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LEGENDS OF THE  
DRAGON ISLES



# LEGENDS OF THE DRAGON ISLES



The world has died  
The world is new  
As above, so below

LEGENDS OF THE DRAGON ISLES

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# Player Quick Reference

## Character Creation

**Write your character in your own words.** You start with 2 Themes, 2 Traits, 6 Assets (4 normal & 2 enhanced), 2 Secrets, 1 Dark Secret, and 2 Paths.

## Turns

The game is played in continuous rotating turns; it's always someone's turn.

Take one Action in your turn:

- **Attack** - inflict 1 Damage
- **Investigate** - search, examine in detail, appraise, etc
- **Use Item** - drink a potion, throw a rope, open/shut door
- **Mercy** - stabilize or dispatch a mortally wounded creature
- **Use Secret** - cast a spell or use a special ability (pay 1 Vim)

Also take two Maneuvers in your turn or at any time during the same round:

- **Move 10 feet** - walk, sit, stand, kneel, swim, climb, etc.
- **Run 20 feet** - on open ground
- **Ready Weapon** - get sword, put away ax, draw bow, etc.
- **Aim** - improve attack
- **Dodge** - improve defense
- **Cover** - take cover

The GM will require a roll for most Actions, and these rolls are made during your turn. If you are attacked then also roll a Saving Throw during your turn.

## Hazard, Stress & Vim

Hazard, Stress, and Vim are the three vital stats essential to how the game works and used in dice rolls. They rise and fall during the game, similar to dramatic tension in a book or film; you can think of them as "volume knobs" for the story. They are also shared by all players, so what you do affects others.

**HAZARD** is the difficulty of the scene your group of characters is facing, and is set by the GM. Hazard is the target number to succeed on rolls of 1d20, so if Hazard is 12 you need to roll 12 or higher to succeed.

**STRESS** is the amount of strain and trauma your group of characters has taken, and can be mental, spiritual, or physical. As Stress rises your failures are more likely to be disastrous fumbles. Stress starts at 1, then Raise Stress by 1 each time you are hit, fail a Saving Throw, or your ship/castle is hit, use a Secret with negative Vim, or see something awful. When things slow down after a stressful situation, you can reduce Stress by eating, drinking, making camp, cleaning yourself, mending your gear, making jokes, playing music, and blowing off steam. After all, you're a person. Reducing Stress within a stressful situation requires a Secret spell or power, such as "song of hope", "boost morale", etc.

**VIM** is the amount of energy your group of characters has available to use Secrets. Spend 1 Vim when you use a Secret. Sleeping raises you to 4 Vim, or less if you didn't receive a good night's sleep. However, a better way to gain Vim is via arcane Rituals, which are discussed in the chapter on Secrets.

# Rolling Dice

A standard roll consists of one d20 and a one Legend Die.

Your **d20** succeeds if you roll the Hazard or higher. So at Hazard 14 you succeed on 14 or higher. You Crit on 20. There are no modifiers to this roll. Otherwise you fail, but you **Fumble** if you roll Stress or below.

Your **Legend Die** is a custom die (faces below) which may upgrade [+] or downgrade [-] your natural result by one full step, e.g. failure to success! Each face is a mini-game unto itself, showcasing various details of your character, situation details, or your skill as a player.

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| THEME  | Name a Theme or Theme Signature that assists your action.<br>Downgrade if you don't have necessary specialized knowledge.  |
| EFFORT | Raise Stress if < 5. Upgrade if you have a Trait ideal for your roll.<br>Downgrade if your roll is hindered by a Dark Secret or Doom.  |
| ASSET  | Downgrade if you are not using an Asset (item). Upgrade if you have an ideal Asset Signature ideal, such as a "flaming sword" vs spiders. Do not apply any modifier if the action cannot benefit from an item, e.g. singing, hearing, observation, etc.  |
| COMBO  | Upgrade if you have an advantage that combines with your current roll. For example, you might have taken the high ground or other optimal position, dodged, or parried. In most cases, gaining advantage is the result of taking Maneuvers or Actions to position yourself or activate Asset Tags. Downgrade if you have disadvantage (e.g. blinded, prone) or opponents have outmaneuvered you (e.g. flanking, high ground, etc). You can also leverage Maneuver of allies. |
| ULT    | Upgrade if you are an expert at your action, and more expert than anyone nearby. Requires player consensus for bonus. Downgrade if your action directly opposes someone who has ULT, e.g. a monster special attack.  |
| PREP   | Leverage an Action you took on a previous Turn where you described preparation for the current roll. Usually this required you to have noticed foreshadowing or clues and used your wits to make ready. However, downgrade if your foes are better prepared than you (e.g. ambush, swarm).   |

Your natural d20 result can only be modified by a maximum of one step, up or down, so you will never fumble if your d20 rolls a success. An upgraded Crit is a Super Crit, and a downgraded Fumble is a Super Fumble.

# Saving Throws

The GM will call for a Saving Throw if you are attacked by a monster, trap, spell, or other danger. Roll dice for your Saving Throw during your turn. If you fail a Saving Throw you take Damage. If you Crit you get a free Counterattack.

**If you fail a Saving Throw you take 1 Damage.** If you roll a Fumble you take 2 Damage, or 3 for Super Fumble.

Next, compare Weapon Class and Armor Class in the Hit Location. Add 1 Damage if Weapon Class is higher or subtract 1 Damage if Armor Class is higher. If your armor does not negate all Damage you will gain a Doom with a stage equal to the remaining Damage.

If you have a **Protective Trait** ideal for this Doom then reduce your Doom by one stage. For example, if you are cut by a sword and take 1 Damage this would normally be a Doom 1, but if you have a Trait "sword scars" then you just gain Doom 0. You can only use one Protective Trait per Doom, so you cannot declare a Trait when combining a Doom with an existing Doom (see below).

## Dooms

Dooms are very serious life threatening injuries or afflictions. You gain a Doom whenever you fail a Saving Throw and your armor does not negate all Damage. Dooms have three Damage boxes; check one box for each point of Damage you take. Once all three are checked you are expected to die, and any further damage results in immediate death.

| Damage Boxes | Doom Stage       | Effects                        |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| □ □ □        | 0 - "Fine"       | none                           |
| ☒ □ □        | 1 - Wounded      | [−] EFFORT                     |
| ☒☒ □         | 2 - Disabled     | +1 Damage if Hit Location used |
| ☒☒☒          | 3 - Death's Door | Expectant, near death          |
| ☒☒☒+         | Dead.            | Immediate death                |

**New Dooms are Unstable** and you take +1 Damage each time you roll EFFORT. You or someone else can take an Action and roll to stabilize a Doom.

**Combine Dooms** of the same kind and Hit Location, such as another wound, additional poison, more extensive burns, etc. You cannot use a Trait to reduce a Doom that is being combined with an existing Doom.

**Healing Dooms** requires months of time for natural healing, or a few hours if using a healing Ritual.

# Weapon Class & Armor Class

For any attack or Saving Throw, compare Weapon Class and Armor Class in the Hit Location. Add 1 Damage if Weapon Class is higher or subtract 1 Damage if Armor Class is higher.

| Class | Weapon  | Armor & Shields  |
|-------|---|--|
| 0     | cane, whip, magic spell *   | skin, normal clothing  |
| 1     | knife, club, sickle, javelin  | thick clothing, stiff leather  |
| 2     | dagger, rondel, sidesword, longsword (1H), club (2H), hunting bow, small ax, spear (1H)           | light gambeson, cuir-boulli, arming jack, handguard                    |
| 3     | spear, (2H), mace, battle axe (2H), falchion, crossbow, longsword (2H), longbow, war bow, khopesh | gambeson (30 layers), mail, jazeraint, coat of plates, buckler         |
| 4     | greatsword, lochaber ax, military pick  | transitional plate, munition plate, round shield, rotella, kite shield |
| 5     | halberd, poleax, polearm, pistol, arbalest, flintlock blunderbuss                                 | full plate, tower shield, aspis, young dragon                          |
| 6     | mounted lance, flintlock rifle, arquebus, ogre club, dragon breath *                              | jousting plate, pavise, adult dragon                                   |

\* Non-weapons, including magic spells, are always Weapon Class 0. However, the GM can assign a Weapon Class to monster attacks, such as dragon breath.

## Armor Coverage

Armor is a tradeoff of coverage and mobility. Each armor suit has a Tag hind describes your Hit Locations covered and number of Maneuvers per Round.

| Armor Tag  | Example             | Hit Locations                           | Maneuvers |
|------------|---------------------|---|-----------|
| Body-Armor | cuirass             | Head, Torso                             | 3         |
| Half-Armor | mail haubergeon     | Head, Torso, Arm, Groin                 | 2         |
| 3Qtr-Armor | three-quarter plate | Head, Torso, Arm, Groin (partial), Knee | 2         |
| Full-Armor | plate armor         | Head, Torso, Arm, Groin, Knee, Leg      | 1         |

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# Welcome to the Dragon Isles

Welcome bold adventurer! Before you is the timeless mystery of the Dragon Isles of Ambar, a world both reborn anew and yet ancient, with realms to explore broadly above and deeply below. The world has died and been reborn anew, countless times. What bold legends will you build?

**THE WORLD IS NEWBORN**, bright and beautiful, full of life and boundless potential. Young races of man build kingdoms on the unspoiled shores of the Dragon Sea: from the strong **Northmaren** keeps and strongholds with their high-walls in the north to the indulgent **Southmaren** oases with their libraries, banks, and shrines to many gods in the warm south. As they explore wildernesses and forge kingdoms they encounter ancient ruins, Eldar, dragons, and monsters, and thus learn deeper mysteries of the ancient worlds that came before.

**THE WORLD HAS DIED** and risen anew in an infinite cycle. Each new incarnation blossoms and grows for an aeon, then dies in an apocalypse. Every reincarnation is a land for new races and civilizations and dragons, built on the stones and bones of the past. Every death adds another layer to the deep strata of the Underworlds below the surface. The entire world is riddled with the bones of colossal dragons, wyrms, sunken cities, vast watery grottos, and tunnels leading above and below.

**THE UNDERWORLDS** are vast subterranean gigadungeons formed by the layers of countless precursor civilizations. Survivors compete for life in the dark cold below, fighting monsters and one another in their struggle to reach the surface. Yet, treasure hunters, adventurers, and doom cults seek tunnels into the Underworlds to plunder the riches of ancient aeons. Within the depths you will find dead cities, riches, artifacts, dragon lairs, monsters, vast tunnels and caverns inside dead dragons, eggs laid by chthonian horrors, trapped Eldar civilizations, standing armies forged and forgotten,

imprisoned kha'din and undead horrors, entrances to **Kalla**, and shrines to Gods with forgotten names.

**ELDAR** are survivors of previous aeons. Once young races like us, they have been forged, broken, and reforged in world-ending fire to something like fae or daemons. A few Eldar have realms above and below, but most are trapped below and seek the surface, or wander without a people or a home. Some Eldar you might encounter are fae **Elves**, inventious **Dwur**, draconic **Baal**, vampiric **Avathars**, **Drisi** serpentmen, evil troglodytic **Drunes**, stone-skinned **Karrocks**, dragonslaying **Kith**, wise **Belerions**, black-robed **Alu**, reptilian mystic **Kess'rith**, fiery **Ifr'it**, slithering scaled **Linnorms**, grotesque **Gobbah**, and angelic **Aethiiri**.

**KALLA** are holdfasts that allow the Eldar to survive across aeons. Each is an extradimensional pocket controlled by sorceries. Eldar, dragons, and wizards struggle for control of these places in a hidden magical war, yet, one that influences the rebirth cycle of the surface world. **Kalla'din** are Eldar extradimensional prisons for Kha'din and otheremonic horrors. Kalla gates are located at Nodes, which are intersections of Dragon Paths coiling around the world.

**WIZARDS** are abstruse sages and adepts of the magic arts. Aside from the youngest apprentices, wizards are as old and wise as the Eldar. Wizards seclude themselves in Kalla to focus on their arcane experiments and studies without interference or interruption, leaving only to fetch certain requirements or provide guidance to the current swath of young kingdoms. Wizards often form covenants of mutual assistance and defense of their Kalla, such as **Imperial Black Wizards** in Harnendor, **Istari** in Belerion, **Inverted Pyramid** in Lyonesse, and **House Cennyth** in Kitania.

**DRAGONS** are bound to the cycle of the world, dying in each apocalypse and reincarnating with each aeon. Dragons are territorial, and guard their lairs to the death, from threats above and below. Some dragons have cast aside this natural cycle, living past

their aeon as quasi-undead **Wyrms**. The **Baal'Mot** are draconecroalchemist priests who aided the Wyrms in this end. By living beyond their natural time the Wyrms grow to enormous size, misshapen, grotesque, cancerous, and undead.

**KHA'DIN** are primordial horrors spawned in the watery darkness of the deepest, oldest layers of the Underworlds and ocean abzu. In each aeon Kha'din find for paths to migrate to the surface, and dragons struggle to hold them back. Their mournsong causes eerie dreams and impulses, and a touch of eye-covered tentacle infects with taint that spreads until the host is a **Akuma** thrall.

THE GODS are **Pyrose** the Sun King, **Xohm** the Earth Mother, **Mrmym** the Winged Messenger, **Lunara** the Veiled Maiden, **Kurg** the Winter King, and **Hruul** the Voice in the Void. They are known by other names across cultures and the aeons, but the archetypes are the same, for example the Baal known the Veiled Maiden as Suul. The Gods exist above the rebirth cycle of the world, and seldom leave their Hallows, instead sending **Saints** armored in faith.

THE MAGIC ARTS of the Dragon Isles are ancient, elegant, and decadent, having been developed by various lines of Eldar across aeons. Magic spells, rituals, runes, enchantments, and the like are all Secrets that you can learn, and should guard closely.

**GULDURINE GLYPHHS** are unsettling ancient symbols sometimes found inscribed on ruins buried deep in the past, or submerged under the seas. Glyphs command abstruse concepts rather than natural phenomenon, such as summoning, binding, unseen forces, teleportation, and other mysteries. Glyphs are used by the Black Wizards of Aquila, Avathars, Gobbah, and Guldurine Alu.

**THAUMATURGICAL RUNES** are the building blocks of creation, and securely held by the Dwur. There is a rune for every concrete concept in the world, such as "fire", "mountain", or "tree". Runes are most often used by Dwur, Thaumaturgists, and White Wizards.

**ALCHEMICAL ARTS** are magical processes which can create substances not naturally found in the world, such as magic potions,

special alloys, alchemist's fire, hardened glass or stone, and many other wondrous materials. Notable alchemists are the Baal'Yr, Drisi'Yr, Avathars, and Black Wizards of Aquila.

**MTHU RYGAS** are sorceries built by forming mental images and constructs and holding them together by force of will and spirit. No words or gestures are used, but the sorcerer must concentrate, and must see the target directly with his own eyes, for the eyes are the gateway to the soul. Known practitioners of sorcery are the Belerions, Black Wizards of Aquila, and Ifr'it.

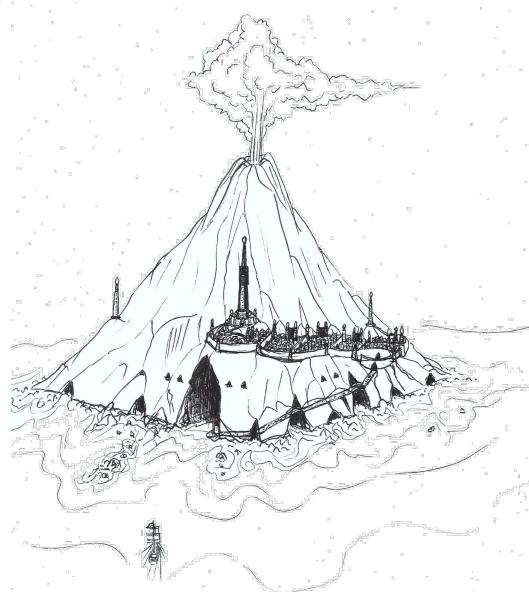
**ASTRAL HARMONICS** are eerie sounds, intonations, or songs drawing magic from the Astral. Aethiiri melodic strings and voices weave beautiful eerie music, Alu bells, song bowls, and chants direct deep meditation, Baal horns and brass instruments echo dragonsong, and Kha'din create dark whalesong dirge.

## The Known World

The Known World is a familiar medieval tapestry with human kingdoms, swords, chainmail, castles, and city-states. Eldar realms are mythical and grim renaissance fairy tales. At the time of writing the year is 882 in the current aeon.

**AKKAR** - The basalt and obsidian palaces of the Baal dragon lords, powerful Eldar who worship and serve noble black-scaled dragons. Their Draconian Empire once spanned the world, and remnants are still visible into the new aeon, poking above the crust like islands.

**ALGLONDOR** - The holy kingdom of the Alglonds occupies the rocky river valleys in the northwest. The Alglonds are honorable, pious, and excel at building river castles and forts. Their chief fortification is the Aegis, Shield of the North, where Alglond paladins of Pyrose the Fyre Lord ward against the undead of Sepulchre to the north and the vampires of Nan-Avathar to the east.



**BELERION** - A remote northern realm bordering Nan'Avathar and Hrvlyggdor, renowned for natural wonders such as floating rock formations. Pilgrims on a quest for knowledge and peace will be welcomed by wise Eldar druids and will find what they seek.

**DORTHONIEN** - A vast woodland coastland region. Within and around these forests dwell the Dorthons, men known as elf-friends and half-elves, for these forests are a refuge of the Elves.

**THE DRAGON SEA** - A vast inland ocean with waters infamous for rocky "teeth" within a few miles of the shore, oft hidden by thick mists. Some teeth are atolls, but most are uncharted hazards. Sailors make offerings to Suul, the dragon of the mists.

**THE DRUNLANDS** - A dismal land of twisted forests, fens, and dragon mounds between Hrvlyggdor and Akkar, where travelers are welcomed and put to succulent use. The hateful Drunes rule this land, red-eyed troglodytic Eldar who hide from the sun in their tomb city of Drun'Carnac, or in countless dim caves and dungeon-forts in the region. Drun warbands raid human lands for slaves and sacrifices to summon the Great White Wyrm to devour the world.

**THE GOBBAH EMPIRE OF DORASH KAR** - A harsh land of pits and tunnels leading to the Underworld realms of the Gobbah, a cruel Eldar race of goblin sea daemons who always seem to wriggle their way to the surface during each aeon. The shores are littered with sacrificial altars and temples near steps leading into the sea, to worship and summon Dagon the Voice of the Deeps or even Kha'din.

**HARNENDOR** - The Southmaren Empire of Harnendor covers the far south. Their golden city of Aquila is a hub of trade, learning, and Black Wizardry. The Southmaren have vast fleets and have explored much of the world, and established many secret trade routes and colonies around the Dragon Sea.

**HRIVLYGGDOR** - The northlands of the midnight sun are vast taiga forests and arctic tundra. Only monsters and Kith venture here.

**KITANIA** - A prosperous kingdom covering the fertile midlands between Alglondor to the north and extending into the Rochir Plains to the southwest. The Kitanians love freedom, horses, archery, and

the sea, and revere the gods Mrmym and Lunara. They send supplies north to Alglondor.

**LYONESSE** - The rocky and mist-cloaked central coast is home to the Lyonese free cities. The Lyonese people love freedom and trade have learned to be adaptable in their war-torn region. The Lothian mercenary companies are famous. Their greatest free city is Ashenrise, which sits at the end of the Wolves Teeth archipelago and is the main trading hub of the north.

**NAN-AVATHAR** - A grim and desolate land of volcanic ashlands and crags east of Alglondor. This is the realm of the Avathars, vampiric Eldar ruled by thirteen Vampire Lords who serve Kurg the Winter King seek to end the aeon in an endless winter of ash and bones. Some histories indicate they have done this several times before, with each death adding to the strength of their underworld. Some Avathars labor to build dark shrines and recover lost treasures in Sepulchre, and some dream of rediscovering the ruins of the Necroalchemical Empire Of Arh'Tolth deep in the Vokrazum jungles.

**NAN-SURINEN** - The southern edge of the world, filled with the warm breath of the divine winds. This is the holy land of the Alu and their feathered dragons. Foreigners are seldom welcomed.

**ROCHIR PLAINS** - The Rochir Plains is a vast region of arid savanna and deserts. The Rochir "horse lords" are Southmaren nomads who rule these lands, said to learn to ride and wield a blade before they walk, who value freedom above all and while claimed by Kitania, bend no knee other than to the gods Mrmym, Xohm, and Lunara.

**SEPULCHRE** - This legendary valley is ringed by the Wintercrown Mountains, north of Alglondor and west of Nan-Avathar. This was the oldest region of the world, cradle and paradise of first Eldar, who called this region Ealde and took refuge within a valley ringed with weirstones. Later this was the site of the legendary Battle of the Thousandfold Curses, where Eldar hosts fought the Kha'din, died, but rose as undead rather than thralls. Their graveyard extends deep into the strata of the Underworlds.



## Northmarens

Northmarens are people from various river and sea-side kingdoms on the northwestern shores of the Dragon Sea, such as Alglondor, Dorthonien, and Lyonesse. They are young and impetuous and eager for glory in battle, conquest, exploration and trade, however they are not as advanced as their smaller southern cousins, the Southmarens. They are divided into countless kingdoms and free cities, such as Alglondor, Dorthonien, Belerion, and Lyonesse, but stand united against the threat of bloodthirsty Nan-Avathar. They are allies with the Eldar races of Elves, Belerions and Dwur, and plagued by foes such as the Avathars and Illythrhi.

Northmarens are a diverse lot, and customs vary between regions, since most never leave their home town. A typical Northmaren stands six feet tall, a full head taller than their smaller Southmaren cousins, and some of their larger men are seven feet tall. Some tend towards single-mindedness and perfectionism, like the Dwür who taught them the arts of stone and steel. Yet others love nature, forests and the sea, like the Elves who taught them the arts of archery, swordsmanship, wood lore, and prayer. Most Northmarens

have a profound sense of fear and distrust for magic, especially Avathar blood magic or necromancy, except for obviously Elven "hallowed" magic such as songs to Lunara. Witches and vampires are hunted and cleansed with holy fyres of Pyrose.

Northmaren strongholds are works of engineering that would make the Dwur proud. The most famed is the city-fortress of Alglondor, the "Silverplume".

**Northmaren Names:** Alrik, Godfred, Bjarieson, Gunnar, Ognin, Thorkell, Ulf, Ragnar, Thorir, Leikrison, Knut, Sigrid, Saxe, Hallki, Geirla, Idin, Leif, Sigfi Horgi Iwar Asbralson Scandlo Odik Sturlison Ognin Thorki Bjarieson Hrike Agingrson Tholmfi Alldolfr Axir Herison Orken Fasti Artmav Saxe Geirla Idin Leido Artlidson Edil Mundi Leikrison Hugi Horhi Arnkend Axek Hallki Berdi Mundi Summi Gudmi Arar Knute Sokki Loomis. **Homelands:** Alglondor, Lyonesse, Dorthonien, Belerion. **Themes:** Alglond, Dorthon, Taurithren Ranger, Druid, Elf Friend, Arms Master, Hallow, Knight, Noble Born, Paladin, Herald. **Traits:** hard to kill, strong, archery, swordsmanship, spearman, honorable, courageous, heraldry, music, scouting, bowyer/fletcher, bushcraft, wood lore. **Assets:** cuirass, plate armor, sword, lance, poleax, longsword, rondel, warhorse, canoe, silk rope, Elven cloak, hunting bow, long bow, war bow, bread, cheese, Elven way bread. **SECRETS:** detect evil, sense truth, holy aura, Elfsight, Starlight, Blessing of Lunara, Healing of Lunara, Purify water, Find Path, horse whisperer. **Dark Secrets:** family slain by Avathars, impious, deserter, fears undead. **Paths:** battle the Avathars, earn knight's armor, become a knight, build a river fort, strengthen the forest, purify forest tainted by Avathars, hunt Avathars, win new lands in the south



# Southmarens

Southmarens are the sophisticated citizens of the seafaring cities of Aquila and the Empire of Harnendor. They are ambitious merchants and adventurous scoundrels with a famous wanderlust and are thus found everywhere, recognizable as slightly smaller, swarthier, and more calculating than

Northmarens, with fast hands and a ready smile. They are true rogues who rely on their exceptional luck, opportunism, quick wits, sharp blade, and even sharper quips. The center of their world is Aquila, the infamous "City of Thieves" and seat of their golden Southmaren Empire of Harnendor, with its decadent aristocratic society, dreaming artists, clever thieves, silver-tongued merchants, and scheming black wizards. Their empire extends as far north as Kitania, surrounding majestic Madrigal, "City of Birds". Southmarens are famed for their ships, horses, skill in arms, and the sense of style they bring to all they do.



