unusually thin. Planar rifts can be used to travel between planes using the appropriate rituals. For details, see the Tome of Guidance.

plane: A plane is a distinct realm of existence. Except for the connections between planes through planar rifts, each plane is effectively an isolated universe, and different planes can obey different fundamental laws. For details, see the Tome of Guidance.

point of origin: A point of origin is the grid intersection, creature, or object that an area originates from. For details, see Point of Origin, page **??**.

poison: Poisons attack Fortitude defense each round to cause debilitating effects or damage. For details, see Poison, page **??**.

poison stage: Each poison progresses in a series of stages. Each stage inflicts a particular negative effect on the poisoned creature according to the poison's description. For details, see Poison, page **??**.

potion: A potion is a magical liquid that is typically contained in a Fine vial. In general, drinking a potion requires a standard action. Potions cannot be safely mixed together without diluting their magic, so you cannot consume two potions with the same action.

power: Your power increases your damage, and can have other effects on specific abilities. For details, see Power, page **??**.

primary target: Some abilities that affect multiple targets distinguish between their primary and secondary targets. For details, see Primary and Secondary Targets, page **??**.

proficient: A creature must be proficient with weapons and armor to use them effectively. Using a weapon without proficiency imposes a −2 accuracy penalty. Wearing armor without proficiency halves its defense bonus and applies its Armor defense bonus as a penalty to accuracy.

projectile: A projectile is an object fired from a weapon at a target. Arrows and bolts are projectiles.

push: Push is a type of forced movement. It represents being pushed by a constant force. If a pushed creature encounters an obstacle, it stops moving with no negative consequences. For details, see Push Effects, page **??**.

range: The range of an ability determines how far away it can be used. Unless otherwise noted, all abilities with a range require both line of sight and line of effect to the point of origin or to all targets. There are five standard ranges used for abilities: Short *(30 ft.)* range, Medium *(60 ft.)* range, Long *(90 ft.)* range, Distant *(120 ft.)* range, and Extreme *(180 ft.)* range (see Ability Range, page 10). Ranged weapons do not use those standard ranges, and instead use specific range limits (see Weapon Range Limits, page **??**).

range limit: Ranged weapons have two range limits listed, with a slash between them, such as 60/180. The first number indicates the maximum range for a weapon's close range. The second number indicates the maximum range for a weapon's long range. For details, see Weapon Range Limits, page **??**.

ranged: A ranged ability affects targets at a distance from its source. Ranged abilities always have a range at which they function.

rank: A rank is a general categorization of how powerful something is. There are several specific types of rank: ability rank, archetype rank, character rank, and item rank.

rare language: Rare languages are languages that are only spoken by rare or distant creatures or cultures. They are described in Table **??**: Rare Languages, page **??**.

reactive attack: A reactive attack is an attack that happens outside of your control. You cannot modify it in any way, and it is not improved if you are empowered *(add rank to damage)*, focused *(roll attacks twice)*, maximized *(deal max damage)*, or primed *(always explode)*. For example, you cannot use the desperate exertion ability to reroll a reactive attack, or add an extra target with a Sweeping weapon.

If you would make multiple reactive attacks during the same phase with the same ability against different targets, use the same attack roll for each target. A reactive attack can never be triggered by a reactive attack or reactive check.

reactive check: A reactive check is a check that you make during the resolution of another creature's actions. Just like a reactive attack, you cannot modify a reactive check in any way.

repeat: Some effects can repeat abilities at a later time. When an ability repeats, it normally keeps the same choices as the original ability, such as targets and affected area. Some effects change the choices for a repeated ability, such as only affecting a subset of targets.

All attacks made for a repeated ability are reactive attacks. They are made using the creature's statistics when it used the ability originally, not its current state. For example, imagine a creature had a +2 accuracy bonus when it initially used a repeating ability and then was knocked unconscious before the repeat occurs. Although the creature is unconscious and unable to attack, the repeat would still occur, and its accuracy bonus would still apply.

Some repeats specify their targets, such as repeating only for a particular creature. Other repeats affect the entire ability. If a repeat specifies a target, it works on that target regardless of the ability's original targeting restrictions.

reroll: Some abilities allow you to reroll a roll you just made.