The Southmaren Empire covers the Dragon Sea, with many hidden trade routes, ports, cities, and lands on its shores, such as Kitania, the Rochir Plains, Dagor, sorcerous cities the Sea of Fallen Stars, the deserts of Haradjiiia, and the southern Emerald Isles. As a result, the Southmarens are a varied people, a melange of cultures of Aquilans, Kitanians, Rochir, Northmaren immigrants, and Haradjiiin.

Southmarens have intermittent alliances and wars with the ever changing Northmaren kingdoms, hampered by their propensity to raid the rich Southmaren lands. They are also neighbors of Eldar races such as the Mirjiador Alu, Baal of Akkar, Guldurine Alu, Haradjinn Alu, and know how to appease and trade with them, but are bitter enemies of the Gobbah and Drisi.

Southmaren nobles are most often found in the major cities of Aquila and Madrigal. Nobles are expected by society to have skill in business, in feats of arms, as well as athletics, music, dancing, and other arts. All must be done with sprezzatura, the air of nonchalance of doing many things well with little effort or concern.



**Southmaren Names:** Marozzo, Faxx, Hristo, Elo, Rendo, Pulg, Thorkell, Talin, Thaxas, Thax, Pax, Falar, Thorkar, Basharat, Killian, Tia, Mira, Alya, Avaxa, Ava, Vlasha, Vlana, Thorkell, Talin, Fay, Thaxas, Jakartai, Than, Pax, Thoren, Thorin, Falkar, Thorkar, Avar, Pulgh, Basharat, Giovanni, Rezz, Seco, Ansus, Sabe, Rento, Tiusio, Garso, Mundi, Anez, Veno, Zaido, Guiro, Arin, Ruenzo, Vadi, Garceo, Rila, Duso, Luadio, Miro, Cuso, Reiala, Tero, Sesme, Video, Nando, Andos, Mara, Cemia, Sesa, Aurol, Sendia, Female:, Killian, Thraxa, Talya, Thorka, Thorlia, Avaxa, Ava, Vlana, Vlasha, Eildinda, Gila, Berta, Gelvan, Vico, Viso, Ardon, Valdo, Mundo, Afin, Crono, Alid, Lupe, Faxx, Thaxas, Brax. **Homelands:** Aquila, Madrigal, Kitania, Dagor, Tuln, Guldur, the Emerald Isles. **Themes:** Southmaren, Harn, Aquilan, Rochir, thief, adventurer, swashbuckler, city merchant, banker, traveling merchant, mercenary captain, ship captain, Black Wizard, priest, Aristocrat, thief, assassin, slave trader, ranger, traveler, scout, nomad. **Traits:** sophisticated, streetwise, agile, quick, lucky, savvy, appraisal, artistic, witty, jaded, swordsmanship, traveling, riding, survival, desert survival, bushcraft. **Assets:** cuirass, sidesword, buckler, parrying dagger, storta, spadone, partisan, crossbow, boots, guildmaster silver pin, spellbook, vial of poison, vial of poison antidote, deer meat, wineskin, traveling rations. **Secrets:** black wizard spells, lock picking, magic appraisal, forgery, bribery, sword tricks, riding tricks, archery stick shot, horse whisperer, poison/antidote brewing. **Dark Secrets:** owes a debt, liar, thief, blackmailed, gigolo, flat broke, lost soul. **Paths:** find a magical rapier, learn black wizard spells, make it rich, pay off debt, blood debt vs goblyns, soul owned by a black wizard, orphan, raised by slave traders

## Alu

The sight of a masked Alu is enough to clear a busy street in any city. While similar in size to a Southmaren, the distinctive demon mask, robes, curved swords, hooks, and chains they carry mark them as "Alu Demons", Eldar shadow warriors and deadly from the underworlds. Only arrogant fools stare at their swords or meet their red-gold eyes, for these are challenges to duel, and once drawn a hungry Alu blade must taste blood and souls before it may be sheathed.



Alu are famous duelists and swordsmen, known for being particularly devious adversaries with many secret and deceptive techniques. They wield distinctive curved and hooked swords of varying designs and lengths. The long edge is curved and ideal for broad sweeping cuts. Often weapons have hooks, lugs, chains, or cords for ensnaring and tripping. Such weapons are often of distinctive cultural design and use Eldar materials such as moonsilver, night iron, and bladegrass. Alu who always stand ready to fight are known as the Alu'Kel, and take that honorific after their name, such as "Arar'Kel".

Alu traditionally hide their faces, either behind a hood, veil, or war mask, leaving only their red-gold eyes visible. Their war masks are terrifying, formed in the stylized visage of various "Gallu", which is the word Alu use to describe the various demons of the underworlds, such as Oni, Ifr'it, Djinn, Tengu, Naga, Kha'din and all too many others. The Gallu visage is artistically embellished with elements of nature, spirits, and weapons. Alu masks are reputed to have magic powers, such as hiding the wearer from demons, shapeshifting into a demon, or ward pacts with bound demons.

Secretly, as one of the oldest of the Eldar, the Alu see it as one of their sacred duties to hunt, bind, and imprison wandering demons

("Gallu") across the Dragon Isles. This ranges from minor monsters and spirits to major incursions that threaten the world, such as the Kha'din. To this end, Alu use various binding chains, hooks, and magic rituals to ensnare and imprison demons into Kalla'din planar prisons. Indeed, many of the Alu ruins found across the Dragon Isles are prisons, best left unopened. Alu entrusted with this sacred duty are the Alu'Shem, and use that honorific after their name, such as "Ammon'Shem". Some are reputed to call upon bound powers in times of need, and may undergo transformations to take a Gallu visage or feature such as tengu wings or oni strength.

Alu choose their words with care, for they know hidden power of words to bind, and true words are magically binding.

**Alu Names:** Ammon'Shem, Arar'Kel, Panur'Shem, Sago'Shem, Azzaz'Kel, Verash'Kel, Ara'Kel, Nina'Kel, Vera'Shem, Nezzera'Kel, Nim'Kel, Ran'Kel the Ghost Blade, Dim'Shem Binder of Gallu. **Homelands:** Nan-Suruinen, Haradjiiia  
**Themes:** Alu, Alu Demon, Alu'Kel, assassin, Ifr'it, Haradjinn, Kha'din hunter, ninja, kensai, sohei shadow warrior, duellist, demon binder, tengu. **Traits:** quick, light, agile, swift, agile, small, cunning, cruel, perceptive, clever, tumbling, leaping, rolling, parry, dodge, stealth, rope use, trapping, binding, climbing, water walking. **Assets:** Alu demon mask, Alu silk robes, Alu bladegrass armor, Alu curved longsword (e.g. katana, scimitar, falchion, shotel), throwing dart knives (e.g. kunai, trumbash), hooked blades (e.g. sickle, kusari-gama, kama, karambit, khopesh, trumbash), bladegrass whip, night iron mail, hunting bow, longbow, silk slippers, horse, falcon, saffron, lamb, rice balls, sake bottle.

**Secrets:** arrow cutting, leaping, shadow step, invisibility, illusion, mirror image, shadow image, hide in shadows, shadow mask, binding words, circle of binding, binding chains, oni strength, tengu wings (grow from the back), shapeshift to Gallu. **Dark Secrets:** clan outcast, sole survivor, vengeful, consorts with shadow daemons, hired assassin.

**Paths:** defeat an Akuma in single combat, hunt Kha'din and purge them, master a disguise, master the flute, recover an ancient sword, recover a demon mask



# Avathars

Avathars are a beautiful, dark and deadly people of the northern ashlands of Nan-Avathar. They are ruled by the dread Vampire Lords, some of the most ancient Eldar infamous for covering the world in ash and bones in a series of Vampire Wars aeons ago. They were possibly once Northmaren, but their fine features and supernatural grace reveal stolen Elven blood, and their survival across the Aeons ranks them as some of the most powerful Eldar. Do not enter their lands lightly and *do not die there...*



Avathar Knight

**Avathar Names:** Alan, Dani, Dmitri, Ivan, Pavel, Vlad, Vristo, Vladmir, Vela, Trina, Vlina, Jara, Natasha, Sonja, Anna.

**Surnames:**

Tepsh, Snagov, Cragov, Split, Hvar, Riva. **Themes:** Avathar, Kurgan, Noble, Assassin, Executioner, Necroalchemist. **Traits:** strong, beautiful, dark, ruthless, deadly, hard to kill, noble, undying. **Assets:** plate armor, horseman's ax, footman's flail, longsword, greatsword, halberd, arbalest, pavise, blood potion, black bread, blood sausage, wineskin. **Secrets:** poison use, vampiracy, vampiric regeneration, bat familiar, wolf familiar, change to bat, change to wolf, energy drain, raise skeleton, raise zombie. **Dark Secrets:** drinks blood, deserter, wants to defect/desert. **Paths:** become a necromancer, gather Elf blood, capture thralls, corrupt a saint

## Baal (Draconians)

Baal are dragon worshipers from the "Draconian Empire" of Akkar. Baal are elegant Eldar with a touch of draconic; their skin is ash-like gray or black, often with small horns, bony ridges, sharp nails, and sometimes wings. Haughty, cruel, and greedy as dragons, Baal are looked upon with fear and loathing by most people. Human life has little value in their immortal eyes, and everyone has heard tales of the age when the Draconian empire stretched from sea to sea, enslaving all those within their reach. Their rituals of dragon worship call for burnt offerings of many kinds, but the Baal burn with a deeper purpose. Baal are often confused with Drisi serpentmen, especially by Northmaren who are often hostile to both Eldar races.



**Baal Names:** Jav'Tara, Vir'Hajas, Nur'Ash, Gor'Ash, Tak'Jat, Ton'Hajak, Kajas'Gor.

**Themes:** Baal, Dragon Lord, Pyromancer, Dragon Knight, Baal'Kel, Baal'Yr.

**Traits:** noble, dragon-scarred, bony skin, commanding voice, haughty, greedy, resist fire. **Assets:** silk robes, ornate silk hat, fluted plate armor, flamberge sword, spear, smoked meat, water, incense, book of dragon rituals.

**Secrets:** conjure flames, purifying flames (burns Taint), summon dragon, sacrificial rites, dragon scales (manifests scale armor as an Innate Asset), dragon wings (grow from the back). **Dark Secrets:** as greedy and cruel as any dragon, secretly a Baal'Mot. **Paths:** find a dragon to serve, expand the Regio of my dragon, hunt Baal'Mot

## Drisi

The Drisi are the Eldar "serpentmen", servants of the Gorgonae serpent gods, old enemies of mankind. Their cold-blooded empire periodically slithers from the underworlds to cover the world in coils of slavery and deceit, then cycles into dormancy, like a snake shedding and renewing its skin.



Drisi appear as Southmarens and can blend in with human society anywhere, yet they are not what they seem to be. Drisi live to serve the Gorgonae serpent gods, and receive gifts as rewards for faithful service, such as snakes for hair, fangs, claws, scales, snake head, tail, and other snake, serpent, or draconian features such as spines and even dragon wings. Accomplished Drisi have many gifts, yet, these gifts are secrets of the serpent gods, revealed only to their saints, and so Drisi serpentmen are indistinguishable from Baal and Southmarens unless they choose to reveal these gifts to the world.

The serpent gods are renowned for their wickedness, as well as their wisdom and powers of renewal, healing, and resurrection. Also known as the *Gorgonae*, they have been known across the aeons by a great many names, such as Tark, Hypsiglena, Set, Ningishzida, Asclepius, Hygeia, Panacea, Aceso, Vilothus, and Nisi. Their necroalchemist priests traditionally took the surname "-Mot", although this fell out of favor after a great war with the Baal, who took issue with the Drisi-Mot claiming dragons were hatched from the moons and sacrificing them to the Gorgonae.

Drisi ruins are common, such as snake-carved pyramids, crypts, slave pits, and sacrificial altars to the dark serpent gods, and these places are filled with glittering treasures as well as grave peril. The Eldar serpentmen were masters of sorcery and necroalchemy, and left behind caches of potions, poisons, salves, healing unguents, and oils, most of which last indefinitely in preparation for the end times. Rarer still are Drisi libraries, housing the skins of snakes, dragons, strange beasts, Eldar, humans, and others, each of which can be read like a book to learn their story. In this regard, snakes prove superior since they shed their skins and need not be *skinned*.

Drisi warriors are known for their skill with the spear, javelin, partisan, and curved swords and axes. They often prefer shields over armor, since many of their heroes of legend were reputed to be encased in tough scales, gifted by the gods, as well as other weapons such as venomous snake hair. Their weapons are often made of alchemical steels, such as ever sharp black adamant, magic-soaking brassy orichalcum, or venomous purple vakar.

**Drisi Names:** Amon, Ammon, Amon-Mot, Amosis, Angrboda , A'rthuun-Mot, D'irz, D'aergul, D'ras, E'rthane, Hypnalis, Imhotep, Im'Ravin-Mot, K'alaban, Khafra, K'kai, K'nren, L'lanir, Mesedsure, Moraga, Nedjem, Neferet, Rameses, R'enn, R'leth, Set ("man of Seth"), Tahemet, Y'quis, Y'sis. **Homelands:** Aquila, Ashenrise, Underworlds of Valusia, Necroalchemical Empire of Ahr'Tolth, Kalla'Drisi, the Cave of Serpents, The Nameless City. **Themes:** Drisi, Nisi, Nisibisi, Draconian, Serpentman, Gorgon, Linnorm, Naga, Desert Viper, Drisi-Mot, Son of Hecate, Son of Hypsiglena, Necroalchemist, Draconeuroalchemist. **Traits:** serpentine, scales, serpent speed, cold eyes, snakes for hair, snake tail, devious, adaptable, beguiling, calculating patient, planner, mastermind, deceptive. **Assets:** dory (light spear), aspis (shield), dagger, khopesh (sickle sword), crescent moon ax, crescent moon spade, gada (mace), monk spade, pilose (conical helm), orichalcum aspis, orichalcum pilose, adamant dory, orichalcum khopesh, vakar dagger. **Secrets:** charm person, charm snakes, sticks to snakes, spray poison, suggestion. **Drisi Gifts:** Take an Innate Asset for each of your "gifts", e.g. serpent scale armor, dragon scale armor, snakes for hair, poison bite, poison blood, heat vision (q.v. pit viper), sleep venom, etc. Also take a "Drisi Gifts" Secret; when used this manifests your gifts, making them available to use as well as visible. Otherwise you appear human, and your gifts are unavailable to use, as well as undetectable. **Dark Secrets:** disguised serpentman, owes sacrifices to Set. **Paths:** become a son of Set, build a cult of Set, summon the Yellow King, summon an avatar of Vilothus, find a lost bowl of Hygeia or staff of Asclepius, find a great library, subvert a human kingdom

# DWÜR

Dwur are master builders and craftsmen, creating many cunning devices and impenetrable strongholds. They are often described as dwarves or gnomes, short of stature, wizened and with dour yet hearty demeanor. As Eldar they devote their aeons-long lives building works of wonder to honor their family lineage, inventing, building, and mastering their crafts. The Dwur homelands are deep in the Forandol mountains to the north, but after The Breaking they fled south. Now aeons later just as many Dwur dwell in cities as in mountain halls. Dwur are weary of war and do not seek it out, but are bitter enemies of the Gobbah, Drisi, and Deurg'dul undeads of Sepulchre. When they must fight they prefer to ally with Northmen and provide units of elite artillery and gunnery troops.



**Names:** Athan, Davon, Durgir, Rugrir, Runon, Thovil, Bador, Adiel, Rura, Runa.

**Themes:** Dwur, Dwarf, Builder, Runemaster, Craftsman, Gunner, Artillery Captain, Rifleman, Gunsmith, Brewmaster. **Traits:** dour, solid, hearty, patient as stone, strong as stone, beardy, beer lover. **Assets:** hammer, axe, crafting tools, lantern, runelock, skullcap, plate armor, sausages, beer, whiskey.

**Secrets:** Runelock, create golem, craft Dwurstone. **Dark Secrets:** family slain by Gobbah, mistrusts Elves. **Paths:** invent something new, craft a new gun, visit a new young kingdom, regain the old Dwur homelands in Forandol mountains.

## Elves (Ælf, Æthiiri)

The Elves are beautiful hallowed Eldar of light, filled with sacred magic of the stars, moons, and music. Most Elves manifest aspects of the gods Lunara and Hirminel to the extent that being "Hallow" is often confused with being Elven, and some Elves have a visible silver halo. Elves are extraordinarily perceptive, and can see, feel, and find things invisible to mortal eyes. When they find people who are pure of heart they name them "Elf-friends", and help them follow their call to become hallow servants of light. However, when Elves find hidden darkness they purge it with silver arrow and flaming sword, just as they have always confronted evil across the aeons, such as Kha'din daemons, Deurg'gul undead of Sepulchre, fallen "dark" Elves, and fallen Wyrms. As a result, Elves traveling in the young kingdoms are met with mixed feelings of awe, wonder, and fear that they might find an imperfection in mortal hearts. This fear means some kingdoms do not welcome them at all.



**Elven Names:** Aegnor, Aerandir, Anarion, Anar, Annael, Aradan, Aranwe, Elros, Eluchil, Lenwe, Maglor, Aerin, Diora, Luthien, Morwen, Ilmare, Laurelin, Niniel, Rian. **Surnames:** Meadowbrook, Moonshadow, Blackthorn, Whitefeather, Harplight. **Themes:** Elf, Ælf, Hallow, Saint, Ranger, White Wizard, Bladesinger, Battlesinger. **Traits:** lithe, quick, beautiful, holy, light, moonlight, blessed of Lunara. **Assets:** sword, bow, knife, spear, leaf armor, Elven cloak, silver trumpet, mandolin, harp, holy water, way bread. **Secrets:** starlight, moonlight, healing touch, holy water, water of visions. **Dark Secrets:** vow of vengeance against the dark elves, family slain by Kha'din. **Paths:** root out evil in the young kingdoms, find a weirstone of Lunara, learn a new song, bring a new saint to Lunara

# Karrocks

Karrocks have the appearance of classical heroic statues come to life, each a study in fine art.

Indeed, they are as living works of art, their impassive gazes revealing emotions both human and inhuman at the same time.

Karrocks have a quiet wisdom, usually leading peaceful lives outdoors, often in remote mountains, seemingly unfettered by modern concerns. They tend to not place much value on physical belongings; for example tend to dress simply, which works for them to better draw attention to their classical faces and physiques. However, this serene calm is only possible because they have found the path to allow stress to live within them, not to avoid it.



Karrocks were created as war machines of the Draconian Empire. Dwur sculpted the Karrocks in heartstone and gave them life with thaumaturgical runes of power. These warriors of living stone were practically impervious to harm, proof against blades, Drisi poison, necromantic magics, and the Baalfire of renegade dragons and wyrms. They were able to tunnel and shape stone to sap strongholds or dragon caves. After the great wars the Dwur gave the Karrocks humanity to live their lives in freedom. Their bodies became flesh and blood, but they could still wield mystical gifts of stone shaping when needed. Many sought solace in remote mountain tops far from human kingdoms, to live simple monastic lives of contemplation. However, some Karrocks seek to atone for the damage they once caused, helping and protecting the people they once crushed under stone heels. Despite this, most Karrocks hold no regret over fighting the Drisi serpent people or Wyrms.

Although Karrocks were given humanity by the Dwur and can lead mortal lives, they are Eldar who bear thaumaturgical runes of living stone. Karrocks can tap those runes to transform back to their original body of living stone. The runes also form a sympathetic connection with stone, and many Karrocks are able to wield this power to shape stone as if it were clay, or pull stone objects such as great clubs from the ground. Karrocks can use their "runes of living stone" to avoid normal human needs such as food, clothing and shelter, outlasting a famine or winter storm by turning to stone. However, these runes must be fed earth power to develop and keep their power strong, so Karrocks constantly seek out gems and precious stones containing blessings of Xohm, the Earth Mother.

**Karrock Names:** Athan, Davon, Durgir, Galatan, Krego, Rugrir, Runon, Thovil, Bador, Adiel, Galatea, Rura, Runa. **Homelands:** Alglondor, Nan-Surinen, Sepulchre, the Platinum Peaks. **Themes:** Karrock, Exemplar Saint of Xohm, Wrestler, Warrior-poet, Priest, Yamabushi, Sohei, Wanderer. **Traits:** solid, hearty, wrestling, tall, huge, strong, voice like a mountain, baritone, patient as stone, stoic, tough as stone, strong as a mountain, contemplative, meditation, unyielding. **Assets:** stone mace, stone maul, poleax, iron-shod staff, tetsubo, lantern, colorful cloak, monk robes, simple loincloth, sausages, beer, whiskey. **Secrets:** feat of strength, summon greatclub, stone shape, shape stone, earth shatter. **Karrock Gifts:** Take an Innate Asset for each of your "Karrock gifts" when you are made of stone, e.g. stoneskin, stoneshirt, stonefists, etc. Also take a "Karrock Gifts" Secret; when used this manifests those Innate Assets, making them available to use as well as visible. Otherwise you appear human, and your gifts are unavailable to use, as well as undetectable. **Dark Secrets:** war atrocities, recurring war nightmares. **Paths:** find the Karrock homeland, find an arkenstone, become truly patient. **Karrock Paths:** You can consume gems and precious stones to earn XP on Paths for Karrock Gifts. (Tip: look up reputed gemstone powers for inspiration.) For example, you might work towards gaining a "stone strength" Trait or Secret by consuming a precious stone (such as agate or black onyx). Also if you find a truly magical stone then you may be able to gain its power.

# Kith

The Kith are the rarest and grimdest of warriors, feared the world over for their immense strength and ferocity. Legend tells that their ancestors were *Wyrmskrøl* "dragonslayers", who hunted wild beasts, monsters, and dragons, then in tradition ate the hearts of their prey to gain all the qualities of the beast: bravery, strength, agility, and from dragons came healing and immortality.



Each Kith is an alpha predator, a peerless hunter and warrior, yet seeks to outdo the feats of past great heroes and build an even greater name and legend that will last for all time.

Kith of legend often cast as musclebound berserkers half-naked in animal skins, wielding giant weapons, howling and murdering and like feral animals, and immune to wounds. Many live by the words "you keep what you kill", only owning and carrying what was pried from the grasp of vanquished foes, even going so far as to keep "drinking skulls" as trophies from especially worthy foes or prey. Kith often fasten belongings which can't be worn with cords or chains. All the myths are true, but the Kith are also Eldar, and some are just as civilized as any northman. Some Kith do indeed tower above even the northmen, and some have a bestial ferocity, but many others have the calm, quiet and determined demeanor of a seasoned hunter who stalks deadly monsters, yet prevails via cunning.

The ancestors of the Kith came from the far northern lands of the midnight sun, which they call Hrvlyggdor. The cold mountains,

tundra, forests and rivers of the north are teeming with big game for the hunt. The weather alone can kill, heightening the challenge when hunting monsters such as cave bears, giants, dragons, wyrms, werewolves, and underworld cities of Drisi and Drunes. Many Kith return to this ancient homeland as a rite of passage, seeking to test and find themselves. Yet, this land is no longer their home, which is amongst the northmarens and southmarens who struggle against monsters, wyrms, and oppressive Eldar empires, and are in need of a hero.

**Kith Names:** Alva, Asger, Aslog, Balder, Bard, Beowulf, Bjorn, Brant, Canute, Dag, Dagmar, Egil, Eirik, Fafnir, Freja, Haldor, Halvard, Helle, Hjalmar, Inge, Ivar, Jarl, Jormunrek, Niflung, Odin, Ottir, Siggeir, Sigi, Sigurd, Sorli, Regan, Regin, Rerir, Rodingeir, Tarben, Thor, Thorsen, Thorvaldr, Thorvaldr, Thurmond, Tyr, Tyra, Unn, Vali, Volsung, Ylva.

**Homelands:** Hrivlyggdor, Ashenrise, The Wolf's Maw, Belerion, Lyonesse. **Themes:** Kith, Wyrmskrøl, wyrmslayer, dragonslayer, warrior, ranger, scout, berserker, monster hunter, giantsbane, werewolf trapper. **Traits:** hard to kill, strong, hunting, trapping, scouting, stealth, unstoppable, force of nature, resilient, axeman, swordsman, spearman, courageous, resilient, skald, bowyer, bushcraft, wood lore. **Assets:** greatsword, lochaber ax, dragonbone axe, saex, small ax, dragonbone dagger, war bow, war drum, cloak (esp. deer hide, wolf, bear, etc.), drinking skull, venison, grog, gold wrist band, gold torc. **SECRETS:** understand bird's song, dragon eyes, dragon skin, dragon awe, burning blood, burning eye, stone heart, dragon fury, strength of the wyrm. **Dark Secrets:** seeks pain, only own what I can carry, keeps drinking skulls, family slain by Baal/Drunes/Drisi/Wyrms. **Paths:** master the winged axe, master the dragonspear, master the greatsword, slay a wyrm, slay a dragon, slay Baal, slay Drunes, raid Baal lands, establish trade with the south.