The most common ability that allows rerolling is desperate exertion (see Desperate Exertion, page **??**). You must reroll the entire roll, not just one die from the roll (such as if the original roll explodes). It is possible to reroll the same roll multiple times with different abilities. Each reroll only grants one extra roll.

resource: A resource is something that a character can expend to gain a benefit. Most resources are shared between all types of characters, though different characters can use them differently. There are two resources that are used during the character creation and leveling process: insight points and trained skills. In addition, there are two resources that are used during gameplay: attunement points and fatigue level.

resurrection: When a creature is resurrected, it comes back to life after being dead. For details, see Resurrection, page **??**.

ritual: A ritual is a complex magical ceremony that has a specific effect when completed. For details, see Spell and Ritual Mechanics, page **??**.

round: Combat takes place in a series of rounds, which represent about six seconds of action. Rounds are divided into two phases: the movement phase, and the action phase.

secondary target: Some abilities that affect multiple targets distinguish between their primary and secondary targets. For details, see Primary and Secondary Targets, page **??**.

scent: A creature with the scent ability has an unusually good sense of smell. For details, see Scent, page 33.

scrying sensor: A scrying sensor is a magical construct created by some magical abilities. Scrying sensors are Fine objects resembling a human eye in size and shape, though they are invisible. Scrying sensors typically float in a fixed position in the air. They normally can't be moved by external forces without destroying the sensor. Unless otherwise specified, a scrying sensor's visual acuity is the same as that of a normal human, giving it a +0 bonus to the Awareness skill and similar checks.

sentient: A sentient creature is capable of experiencing emotions and perceiving its surroundings. Complex animals are sentient, but trees are not. Some creatures have incomplete minds that are capable of simulating intelligence without true sentience. These creatures are called simple-minded.

shadowed: A creature or object is shadowed if it is touching its shadow. That typically means it is in dim illumination or bright illumination, but not brilliant illumination or complete darkness. In addition, it must be grounded or otherwise touching a surface.

shapeable: Abilities with shapeable areas can customize the exact area they affect. For details, see Shapeable Areas, page **??**.

shapeshift: Shapeshifting abilities change the physical form and abilities of a creature or object. For details, see Shapeshifting, page **??**.

shield: Shields are a form of armor that you wield in a hand to protect you from harm. For details, see Armor, page **??**.

short rest: A short rest represents ten minutes of relaxation. It allows you to regain lost hit points and any attunement points you released from attunement. For details, see Short Rest, page **??**.

size category: A creature's size category indicates how large it is. There are nine size categories, from smallest to largest: Fine, Diminutive, Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Huge, Gargantuan, Colossal. For details, see Size Categories, page **??**.

skill: A skill represents your degree of talent with a particular non-combat aspect of the world. For example, the Climb skill represents how skilled you are at climbing. For details, see Skills, page **??**.

somatic components: Somatic components are hand motions required to cast arcane and pact spells. For details, see Ability Usage Components, page **??**.

something: Many abilities say they target "something", generally within a range. This means they target one creature or object of your choice.

space: Your space is the area that your physical body occupies. For convenience, your space is measured in five-foot squares. Medium creatures occupy space equal to a single five-foot square. For details, see Size Categories, page **??**.

speed: Your speed represents the number of feet you can move with a single movement (see Movement and Positioning, page **??**).

spell: A spell is a discrete magical ability with combat-relevant effects. For details, see Spells, page 33.

spell list: The list of spells you can cast from a particular magic source. Each spell source has a specific spell list which is described at Spells, page 33. Most characters with the same spell sources have the same spell lists. However, some effects, such as a cleric's domains, can add spells to a character's individual spell list.

square: A square represents a single 5-ft. by 5-ft. space. Many areas are measured in squares for convenience.

standard action: A standard action is one of the four action types (see Actions, page **??**). You can take one standard action each round during the action phase. For details, see Actions, page **??**.

Strength: Strength is an attribute that measures your muscle and physical power. For details, see Strength, page 33.

strike: A strike is a single physical attack with a weapon. It is the most common type of attack. You can make a strike as a standard action in the action phase. For details, see Strikes, page **??**.

subdual damage: Subdual damage is a special kind of damage that can't kill you. If you would gain a vital wound from subdual damage, you increase your fatigue level by three instead. For details, see Subdual Damage, page **??**.

suppressed: Effects have no effect while they are suppressed.

sustain: Some abilities last as long as you sustain them. Each ability specifies a particular action that is required to sustain the ability, such as a minor action. When Swift abilities resolve during each action phase, the ability is dismissed unless you take the action to sustain the ability that round. For details, see Sustained Abilities, page **??**.