## Vôzen

Vôzen are doppelgängers who can take on the appearance and mannerisms of other people. Given time they can mimic the complete identity of any person. Vôzen are Eldar, and have been living this way for aeons...they could be anyone you meet, and unless you learn their "tells" you'll never know the difference.

Perfecting anything takes time, and each Vôzen develops only a few *identities* over their lifetime. Any given identity has a name, race, face, voice, and the countless other details that make up a full, believable persona. Vôzen who travel might have different identities for each region, or parts of a city. As Eldar, they might have identities from long ago which could seem antiquated in our time, or might even have been famous people. Vôzen try to avoid their doppelgängers, since their reactions are often violent. Many Vôzen have taken action to eliminate their doppelgängers, i.e. murder them, which made their generally unsavory reputation even worse. As a result, even honest Vôzen keep their true nature secret for fear of retribution.

The unique Vôzen gifts stem from alchemy. They have alchemical blood, which provides superhuman observation and adaptation, as well as their well-known ability to change shape. In fact, some Vôzen learn to take on the shape of objects such as furniture or shrubberies instead of people. Some Vôzen have also proven able to learn new abilities by studying alchemy, especially using magic



potions and alchemical elixirs. For example, a Vôzen might learn to self-heal by carefully absorbing the contents of a *potion of healing*.

Vôzen are Eldar with ancient origins. Aeons ago, the Baal'Yr alchemists discovered the native peoples of the Vôkrazum jungles, which to *everyone else* is an inhospitable, toxic environment with rare and deadly alchemical compounds and fungi. The Baal'Yr were intrigued and used their alchemical arts to study, and subsequently enhance the Vôzen, creating perfect scouts, spies, and agents for the Draconian Empire. The processes used were experimental, painful, and inhuman, but ultimately resulted in what the Vôzen are today, a people transformed by alchemy with superhuman gifts. However, due to this ancestral trauma Vôzen have an innate terror of fire, and this is entirely rational since extreme heat has the potential to destabilize their alchemical composition. As a result, most Vôzen eschew fire, and even go so far as to favor bland, uncooked food.

**Vôzen Names:** correspond to the current identity. **Themes:** Vôzen, Scout, Explorer, Spy, Alchemist, Actor, Merchant, Ambassador, Emissary, Investigator, Bodyguard, Adventurer. **Traits:** adaptable, observant, disguise, linguistics, voice actor, disguise, mimicry, acting, stagecraft, ventriloquism, alchemy.

**Assets:** sidesword, dagger, merchant's outfit, alchemists robes, master alchemist pin, *potion of healing*, *potion of water breathing*, alchemy kit.

**Secrets:** one secret identity, breathe water, squeeze flat, survive fall **Identity Secrets:**

Each *identity* is a Secret. When you use the identity Secret you instantly assume that identity, and remain that way until you use a different identity Secret or want to go back to your own identity. **Dark Secrets:** fears fire, fears hot water, fears spicy food, fears dragons and Baal, fears helplessness/capture, murdered one of my doppelgängers, secretly a spy, always takes any potions found. **Paths:** sip my *potion of water breathing* to learn how to *breathe water*, overcome fear of fire, tip my *potion of healing* to learn how to heal myself, learn to endure spicy food, perfect next identity, go bush camping, kill off my doppelgängers, steal the identity of a noble/merchant/alchemist.

**Alchemical Paths:** You can sip Potions to gain XP towards Paths dealing with alchemical pursuits or powers. For example, you might work towards gaining a "strength" Trait or Secret by sipping a *potion of strength*. Sipping a potion lets you know what the potion does, but does not trigger any of the normal potion effects or side effects. You get XP after sipping all of the potion. You can also consume alchemical components, working towards the reputed or presumed abilities of that component. For example the "heart of a basilisk" might allow you to "resist petrification" or gain the ability to change your "stone to flesh".

# Secrets of the Dragon Isles

The following is unknown to most living people, only hinted at in songs and histories. Learned men such as monks, sages, wizards, and Eldar may hold scraps and clues to these great mysteries, but only those who delve deep under the surface of the world can have any true understanding.

## The Young Kingdoms

The Eldar know that the young kingdoms of men which have sprung up in the recent years bears a striking resemblance to kingdoms in prior aeons. The names and locations of nations and cities are the same, or very similar, as the youngest new aeon plays out. Only the wisest Eldar know the Kalla below influence the Regios above. This is the secret of the Eldar, shaping the newborn lands again to the vision they had in their eons long ago.

## The Surface World

The young kingdoms of men have blossomed on the surface of the world, but this is a paper-thin veneer even more superficial than the tip of an iceberg. The surface marches through seasons of the year as well as a countdown towards the end of the current aeon, which will end with a worldwide cataclysmic apocalypse, adding one more layer to the world and beginning the rebirth cycle.

## The Underworlds

The entire world is riddled with the bones of colossal dragons, wyrms, and great cities of lost empires. Lands once above are now below, and bones of aquatic cities have been washed up on the shores. Entire civilizations have been covered over by layers of history, sometimes buried alive and furiously tunneling up toward the surface...or below in search of even more ancient treasures. The tangled warren of countless tunnels and layers is an endless gigadungeon crossing back and forth, up and down, over the entire world.

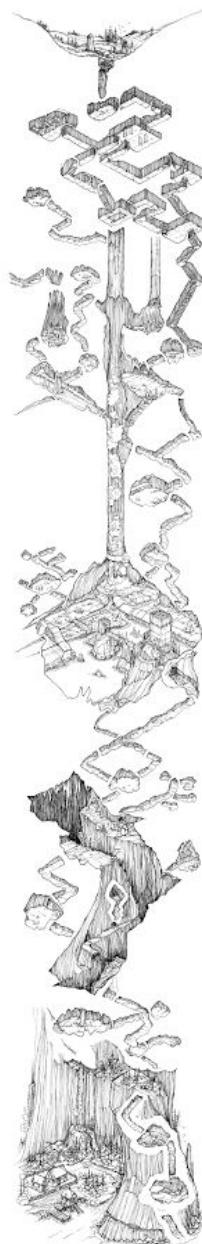
# Strata (Layers)

However, the surface is just a thin veneer. The world beneath is endless strata (layers) of buried civilizations. The entire world has died a thousand times, with each apocalypse adding a new layer to the strata, forming a stratigraphic sequence of megadungeons and gigadungeons, like the classic “circles of hells”, part Tartarus, part Jules Verne.

Some layers contain world-spanning cities, dungeon levels, evil (or good) empires, fossilized remains of mountainous dragons, bore-holes of cyclopean wyrms, shells of immense ammonites, nations of undead trapped for all time, or pure clean ash. Some layers are repeated, as if the ancients repeated past mistakes.

Only the surface and the few layers just beneath are understood or remembered at all. The stratum also varies in depth and even order depending on where you descend. Thus do the strata differ from the classic “circles of hells”, for they are not sequential nor directly connected or organized. Thus, the world is not a static place, but ever-changing both over time and as you explore the world. Some legendary strata were:

- i.      Ruins of the Draconian Empire of the Baal
- ii.     Mass Crypts of the First through Fifth Vampire Wars
- iii.    Ruins of the Serpent Empire of the Drisi and Nisi
- iv.     Ruins of the Dracoalchemical Empire of Ahr'Tolth
- v.      Cyclopean fossils of dragons and ammonites
- vi.     Toxic Jungles of Vokrazum and giant insects
- vii.    Decadent treasure halls of the *Harvesters*
- viii.    Great Gobbah Empire, ever tunneling upward
- ix.     Troglodytic cities of the Draugr and Drunes
- x.      Endless graves of the Battle Plain of Sepulchre
- xi.     Legions of undead elves seeking the surface
- xii.    The Undying Lands of Ealde
- xiii.    Rhi'Annon, the endless dungeon of graves
- xiv.    The Gigaglacial Age
- xv.     Layers of only ash, debris, and fragments of the moons
- xvi.    Hollow earths and lost worlds, buried and preserved in time
- xvii.    The deep waters of the Abzu



## Kalla

Most Eldar survived the end of their eon and subsequent apocalypses by constructing **Kalla**, magical realms that exist outside space and time. Access is made via ancient **Kalla gates** found scattered across the surface and deep Strata. Despite their precautions these civilizations usually die in time, decaying from within or falling to ancient rivals. Many adventures can be had within these mythical places.

## Magic of the dragon Isles

### Glyphs / Runes

Spells are cast by drawing magic symbols such as glyphs or runes in the air or on objects. Each symbol has a corresponding power word that may be spoken to add to the effect, although some say this does nothing more than assist the wizard in recalling the symbol precisely.

Since glyphs and runes are a form of writing, this method of magic has been easier to pass down through generations of wizards. Also, it is possible to rediscover symbols from ancient times in old ruins.

The Guldurine Glyphs originated from the Fomorians, an ancient Eldar race deep old ones. They can often be found inscribed on coral and stones around the oceans. These glyphs rarely describe natural phenomenon like, usually only abstruse magical concepts such as summoning, binding, force lightning, and teleportation. This is likely because these glyphs originated in the Astral Seas, where the natural elements do not exist as we know them. Guldurine Glyphs are used by the "Black Wizards" of Harnendor, Avathar Necromancers, and Ifr'it. Runes are used by wizards (for fireball!), Dwur, other Eldar.

The Dwur are the keepers of the sacred Eldar Runes. These powerful symbols hold the keys to the creation of the world of Ambar. There is a rune for every concept in the world, such as "fire",

"mountain", or "tree", and thus are essentially the opposite of the Guldurine Glyphs ("reality" versus "theory"). Some "White Wizards" only practice runes, eschewing glyphs as occult lore that should be avoided, and most Aethiiri avoid both.

## Thaumaturgy / Alchemy

This magic method is not used to cast spells, but instead to craft magical objects such as potions, unbreakable doors, and even automatons. Special materials are often required. This magic method is used by a great many Eldar, including the Baal'Yr, Avathars (blood alchemy), Dwur, and Harnendorian Black Wizards.

## Astral Harmonics

Spells are cast by making particular sounds that have magic resonance. The instrument can be the voice, bells, horns, or even swords, but the sounds are quite eerie as this method of magic originated in the Astral Plane.

Some Eldar cultures, particularly the Elves, have developed this into a fine art of music, albeit alien-sounding music. Few other cultures have mastered this method of magic, save the dragons and Baal, who use horns that mimic dragon sounds. Be aware that the Kha'din also employ astral harmonics.

## Mthu Rygas (sorcery)

Spells are cast by forming mental images and constructs. No words or gestures are used, so some say this is the purest form of magic, however there are some unusual restrictions. The sorcerer needs to be able to concentrate well, and if he wants to affect a target directly he must see it directly with his own eyes, for the eyes are the gateway to the soul. This is most often called Mthu Rygas, and is the favored magic method of Eldar such as the Ifrit and Belerions.

## Saints

The gods of the Dragon Isles are real, and their servants, the Saints, can work miracles. The souls of the god and his saints are joined in a

communion or collective called a Hallow. Saints can commune with each other and their god.

# Legends Roleplaying System

This game uses the Legends Roleplaying System, a lightweight innovative system with an old school feeling.

## Build your Legend!

LEGENDS helps you create the character you want, in your own words. There are no arbitrary classes, skill lists, attributes, or numbers to limit your imagination. Set your own goals for advancement and build your legend, in your own way.

## Your dice want you to roleplay

A unique new dice approach keeps you immersed in your “words only” character, savoring each facet of your character concept and the tactics you choose to employ.

A standard Legends roll consists of a **d20** and a **Legend Die**. The d20 is a simple “natural” roll without modifiers. You succeed if you roll the **Hazard** or better, crit on 20, and fumble on 1. However, you also fumble if you roll less than or equal to the **Stress**, which starts at 1 and slowly rises as you are hit, other PCs are hit, or you see something awful. **Hazard** starts at 10 and slowly increases as the GM foreshadows danger and increases tension in the story.

The **Legend Die** is a custom 1d6 with faces labeled **THEME**, **EFFORT**, **ASSET**, **COMBO**, **ULT**, and **PREP**. Each face represents one *potential factor for success*. Your Legend Die decides which factor is decisive in this moment. You get to experience each factor separately like a multi-course meal, roleplaying and showcasing each aspect of your character and the scenario. The Legend Die represents factors like character traits/concept, character domain/role within the team, situational advantages, teamwork, and player

wits/preparation. About half of these factors highlight the character, and the others from player skill

## GM Support

Legends provides a lightweight, innovative framework for the Game Master to drive player immersion in your genre or world of choice. Legends uses continuous turns, so it's always someone's turn, even out of combat. The GM takes the first turn, and then Transitions to each player. The GM turn starts by rolling a random Encounter seed, then narrates the scene, maneuvers foes, and foreshadows threats.

## Heroic Realism

Legends is built upon historical martial principles, and combat should feel like historical combat, keeping authentic details but without overcomplicating things. Legends strives to portray a balance of "heroic realism", where the characters are heroes who are larger than normal life, but are still mortal and live in a dangerous and real world. Combat is realistic and deadly enough to make you consider all your options.

## Getting Started

Gather 2-8 people and nominate one player to be your "Game Master" (GM). Each player takes on the role of a player character (PC). Everyone needs one d20 and Legend Die (a custom d6). The GM is responsible for all elements of the fictional world other than the PCs. This includes monsters, NPCs, obstacles, and other aspects of the universe. The GM also acts as the referee for game rules. The story starts with a situation set forth by the GM, however, the GM does not script the story, rather the story is revealed during play by the your decisions. Play to find out what happens.

# Part 1: Your Character

The best introduction to Legends is to create your character. Your character will be freeform, written in your own words, with no limitations on your vision and creativity. Legends allows any character you can imagine, so play who you want!



Start with a blank page, or printed character sheet, then write the following elements all in your own words. Also ask the GM for suggestions that will fit the campaign.

**Name** - What are you called? You can include a title or alias.

**Themes (2)** - Write two core concepts. Try to use familiar concepts such as "Elf" or "swordsman", but write a creative Signature to make it yours.

**Traits (2)** - Write two personal qualities or skills, e.g. "strong", "patient", "climbing", "juggling", "handsome", or "quick-witted".

**Secrets (2)** - Write two rare skills, abilities, gifts, or talents that you have, such as finding water, rare languages, or using magic spells.

**Dark Secret (1+)** - Write one hidden motive or aspect of your past that you hide from others. Write one extra per Theme or Signature related to magic or crime (e.g. wizard, priest, thief, assassin).

**Assets (6)** - Pick two enhanced Assets such as a family heirloom, racial feature, or something expensive. Then choose four common Assets, such as armor, clothing, weapons, rope, provisions, etc.

**Experience Paths (2)** - Write two Experience Paths for motives, goals, or quests.

# Sample Characters

## Syr Wyndon

Sun Knight of Alglondor

### THEMES

Alglond - of *Tolsiriost*

night - *holy paladin of Pyrose*

Noble - *valiant*

TRAITS: brave, pious, strong, tall

ASSETS: *father's sword [Longsword]*

Plate armor, Kite shield, Justice

[Warhorse]

SECRETS: Knightly vows, Friend of

Lord Tirith, Holy light, Sense the truth

DARK SECRETS: Will never trust an

Avathar



## Dthar Kel'en

Alu'Kel assassin and master of the nine winds

### THEMES

Alu - desert screamer

Kel Warrior - sickle swords

Assassin - for honor of clan

TRAITS: agile, deadly, quiet, intense

ASSETS: Sickle swords (2) - *honor & death*

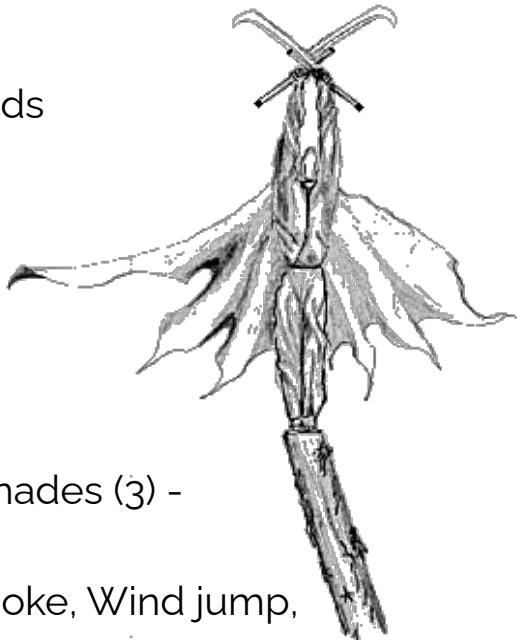
Dart knives (9), Armored robes, Smoke grenades (3) -

secret: smoke cloud

SECRETS: Whispering wind, Vanish into smoke, Wind jump,

Gust of wind

DARK SECRETS: Sole survivor of last mission



# Build Your Character

Character building is one of the most enjoyable experiences of any roleplaying game. Legends provides you with full creative control because you get to write your character in your own words!

## Step 1 - Themes

Write two **Themes** that describe your high concepts, such as: "Elf, Swordsman, Wizard". Use familiar concepts and wording that other players will immediately recognize and understand. Your fellow players shouldn't need to ask you what a Theme means.

## Signatures

As you write each Theme, also write a Signature to personalize and awesomize. This is a short note or epithet that puts your creative spin on the familiar archetype. A Theme like "Knight" could have a Signature like "errant knight", "champion of Alglondor", "knight commander", "veteran of the Vampire Wars", or "grizzled old knight who has seen it all". You can also use Signatures for quotes, mottos, or beliefs, such as "knowledge is power". While Themes must be simple and familiar, your Signature can be written however you like, with no limits. The result is a familiar foundation for the other players to understand who you are, along with plenty of room for your own creative expression.

## Using Themes

You will use your Themes by naming them when your Legend Die rolls THEME. For example, if you are playing "Leclo, moon elf prince" (above) and making a sword attack, and roll THEME, you might say "Fighter" or a Signature like "crescent moon blade dancer".

## Race Theme

You should use one Theme for your race, since this gives your character an anchoring culture and general physical appearance, which helps to define your character. If you don't use a race Theme then you won't be able to claim any strong ties to a homeland,

cannot take Themes/Traits such as "noble", or gain any specific racial advantages or features, such as "elf sight".

**Northmaren:** Alglond, Dorthonien, Karrock, Kith, Lyonese

**Southmaren:** Harn, Kitanian, Rochir

**Eldar:** Aethiiri (Elves), Alu, Avathar, Belerion, Baal, Drisi, Drune, Dwur, Illythrhi, Kess'rith, Norns, Sind, Vozen

## Sample Themes

|              |             |                |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|
| Archer       | Fighter     | Necromancer    |
| Assassin     | Hero        | Nobleman       |
| Berserker    | Horse Lord  | Paladin        |
| Bard         | Illusionist | Priest         |
| Baron        | Knight      | Ranger         |
| Battlemage   | Lord        | Rogue          |
| Charismatic  | Magician    | Soldier        |
| Cleric       | Magic-User  | Sorcerer       |
| Crossbowman  | Man-at-Arms | Swashbuckler   |
| Dragonslayer | Mercenary   | Thief          |
| Druid        | Merchant    | Tinkerer       |
| Duke         | Minstrel    | Vampire Hunter |
| Executioner  | Monk        | Wizard         |

## Themes for Magic and Faith

Use Themes to describe any talents in the magic arts or calling as a priest. Magic abilities such as spells need to be taken as Secrets.

### Magic Arts

|              |              |                |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Alchemist    | Fire Wizard  | Summoner       |
| Arcanist     | Hedge Wizard | Thaumaturge    |
| Battlemage   | Illusionist  | Warlock        |
| Black Wizard | Magic-User   | War Wizard     |
| Blood Mage   | Magician     | Witch          |
| Chiromancer  | Necromancer  | Weather Wizard |
| Conjurer     | Oneiromancer | White Wizard   |
| Diviner      | Rune Mage    | Wild Mage      |
| Enchanter    | Song Mage    | Witchdoctor    |
| Evoker       | Sorcerer     | Wizard         |

|           |            |              |
|-----------|------------|--------------|
| Faiths    |            |              |
| Brother   | Healer     | Saint        |
| Cleric    | Inquisitor | Seer         |
| Confessor | Keeper     | Shaman       |
| Destriant | Monk       | Sister       |
| Druid     | Paladin    | Spirit Guide |
| Faithful  | Pious      | Sword Saint  |
| Father    | Priest     | Templar      |
| Hallow    | Reverend   | Wise One     |

### Magic Arts of the Dragon Isles

|                |                |              |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Alchemist      | Dragon Priest  | Necromancer  |
| Black Wizard   | Guldurine      | Sorcerer     |
| Cairn Mage     | Hallow / Saint | Thaumaturge  |
| Dracoalchemist | Necroalchemist | White Wizard |

## Step 2 - Traits

Write two **Traits** for your character, in your own words. Traits are qualities and keywords that describe you, adding detail and fill in around your Themes. Traits describe your character and help you roleplay. A Trait like "handsome" or "silver tongue" helps you play your character. Some examples are:

|                |             |               |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| athletic       | focused     | manly         |
| calm           | genius      | morale        |
| chi            | gritty      | musical       |
| clever         | handsome    | noble         |
| cool           | hardy       | pious         |
| crafty         | healthy     | powerful      |
| dashing        | holy        | quick         |
| dextrous       | icy gaze    | rock steady   |
| elemental pact | infernal    | rough         |
| eloquent       | intelligent | short         |
| fast           | intrepid    | silver tongue |
| fit            | magical     | smart         |

|             |                |             |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| spiritual   | survivor       | unholy      |
| stable      | tall           | unflappable |
| stalwart    | tough          | unstoppable |
| stoic       | tough as nails | veteran     |
| strong      | traveler       | wise        |
| steely eyed | unbreakable    | witty       |

You may refine one Trait at the end of each game session, adjusting your words to reflect how your character is growing or changing as a result of what happened during the game. For example, you might adjust "quick" to "quick hands" or "witty" to "charmingly witty".

## Step 3 - Secrets

Write two **Secrets**, such as a magic spell, secret language, or a secret master. These are things known only to you, or to a select few. Secrets are unique amongst each band of PCs.

|                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| secret base                | owed a favor by person x     |
| password to thieves' guild | has leverage over person y   |
| the thieves' cant          | location of a magic artifact |
| ogham (language of druids) | secret or long lost language |
| memorized treasure map     | apprentice of an archmage    |
| contacts/allies            | apprentice of a master thief |

You may only use a Secret if you have an appropriate supporting Theme. For example, an Elf "white wizard archer" might have Secrets like Elf light, Blessing of the Elves, Silent bow shot, Secret language of the Elves, etc.

All magic **spells** and spell-like abilities or powers are Secrets.

|               |                |               |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| detect magic  | open           | rope trick    |
| charm person  | light          | magic shield  |
| floating disk | read languages | ventriloquism |

You can use Secrets for any habits or instincts you have. You always do these things even if you don't remember to say it, but they can sometimes also get you in trouble.

|                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| sits with back to wall | keeps sword ready          |
| checks the ceiling     | always checks exits        |
| checks for poison      | light sleeper              |
| always wears gloves    | always sets snares at camp |
| covers his tracks      | keeps weapons clean        |

Rituals are used to recover Vim faster than sleep.

|                    |                        |                   |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| field medic ritual | magic circle           | Feast of Pyrose   |
| sacrificial altar  | first harvest festival | Feast of the dead |

## Step 4 - Assets

Write two "special" Assets, your most prized possessions, such as your family sword, expensive metal armor, a spell book, etc.

Then write four "common" Assets typical for your world, of moderate to low cost, which are ordinary.

These six items are your personal belongings, and everything you own for now. Use the examples below for inspiration and guidance, but describe them in your own words and as you imagine. You can draw from any sources you like, such as novels, movies, or historical sources, but you may only choose items that exist in the campaign setting. Try to use simple terms familiar to the other players.

Your Themes and Traits determine which Assets you would reasonably know how to use and possibly own. For example, a Theme like "archer" implies you know your way around bows and surely have one, while a "knight" Theme implies armor, weapons, and a warhorse. One way to pick your Assets is to choose one or two that accompanies each Theme and Trait.

# Sample Assets

These are examples of some appropriate starting Assets in a medieval setting. You can draw from other sources, your own knowledge, or lists provided by the GM for the campaign setting.

Assets marked with "\$" are difficult to obtain (e.g. rare, expensive, noble, racial, etc.) and will be one of your "special" Assets.

## Clothing

|              |               |                       |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| belt         | doublet/tunic | trousers/leggings     |
| cap/hat      | riding boots  | turn shoes            |
| cloak/mantle | robes         | fashionable outfit \$ |

## Armor

|                     |                 |                     |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| gambeson corset     | mail hauberk \$ | great helm \$       |
| mail shirt          | half plate \$   | visored helm \$     |
| breastplate         | full gambeson   | leather gloves      |
| plate cuirass \$    | full mail \$    | leather gauntlets   |
| Elven leaf armor \$ | plate & mail \$ | padded mittens      |
| Dwur mail shirt \$  | quilted coif    | mail mittens \$     |
| arming jack         | mail coif       | mitten gauntlets \$ |
| buff coat           | skullcap        | finger gauntlets \$ |
| gambeson coat       | bascinet        |                     |

## Shields

|         |             |              |
|---------|-------------|--------------|
| buckler | kite shield | round shield |
| heater  | pavise      | target       |

## Weapons

|                |                |             |
|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| axe            | light crossbow | sidesword   |
| arming sword   | longsword      | spear       |
| dagger         | mace           | staff       |
| falchion       | messer         | storta      |
| knife          | hunting bow    | throwing ax |
| horseman's axe | sickle         | war dart    |

## Heavy Military Weapons

|               |          |               |
|---------------|----------|---------------|
| arbalest \$   | halberd  | polearm       |
| bardiche      | lance    | spadone \$    |
| bill hook     | warbow   | spiedo        |
| danish axe    | longbow  | war club (2h) |
| glaive        | partisan | war scythe    |
| greatsword \$ | polax \$ | zweihander \$ |

## Adventuring / Dungeoneering Gear

|                   |                 |                   |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| acid flask        | mirror          | rope, silk 50' \$ |
| backpack          | lantern         | sack, burlap      |
| belladonna        | ladder, 5'      | sack, leather     |
| healing potion \$ | lockpicks       | waterskin         |
| holy water flask  | oil flask       | wolfsbane         |
| iron rations, 1d  | pole, 10'       | torch             |
| iron spikes       | rope, hemp, 50' | torch bundle (5)  |

## Thieves Gear

|                |                  |                 |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| bandit mask    | hood             | poison vial \$  |
| bandolier      | hooded lantern   | prybar          |
| belt pouch     | knife, boot      | mirror          |
| cordage        | knife, sleeve    | rope, silk, 50' |
| crowbar        | knife, bandolier | slippers        |
| fish hooks     | lockpicks        | smoke pot       |
| gloves         | padded grapnel   | string          |
| grappling hook | pliers           | thieves toolkit |

## Special Assets

Two of your Assets are special, and are your most precious possessions. Give each an enhancement from the list below.

**Expensive** - Some Assets are rare, expensive, or difficult to obtain. Some examples are marked with "\$" in the sample assets. Add a Signature to describe how nice your Asset looks.

**Fashionable** - Add a Signature to one Asset to make it haute couture, fashionable, rich, and noble. As long as you have a

supporting Theme (e.g. "noble") you will look fabulous, rock your look, get noticed, have influence, and be invited to fab parties.

**Signature** - Add a Signature to the Asset to describe a personal connection, superior quality, decorations, special features, etc. For example, your "longsword" can be your "Silverlight, family longsword". You can declare a relevant Asset Signature when you roll ASSET, for example, Asset Signatures like "Holy water - burns undead" or "holy sword" would be useful for slaying undeads.

**Secret** - Give the Asset a Secret such as a magic power or special ability. You could have a ring with a secret compartment, a magic sword that detects evil, or a flask of holy water that heals wounds. You may only use a Secret if you have an appropriate supporting Theme, so choose something that fits your character.

**Book of Secrets** - You have a "grimoire", "spellbook", "holy scroll", or similar text with secret knowledge of a specific topic area. You can read this over time to learn new Secrets (see Advanced Assets - Books of Secrets). Also take one extra Secret from the book now.

**Racial Ability** - You have a special innate racial ability such as infra-sight, ability to sense secret doors, resistance to charm & sleep, etc.

**Racial Innate Feature** - You have an innate racial feature such as wings, claws, scaled skin, stony skin, etc. This is an "Innate Asset", i.e. an asset which is part of your body. Alternatively, you can describe this as a Secret that manifests as Innate Asset when you use it, to blend in better with human society when the feature is inactive.

**Racial Item** - You have a special item unique to your race or culture, such as "Elven leaf armor", "Elven bow", "Elven boots", "Alu Kel sword", "Dwur mail shirt", "Dwur runelock", etc.

## Asset Tips

**Quick access** - You can optionally write a short note describing how an Asset is carried for quick access (e.g. "knife - sheath right belt"). You can ready the Asset with a single Maneuver instead of two.

**Securely stowed** - You can optionally write a short note describing how an Asset is securely stowed (e.g. "acid vial - wrapped in cloth in pack"). You will need to use an Action to ready this Asset, but it's far less likely to be accidentally broken (or stolen)

**Weapons** - Choose one main heavy weapon such as a spear or longbow for battle, and a smaller sidearm such as a sword or knife. Your sidearm is your backup and everyday carry in securely guarded areas such as cities, castles, or inns.

**Armor** - Choose how heavy you want your armor to be, because this affects your number of Maneuvers per round: Body-Armor 3, Half-Armor 2, Full-Armor 1. The default rule of "2 Maneuvers per Round" assumes Half-Armor. You can upgrade armor pieces, but if you add more coverage areas then you go to the next tier.

## Step 5 - Dark Secrets

You must also write **one Dark Secret**. Dark Secrets represent the hidden motives or internal conflicts of your character. Their purpose is to help you roleplay your character as a real person who has complex motivations. You must take an extra Dark Secret per Theme or Signature related to secrecy, magic, or underworld (e.g. wizard, priest, thief, assassin).

Some aspect of your troubled past might haunt you.

|                               |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| secret identity               | survived starvation (ate friends) |
| sole survivor of last mission | ex-smuggler                       |
| outcast/exile from homeland   | wanted outlaw / murderer          |
| false tooth (w/ poison?)      | sole survivor of plague           |
| old wound / phantom limb      | witnessed eldritch horror         |
| bad bargain (owes debt?)      | spy from foreign nation           |

You might have personal weaknesses, foibles, or mannerisms that may have caused you to take up the life of an adventurer, outcast, or wanderer, and cause friction with normal people.

|                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| nosy in others' business | gluttonous or hoards food |
| offensive fashion sense  | doesn't understand humor  |
| too honest, and loud     | was never held as a child |
| zealous/uncompromising   | always right              |
| host for something awful | bad selfishness           |

You might bear a curse or ill omens.

|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| ancient family curse    | haunted by nightmares      |
| sees dead people        | visited by portents/dreams |
| my friends turn undead  | fated to die               |
| parent was undead       | have seen my own death     |
| hears voices in my head | unnerves animals           |
| infected at birth       | possessed                  |

## Step 6 - Experience Paths

You are ready to play, but to build your legend you need to write Experience Paths ("Paths"). Paths say what you need/want to do/accomplish, and suggest who/what might become. They are your essential goals, missions, or other statements of intention to do something, whether they are quests to "find the cure to save the poisoned king" or self-serving wishes such as "become a fire wizard" or "find a magic sword".

**Rewards** - Upon successfully completing a Path the GM will give an appropriate Reward. Some Rewards will directly enhance a part of your character such as adding new Trait or Secret. You could get a new Themes (max of four), or modify a Theme, or rid yourself of a Dark Secret. You could alternatively craft or obtain a new Asset.

**GM Paths** - The GM will also set Paths before you, to give you meaningful choices and challenges tied to rewards. Many of these Paths are limited-time opportunities, and will have a "Countdown" after which they resolve on their own.

**Bonds** - You can use Paths to describe unresolved relationships between you and other characters, such as debts, oaths, or favors. Be sure to describe the resolution you are driving toward. Examples:

- "I look up to \_\_\_\_\_ and want to learn from him"
- "I owe my life to \_\_\_\_\_ and will repay my debt in full"
- "I know \_\_\_\_\_ is a bad man and will see that justice is done"



## Part 2: Play the Game

Legends is a roleplaying game where you take on the persona of a player character (PC) in a fictional world. The GM describes the world, including everything and anyone other than the PCs. You should roleplay your player character at all times, so everything you do is "in character", even when rolling dice.

The game takes place in turns, the GM takes the first turn, followed clockwise by each of the players, continuously.

Each **GM turn** is used to narrate the fictional world and set the scene for the PCs. The GM also seeks to **Raise Hazard** when possible, by describing direct threats, ominous details, foreshadowing, and dramatic tension. The GM will also **Cut Hazard** when you make progress overcoming those challenges, so Hazard floats up and down with the dramatic tension in the story.

Your turn starts with a brief narrative **Transition** from the GM, which can include attacks or other dangers. You must respond to any attacks or dangers by rolling **Saving Throws**, and may then take one **Action** and two **Maneuvers**.

Use your Action to do something significant such as attack a foe, use a Secret, attempt a stunt, etc. Use your **Maneuvers** to move, interact with items or environment, take cover, assist your Action or assist other characters.

In general you should only roll dice when the GM asks you to do so. You will always roll for Attacks and Saving Throws, and those rolls always happen within your turn.

**If you fail a Saving Throw you take 1 Damage.** If you roll a Fumble you take 2 Damage, or 3 for Super Fumble.

Next, **compare Weapon Class and Armor Class** in the Hit Location. Add 1 Damage if Weapon Class is higher or subtract 1 Damage if Armor Class is higher. If your armor does not negate all Damage you will gain a Doom with a stage equal to the remaining Damage.

If you have a **Protective Trait** ideal for this Doom then reduce your Doom by one stage. For example, if you are cut by a sword and take 1 Damage this would normally be a Doom 1, but if you have a Trait "sword scars" then you just gain Doom 0. You can only use one Protective Trait per Doom, so you cannot declare a Trait when combining a Doom with an existing Doom (see below).

## Hazard, Stress & Vim

Hazard, Stress, and Vim are the three vital stats essential to how the game works and used in dice rolls. They rise and fall during the game, similar to dramatic tension in a book or film; you can think of them as "volume knobs" for the story. They are also shared by all players, so what you do affects others.

This game emphasizes teamwork and rewards collaboration between the players. You will need to work together to survive and overcome the challenges of the story.

# Hazard

Hazard is the difficulty of the scene your group of characters is facing, and is set by the GM. Hazard is the target number to succeed on rolls of 1d20, so if Hazard is 12 you need to roll 12 or higher to succeed. The GM manages Hazard, raising Hazard as the difficulty escalates. The GM also reduces Hazard to acknowledge and celebrate your triumphs over challenges.

Hazard is the GM's "volume knob" for tension, drama, and risk in the story. The GM will start Hazard very low (probably 10) and then slowly raise Hazard whenever describing dangerous details that make the story more risky, such as foreshadowing, describing well-prepared foes, revealing threats, maneuvering enemies, or adding a detail that makes the situation more tense or dangerous.

As a player you need to pay attention to **foreshadowing**, since each new dangerous or frightening detail is possibly useful information, and also raises Hazard.

|                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| claw marks on trees   | find/cross obstacle          |
| big tracks/footprints | fight sounds/yelling/screams |
| darkness falls        | damage to your ship/camp     |
| ominous sounds/smells | enemy leader yells orders    |
| wild howling/growling | seeing something awful       |
| find/avoid traps      | supernatural evil/horror     |

**Monsters** - Monsters are proportionally difficult to the amount of foreshadowing, information, and fear the GM provides to heighten tension. The GM raises Hazard with each new detail, and will cut Hazard if you overcome or mitigate those dangers.

**Traps** - Similar to monsters, traps are more dangerous as Hazard rises. Similar to a movie, the PCs might find a few easily-discovered (yet deadly) traps, raising Hazard each time.

**Obstacles** - The GM can describe obstacles the PCs find in their path and must cross, such as a rotten bridge, narrow chasm,

piranha-infested river, quicksand, etc. Each obstacle adds dramatic tension and the PCs will need to cross them coming back.

**Enemy Leaders** - Enemy leaders can strategize and coordinate their troops or fleet, so otherwise weak underlings become more dangerous due to their leadership.

It's important to understand that the danger of monsters and traps are mostly based on Hazard, and they do not have absolute values. Thus, the difficulty of a monster is based on the amount of foreshadowing, information, and fear the GM provides to heighten tension, as well as the GM's judgment of how challenging the situation is for the PCs. So a werewolf might be much easier to defeat if Hazard is low, but very challenging after lots of foreshadowing, and similarly easier or difficult if the PCs have defeated werewolves before!

The GM will acknowledge and celebrate your progress and triumphs over these dangers by reducing Hazard, but this is more likely to happen between scenes than in the middle of combat...unless you find a clever way to reduce the difficulty of the situation!

## Stress

Stress is the amount of strain and trauma your group of characters has taken, and can be mental, spiritual, or physical. As Stress rises your failures are more likely to be disastrous fumbles. Stress starts at 1, then Raise Stress by 1 each time you are hit, fail a Saving Throw, or your ship/castle is hit, use a Secret with negative Vim, or see something awful. When things slow down after a stressful situation, you can reduce Stress by eating, drinking, making camp, cleaning yourself, mending your gear, making jokes, playing music, and blowing off steam. After all, you're a person. Reducing Stress within a stressful situation requires a Secret spell or power, such as "song of hope", "boost morale", etc.

You and the other players are responsible for managing Stress; how you deal with stressors is part of your story. The life of an adventurer is incredibly dangerous to body and mind, routinely defying death and witnessing supernatural horrors. These experiences, which are measured by Stress, take their toll as psychological strain which does not simply go away once the direct threats have been neutralized or the scary shadows have gone away after the sunrise. You must work off the trauma and find ways to relax. What does your character do to blow off steam?

eating / drinking / cooking  
resting / sleeping  
cleaning yourself up  
repairing armor / gear



foraging / hunting / gathering  
feasting / celebrating victory  
composing music / poetry  
partying / carousing

## Vim

Vim is the amount of energy your group of characters has available to use Secrets. Spend 1 Vim when you use a Secret. Sleeping raises you by 4 Vim, or less if you didn't receive a good night's sleep. However, a better way to gain Vim is via arcane Rituals, which are discussed in the chapter on Secrets

## Negative Vim

Vim drops as Secrets are used, and can go to zero or even become negative ("in the red"). Raise Stress any time you use a Secret and have Negative Vim. Negative Vim sets the minimum Stress, so if Vim is -5 then the minimum Stress is 5.

If your Vim is negative then it will not reset unless what you are doing (i.e. sleeping or a Ritual) earns enough Vim to set you to at least zero. Thus, at Vim -5 or below simply sleeping will not help.

## Turns

Legends is a turn-based game. The GM takes the first turn, followed by you and the other players. Game play flows clockwise around the table, continuously through the game session, in or out of combat.

Each **GM turn** is used to narrate the fictional world and set the scene for the PCs. The GM also seeks to **Raise Hazard** when possible, by describing direct threats, ominous details, foreshadowing, and dramatic tension. Hazard is central to game play, setting the difficulty of all rolls and ramping up challenges.

Your turn starts with a brief narrative **Transition** from the GM, which can include attacks or other dangers. You must respond to any attacks or dangers by rolling **Saving Throws**, and may then take one **Action** and two **Maneuvers**.

## GM Turns

The GM takes the first turn for each round. The GM narrates changes to the scene, including descriptions of what NPCs and monsters do. The GM then **Transitions** to the player on the left.

The GM should vividly describe what the PCs notice about the surroundings, such as "you hear the low growling of wolves in the trees", often as foreshadowing to **Raise Hazard**. Players are free to ask questions as needed to understand the scene.

The GM then manipulates scene elements. The GM should consider the passage of time and describe anything the PCs would observe, for example, a fire lit earlier might spread or die out, or the sounds of drums previously mentioned in the distance might be rolling nearer, creating verisimilitude. If there are monsters the GM should move them in a lifelike manner and foreshadow threats against the PCs. Otherwise the GM might use anything available, such as a monster, trap, terrain, or even the weather. Threats are only “a shadow of a threat”, meaning they are *possible* threats. The GM will call for actual Saving Throws during **Transitions** to each player’s turn.

You have two Maneuvers per round, which can be used at any time. You may freely interject your Maneuvers into the GM Maneuver phase, in which case the GM will interweave them together. For example, if the GM describes a monster moving to engage a PC, you might say “I step back to keep my distance”. The GM should handle this with a fluid narrative when possible, but can pause play to settle conflicting Maneuvers as necessary.

## Player Turns

As a player you get one turn per round to describe your PC’s action and responses to the evolving story.

The GM will herald your turn with a **Transition**, a short narration to shift the spotlight onto **you** while keeping the game flowing. Your Transition is for you and may include critical information such as the environment as you see it, details you notice (and possibly only you), opportunities you have, or declarations of attacks against you. The GM may say things like “you see” or “(your name) sees”.

The spotlight is now **yours**, use your moment to play your character and describe what you do in the unfolding game story. You should describe how you react to threats such as attacks, as well as what action you focus on taking, ideally interweaving them together. Think of your turn as the point of view of a camera in a film, which

needs to move around to tell the story, and is focusing on you for a limited time.

You must roll **Saving Throws** to defend against threats described by the GM during the Transition to your turn.

You get one **Action** for your turn. You also get two **Maneuvers** per round, which you can use at any time in the round, but now is as good a time as any if you still have them. Since you are able to judge the success or failure of your rolls, you should narrate the outcome of your Action and Saving Throw. Once you're done with your turn, the GM will use another **Transition** to wrap up your turn and shift the spotlight to the next player's turn.

## Resolution Order

Rolls for your Action and Saving Throws within your turn are considered simultaneous. For example, if you are in a fight and you and your opponent both attack each other, your attack and defense occur at the same time, so it's possible for you to hurt your foe, at the same time your foe hurts you.

However, you can ask to take your Action ahead of your Saving Throw if your GM agrees your Action should happen first. For example, if an enemy rushes you and you have a spear, then your attack should occur before your foe reaches you. If you defeat your foe you won't need to make a Saving Throw against his attack.

## NPC Turns

There is one special floating "NPC Turn" each round, where an NPC allied with the PCs takes a turn. The NPC Turn can happen at any time during the round and is shared amongst the players and GM. You can take the NPC Turn, or another player, or the GM, or you can collaborate. Multiple NPCs can share an NPC Turn if they are doing the same kind of thing. Otherwise NPCs allied with the PCs will generally continue whatever they were already doing.

# Player Actions

As a player you get one Action per round to have your character do something important, such as making an attack, casting a spell, disarming a trap, or climbing a cliff. This is the focus of your turn.

|             |            |               |
|-------------|------------|---------------|
| attack      | overwatch  | open lock     |
| prepare     | intimidate | cast a spell  |
| Cut Hazard  | search     | first aid     |
| investigate | stunt      | coup de grace |

Most Actions will require a dice roll, so when you take an Action, the GM will either say "yes" or "roll the dice". Some Actions have in-game definitions, but you can attempt to do anything.

**Investigate** - Conduct a detailed observation, analysis, appraisal, or search. This could potentially be used to find a weakness of a foe, a gap in armor, or something else you can exploit.

**Attack** - Make an attack roll to inflict Damage.

**Mercy** - Stabilize or dispatch a mortally wounded creature.

**Cut Hazard** - You can use an Action to reduce the current Hazard by 1, limited to -1 per round. Describe how you do this in-character.

## Push your limits

You can push your limits and attempt higher-risk Actions. Describe your high-stakes stunt and take it up to 11. Roll for your Action normally. The GM uses a Counteraction to describe an unpredictable natural consequence (good or bad) of your stunt. For example, you might say "I point my sword down and leap from the cliff onto the giant...death from above!" and hope for good rolls that will wreck the giant without going splat.

## Maneuvers

Maneuvers are minor activities such as moving, shouting orders, opening a door, drawing a weapon, reloading, taking cover, etc. A Maneuver that requires a roll instead requires an Action.

Your maximum number of Maneuvers per Round is determined by your level of armor coverage: **Body-Armor (or none) 3, Half-Armor 2, or Full-Armor 1**. Carrying something very heavy or bulky such as a sack of loot or a body also takes 1 Maneuver.

You may take your Maneuvers at *any time* in the round, even in the middle of the another player's (or the GM's) turn. If two characters want to act at the same moment they can bid Maneuvers to go first, or roll to break a tie. Unused Maneuvers are lost at the end of the round.

Maneuvers can be used for quick observation and communication. You could glance at something, listen, gesture or point, shout a quick command or word of warning.

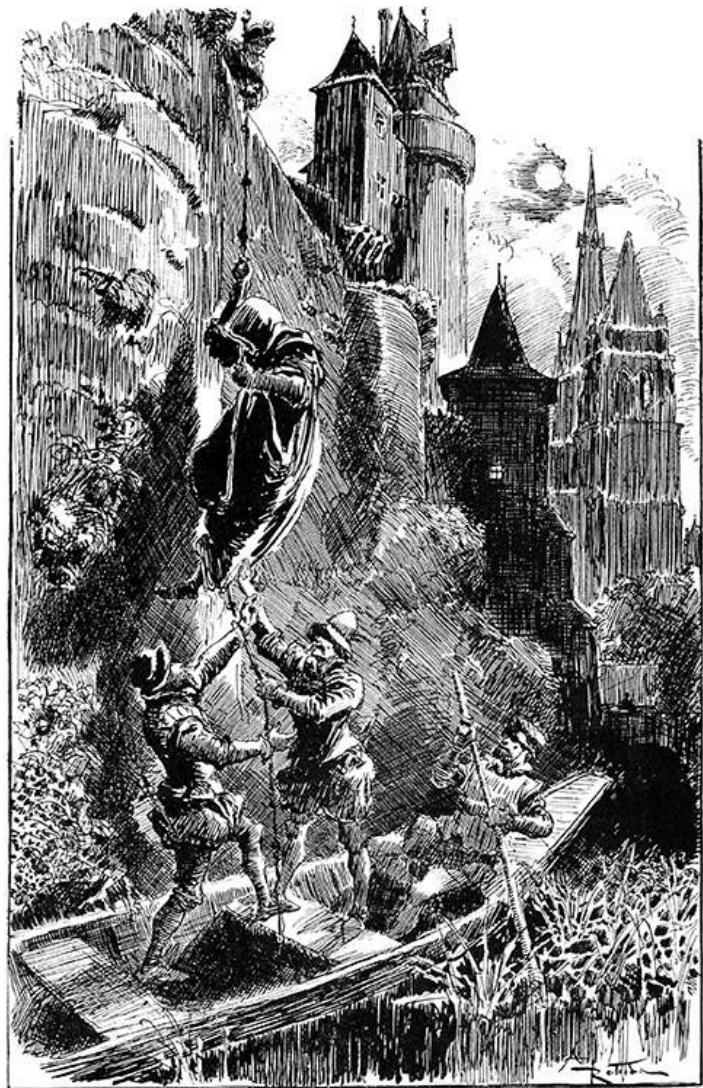
Maneuvers can be used for moving a few steps, sitting, standing, taking cover, etc. The normal distance moved for a

Maneuver is **ten (10) feet**, which is typically two 1-inch squares on a tabletop grid for miniatures. Double your movement (to twenty feet) if running forward or taking advantage of the environment (e.g. moving downhill, downstream, or falling). Halve your movement (to five feet) if struggling with movement (e.g. crawling, climbing, standing jump, etc.) You can change facing while moving, but are otherwise assumed to face the direction of your movement.

step (10')

run forward (20)

back up (10')



|                 |                |                    |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| sidestep (10')  | crawl/roll (5) | running jump (10') |
| kneel/crouch    | climb (5')     | standing jump (5') |
| sit/stand       | fall (20')     | swim (10')         |
| lay prone/stand | take cover     | spin/turn around   |

Maneuvers can be used to interact with items in simple ways. This costs 2 Maneuvers by default. However, this is just 1 Maneuver if you have a written note describing how you are carrying for quick access (e.g. "sword - sheathed left hip") or the Asset is otherwise quickly accessible (e.g. pulling a lever, or pushing a door open with no knob).

|                |               |                |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| draw weapon    | put item away | open/shut door |
| reload weapon  | pick item up  | drop backpack  |
| check ammo     | throw item    | pull lever (1) |
| get item ready | uncork potion | push door (1)  |

You can use a Maneuver to embellish your Action, adding a touch of your personal style. This is for fun and makes you look awesome.

|                |                   |                     |
|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| bow/salute     | quip/quote/motto  | twirl/spin/flip     |
| hero pose      | smile/grin        | rude gesture        |
| flourish/swash | hiss/howl/catcall | fist pump/high five |
| swagger        | war cry           | "z" slash           |
| laugh/jeer     | challenge         | dance-off           |
| smirk/sneer    | taunt/insult      | theme song          |

**Combat Tactics are Maneuvers** - You can use Maneuvers as combat tactics for your attacks & defenses; see the Combat section.

**Long Maneuvers are Actions** - Getting out a water flask (or potion), uncorking it, drinking, and putting it away uses your Action.