Swift: An ability with this ability tag resolves its effects before other actions in the same phase. For details, see Swift Abilities, page **??**.

swim speed: A creature with a swim speed can move at that

speed while swimming, and being underwater does not make it unsteady *(−2 accuracy, Armor, Brawn, Ref)*. For details, see Movement Modes, page **??**.

target: A target is a creature or object directly affected by an ability. Many abilities only affect a single target, and some affect a specific number of targets. For details, see Ability Targeting, page **??**.

target square: A target square is a particular square that an attack is made against. A target square is chosen to determine cover and concealment (see Cover, page **??**).

targeted: A targeted ability allows you to individually choose which creatures or objects are affected. Area abilities are not targeted, since you choose the area rather than individual targets. A strike is a targeted ability, as is any ability that causes you to immediately make a strike. Adding an extra target to an ability that causes you to make a strike means you hit an extra creature with the strike, not that the extra target also makes a strike.

targeting proxy: When you use an ability through a targeting proxy, you determine its targets as if you were in the targeting proxy's location instead of your own. This can allow you to affect targets outside your normal range. For details, see Targeting Proxies, page **??**.

telepathy: A creature with telepathy can mentally communicate with other creatures within a given range. For details, see Telepathy, page **??**.

teleportation: A creature or object that is teleported instantly leaves one location and arrives at another. Unless otherwise specified, teleportation requires line of sight, line of effect, and an unoccupied destination on stable ground. For details, see Teleportation, page **??**.

thrown weapon: A thrown weapon is a weapon designed to be thrown at a target. For details about attacking with thrown weapons, see Basic Strike – Thrown, page **??**.

touch: You can generally touch an adjacent creature with a free hand as a free action, even an enemy. This has no mechanical effect by itself. Some abilities function on creatures you touch, so you can touch them as part of using those abilities. Some creatures cannot be touched, such as intangible creatures.

trained skill: If you are trained in a skill, you have learned how to use it well. Your modifier with a trained skill is equal to 3 + the higher of its associated attribute (if any) and half your level. For details, see Trained Skills, page **??**.

unaffected: If you are unaffected by a particular effect, it doesn't do anything to you. Unlike being immune, you do not automatically remove persistent effects that you are unaffected by, such as conditionsc. This means you may still need to track that the effect is on you in case you stop being unaffected by it. For example, a barbarian is unaffected by conditions while raging, but those conditions have their full effects when the barbarian stops raging.

unattended: An unattended item is an item not being held or carried by a creature. Some abilities can only affect unattended items.

undergrowth: The presence of a significant amount of roots, bushes, and similar plants that can obstruct movement is called undergrowth. There are two kinds of undergrowth: light undergrowth and heavy undergrowth. For details, see Undergrowth, page **??**.

usage class: The usage class of armor is a measure of how much effort it takes to use it. There are three usage classes: light, medium, and heavy. For details, see Armor Usage Classes, page **??**.

verbal components: Verbal components are words required to cast most spells. For details, see Ability Usage Components, page **??**.

vital wound: A vital wound is a serious injury that inflicts negative effects on you. You gain one or more vital wounds when you take damage in excess of your hit points (see Negative Hit Points, page **??**). For details, see Vital Wounds, page **??**.

vulnerable: A vulnerable creature takes a −4 penalty to all defenses against whatever it is vulnerable to. For details, see Vulnerable, page **??**.

wall: A wall is an area shape that an ability can have (see Area Shapes, page **??**). A wall-shaped area has a length and height, but its width is not measured in squares.

walk speed: A creature's walk speed is a movement mode that determines how fast it can walk on land (see Movement Modes, page **??**). Most creatures have an average walk speed.

weapon: A weapon is an object used to inflict damage. Some creatures can treat parts of their body as weapons. For details, see Weapons, page **??**.

weapon damage: Each weapon defines the damage die or dice that it deals when you hit with it. Typically, weapon damage is dealt by strikes (see Strikes, page **??**). For details about the damage dealt by specific weapons, see Weapons, page **??**.

weapon group: A weapon group is a category of weapons with a similar design and fighting style. Some abilities grant you proficiency with or special abilities with particular weapon groups. For details, see Weapon Groups, page **??**.

weapon tag: A weapon tag describes the special effects of a weapon. For details, see Weapon Tags, page **??**.

weight limit: Your weight limits define the amount of weight you can carry or push without penalty. For details, see Weight Limits, page **??**.

weight category: The weight category of an object or creature is a broad measurement of how much it weighs. Weight categories are closely related to size categories. For details, see Table **??**: Weight Categories, page **??**.

Willpower: Willpower is an attribute that represents your ability to endure mental hardships. For details, see Willpower, page 34.

vital roll: When you gain a vital wound, you make a vital roll to determine the detrimental effect of the vital wound. To make a vital roll, roll 1d10 − the number of vital wounds you already had, ignoring the vital wound you are rolling for. For details, see Vital Wounds, page **??**.

zone: A zone is a type of area that an ability can have (see Area Types, page 11). A zone ability has effects within an area for the duration of the ability. Unless otherwise noted, it does not move after being created.

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