**Extreme Maneuver are Actions** - If you need to make a roll to perform movement, such as jumping over a wide pit, it's an Action.

# Roll the Dice

A standard Legends roll consists of **1d20** and a **Legend Die**. The d20 is a “natural” roll without modifiers, and you succeed if you roll Hazard or higher, otherwise you fail. Describe how your action succeeded or failed, as well as any natural consequences.

**Crits and Fumbles** are extreme successes and failures. You Crit on 20, which has extra effect /damage. You Fumble if you roll less than or equal to the Stress on your d20, e.g. if Stress is 5 you Fumble on 1-5. On a Fumble the GM will take a Counter action.

**Super Crits and Fumbles** - An upgraded Crit is a “Super Crit”, and a downgraded Fumble is a “Super Fumble”.

**Successes** - You earn 1 “Success” on a successful roll, 2 on a Crit, and 3 on a Super Crit. When attacking you deal 1 Damage per Success, but Successes can be used for other actions too.

## The Legend Die

**The Legend Die** presents an opportunity to improve your *natural* result, where each die face is a “potential factor” towards success.

If you do what your Legend Die says, you win that deciding factor, and **Upgrade [+]** your natural result by one step (fumble [+] failure [+] success [+] crit). Otherwise, your natural result stands as-is.

Conversely, in some situations your Legend Die will **Downgrade [-]** your natural result (crit [-] success [-] fail [-] fumble). Multiple upgrades and downgrades are additive, but the natural result can only shift by one step, so a natural success can be at best a crit, and at worst a failure.

Some game rules call for specific upgrades [+] and downgrades [-], so if you see “[+] COMBO” that reads “upgrade COMBO”, and “[-] ASSET” reads “ downgrade ASSET”.

# Legends Die Faces

The Legend Die is conceptually simple to use, but each facet is a mini-game with its own depths of play.

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| THEME  | Name a Theme or Theme Signature that assists your action.<br>Downgrade if you don't have all necessary specialized knowledge (e.g. alchemy, swordsmithing).   |
| EFFORT | Raise Stress if < 5. Upgrade if you have a Trait ideal for your roll.<br>Downgrade if your roll is hindered by a Dark Secret or Doom.   |
| ASSET  | Downgrade if you are not using an Asset (item). Upgrade if you have an ideal Asset Signature ideal, such as a "flaming sword" vs spiders. Do not apply any modifier if the action cannot benefit from an item, e.g. singing, hearing, observation, etc.   |
| COMBO  | Upgrade if you have have an advantage that combines with your current roll. For example, you might have taken the high ground or other optimal position, dodged, or parried. In most cases, gaining advantage is the result of taking Maneuvers or Actions to position yourself or activate Asset Tags. Downgrade if you have disadvantage (e.g. blinded, prone) or opponents have outmaneuvered you (e.g. flanking, high ground, etc). You can also leverage Maneuver of allies. |
| ULT    | Upgrade if you are an expert at your action, and more expert than anyone nearby. Requires player consensus for bonus.<br>Downgrade if your action directly opposes someone who has ULT, e.g. a monster special attack.  |
| PREP   | Leverage an Action you took on a previous Turn where you described preparation for the current roll. Usually this required you to have noticed foreshadowing or clues and used your wits to make ready. However, downgrade if your foes are better prepared than you (e.g. ambush, swarm).  |

## THEME

Name a Theme or Theme Signature that assists your action.  
Downgrade if you don't have all necessary special knowledge (e.g. alchemy, smithing). (Note that Asset Signatures are used for ASSET.)

## EFFORT

Raise Stress if < 5. Upgrade if you have a Trait ideal for your roll.  
Downgrade if your roll is hindered by a Dark Secret or Doom.

## ASSET

Downgrade if you are not using an Asset (item). Upgrade if you have an ideal Asset Signature ideal, such as a "flaming sword" vs spiders. Do not apply any modifier if the action cannot benefit from an item, e.g. singing, hearing, observation, etc.

Examples:

- **Attacking** - Upgrade if your weapon has a Signature useful against your foe, such as a "holy sword" vs undead. Otherwise a normal weapon will work, but downgrade if you don't have a weapon and using bare knuckles.
- **Defending** - Upgrade if you have a weapon, shield, or armor with a Signature that helps against this attack, such as "adamant" against weapons or "orichalcum" armor against hostile magic. Normal armor works fine, but downgrade if you lack a defensive Asset.
- **Climbing** - Upgrade if you have a rope with a fancy Signature like "silk rope" or "elven rope", or another climbing Asset such as "climbing claws". You can do just fine with a normal rope, but downgrade if you are going free solo.
- **Picking a lock** - Upgrade if you have lock picks with a Signature (which would indicate they are higher quality). You could make do with a piece of wire, otherwise downgrade.
- **Social** - Upgrade if you have the proper attire for the situation, with a Signature, such as "latest fashion upper city cloak". Downgrade if you are improperly clothed for the situation.
- **Using Magic** - Upgrade if you have an Asset Signature relevant to your magic, such as "wand of fire". Downgrade if you don't have any magical props to help you channel your magic.
- **Defending against Magic** - Upgrade if you have an Asset Signature that helps you defend, such as "amulet of shielding". Downgrade if you don't have any magical props to defend you.

## COMBO

Upgrade if you have have an advantage that combines with your current roll. For example, you might have taken the high ground or other optimal position, dodged, or parried. In most cases, gaining

advantage is the result of taking Maneuvers or Actions to position yourself or activate Asset Tags. Downgrade if you have disadvantage (e.g. blinded, prone) or opponents have outmaneuvered you (e.g. flanking, high ground, etc). You can also leverage Maneuver of allies.

You can use Maneuvers at any time, even when it's not your turn. While you can use a Maneuver after a roll, you will often receive more benefit before rolling.

**Maneuver:** [+] COMBO if you are using a Maneuver to assist your roll such when you dodge, feint, parry, or aim.

**Teamwork:** [+] COMBO if an ally is assisting you with a Maneuver. For example a friend could distract a foe to assist your attack, or watch your back to assist your defense.

**Advantage:** [+] COMBO if you used a Maneuver to gain a tactical advantage like taking high ground or overwatch over a choke point.

**Disadvantage:** [-] COMBO if you're in a bad position, such as surrounded, swarmed, unarmed, blind, held, distracted, prone, crawling, or your opponent used a Maneuver to take the high ground or use a tactic to aid their attack (e.g. aim, feint, beat, etc).

**Guard:** If declared prior to your roll, you can move your weapon or shield to a Guard which is a Hit Location and side (e.g. "head - left"). This provides [+] COMBO for attacks in that location. Shields provide Shield Class as armor. Weapons count as Class 1 shields, or Weapon Class if the weapon has the Defensive Tag.

**Weapon Range:** [+] COMBO melee attacks and saving throws vs melee attacks when you are at your optimal range and your opponent is not. All weapons have Tags to indicate *optimal* fighting distance. For example, if you have a spear and attack a swordsman at "spear range" such as while he is approaching then use your spear's Long Tag to [+] COMBO.

## ULT

Upgrade if you are an expert at your action, and more expert than anyone nearby. Requires player consensus for bonus. Downgrade if your action directly opposes someone who has ULT, e.g. a monster special attack.

Since ULT is based on the consensus of all players, it's dependent on your *perceived* character concept, role in the group, and past demonstrations of expertise. If you're picking a lock you'll likely win if you're "the thief" of the group, especially if you have picked locks before no. If you're reading archaic runes you'll win if you're "the wizard". This might also be an easy win if you are using a Secret, but on a tie nobody gets the bonus, so guard your Secrets.

You should expect to lose ULT when facing NPCs in their area of expertise. You're unlikely to out-haggle a merchant, hide from a huntsman, or out-maneuver a courtier. This is especially true for monsters with special dramatic attacks that they are well known for, such as dragons breathing flame, gorgon's stony gaze, giant toads that swallow people whole, etc.

## PRCP

Leverage an Action you took on a previous Turn where you described preparation for the current roll. Usually this required you to have noticed foreshadowing or clues and used your wits to make ready. However, downgrade if your foes are better prepared than you (e.g. ambush, swarm).

Preparation is not necessarily complicated, they just require paying attention, thinking, and setting plans into motion, often simply by roleplaying what you do. For example, you might rig warning traps around your camp, or plug your ears with wax before fighting the harpies, or douse yourself with water before fighting a dragon. Your foes will do the same, whether it's an ambush by brigands, a dragon hiding on a cave ledge, or that intricate looking magic circle the bad wizard is standing inside



## Part 3: Experience Paths

Experience Paths ("Paths") are important objectives and accomplishments for the characters. These can be goals, quests, areas of research, crafting items, magic research, and more.

- Lenarin wants a proper Elvish sword
- Hazarak wants to find a grimoire of summoning rituals
- The dragon Aashok wants the nearby goblins purged
- The townsfolk need your help against raiders
- Krod wants a hunting dog
- Hazarak is experimenting with a "blue fireballs" spell
- The princess asks for help returning to her kingdom
- Druznar is attempting to summon and bind an elemental
- Brigit wants to find the lost shrine of Ithilmerin

Paths are as wide and varied as your own experiences. They can be large or small, shared or personal, and involve one or more characters. They can be story quests or challenges from the GM, or wish lists of stuff that characters want to find.

# Writing Paths

To start a new Path, write down your quest, goal, or objective on a sheet of paper shared by all players. Paths are freeform, in your own words with no limits to creativity. You can write any details you want in addition to the Path name. Keep in mind the purpose of Paths is to propel the story forward in directions which you and the other players find interesting, so try to write them in an exciting voice. Take ideas from your favorite books and films.

The only limitation is you may only have two active Paths at a time, and NPCs may only have one active Path.

Keep all Paths together on a piece of paper and start each game session by reviewing Paths as a group, possibly passing the page around the table for updates. Since roleplaying is a social game, all Paths are open and shared between the players. This transparency makes it clear what kind of game everyone wants to play, and what Paths they think will be interesting and fun. The players and GM form the audience for the heroic deeds of the characters, and can often help each other.

## Experience Points (XP)

Experience Points (XP) are a measure of progress towards completing a Path. At the end of each game session, record **10 XP** on one Path for showing up and playing. When you accumulate 100 XP on a Path, you complete it and the GM grants a Reward.

Thus, XP is how you "win" the game, and completing a Path is like "leveling up", but according to your vision and in your own words. Thus for fastest advancement you should strive to make progress in both of your Paths during every game. You can also earn XP bonuses as follows.

**Training Time** - At the end of the game session, you earn up to 10 XP on each Path for which you spent considerable in-game time training. This requires about half a day unless you hire a trainer.

**Materials** - At the end of the game session, you earn up to 10 XP if you convert loot (treasure) into materials that help you on your Path. This usually requires you to bring treasure to a town and then barter for what you need, e.g. you might trade gold for special ink or paper to work on a new spell.

**Dark Secret** - At the end of the game session, you earn up to 10 XP for one Path if you role-played the downside of a Dark Secret.

**MVP** - At the end of the game session, optionally vote for one player who was the "most valuable player" (MVP). That player gains 10 XP. This is ideally a combination of achievement, roleplaying, and dramatic style, such as a memorable "POTG" one-shot with daemon-slaying arrow to the big bad shadow daemon.

**Rookie** - At the end of the game session, optionally vote for one player who has the newest character to gain 10 XP.

**Development** - At the start of each session, gain up to 10 XP for each Path you made progress on based on effort you put in between game sessions, such as to journal your adventures, develop your character, or help with worldbuilding. This must result in some creative output such as a backstory, adventure log, character sketch, a miniature, sketch of your castle, details for an NPC, essay on your religion, etc. This is a great way to add detail to your character and campaign world.

Once you are halfway complete (50 XP) you can try to use the Reward before the Path is completed, such as trying out a new spell you are working on.

## Changing Paths

If you want to change a Path to something else, or if a Path becomes impossible to complete then cross it off the list. Sometimes a Path seemed like a great idea, but for whatever reason didn't turn out. The path might no longer be relevant to the characters or story, or might no longer be possible to complete. For example, a path like

"Warn the King of the assassination attempt" might become impossible if you learn he's been assassinated. If you cannot complete a Path then you should abandon it so you can focus on a new Path.

## Natural Consequences

Whether you complete, fail, or abandon a Path, any natural consequences still apply. Surviving a harrowing experience can lead to long-lasting trauma or a quest for vengeance. The GM should assign a Dark Secret if a character is adversely affected by a Path, including a Doom.

## Journeys

Sometimes a Path is just one step in a longer journey, of many Paths. If your dream goal is to become a king, an archmage, a guild master thief, then you will need to complete multiple Paths along the way. The GM may require you to split a Path into multiple Paths. This gives you small goals along the way, and avoids the need to increase the number of XP for an ambitious Path.

## Rewards

The GM will give an appropriate **Reward** when you complete a Path.

Some Rewards will directly enhance a part of your character such as adding new Trait or Secret. You could get a new Theme (up to a max of four), modify a Theme, or rid yourself of a Dark Secret. You could find or construct a new Asset, even something exotic, magic item, or summoned servant. Anything is possible if you follow your dreams, although your GM may increase the XP needed to complete the Path for really big dreams.

The GM can also assign a Dark Secret if the way you took your Path had undesirable consequences.

ESCAPE FROM THE DUNGEONS OF THE MAD KING! - Day 5: Success! We emerged from the river and into the sunlight. We're in a deep and wild wood but out of the dungeons. We got to keep our lives and our loot! Azazrem is studying the "moon orb" and can make it glow with light and purify water.

The Reward could be a component of your character (e.g. Theme, Trait, etc) or something less tangible like a noble title. Examples:

|                   |                    |                     |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| gold/cash/credits | valuable art       | horse/vehicle       |
| letter of credit  | trinket/gimmick    | pet/familiar        |
| magic spell       | magic item         | henchman/minion     |
| spellbook         | favor owed         | resolve dark secret |
| healing potion    | cure for a disease | location of hostage |
| special weapon    | cure for a curse   | potion ingredients  |
| special arrows    | land/holdings      | treasure map        |
| custom armor      | secret base        | key to something    |
| armored clothes   | ship/boat          | talking book/skull  |
| trophy/big tooth  | musical instrument | unusual tools       |

## Using Paths

Use your Paths for anything you want to accomplish. You can create personal wish lists, character objectives, personal quests, spell research, creation of magic items, finding a teacher, etc.

## Quests

You can write a Path to seek out rare items, such as a custom suit of armor, fine sword, or a spell scroll. This lets the other players and GM know the character wants that item, and lets you highlight your character's journey to find and claim the prized possession. In this case the reward will be an Asset with an enhancement such as a Signature, Secret, or Asset Tag.

MY FATHER'S SWORD - The creepy cultists in the mountain stole my father's sword, all I have left of the great man. I will reclaim it to save my honor.

If you have crafting skills you might build an item rather than buy or quest for it.

CLOAK OF BLADES - I'm crafting a magic cloak with swords and daggers incorporated into the cloth and hem. This cloak is used like a shield.

## Magic Research

Use a Path to research a new spell, construct a magic item, or other kinds of magic research. This might involve obtaining and reading arcane books, acquiring rare materials, spending time conducting magical research in a laboratory, etc.

### Books of Secrets

Books contain knowledge, and knowledge is power. Ancient tomes, scrolls, maps, and spellbooks may contain Secrets such as spells or the location of an ancient lost city or treasure trove. Books are tremendously beneficial because they free you from having to travel to find knowledge. Write a Path for each topic you are studying, then spend time to earn XP, and on completion gain a Reward.



The GM secretly determines how many Secrets each book contains (possibly rolling dice by size of the book). The form factor is not important, for example a "scroll" is really just an unbound book and could potentially be very long. If you've gleaned all the Secrets from a book, the book will no longer allow you to earn XP.

## Minions

Use a Path to find a loyal minion, henchman, companion, or servant, including a magical minion such as an elemental or familiar. Write a **Secret** describing why your minion is truly loyal, whether that is from admiration, an oath, or magical binding. Your minion is an NPC ("non-player character") controlled by the GM, although you can generally

ask (or order) your minion to do things and can temporarily take over a minion as your PC if your main character is indisposed.

Minions start with **one Theme** (with Signature) and **two Traits**. If association with the minion poses a complication (e.g. "my bat is vampiric") then add a Dark Secret and a second Theme (with Signature). Minions can have one Path open at a time.

## Familiars

A familiar is a spirit who accompanies you in order to assist you in using your magic. Each familiar takes on the form of a tiny animal such as a cat, bat, small dog, toad, etc. Each familiar is a minion: use the Theme & Signature for the familiar form (e.g. "black cat familiar") and Traits to describe physical qualities or ways the familiar assists you with magic. Use your Secret that describes why your familiar (Minion) is loyal to describe a mystical bond with you, such as "telepathic bond", "shared emotions", "shared sight", "shared dreams", "shared voice", etc.

Familiars are relatively weak and likely to be killed if exposed to harm, however since they are spirits they can be brought back to life. You must use a Path to bring your familiar back from the dead, which manifests a new animal body (not necessarily the same kind as before). When this happens update your familiar's Theme & Signature as needed, and assign a new Trait or Secret.

## Campaign Paths

The GM can write Paths for the campaign world, such as rumors or events, creating a sense of verisimilitude. These Paths might independently from your actions...or possibly as a result of them. The GM then assigns XP towards those Paths at the end of each game session, but you can also assign XP to those Paths. Just be aware that some of these Paths might be opportunities for adventure, such as a lost merchant caravan, and others might be portents and signs of impending doom, such as the rise of an evil warlord.



## Part 4: Combat

This section deals with exciting topics like slaying monsters and staying alive. All of this is from the point of view of your character. You will make all the rolls for attack and defense. Legends uses continuous turns, and this does not change when your character clashes with foes. Danger can strike at *any* time.

### Attacks

When you attack you must roll the dice. If you **succeed** on your roll you "hit" and deal **Damage**, otherwise you "miss".

#### Successful Attacks

On a successful attack you deal Damage.

The GM will tell you whether your foe is **Damaged** or **Disabled**.

- **Damaged** - You have dealt Damage, but not enough to disable your foe. The GM subtracts the Damage from the foe's "Hits"; no other effect.
- **Disabled** - Your foe is incapacitated and can take no Actions or Maneuvers, so it poses little threat and should die on its own.

If you roll a **Critical Success** you have dealt a "Critical Hit" which will either dismember or kill your foe outright. Your GM will tell you whether your foe is **Dismembered** or **Dead**.

- **Dismembered** - Your Critical Hit has crippled or removed a limb such as a hand, arm, leg, foot, or wing. You get to describe the wound. You could remove the weapon hand of an evil champion or lop off the wing of a dragon!
- **Dead** - Your Critical Hit has killed your foe, you may describe a fatal blow such as removing it's head or chopping it in half.

## Failed Attacks

Failed attacks "miss" and deal no Damage, with no side effects. However, if you **Fumble** an attack Action the GM will describe a natural consequence or roll for an Encounter, which can possibly use your Action against you. If you use large-scale attacks like grenades or *fireball* spells, you can blow yourself up, and your allies too. Consider the scope of your actions, and the risk they bring.

## Weapons

Weapons must be made ready before they can be used. Use a Maneuver to ready a weapon, such as drawing your sword or getting out your bow and nocking an arrow.

Projectile weapons such as bows weapons must be readied again after firing, for example for a bow you must draw and nock another arrow to be ready again. Weapons which require multiple Maneuvers for reloading are indicated by number after the Reload Tag, such as "Reload2", "Reload3", etc.

## Ammunition

If you have a weapon that uses ammunition you must keep track of every shot.

## Improvised Weapons

Improvised or cheaply made weapons work fine until they don't, breaking on EFFORT.

## Disabled Foes

If the GM says a foe is Disabled, it is incapacitated and can take no Actions or Maneuvers, so it poses little threat and is expected to die. However, the GM rolls a random Encounter at the start of each turn, and it's possible for this to grant an Action or a Maneuver to a Disabled foe. Thus, a Disabled foe might manage to limp off to lick its wounds, make annoying dying sounds, kick and twitch, make a leaky mess, or bite you if you get too close.

You can spend an Action to put a Disabled foe out of your misery, either dispatching the foe with a coup de grâce or finishing blow of some kind or taking a prisoner. This does not normally require a roll, but you need to describe how you do this, and sometimes the way you describe this matters. For example, you might need to use holy water or prayers to put undeads to rest, or use fire to put down a regenerating creature. The GM will not tell you what to do, that's part of your adventure.

## Saving Throws

If you are attacked by a foe or other danger you must roll for your defense. This is called a **Saving Throw**, which is like a roll for an Action. If you fail a Saving Throw you take **Damage**. The GM will describe such dangers, and tell you when to roll a Saving Throw, saying something like "two black-fletched orc arrows fly from the darkness, striking Talin".

If you roll a **Fumble** on your Saving Throw you take extra Damage and the GM will roll an **Encounter**.

If you roll a **Critical Success** on your Saving Throw you get a **Counter Action**, which is a free counterattack or similar Action related to the attack you saved against. You are limited to things you could conceivably do while defending yourself against the attack. If you were attacked by a swordsman you can counterattack that foe, or if you defended against magic wizard fire you can describe how the fire scorches his minions instead of you.



You can use a **Maneuver** defensively to [+] COMBO, e.g. dodge, parry, block, duck, roll, slip, weave, etc. Some Maneuvers need to be declared before you roll, such as Guard and Cover. Also some Asset Tags [+] COMBO.

Saving Throws are used for all risks to life and limb and death-defying situations, such as a trap, collapsing cliff, pit filled with snakes, or poisoned drink. If you fail the Saving Throw you take Damage, which becomes a Doom unless you Soak it.

|             |           |                  |
|-------------|-----------|------------------|
| attacks     | avalanche | lightning        |
| weapons     | poison    | charm            |
| falling     | disease   | mind blasts      |
| drowning    | morale    | fear             |
| suffocation | fire      | paralysis        |
| traps       | cold      | petrification    |
| cave-in     | acid      | very large rocks |

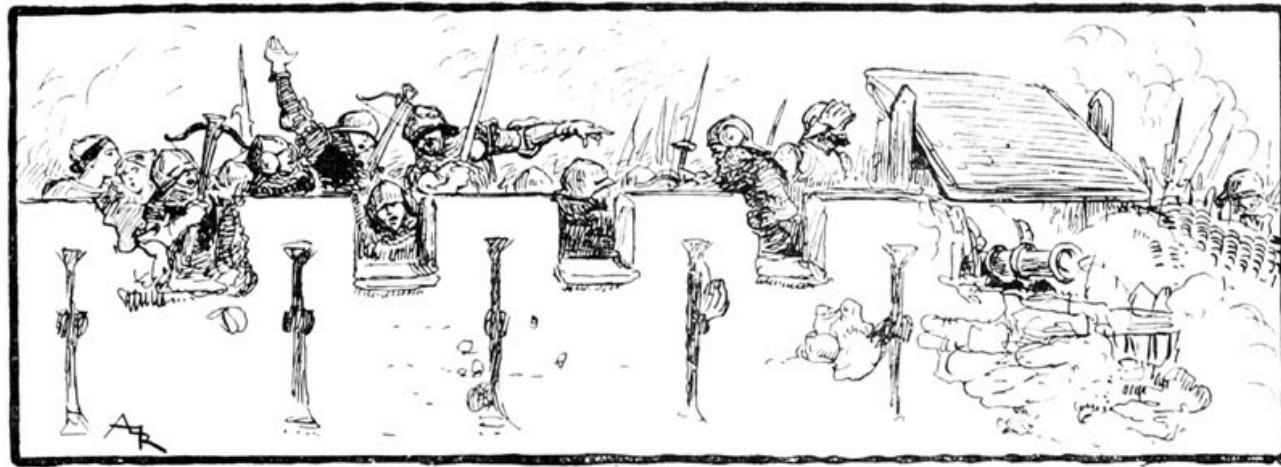
# Damage

Attacks deal 1 Damage, or 2 on a Crit/Fumble, or 3 on a Super Crit/Fumble. This is the same whether you are attacking or defending.

Damage represents *any* kind of harm to your character, not necessarily physical. Damage encompasses concepts such as "hits", "wounds", "strain", etc. Damage is specific to the damage source, such as an arrow wound, burn, paralyzation, or mind-control.

## Armor Class and Weapon Class

Compare armor and weapons using **Armor Class** (AC) and **Weapon Class** (WC). Add 1 Damage if the weapon outclasses the armor, or subtract 1 Damage if the armor outclasses the weapon. If armor brings the total Damage to zero, the attack has no effect. Always use the armor for the specific Hit Location.



**Cover** counts as armor, providing AC to the Hit Locations covered from the attack. Solid objects usually have higher AC than weapon class, so a target with cover will usually downgrade Damage.

**Huge weapons** (e.g. catapults, cannons, giants, dragons, etc.) effectively have very high WC that outclasses any armor and most cover. It's worth noting that in Legends hits from huge weapons are assumed to be glancing blows or shrapnel from near-misses. A direct hit would instantly kill any man.

# Damage from Secrets

Damage caused by Secrets, such as a *lightning bolt* spell, are reduced by armor normally, and are treated as a weapon with W/Co. If a weapon is used to deliver the magic attack, such as *flame arrow* spell with an arrow shot from a bow, then use the Weapon Class of the weapon.

## Monster Hits

The GM may apply a modifier for Damage caused to monsters. For example, non-silvered weapons inflict -1 Damage to werewolves, but a holy weapon inflicts +1 Damage to minor undead.

## Hit Location

Each attack affects one of the six major Hit Locations. The Hit Location determines what protection (such as armor and cover) applies for defense. The GM determines the Hit Location and possibly a Sub-location for each attack (see the GM quick reference at the end of this book for details.)

### Hit Location Sub-locations

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| Head  | neck, chin, nose, face, forehead, skull                   |
| Torso | abdomen, ribs, sternum, chest, clavicle                   |
| Arm   | fingers, hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder |
| Groin | outer thigh, inner thigh, genitals, hip, pelvis           |
| Knee  | patella, outer knee, inner knee, back of knee             |
| Leg   | shin, calf, ankle, foot, heel, instep, toes               |

The Head and Torso are the most vulnerable areas, and the first body parts you should armor. Melee attacks prioritize the fragile Head since the neck is a poor shock absorber and Body-Armor is often invulnerable to melee weapons. Conversely, ranged attacks usually prioritize the "center mass" target of the Torso, and a "near miss" might hit an adjacent area. In melee the hands are often the easiest target (and a tempting target for sniping at a distance)

although for ranged attacks they present too small of an area to be worthwhile targeting.

You may use the "Called Shot" **Maneuver** to target a specific Hit Location, so you can attack your foe in an unprotected area (e.g. "I cut into his unarmored neck"), or choose a target to hamper (e.g. "I cut his hand to disarm him", "I cut his legs to slow him down").

Otherwise, the GM determines the Hit Location (and possibly a Sub-location), either by choosing an appropriate available target or by rolling. The GM will usually foreshadow when foes take their Maneuvers, e.g. "the goblin is swinging from the right" or "the scything blade arcs towards your legs". Otherwise you can ask. You can use a Maneuver to position your shield or weapon to cover a specific Hit Location, either by naming the Hit Location or naming the foe who is attacking, e.g. "I am blocking the goblin chief's falchion with my shield".

## Soak Rolls

Raise Stress and roll 1d20 when you fail a Saving Throw. If you roll above Stress you Soak 1 Damage.

Always roll even if you have armor or other defenses, because if you roll a natural 1 then you take 1 extra Damage. On the positive side, if you roll a natural 20 then you may roll again! Thus, you always have a tiny chance of a freak mishap or miraculous survival.

If necessary (i.e. you haven't soaked all the damage), you can roll an extra die if you have a protective Trait that is relevant to the attack (e.g. "hard to kill"). The GM may allow you to roll another extra die (for a total max of 3 dice) if your Trait is extremely specific (e.g. "arrow cutting").

If you Soak all Damage from a hit then you were "hit but not hurt". That arrow might have grazed you, or it hit the spot where you were, it was a close call. However, if you didn't soak some of the Damage

then the arrow is sticking deep in your leg and you're bleeding out and going into shock and you might die; you have gained a Doom.



## Combat Maneuvers

Use your **Maneuvers** in combat for tactics such as feints, parries, beats, taking cover, etc. You can use a Maneuver after rolling to [+] COMBO, but if you declare a Maneuver before you roll then you get a broader benefit that can apply to several rolls. Maneuvers can have interesting tactical combinations, such as activating Weapon Tags for [+] COMBO or other benefits. Examples are below, but you should use Maneuvers to describe your own cunning tactics.

**Guard** - Move a weapon or shield to cover a named Hit Location and side, such as "Head - left". This grants [+] COMBO on attacks against that area, and additionally provides armor to that Hit Location and side. Shields provide Shield Class as armor. Weapons count as Class 1 shields, or Weapon Class if the weapon has the Defensive Tag.

- I hold my shield high
- I shift my poleax to cover my left side

- In response to his leg cut, I cover my leg with my sword

**Range** - Move to a specific Range from your opponent (either in or out). You can also use this to maintain current Range when an opponent is moving relative to you (either in or out). Each Weapon has one or more Range Tags that specify the optimal distance for an attack. You can [+] COMBO if you are at your optimal range and your opponent is not..

- I keep him at long range, ideal for my spear versus his puny knife
- I stay close as he tries to flee so I can keep stabbing him with my dagger

**Aim** - Using a Maneuver to aim at a particular opponent before an attack grants [+] COMBO. If declared before you roll, this benefit persists between rounds as long as neither of you change position.

**Called Shot** - Pick your Hit Location (otherwise the GM will roll a random Hit Location). You can choose one of the six Hit Locations (e.g. head, torso, etc) with a side (right/left) or ask the GM to pick an open target for you (i.e. something not behind cover). This requires multiple Maneuvers for smaller areas, for example two Maneuvers for a small area such as a hand or gap in partial armor, or three for a tiny or hard to reach target such as an eye, back of the knee, etc.

- I aim at center mass
- I look for an opening
- I look for a clean shot
- I cut him in the leg
- I take his hand with my sword (2 Maneuvers)
- I hit him in the face (2 Maneuvers)
- I shoot him in the eye (3 Maneuvers)
- I hit him in the back of the knee (3 Maneuvers)
- I slice off his ear (3 Maneuvers)

**Beat** - Move your opponent's weapon or shield away from a Guard so that you can attack a Hit Location protected by that Guard.

- I beat his blade aside and cut
- I beat his blade with my false edge and cut him in the head (w/ Aim)

**Feint** - Pretend to attack a Hit Location, but attack somewhere else instead. You {+} COMBO, but more importantly might fool him into guarding the wrong location.

- I cut on the right and then on the left
- I feint high and then cut low
- I change through to cut to the other side
- I redouble my cut
- I pull my cut and turn it into a thrust
- I disengage my point under his sword and thrust

**Find a Gap** - Attempt to find a gap somewhere in your target's armor. This increases your Weapon Class for this hit by your Damage (e.g. +1 on a Hit, +2 on a Crit, +3 on a Super Crit). Also Weapon Class is +1 vs a Prone target, or +2 if the attacker has wrestling *Control*. You must declare before rolling

- I aim for the gaps
- I stab him between the armor plates
- I thrust into his armpit (w/ Aim)

**Wrath Stroke** - Grip your weapon in two hands and swing a mighty blow. Adds +1 Damage if you roll EFFORT or if the target is Prone or Pinned against a wall. You must declare before rolling.

- I put all my strength into my swing and shout as I smash him down
- I reverse my sword and strike the mortshlager murder stroke at his knee (w/ Aim)

**Grab** - Use a free hand to grab part of a foe while at Close Range. Your opponent may not move unless he spends a Maneuver to break your hold, so you will keep him at Close Range until you let go. Intentionally closing from normal melee range (Short/Medium/Long) to Close Range costs 1 Maneuver.

- I grab his shirt and punch him (w/ move Maneuver & attacks Action)
- I step in, grab his arm and stab him with my dagger (w/ move Maneuver & attack Action)

**Cover & Concealment** - Position yourself to take advantage of cover, such as a wall, doorframe, trench, etc. Cover counts as armor, and has a Class which you can declare as Armor Class. Cover and concealment also reduces your visible target areas. However, your Cover can also prevent you from taking some Actions, and if so you

will need to use a Maneuver to move back out of Cover, such as leaning around your Cover to shoot.

- I take cover behind the stone wall
- I dive into the trench
- I use the door frame for cover



## Weapons and Armor

Weapons and armor are essential in combat. If you attack without a weapon then [-] ASSET. If you are attacked [-] ASSET if you do not have a protective Asset such as armor, shield, or parrying weapon.

### Weapon and Armor Class

Compare weapon and armor Class for attacks which hit. Subtract 1 Damage if the armor is better; add 1 Damage if the weapon is better.

### Weapon and Shield Guards

A Guard is a defensive position that also allows you to launch your attacks. Always remain in a guarded position.

**Each Guard covers one Hit Location for one side**, so simply say the Hit Location and side (left or right) you are guarding. Each Guard applies to a single Hit Location, and for only one side of the body

(right or left, randomly determined if not declared). This grants [+] COMBO for attacks towards that location as well as armor for that location. Shields provide Shield Class as armor. Weapons count as Class 1 shields, or Weapon Class with the Defensive Tag.

**Shield Guards** are relatively static, and only change when you use a Guard Maneuver. **Weapon Guards** are much more dynamic and correspond to the starting and finishing positions of attacks and parries. **You can name a Guard for a weapon after each attack**

**Action or parry Maneuver.** For example, you might say "I cut down and guard my left leg", or "I parry up and guard my right head". This is free when done with an attack Action or parry Maneuver.

**Each weapon and shield Asset has its own Guard.** So you can have two Guards if you have a shield or companion weapon.

## Cover

Cover counts as armor, with an Armor Class based on the construction. This is essential because people are soft, and being out in the open is an invitation to be a target. This is especially important if the character does not have any armor, or relatively light armor compared to the weapons in play. Taking cover is a Maneuver, and you must specify what Hit Locations are covered and from which direction. You may not use Hit Locations in those directions. For example, you could take total cover by ducking behind a low wall, but then you can't see your targets to shoot back; if you knelt behind the wall only half your body would be covered and you could shoot.

## Wrestling

Wrestling is a way to *control your opponent*. You can push him, grab his weapon arm, keep him from fleeing, throw him to the ground, break joints, choke him unconscious, or force him to surrender. There are infinite variations, but it all comes down to gaining *Control*.

Wrestling is an attack Action; choose one of the following techniques.

Wrestling requires physical contact, so it is only possible in Close Range.

**Push** - Force your opponent to move 5 feet in the direction of your choice. Unless you Crit you move with your opponent.

**Throw/Trip** - Put your opponent on the ground, putting him Prone, which is a disadvantage on COMBO. You can either remain standing or gain *Control* by landing on top of your opponent. If you roll COMBO you also deal Damage.

**Hold** - Gain *Control* of one Hit Location of your opponent, e.g. an Arm or Head. Similar to a Doom, your foe must [-] EFFORT when using that Hit Location until you let go. If you Crit you can disarm his weapon. Maintain the Hold with a Maneuver each Round.

**Pin** - Immobilize an opponent whom you already *Control*. This can be done standing up, or against a surface like the floor or a wall.

**Escape** - Escape *Control* of an opponent. On a Crit you execute a "reversal" and now you have *Control*!

**Break/Subdue** - If you already *Control* an opponent's Head, Arm, Hand, Leg, or Foot you choke the neck or hyperextend the joint, dealing Damage. If you Crit you can disarm. You may use a Maneuver to let your opponent submit ("tap out") to avoid Damage. Only works with humanoid anatomy.

## Details

**Damage** - Wrestling attacks only inflict Damage as noted above. Armor does not reduce Damage inflicted by wrestling, but plate armor prevents chokes and joint locks in elbows and knees.





**Close Range** - Wrestling is only possible at Close Range. Moving to Close Range from a normal melee range (Short/Medium/Long) requires 1 Maneuver.

**Weapons** - If you wrestle using a weapon with the "Close" range Tag then [+] COMBO. Conversely, if your weapon has the "Long" range Tag then [-] COMBO. (Do not apply either modifier if your opponent also has a similar weapon.)

**Find a Gap** - Using "Find a Gap" Maneuver, Weapon Class is +1 vs Prone, or +2 if you have wrestling *Control*.

**Prone** - Someone who is "Prone" is on the ground, possibly laying down, sitting, kneeling, etc, and must [-] COMBO.

**Fumbles** - If you Fumble, the GM could choose to describe a "reversal" where your foe does the same thing back to you.

## Visibility

**Visibility** comes in three levels: High, Low, and Partial. This determines how well you can see, and much detail the GM will provide when describing the situation and answering questions.

| Conditions | Effects |
|------------|---------|
|------------|---------|

|                    |  |   |
|--------------------|--|---|
| High visibility    | Clean line of sight with bright lighting, such as outside on a clear day, in a well-lit arena, or a candle over a book, after your eyes have adapted.  | The GM will provide detailed or "chatty" information for what you see. When you ask questions the GM is likely to be "chatty" rather than require Maneuvers or Actions.   |
| Low visibility     | Clean line of sight with dim lighting or near-darkness, such as moonlight or candlelight, after your eyes have adapted to the dark.  | The GM will provide sparse information for what you see (e.g. "multiple creatures are behind you"), and require a Maneuver if you ask a detailed question.  |
| Partial visibility | Sight is at partially blocked or obscured due to rain, smoke, snow, shadows, cover, concealment, etc.<br><br>Or, your eyes have not yet adapted to changes in prevailing light. This also includes full blindness. | The GM will primarily describe the obscuring effect (e.g. smoke) and may provide little or no information beyond that, and require a Maneuver and/or Action if you ask a detailed question.<br>Also [-] COMBO for all rolls influenced by visibility. |

## All Senses

These descriptions for Visibility are focused on vision because that's easiest to visualize, but this also applies to hearing and other senses.

## Line of Sight

Regardless of the prevailing visibility, line of sight is still a limiting factor. In High Visibility you can see in high detail in your line of sight, and in Low Visibility you can see in your line of sight, just with less detail. Without clear line of sight you have Partial Visibility.

## Adaptation

People can naturally adapt to see well enough in various levels of light, from bright to dim. This after a few minutes. However, you lose your Dark adaptation if you see bright light, such as the directly lit area of a light source. Whenever your vision is adapting you have Partial Visibility.

If you are exposed to a flash bright light, you can make a Saving Throw to close your eyes. An eye patch or helmet visor can help.

## Light Sources

Each light source creates an illuminated area with High Visibility, which is useful if you need to detailed get information such as when reading runes or searching for traps. A candle or lamp lights a small book-sized area, a torch or lantern lights a medium man-sized area, etc. However, this direct light spoils your night vision, so you have Partial Visibility outside of the illuminated area.

Light sources also provide indirect light, so in a cave or dungeon a simple candle is enough to provide Low Visibility. You need to let your eyes adapt to the dark and avoid bright lights; whenever your eyes are adjusting you have Partial Visibility.

Also keep in mind light sources can be seen from very far away, and the area they illuminate is High Visibility for potential foes skulking out there in the darkness.

## Helms Limit Visibility

Helmets limit your vision and hearing. If your helmet covers the sides of your head (ears), your hearing and peripheral vision are at best Low Visibility.

**Closed helms** cover the wearer's face for greater protection, but sacrifice comfort, visibility, and breathability. Closed helms limit your vision and hearing. If you have a Closed helm you have Partial Visibility and must [-] COMBO for rolls involving keen senses, such as ranged attacks, ranged defenses, observation, etc.

## Nocturnals

Nocturnal (such as cats) or subterranean creatures (such as goblins) have sensitive eyes optimized for the dark, so they have High Visibility in dim light and Low Visibility in bright light.

# Strategy & Tactics

Tactics are vitally important to PCs in combat, and also a fun part of the game where you get to see how clever you can be. Most tactics involve taking Actions that set up your Legend Die. Whether or not your tactic works will depend on the specific situation, which means you might need to use multiple tactics at the same time.

**Disadvantages** - Any miscellaneous situational disadvantages such as prone, flanked, blind, etc, require you to [-] COMBO. Consider countering enemy tactics, such as denying cover or high ground. Pay attention to details the GM provides, and look for opportunities.

**Opening** - Develop Openings prior to attacking so that you are attacking safely. Also take steps to minimize being Open yourself, especially against the most deadly foes. Keep a weapon ready and use cover to close lines of sight from possibly attackers.

**Ready weapon** - Since drawing a weapon is a Maneuver, it's best to do this ahead of combat, to use your Maneuvers for other things.

**Overwatch** - A common tactic is to prepare to cover a particular field of fire with a ranged weapon, or cover a narrow choke point with a melee weapon. You're waiting to attack the first target who appears (although you could describe a specific target e.g. "I wait for the sorcerer to appear"), so you gain PREP on your attack roll.

**Positioning** - Gaining the high ground can grant PREP.

**Shooting on the Move** - There is no penalty for attacking while moving, but moving uses up Maneuvers that could be used for aiming.

**Cover** - The use of cover is critical when facing heavy projectile weapons. Use a Maneuver to take cover against attacks from a specific direction, providing [+] COMBO and [+] PREP.

**Keep Down** - You can crouch, kneel, or crawl to reduce your target area to [+] COMBO in defense against ranged attacks. However, you [-] COMBO on melee attacks and defenses against melee attacks.

**Swarming** - Pay attention to groups, teams, or swarms of enemies. If these surround or flank you then [-] COMBO. You can counteract this with a Maneuver to [+] COMBO, such as pulling your allies close and

locking shields. You can also use your Maneuvers to position yourself so you are not surrounded.

**Control Range/Measure** - You should attempt to control the Range (also called "measure") between you and your foes. Your ideal position is one where you can attack but your foe cannot. Weapons have a "Range" Asset Tag that describes their optimal range and range limits, and if you apply this you will more often win COMBO.

**Ambush/Stealth** - Planning a stealthy attack, ambush, or assassin's "backstab" counts as PREP. If a foe does this to you, [-] PREP.

**Pay Attention** - Your enemies can also use tactics against you, so listen carefully when the GM narrates maneuvers of foes. The GM will foreshadow threats to inform your choices. For example, noticing where enemies aim will tell you who will need to defend, and who might need to find cover or be covered by allied shields.

## Looting

Looting in its various forms involves taking an item, whether that's from the ground, furniture, prisoner, or corpse. The way you describe your looting matters! You might just want to grab a weapon or object on the ground, but a body might also have something hidden under its shirt, in a boot, a fake tooth, or might have gems *inside*. The GM will not tell you what to do, or if you missed something, that's part of your adventure.

**Grab** - Use a Maneuver to take one unsecured item in plain view. The item isn't nailed down and nobody is stopping you. Examples: torch, lantern, abandoned weapon or shield, sack, book.

**Pickpocket** - Use an Action to take a small item from someone, or plant an item. The GM may require you roll to avoid notice. This only works for easily accessible items, such as a coin purse or ring of keys on a belt hook, unless you have a Secret such as "pick pockets".

**Loot** - Use an Action to loot a person or similarly-sized area, such as a prisoner, body, furniture piece, chest, pile of debris, etc. Your GM will tell you what you find, and you can take one item in the Action.

**Investigate / Search** - Use an Action to search a person or similarly-sized area for concealed or hidden items. Describe how

you search (visual, patdown, or stripdown). The GM may require a roll if the search needs special skills. Sometimes an item might be impossible to find without a specifically worded search, such as a gem rolled up in a rag in the toe of a boot. It's up to you to say how you search, then the GM will tell you if you find something, and you can decide whether or not to take it.

**Harvesting** - Use an Action to harvest a material, such as picking mushrooms or cutting a fang off a giant spider. Your GM may call for a roll if the process seems difficult or risky.

# Part 5: Dooms

Dooms are traumatic conditions and experiences such as wounds, disease, starvation, and poisoning. Dooms are life threatening. As the Doom worsens the effects become more severe, eventually leading to death.

Dooms most commonly result from failed Saving Throws. You take Damage if you fail a Saving Throw, and any Damage not stopped by armor or cover carries over into a Doom.

This is the same for all afflictions, from injuries to curses, for example:



wound  
injury/trauma  
darkness  
deaf/blind  
poison/venom  
disease  
drowning  
magical charm  
domination

magical sleep  
freezing  
insanity  
lycanthropy  
curse  
paralysis  
petrification  
stunned  
venom

radiation  
burns  
starving  
taint  
undead drain  
rot grubs  
soul drain  
insanity  
other bad stuff

# Doom Stages

Each Doom has three Damage boxes corresponding to Stages of decline. Check a box for each point of Damage taken for that Doom, so if you take 1 Damage you have Doom Stage 1. Once all three boxes are checked you are expected to die soon, and additional Damage causes immediate death.

| Damage Boxes | Doom Stage       | Effects                        |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| □□□          | 0 - "Fine"       | none                           |
| ☒□□          | 1 - Wounded      | [−] EFFORT                     |
| ☒☒□          | 2 - Disabled     | +1 Damage if Hit Location used |
| ☒☒☒          | 3 - Death's Door | Expectant, near death          |
| ☒☒☒+         | Dead.            | Immediate death                |

**New Dooms are Unstable** and you take +1 Damage each time you roll EFFORT. You or someone else can take an Action and roll to stabilize a Doom.

**Combine Dooms** of the same kind and Hit Location, such as another wound, additional poison, more burns, etc. You cannot use a Trait to reduce a Doom that is being combined with an existing Doom.

## Doom Stage 0 (□□□) - "Fine"

At Doom 0 you are "fine". At least you think you think you probably will be fine, and might feel ok, but sometimes wounds can take a turn for the worse, so it's best to be cautious. After the stressful situation ends (e.g. combat or a chase) then Stage 0 Dooms are automatically recovered, barring any special complications set by the GM.

## Doom Stage 1 (☒□□) - Wounded

At Doom 1 you must [−] EFFORT. You know have received a life-threatening wound and are dying. You might have pain and nausea, and may find it difficult to rest or sleep. Stage 1 Dooms require a Field Ritual to heal, or many weeks of rest.

## Doom Stage II (☒☒□) - Disabled

At Damage 2 you cannot use the Hit Location. If this is your Head you are possibly delirious or unconscious. Stage 2 Dooms require a Circle Ritual to heal, or many months of rest.

## Stage III (☒☒☒) - Death's Door

At Damage 3 you are dying, at "death's door", expected to die, and you will instantly die if you take any more Damage. You cannot take Actions beyond "death throes" such as complaining, crying, cursing, and making a mess. If the Doom is limited to a limb, then you might live if you sacrifice the limb. In this case it's possible for you to continue to play your character, or you could retire from adventuring. Stage 3 Dooms require a Node Ritual to heal.

## Character Death / Retirement

If your character dies or retires, role-play the last few moments, and recount the legend you have built. For example you might have been eviscerated by the orc's falchion, crushed dead by the falling boulders, drained soulless by the vampire, turned to stone by the basilisk, eaten alive by the "vorpal squirrels", or had his brain turned to eggs by the psionic blast of the "squid face". Afterwards, create a new character, so the GM can get you back into the action. The life of an adventurer is exceedingly dangerous, so you may want to have a few characters on the deck and ready to play.

## Doom Recovery

Dooms are best recovered using magical healing Rituals, since otherwise they take months of time to heal naturally.

## Healing Rituals

You can heal a Doom with a magic healing Ritual.

The level of Ritual depends on the Doom Stage. A Field Ritual can heal a stage 1 Doom, a Circle Ritual can heal a stage 2 Doom, and a Node Ritual can heal a stage 3 Doom.

You must also have a Secret appropriate for healing the Doom. For example, a "sword cut left arm" Stage 1 Doom could be healed with a "heal wounds" Secret channeled into a Field Ritual. However, Dooms such as "petrification" or "burns" would need a different Secret.

Sometimes finding an appropriate healing Secret will require seeking out an NPC or going on a quest, for example "vampiric life drain" might require finding a priest who knows how to cure that affliction, or a rare disease might require a search for a cure.

## Healing Potions

Magic potions, such as a *potion of healing*, are essentially bottled magic.

## Natural Healing

Dooms can be healed naturally, however this takes many weeks or months. Just think about how long it takes for a deep cut with stitches to heal, or a broken bone, or worse! This should be your last resort since it takes your character out of the game for a long time.

## Arcane Dooms

Arcane dooms occur if you take Damage as a result of wielding magic. Highlight your character's specific magic school/art/style.

THE WATCHER - As you channeled power to enthrall the piteous villagers you felt something Watching, and it hasn't stopped. You see flickers of the Watcher in the corners of your eye, but it isn't there when you look for it. You feel a sense of loss, as corners of your mind peel away when you aren't watching them. You lose 1 Secret per point of Damage. You feel like you should be able to remember them, unless your Doom finalizes. You might have met this doom if you enthralled lesser minds with dark magic, meddled with summoning spells of some-thing-best-left-unknown, saw something best-left-unseen, or killed something-from-somewhere-else. You can avoid this doom if you find a way to protect your slowly unraveling mind before you go deeply, truly mad,

**DOOM OF FALSE DEATHS** - You die, and then come back to life on your next turn, but have a barely noticeable patch of dead skin the size of an eye or a bite. Each time you check a box you die again. Each time you come back to life, but it's slower, starting with a few hours and stretching to days. Each time you come back from the dead a little bit of you stays dead, such as a numb finger or foot, or a strange rotting smell. On your final doom you return fully undead. You might have met this doom if you dabbled in the dark arts of necromancy, meddled with evil objects best left alone, were wounded by undead, or received a death curse. Avoid this doom by setting to right the curse, or finding religion and entrusting your soul to the keeping of a god. Whether or not you continue to play as an undead is up to you, but know that all the world will be hostile to you.

**BLACK WIZARDS MIEN** - You gain an "mien" (aura) of black magic. Highly sensitive people and animals can feel this and will feel repulsed. Dogs will growl and bark, cats will hiss, babies will cry, horses will kick and buck you off. As you countdown to doom your "mien" grows. With one box anyone interacting with you will feel repulsed. With two boxes anyone nearby will feel something is very wrong. Nobody will talk with you, sell goods or services to you, or allow you in their shop or inn. You are the "creepy person" everyone avoids and you will be entirely alone. On your final doom you feel so alone and cursed that you die, alone. You might have met this doom if you dabbled in dark magical arts, evil artifacts, or were cursed. You can avoid this doom if you get a pet, take care of it, and it stays around on its own volition. However, most animals will avoid you, so you need to find "your pet", i.e. your familiar, an odd animal indeed.

**ACCELERATED AGING**- Your casting of "ebon lightnings of Ev-tol" went awry. You are rapidly aging! You've heard rumors that this can lead to a premature death as a crusty old corpse. You age  $1d6$  years per point of Damage, and if the total is over 40 you die.



## Part 6: Secrets

Secrets are things only your character knows, such as forgotten knowledge, special abilities, or magic spells.

Just as your character is in your own words, so are your Secrets. You have full creative control to invent your own Secrets that match your character concept. There is no predefined list of Secrets, but here are a few examples to kick start your creativity.

# Examples of Secrets

|                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| detect magic spell           | contacts or allies           |
| fireball spell               | favor owed                   |
| teleport location            | leverage for bribery         |
| secret base                  | location of a magic artifact |
| mastery of a node            | secret or long lost language |
| location of a lost temple    | secret master or teacher     |
| secret path to ancient ruins | speak with animals           |
| hidden mountain pass         | shapeshift to wolf           |

## Martial Arts

Rare, difficult or flashy combat techniques make good Secrets. See Part 4: Combat for more examples.

|                   |                 |              |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| arrow cutting     | kiai/war cry    | leg cutting  |
| dance fighting    | flying kick     | sweep attack |
| disarm with style | iron fist/foot  | zen archery  |
| flourish          | iron body/shirt | zornhau      |

## Thievery

Thieves carefully guard secrets of all kinds, and have many specialized (and illegal) skills. Elaborate jobs and heists may require a group of thieves with specialized talents. If you take Secrets for your specialized skills then you can more easily claim ULT when using them, even when surrounded by other thieves.

|              |                 |               |
|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| appraise     | find traps      | pick pockets  |
| disguise     | forgery         | open locks    |
| climb walls  | hide in shadows | remove traps  |
| detect noise | map making      | Thieves' Cant |
| fence        | move silently   | use poison    |

# Magic Spells

Magic spells and powers are Secrets. You can create any you like, or take inspiration from books, movies, or classic roleplaying games.

## Magic-User Spells

|              |              |               |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| detect magic | magic shield | telekinesis   |
| levitate     | read magic   | teleport      |
| lock/unlock  | scrying      | ventriloquism |

## Hallow (Divine) Spells

|                |              |                     |
|----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| bless          | detect magic | moon blessing       |
| cure blindness | dispel evil  | prot. from evil     |
| cure disease   | dispel magic | purify food & drink |
| cure poison    | hallow       | remove curse        |
| cure wounds    | heal         | remove fear         |
| detect evil    | meditation   | slow poison         |
| detect lie     | moonlight    | speak with animals  |

## Pyromancy (Fire) Spells

|                |               |                      |
|----------------|---------------|----------------------|
| blazing arrow  | control fire  | hellfire             |
| combustion     | flaming arrow | ignite               |
| ring of ashes  | fireball      | purifying flames     |
| smokeless fire | flame wall    | fire resistance      |
| sunfire orb    | flamberge     | vision in the flames |

## Illusion Spells

|                 |                  |                   |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| audible glamer  | invisibility     | phantasmal killer |
| blur            | light            | phantom steed     |
| color spray     | minor illusion   | prestidigitation  |
| darkness        | mirror image     | shadow blade      |
| disguise self   | phantom fog      | silence           |
| illusory script | phantasmal force | ventriloquism     |

## Necromancy (Death) Spells

|                 |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| animate dead    | finger of death | soul trap       |
| circle of death | raise dead      | speak with dead |
| feign death     | resurrection    | vampiric touch  |

# Magic Rituals

In order to conduct a Ritual you need a Secret, which must correspond to one of the Ritual tiers (Field, Circle, Node, High, or Seasonal). Rituals have excellent potential for roleplaying and showing off your magic, since they are used in slow scenes where you have time to use evocative language and imagery.

|                      |                   |                        |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| field healing ritual | dolmen of stones  | Winter end festival    |
| healing shrine       | sacrificial altar | First harvest festival |
| temple cleansing     | pit of serpents   | Feast of fires         |
| magic circle         | Feast of the dead | Festival of dooms      |

## Using Secrets

Use a Secret like any Action, except you must spend 1 Vim and the end result will be more powerful than normal.

Make a roll if a similar Action without the Secret would involve a roll. For example, rolls are always required for attacks, but movement only requires a roll when doing something risky or flashy such as leaping over a pit. Do not roll for Secrets that provide protection, since you will roll a Saving Throw as needed.

Secrets are often oddities in comparison with normal actions. This is half the fun! However, the GM may need to make ad-hoc rulings, so please be prepared to be flexible.

## Secrets Cost Vim

Spend 1 Vim when you use a Secret.

However, do not spend Vim in the following exceptions:

- When you are just adding roleplaying flavor for fun, not advantage.
- When you are using a Secret to justify why you deserve to [+] ULT.
- When your Secret is a skill or knowledge that doesn't involve anything magical or supernatural. You should be prepared to

defend this with an explanation as needed. Knowledges such as ancient history or secret languages (e.g. Thieves' Cant, Druidic, Fomorian, Kessrith, Aethiiri, etc) do not cost Vim. For example, a skill such as "quick draw dagger" does not cost Vim, unless you were using magic to accomplish the feat. The GM will limit usage and effect based on what seems plausible without magic.

## Effects

Each Secret has an Effect, which is the main special thing it does, such as making an area glow with warm light, lighting a fire, creating an illusion, charming a person, undoing a button, etc.

Effects are not necessarily harmful, thus they do not always inflict Damage. For example, creating moonlight doesn't harm anyone, and in such cases you may not need to make a roll if the Effect is innocuous. However, you must roll if the Effect is hostile, and then the Effect only occurs if you are successful.

## Damage

If you use a Secret with the intent to cause Damage, this deals 1 Damage *in addition to* the Effect.

- **Fire Missile** deals 1 Damage to one target in line of sight, and the target lights on fire. Creatures vulnerable to fire, such as trolls, might decide to deal with the fire or flee.
- **Petrifying Gaze** deals 1 Damage to one target in line of sight, and the target begins to turn to stone. If this attack defeats the foe with a Crit then it immediately turns to stone.
- **Frost Bolt** deals 1 Damage and halves the movement of a foe.

However, just like any attack Damage is modified by comparing Weapon Class and Armor Class. Most importantly, if Damage is negated by armor then the Effect does not occur.

Secrets are usually Weapon Class 0. This is true even when using a magic focus Asset such as a wand, orb, etc, since they are not actual

weapons. If you are using a weapon to deliver a Secret, such as an Aethiiri bow, then use it's Weapon Class.

You can optionally substitute the Effect for a small "area of effect" or for +1 Damage of a common elemental type (e.g. fire, water, lightning, acid, etc.). Make this choice when you take the Secret.

- **Glyph of Pain** deals 1 Damage to everyone within 6 feet of you.
- **Magic Missile** deal 2 Damage to one target in line of sight.

**Example:** You encounter a deadly *basilisk* and it attempts to turn you to stone with its gaze! Your Saving Throw failed so you take 2 Damage. You make a Soak roll and soak 1 Damage. Fortunately you have full-armor AC2 which is better than the basilisk's "eye" (WCo) so you shrug off the remaining 1 Damage.

## Damage Substitutions

Some Secrets substitute specific effects in place of Damage. You can substitute 1 Damage for a small "area of effect", or with some other side effect such as "slowed" or "lights on fire". This provides interesting tactical options aside from just clobbering foes. Any substitutions must be specified when you gain the Secret and then are locked in; they are not freely selected when you use the Secret.

Some Secrets cause no Damage at all. In this case disregard the normal comparison of weapon and armor class.

- **Friend** makes someone regard you as their friend.

## Healing Secrets

**Healing Secrets** can be used in two ways: as a first-aid Action to stabilize a Doom, or as a Ritual to heal a Doom. Each healing Secret can only cure one specific kind of Doom, for example:

- **Cure Wounds** heals wounds caused by weapons or objects. Does not work if there are complications such as poison, burns, etc.

- **Slow Poison** heals wounds complicated by poison or venom. This includes stabilization of a wound that delivered the poison, such as weapon, bite or sting.
- **Pyromancer's Salve** heals burns, as well as extinguishing active flames and cooling boiling liquids.
- **Purifying Fyre** burns away unholy Taint caused by the touch of a *Kha'din* or other evil spirit.

## Protective Secrets

Protective Secrets grants [+] ULT against a specific threat. These Secrets can be used for a single Saving Throw with a Maneuver, or raised with an Action to stand for a duration. No roll is required when enabling the Secret since you will end up making a roll during a Saving Throw:

- **Wardpact vs swords** grants [+] ULT vs swords.
- **Protection vs Arrows** grants [+] ULT vs arrows.
- **Magic Vestments** grants [+] ULT vs unholy spells.
- **Protection vs Fire** grants [+] ULT vs fire.
- **Mage Shield** is a floating force-disc, granting [+] ULT vs attacks from a specific direction, changed with a Maneuver.

## Conjuration Secrets

Secrets can create Assets. These are equivalent in all ways to normal Assets, they just originated from magical.

- **Conjure Item** creates a small, normal Asset in your hand.
- **Forest Spear** [Class3 2H ...] creates a wooden spear. \*

## Transformation Secrets

Some character races can undergo a transformation from "human" form to a special form such as serpentine Drisi or stone Karrocks. The Secret transforms you into the special racial form, which activates any Innate Assets you have taken for that racial form, such as a Drisi "snake bite" or a Karrock "stone body". Otherwise those Innate Assets are inactive and essentially don't exist.

# Movement Secrets

Secrets can increase your movement. If this enhances normal you do not need to roll, unless you would normally need to roll for movement (e.g. leaping over a pit). Maintaining an effect (\*) requires you to use at least one Maneuvers per round, or the Secret ends.

- **Quick Step** doubles movement from 10' to 20' per Maneuver. \*
- **Flying** allows you to fly, possibly growing wings or manifesting aetheric energies. \*
- **Folded Step** transports you to a location in line of sight.

## Secrets Use Assets

Secrets use Assets just as much as any other Action. For example, if you are making an attack you must [-] ASSET if you don't a supporting Asset, such as a magic wand, staff, or other focus. You can [+] ASSET if your Asset has a Signature to help your Secret, such as a "wand of fire", "runesword" or "Aethiiri singing bow".

## Maintained Secrets reduce Vim

Some Secrets can be "maintained" over time, such as a "protection from fire" spell. However, when you recover Vim (i.e. sleeping or a Ritual) then the Vim earned is reduced by 1 per maintained Secret.

## Secrets as Maneuvers instead of Actions

You can use a Secret as a Maneuver instead of an action if appropriate, but at most once per round.

## Limit of One Bonus Maneuver per Round

Some Secrets can grant a Bonus Maneuver, but you may use at most Secret of that kind per round. For example, a "quick draw dagger" Secret lets you ready your dagger without using one of your own Maneuvers, and "quick step" gives you one Bonus Maneuver of movement, so you can't use both Secrets in the same round.

# Secret Fumbles

The GM takes a Counter Action any time you Fumble, typically an attack or natural consequences directly related to your fumbled roll. This is often more dramatic (or dangerous) when a Secret is involved, especially if it has an area of effect. For example, a fumbled *fireball* spell might blow up in your face and/or affect your allies. Secrets which do not have obvious damaging effects might still inflict Damage on you or others due to the magical drain, backlash, or instability. Always consider whether using a secret is really necessary.

## Drawbacks

Like anything, using a Secret might have side effects or natural consequences. For example, using "blackmail for the Duke" to threaten the powerful Duke might get you what you want for now, but will surely anger him. Casting a spell in view of others might have ramifications unrelated to the spell's effect.

## Gaining Secrets

You can gain a new Secret as a Path Reward. For example, a Thief might find a trap and reverse-engineer the mechanism to create a similar trap, or a wizard might study a spell from an old tome.

You must have an appropriate supporting Theme for every Secret. For example, "Wizard" could support various magic spells such as "magic sight", "wizard light", "magic shield", "levitate", etc.

Access to powerful Secrets such as "fly", "fireball", "suggestion", etc, is restricted. You must have an appropriate supporting Signature, not just a Theme, and also a supporting chain of lesser Secrets. So if you want to learn a powerful spell like "fireball" you would need first learn a few lesser spells like "conjure flame", "fire arrow", etc.

The above are guidelines for you and the GM to help you build your dream character, but keep your concept consistent, and avoid

player character imbalance. Since Secrets are in your own words, the GM will usually adopt a "trust and verify" approach, where you are allowed to write your Secrets and even try them, but require adjustments as needed to match these guidelines.

If I told you it wouldn't be a secret...

Secrets are complex and must be thoroughly earned; characters cannot simply swap Secrets with each other. The same goes with finding a spellbook. After all, owning a chemistry or physics textbook doesn't necessarily mean you have absorbed the material and can apply it. Mastering anything takes time and dedication.

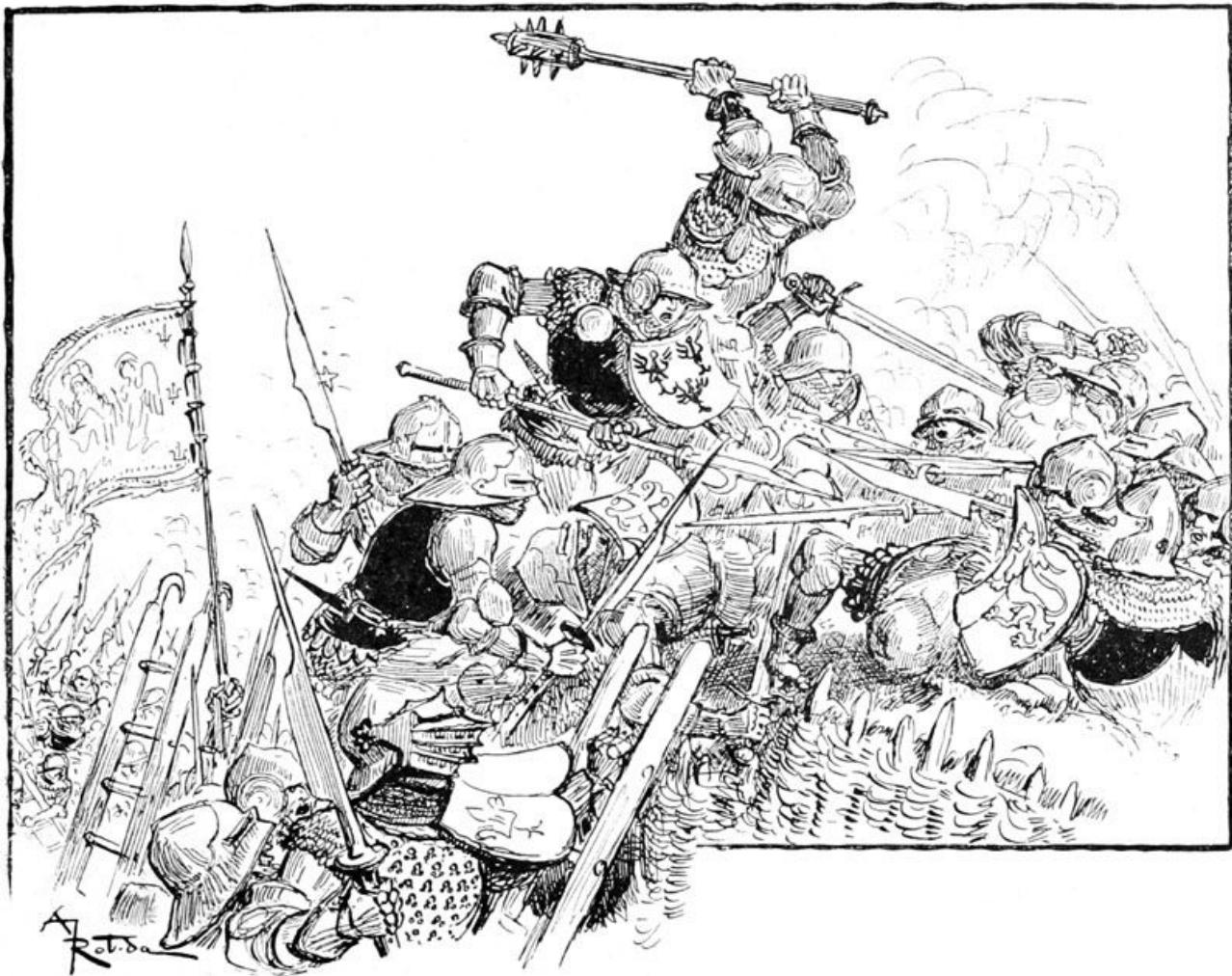
## Rituals

Rituals are complicated ceremonies that restore Vim. If you participate in a Ritual then upon completion your Vim is reset to a new number based on the Ritual.

- **Field Rituals (5 Vim)** are expedient and can take place anywhere, in minimal time (1-2 hours). Thus they are the mainstay of magic-users and priests who spend their lives on the move and can't always take the time to sleep for a full night.
- **Circle Rituals (10 Vim)** are field rituals that involve construction of a ritual focus such as a magic circle, altar, shrine, circle of stones, dolmen, tori gate, etc. This requires preparation, time and/or potentially costly materials such as powdered silver. Circle Rituals take 3-5 hours, or more as appropriate based on what you build.
- **Node Rituals (15 Vim)** are circle rituals within a mystic place of power such as a Node, Kalla, holy ground, etc. Node Rituals take 3-5 hours if the Node is friendly/allied, or 6-8 hours if the Node is unfriendly/hostile.
- **High Rituals (20 Vim)** are node rituals for specific high days of the year, such as changing seasons, harvests, equinox, solstice, etc. There are a dozen High Rituals per year.
- **Seasonal Rituals (25 Vim)** are the most important high rituals celebrated with cultural rituals and festivals for multiple days. There are four Seasonal Rituals per year.

- **Aeonic Rituals (30+ Vim)** are the most rare and powerful of all rituals, taking place just once per aeon. Some herald a new aeon or important milestone, such as the rebirth of man, and some seek to bring about the end of the aeon.

In order to *conduct* a Ritual you need a Secret, which must correspond to one of the Ritual tiers (Field, Circle, Node, High, or Seasonal). Practically speaking, you should coordinate so that at least one PC has each of the first three tiers, since those will likely prove useful while adventuring. However, always keep in mind you can participate in a Ritual that *someone else* is conducting without needing to know a Secret Ritual yourself; look for NPCs to leverage.



## Part 7: Advanced Assets

This section provides advanced rules for Assets beyond the basics presented above. You can skip this for a casual game.

Some Assets have enhancements in the form of **Signatures** and **Secrets**; otherwise they still function normally, but aren't anything special. Assets can also have **Tags**, which provide tactical advantages and disadvantages in combat.

### Asset Signatures

Assets can have Signatures to describe any notable or exceptional qualities. An object might have a famous name and history such as "longsword, Naurdring the goblin slicer", or might be very high quality such as "tunic, royal blue with gold embroidery" or unusual "cloak, velvet green, warm, with lots of little pockets inside". If the

Signature is the proper name of the Asset, be sure to write the normal Asset name afterwards along with Tags, e.g. "Naurdring, the goblin slicer [Longsword Class3...]".

You can declare a relevant Asset Signature to [+]**ASSET**. For example, if you attack a goblin and roll ASSET then you can upgrade if you are wielding "longsword, Naurdring the goblin slicer". Similarly, wearing clothing such as "tunic, royal blue with gold embroidering" could help you in social interactions in high society.

Be warned, if an Asset becomes damaged it may lose these special qualities. For example, "clothing - very fine velvet" could become easily ruined by a crawl through a cavern. Consider reserving especially fine Assets for when you really need them.

## Asset Secrets

Assets can have Secrets, such as magic powers or special abilities. You could find a ring with a secret compartment, a magic sword that detects evil, or a flask of holy water that heals wounds. Asset Secrets work the same and are subject to the same requirements as other Secrets, e.g. you need a supporting Theme, must spend Vim, etc.

## Asset Tags

Asset Tags describe various qualities of the Asset, such as weapon range or features.

Weapons and armor always have a "Class" Tag, for comparing weapon penetration and armor resistance. Some Tags are followed by a value, such as Class2, Class3, Far2, Far3, etc. The value can be positive or negative, and if omitted from a Tag defaults to "1".

## Weapon, Armor, and Shields

When counting **Damage**, compare **Weapon Class** and **Armor Class** for the Hit Location. Add +1 Damage if the weapon is higher, or -1

Damage if the armor is higher. If you have a shield covering the Hit Location then you can use **Shield Class** in place of Armor Class.

The following table is a summary of the arms and armor of the Dragon Isles. The Northmarens generally have early medieval weapons and armor, the Southmarens have late medieval or early Renaissance, and the Eldar have exotic and magical arms.

| Class | Weapon  | Armor & Shields  |
|-------|---|--|
| 0     | cane, whip  | clothing   |
| 1     | knife, club, sickle, javelin, flight bow  | cold clothing, soft leather  |
| 2     | dagger, rondel, sidesword, longsword (1H), hunting bow, club (2H), small ax, spear (1H)         | light gambeson, cuir-boulli, arming jack, handguard                    |
| 3     | spear (2H), mace, battle axe (2H), falchion, crossbow, longsword (2H), longbow, warbow, khopesh | gambeson (30 layers), mail, jazeraint, coat of plates, buckler         |
| 4     | greatsword, lochaber ax, military pick  | transitional plate, munition plate, round shield, rotella, kite shield |
| 5     | halberd, poleax, polearm, pistol, arbalest, flintlock blunderbuss, young dragon's breath        | full plate, tower shield, aspis, young dragon                          |
| 6     | mounted lance, flintlock rifle, arquebus, Dwur thaumasweeper, ogre club, adult dragon's breath  | jousting plate, pavise, adult dragon                                   |
| 7     | light ballista, handgonne, Dwur thaumagonne, giant club, old adult dragon's breath              | old dragon   |
| 8     | siege weapons, Dwur thaumacannon, ancient dragon's breath                                       | ancient dragon   |

# Weapons

Weapons are tools of war, designed and honed to defeat armor and kill enemies.



**Melee weapons** such as swords, axes, and spears are made for hand-to-hand combat, up close and personal. When using a melee weapon you should maneuver to engage with foes at a range appropriate for your weapon, e.g. if you have a dagger you need to get close.

**Missile weapons** such as bows are built for attacking at a distance. When using a missile weapon you should maneuver to keep away from melee opponents and find the best lines of sight to shoot foes while using cover to block their lines of sight.

**Two-handed weapons** need two hands to use, and this is indicated by the "2H" Weapon Tag. If necessary you can use a 2H melee weapon in single hand, but this reduces Weapon Class by 1 and does not grant beneficial Weapon Tags. (Not an option for bows.)

## Common Weapons

These weapons are the most commonly available, being relatively easy to produce and acceptable for carry by a common person. Everyone carries a knife, and travelers usually carry a staff.

**Pugilism** [Classo Close Unarmed] various kicks, punches, knees, foot stomps, and other unarmed attacks

**Knife** [Class1 Close Short Stabbity Civil] common belt knife

**Throwing Knife** [Class1 Close Short Stabbity Thrown-Long]

**Stick or Stone** [Class1 Short Thrown-Long Primitive] sturdy tree branch, rock, etc.

**Cane** [Class1 Short Civil] a gentlemanly stout walking stick or cudgel

**Sickle** [Class1 Short Hooking Tool Fragile] for grain

**Hatchet** [Class1 Short Breaching Tool] small for chopping wood

**Messer / Machete** [Class2 Medium Cutty] long work knife

**Wood Ax** [Class2 2H Medium Breaching Tool] for chopping wood

**Scythe** [Class2 2H Medium Tool Fragile] blade for harvesting wheat

**Spear** [Class3 2H Medium Thrown-Long2 Primitive] short thrusting and throwing spear used regularly in hunting and warfare, typically 5-6 feet in length (about your height), simple and effective.

**Staff / Quarterstaff** [Class3 2H Medium Control-Medium Civil] stout staff around nose- or head-height. Very commonly found, simple, yet effective.

**Long Staff** [Class3 2H Long] staff about as high as you can reach

**Maul** [Class3 2H Medium Crushing Primitive] huge tree limb club

## Swords and Daggers

Swords are versatile sidearms which are particularly excellent at defense, able to parry and deflect most weapons.

**Pommel** [Class1 Close] counterweight end of a dagger or sword

**Dagger** [Class2 Close Stabbity] military double-edged dagger

**Parrying Dagger** [Class2 Close Binding Handguard Defensive Stabbity] left-handed dagger wielded to accompany a sword

**Rondel** [Class2 Close Stabbity] triangular thrusting war dagger, used to pierce gaps in armor, especially while grappling. Carried by many knights and man-at-arms.

**Cutlass** [Class2 Short Defensive Cutty] short curved cutting sword, such as a machete, hanger, langes messer, or dussack. Larger versions are falchions.

**Short Sword** [Class2 Short Defensive Stabbity] short straight stabbing sword, such as a katzbalger or cinquedea.

**Arming sword** [Class2 Short Binding Defensive Cutty] a simple thrust sword with a cross hilt

**Sidesword** [Class2 Medium Handguard Binding Defensive Cutty] "the sword by your side", a typical military or civilian sidearm sword, such as an arming sword, spada di filo, or cavalry sword

**Sabre** [Class2 Medium Defensive Cutty] long curved cutting sword. A thin bladed scimitar can be a sabre, otherwise it is a falchion.

**Rapier** [Class2 Medium Handguard Binding Defensive Cutty] civilian thrusting sword

**Falchion** [Class3 Medium Binding Defensive Cutty] distinctive curved sword with a clipped tip which can bind with an opponent's weapon, also known as a storta, malchus, or scimitar.

**Longsword** [Class3 2H Short-Medium Control-Medium Binding Defensive Cutty] longsword, bastard sword, kriegsmesser, or Alu "av-kel" sword

**Swiss Saber** [Class3 2H Medium Binding Handguard Defensive Cutty] a long saber with an elaborate hilt

**Greatsword** [Class4 2H Medium-Long Control-Medium Handguard Binding Defensive Cutty Secret] a large two-handed sword such as a spadone, montante, or zweihander. Deadly and can attack in any direction.

## Military Weapons

These weapons are strongly associated with military units. Most are more complicated to learn than simple peasant weapons, requiring at least some training in a military order. Many cities and towns restrict possession of military weapons within the walls except by official town guards, as carrying them shouldn't be necessary and may indicate the owner is up to no good. The GM may declare that town guards harass characters so that they must pay fines or have their weapons confiscated.

**Shield Punch** [Class1 Close Binding Defensive] uses the boss or rim

**Rifle Stock** [Class1 2H Short] using the heavy rifle stock as a club.

**Javelin** [Class1 Short Thrown-Far Primitive] short throwing spear

**Small Ax** [Class2 Close Short Binding Breaching Hooking Thrown-Long] war hatchet or tomahawk, with a thin head and long handle

**Rifle Bayonet** [Class2 2H Medium] spearpoint which can be attached to the barrel of a rifle

**Mace, Hammer, or Morningstar** [Class3 Short Crushing] wooden or metal club with flanges, beaks, or spikes for crushing armored foes

**Khopesh** [Class3 Short Binding Hooking] a sickle-shaped sword-ax common in ancient times and still used by some Eldar

**Battle Ax** [Class3 Short Medium Breaching Hooking] war axe

**Spear** [Class3 2H Medium Thrown-Long2 Primitive] short thrusting and throwing spear used regularly in hunting and warfare, typically 5-6 feet in length (about your height), simple and effective.

**Long Spear** [Class3 2H Medium Long Defensive] long thrusting and cutting spear (or glaive) used regularly in warfare, typically 8-10 feet in length (about your height with your arm extended above your head).

**Pike** [Class3 2H Long2] very long thrusting spear used regularly in warfare, typically 15-20 feet in length (about triple your height).

**Flail** [Class4 Medium] large two-handed multi-headed military flail

**Pick** [Class4 Medium Hooking] large two-handed footman's pick, with a distinctive arced head that can strike over shields.

**Ranseur** [Class3 Long Binding Defensive] a very popular early polearm with a trident-shaped head, also known as roncone or ronka. The side prongs are for binding and trapping weapons and shields. Also known as a spetum, especially by Eldar in earlier aeons. Some versions can be folded, and others such as the brandistock or "feather staff" have hidden prongs that spring out from one end.

**Glaive** [Class4 Long Cutty Hooking] polearm with a large single-edge cutting blade, usually with a hook on the back, but no spear point. Also known as a fauchard, especially by Eldar in earlier aeons.

**Guisarme** [Class4 Long Binding Hooking] a polearm with a concave scythe-like blade (such as for pruning), usually with a spike for thrusting and various prongs for pulling. Includes similar weapons such as the bill, bill hook, and scorpion, etc.

**Partisan** [Class4 Medium Long Cutty Binding Defensive] elegant polearm with a sword-like head with guard allowing a shorter grip.

**Poleaxe** [Class 5 Medium Control-Short Crushing Hooking Defensive] the predominant knightly polearm for armored combat, a short stout staff with axe, hammer, and spike

**Halberd** [Class 5 Medium Long Binding Hooking Defensive] popular polearm with a spike for thrusting, ax for cutting, and multiple hooks for pulling. Includes similar weapons such as berdiche, voulge, etc.



## Projectile Weapons

The main three kinds of projectile weapons are bows, crossbows, and guns. Bows are superior to crossbows and guns for fast-moving elite units because they can be reloaded and aimed quickly, while on the move. However they require much greater strength and experience than crossbows or guns, making them impractical for fielding large armies. Guns require the least training and strength, and remain effective even if troops are hurt or weakened by malnutrition or disease. Yet, elite archers can outperform crossbows or guns, making them a compelling choice for adventurers even though armies might make other choices.

Projectile weapons have a **Reload** Tag, which is the number of Maneuvers you need to spend to load or reload between shots.

**Self Bow** [Class1 2H Far Reload Primitive] a self-made or primitive shortbow, quickly and easily crafted, firing simple all-wood arrows with sharpened wood tips and no fletching.

**Hunting sling** [Class1 2H Far3 Reload2 Primitive] a common light sling, shooting stones or clay, requires years of practice.

**Flight Bow** [Class1 2H Far4 Accurate Reload] a light fast shortbow optimized for competitive shooting for distance ("flight shooting").

**Hunting bow** [Class2 2H Far3 Reload] the most common short bow. Hunting arrows usually have broad heads, but simple round heads (Class1) are often used for birds or smaller game.

**War sling** [Class2 2H Far2 Crushing Reload2] larger more powerful sling for war, hurling heavy aerodynamic cast-lead projectiles.

**Warbow** [Class3 2H Far2 Accurate Reload] a powerful military short bow, able to shoot heavy armor-piercing bodkin arrows. Hunting broad arrows (Class2) can also be used.

**Hunting crossbow** [Class3 2H Far2 Accurate Reload3] light hunting crossbow. Reloading takes 3 Actions without moving.

**Longbow** [Class3 Far3 Accurate Reload] a very tall self bow matching the height of the archer, simple to build.

**Military Longbow** [Class4 Far2 Accurate Reload Secret] a powerful military longbow, able to shoot heavy military arrows (50% heavier than standard arrows). Requires years of specialized training.



**Heavy crossbow** [Class5 Far3 Accurate Reload5] military crossbow, easy to learn and hard-hitting, but cumbersome and slow to reload.

**Flintlock pistol** [Class5 Far2 Accurate Reload5] basic Dwur pistol

**Doublloon** [Class5 Far Accurate Reload5 (each)] a double-shot flintlock pistol blunderbuss, often with a nautical/pirate theme. Each barrel must be loaded, primed, and fired independently.

**Shotgonnne** [Class5 Far Reload8 (each)] a double-barreled hand cannon meant for “intimate encounters”, up-close personal combat. Each barrel must be loaded, primed, and fired independently.

**Siege arbalest** [Class6 Far4 Accurate Reload10] very heavy and powerful crossbow, but extremely slow to reload.

**Arquebus** [Class6 Far3 Accurate Reload7] a newer, more accurate version of the hand cannon with a true rifle shape and a matchlock.

**Flintlock rifle** [Class6 Far3 Accurate Reload6] a rifle using a flintlock.

**Handgonne** [Class7 Far2 Reload8] a hand cannon consisting of a heavy barrel, handle, and socket for inserting a stock or staff.

## Weapon Tags

Weapons have Tags to represent their characteristics; many also describe a way you can [+] COMBO in specific circumstances.

Weapons tend to fall into two broad categories, main weapons such as spears and axes, then sidearms such as swords and daggers. Size affects the weapon Range Tags. Larger weapons are inherently more powerful and thus tend to have a higher Weapon Class and more Tags than smaller weapons.

## Weapon Class

Weapon Class is the penetration of the weapon versus contemporary armor types (i.e. of the same era). When counting Damage, compare Weapon Class and Armor Class and add +1 Damage if the weapon is higher, or -1 Damage if the armor is higher.

**Military Weapons** - Weapons of Class3 or higher are considered military weapons and are not permitted in civilized areas such as cities, towns, taverns, etc. Weapons with the Civil Tag are excepted.

## Two-Handed Weapons

Two-handed weapons are optimized for use in two hands, and tend to be longer and heavier than other weapons. Two-handed weapons are designated by the **2H Tag**. If you use a 2H weapon in one hand reduce Weapon Class by 1; also you do not benefit from Asset Tags.

## Weapon Range Tags

**Weapon Range Tags** specify the *optimal Range* for a weapon to make attacks. **Range** is the distance between an attacker and his target, at the moment of his attack. You can [+] COMBO if you are at your optimal range and your opponent is not.

**Close**: is the optimal range for wrestling and other unarmed attacks. The fighters can punch, kick, grab, wrestle, throw, elbow, knee, head butt, pommel strike, and even bite. Note that a weapon pommel is a Class 1 weapon with the Close Tag.

**Short**: is the optimal range of most melee weapons, but any weapon can attack at this range.

**Medium**: is the optimal measure for longer melee weapons such as swords, but any weapon can attack at this range.

**Long, Long2**: is the optimal measure for longer weapons such as spears and thrown weapons. Melee weapons may only attack at this range if they have the "Long" Tag.

**Far, Far2, Far3**: is too far for melee and thrown weapons, so only projectiles can attack. Only weapons with a Far tag can attack. A "Far" tag with a number such as "Far2" is an additional increment of "Far" Range, so "Far2" is double "Far", and "Far3" is triple "Far".

| Range  | Optimal Distance | Example Weapons                              |
|--------|------------------|--|
| Close  | touch            | wrestling, knife, dagger                     |
| Short  | 2.5 feet         | long knife, arming sword, cutlass, ax        |
| Medium | 5 feet           | sidesword, longsword, poleaxe, short spear   |
| Long   | 10 feet          | halberd, halberd, polearm, spear             |
| Long2  | 20 feet          | pike, thrown weapon (knife, ax, spear, etc.) |

|       |             |   |
|-------|-------------|---|
| Far   | 40 feet     | javelin, self bow                                   |
| Far2  | 80 feet     | warbow, war sling                                   |
| Far3  | 160 feet    | hunting bow, hunting sling, longbow, heavy crossbow |
| Far4  | 320 feet    | flight bow, siege arbalest                          |
| Far+1 | x2 previous |   |

## Advanced Weapon Tags

**Accurate** weapons are capable of very long ranged shots in the hands of a skilled marksman. You can increase your optimal range by one step (e.g. "Far" >> "Far2") by spending an Action to adjust for gravity, wind, etc, as long as you have a supporting Theme or Trait (e.g. "marksman", "archer", "sharpshooter", etc.). You can do this multiple times, up to a maximum of double your normal range (e.g. "Far2" can become "Far4").

**Binding** weapons such as swords can be used to "bind" with an opponent's weapon, touching and then keeping "sticky" contact, which helps you influence and track the weapon. Use a Maneuver to "bind" with an opponent's weapon, which gives you [+] COMBO on attacks and defenses for that opponent. You can also use a bind Maneuver in response to an opponent's bind Maneuver, and whoever does this last is "winning the bind" and has [+] COMBO.

**Breaching** weapons are strong and capable of forcing open doors, chests, windows, etc. Other weapons break under this kind of abuse.

**Civil** weapons are less threatening and legal to carry in towns.

**Control** weapons such as long swords and short polearms can be easily turned to strike in any direction. That is useful in itself, and also makes them ideal for controlling an area and fending off multiple opponents. When surrounded or flanked by opponents, avoid [-] COMBO if you spend a Maneuver. This only works if using two hands and at the range specified, e.g. "Control-Medium".

**Crushing** weapons treat manmade metal armor as AC1 on a Crit, and can damage metal armor if AC is greater than normal WC.

**Custom** weapons are higher-quality, bespoke and perfectly made.

**Cutty** weapons such as swords are adept at cutting up and slicing unarmored foes. You can [+] COMBO vs unarmored targets (i.e. your WC is better than their AC).

**Handguard** indicates weapons with a complex hilt such as a rapier's rings or basket hilt sword, which protects the hand, a very common target. This counts as Class 2 armor for the weapon hand.

**Hooking** weapons such as sickles and some polearms are able to trap limbs and cut on the return stroke. When you aim for a Hit Location, you can specify you are hitting the back side of the location, which often has partial armor, especially the back of legs, knees, or groin.

**Fragile** weapons break on a Fumble.

**Defensive** weapons are equivalent to a shield using Weapon Class.

**Primitive** weapons are easy to build, requiring very low skills, time, and materials, and tools. They might still be found in use by primitive tribes, but for modern peoples would only be found self-made or improvised when nothing else is available.

**Reload** indicates the weapon must be reloaded before attacking again. This applies to projectile weapons such as bows, crossbows, and firearms. This requires one Maneuver, but a number after the Reload Tag (e.g. Reload3) indicates multiple Maneuvers are needed.

**Stabbity** weapons are optimized for lots of stabbing or "shanking". After a successful attack you may spend a Maneuver to make another attack on the same target area.

**Secret** weapons are unusual or difficult to use and require a Secret, otherwise [-] COMBO and lose beneficial Tags. For example, a military longbow is a specialized weapon requiring years of training.

**Thrown** weapons can be thrown at the Range specified, such as "Thrown-Long" or "Thrown-Far".

# ARMOR

The purpose of armor is to protect your vitals from weapons you expect to face. Your ancestors only had to deal with weapons of their time period, but you will also face a variety of monsters.

## Armor Coverage

You have six Hit Locations (Head, Torso, Arm, Hand, Thigh, and Leg), and your armor will cover some or all of them. When you are hit, you will use the armor for the Hit Location.



**Armor Suits** - Each armor suit has a Tag which describes your Hit Locations covered and number of Maneuvers per Round. Armor is a tradeoff of coverage and mobility.

| Armor Tag  | Example             | Hit Locations                           | Maneuvers |
|------------|---------------------|---|-----------|
| Body-Armor | cuirass             | Head, Torso                             | 3         |
| Half-Armor | mail haubergeon     | Head, Torso, Arm, Groin                 | 2         |
| 3Qtr-Armor | three-quarter plate | Head, Torso, Arm, Groin (partial), Knee | 2         |
| Full-Armor | plate armor         | Head, Torso, Arm, Groin, Knee, Leg      | 1         |

**Light Armor** - Armor pieces which are AC 1 or have the Partial Tag do not count toward coverage, so long as no other armor is worn in the same location.

**Piecemeal Armor** - Armor suits are comprised of many smaller pieces, which you can wear individually. Each piece has Tags

describing specific Hit Locations or Sub-locations. For example, "finger gauntlets" would have the "Gauntlet" tag.

Your number of Maneuvers per Round is determined by your total number of Hit Locations covered, regardless of whether you are wearing a suit, individual armor pieces, or both. Thus, most people will wear the minimal armor they feel warranted by the situation.

| Total Hit Locations | Maneuvers | Examples                    |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| 1-2                 | 3         | helmet and cuirass          |
| 3-4                 | 2         | helm, mail hauberk, mittens |
| 5-6                 | 1         | fully armored knight        |

**Adjusting Coverage** - High quality suits of armor can be adjusted to any coverage tier by adding or removing removing pieces. For example, you might strip down to Body-Armor for travel, then add other pieces to gear up to Half-Armor or Full-Armor when intentionally going into battle.

**Pieces of Exchange** - The highest quality armors even have "pieces of exchange", alternate pieces suiting different purposes, so the suit can be configured for a range of different uses, such as fighting on foot or on horse.

**Gaps** - Coverage of any given Hit Location is never absolute, and there are gaps behind each joint. These gaps are necessary so that the wearer can move, walk, ride a horse, etc. Common armor gaps are the groin, armpits, buttocks, groin, back of legs, palms, face, and the inside of joints. Armor with the Partial Tag has additional gaps.

**Shields** - Shields are moveable armor, so they are very useful for covering gaps. Larger shields cover larger areas, but also count as armor pieces when determining your number of Maneuvers.

# Body-Armor

Body-Armor covers the Head and Torso. While wearing Body-Armor, or no armor, you get 3 Maneuvers per round.

**Doublet Vest** [Class1 Body-Armor] fashionable vest.

**Light Gambeson Vest** [Class1 Body-Armor] 16-layer gambeson

**Gambeson Vest** [Class2 Body-Armor] thick padded or quilted textile armor, 30 layers thick.

**Cuirie** [Class2 Body-Armor] hardened leather cuirass made of cuir-bouilli (boiled leather).

**Concealed Mail Shirt** [Class2 Body-Armor] chain mail shirt without gambeson, worn concealed under clothing.

**Mail Shirt** [Class3 Body-Armor] chain mail shirt over light gambeson.

**Breastplate** [Class3 Body-Armor Partial] steel breastplate, only covering the front, worn over clothing

**Plate Cuirass** [Class4 Body-Armor] steel breastplate and backplate, worn over light gambeson.

**Plate Cuirass with pauldrons** [Class5 Body-Armor] steel breastplate and backplate with shoulders, worn over light gambeson

# Half-Armor

Half-Armor covers the Head, Torso, Arm, and Groin. While wearing Half-Armor you get 2 Maneuvers per round. The knees and legs are not covered, and most fighters will wrap them in cloth (AC1).

**Doublet** [Class1 Half-Armor Civil Soft] a jacket made of stitched and quilted linen ("doubling") made to be worn by itself. Originally these were gambeson, but eventually became fashionable. The head is protected by a fashionable hat or cap.

**Gambeson** [Class2 Half-Armor Soft] a jacket made of stitched and quilted linen ("doubling") made to be worn under ("doubled under") a cuirass, hauberk, or plate to prevent bruising and chafing. May include arming points for attaching plates, with small patches of mail to cover gaps in the plates. Made of multiple layers of cotton, linen, wool, or leather, it also doubled as a coat. Also known as an

aketon, padded jack, arming jack, or arming doublet. The head is protected by a cloth arming cap.

**Scale Armor** [Class2 Half-Armor] is made of small leather or metal plates attached to each other and to a backing of cloth or leather in interlocking rows.

**Coat of Plates** [Class3 Half-Armor] is a coat of brigandine, consisting of plates sewn onto or between layers of cloth or leather.

Inexpensive, widely available, and easily repaired. The head is protected by a leather cap.

**Mail Hauberk** [Class3 Half-Armor] is a full shirt of mail (chainmail), reaching at least to mid-thigh, and including sleeves. A coif (hood) was often included. Always worn over light gambeson. The head is protected by a mail coif.

**Coat of Plates and Mail** [Class4 Half-Armor] is a coat of brigandine worn over a mail hauberk. The head is protected by a mail coif.

## Three-Quarter Armor

3Qtr-Armor covers the Head, Torso, Arms, Groin, and Knee. While wearing 3Qtr-Armor you get 1 Maneuver per round. This is the same as Half Armor, but three-quarter armor is a later development (Renaissance) and is rare and expensive.

**Three-Quarters Plate** [Class4 3Qtr-Armor Visor] is suit of fully articulated light metal plate armor. Designed for mobile foot combat, this armor leaves the Legs unprotected.

**Dwur Plate** [Class5 3Qtr-Armor Visor] is an advanced suit of fully articulated metal plate armor. Designed for mobile foot combat, this armor leaves the Legs unprotected. Dwur plate is often intricately decorated in "grotesque" style, with a helm and other details resembling an animal or monster.

## Full-Armor

Full-Armor covers the Head, Torso, Arm, Groin, Knee, and Leg. While wearing Full-Armor you get 1 Maneuver per round.

**Hooded Robes** [Class0 Partial Civil] thick robes with long sleeves and hood, worn by monks, wizards, and cultists everywhere

**Reinforced Robe** [Class1 Full-Armor Partial Civil] thick robes with long sleeves and hood, reinforced with boiled leather.

**Full Mail** [Class3 Full-Armor] is a full suit of mail (chainmail), including the hauberk, coif, and chausses (leg protection). Always worn over light gambeson, and sometimes covered with a cuirie, coat of plates, or cuirass.

**Plated Mail** [Class4 Full-Armor] armor is mail covered by embedded metal plates, this heavy armor was worn by the early knights.

**Custom Full Plate** [Class5 Full-Armor Visor Custom] is an advanced, fully articulated light steel plate armor, the pinnacle of protection. Rare, expensive, and time-consuming to build.

## Armor Pieces

Characters may wear specific armor pieces as improvements over the general Body-Armor. This only makes sense if the piece is better than the Body-Armor, so adding Knight's Gauntlets to Full Plate is unnecessary unless the gauntlets are custom or enchanted or have some additional merit.

### Head and Neck

**Leather coif** [Class1 Helm Coif Partial] are hoods of stitched leather. Protects the neck and head but not the face.

**Quilted coif** [Class2 Helm Coif Partial] are hoods of stitched leather. Protects the neck and head but not the face.

**Mail coif** [Class3 Helm Heavy Coif Partial] is a hood of mail (chainmail) or scale, often incorporated into a hauberk or camail. Protects the neck and head but not the face.

### Head

**Plumed hat** [Class1 Helm Civil Hat Partial] are huge, feathered hats that count as some padding.

**Pointed Hat** [Class1 Helm Civil Hat Partial] big conical floppy wizard hat, somehow always stays up there

**Arming cap** [Class1 Helm Open] are hoods of stitched and quilted linen, worn under a helm or coif as padding.

**Cervelliere "skull cap"** [Class2 Helm Cap Partial] are round, close-fitting steel skull caps.

**Kettle Hat** [Class2 Helm Hat Partial] is a helmet made of steel in the shape of a wide-brimmed hat. Inexpensive, effective, and popular with infantry, but are not seen as fashionable.

**Barbute** [Class2 Helm Closed] a visor-less bronze helm with a distinctive "T" shaped opening for the eyes and mouth. Includes an integral lining, so no arming cap is needed.

**Spangenhelm** [Class2 Helm Partial] is a Northman helm made of metal strips with a distinctive mask protecting the eyes (q.v. Gjermundbu helmet), and decorated with wings, horns, knots, etc. Worn as a cap and very easy to put on and take off.

**Full Spangenhelm** [Class3 Helm Open] is a spangenhelm with added protections such as cheek guards and a mail aventail.

**Bascinet** [Class3 Helm Open] a medieval conical open-faced helm. Includes an integral lining, so no arming cap is needed.

**Sallet** [Class3 Helm Open] are open-faced helms, lined so no arming cap is needed.

**Burgonets** [Class3 Helm Open] are open-faced helms. Includes an integral lining, so no arming cap is needed.

**Great Helm** [Class4 Helm Closed] are flat-topped cylinders of steel that completely cover the head and have only very small openings for the eyes and mouth. This helm is fully closed and does not have a moveable visor, so it was usually taken off for foot combat.

**Close Helm** [Class4 Helm Visored] a steel helm that fully encloses the head and neck, with an integral visor that pivots up.

**Hounskull** [Class4 Helm Visored] are bascinets with a "dog faced" conical visor and aventail. Lined so no arming cap is needed.

**Armet** [Class4 Helm Visored] are early fully-enclosed visored helmets compact and light enough to move with the wearer.

## Neck

**Gorget** [Class3 Gorget Partial] stiff collar of brigandine for the throat

**Bevor** [Class4 Gorget Partial] hard plate collar for the throat.

## Arms

**Leather Bracers** [Class1 Arm Partial Civil Soft] hard leather forearms

**Mail Sleeves and mittens** [Class3 Arm Gauntlet] a tube of chain mail covering the entire arm, with mittens that cover the hands

**Splint Vambraces** [Class3 Arm Partial] metal banded forearms

**Spaulders** [Class3 Arm Partial] articulated metal bands (lames) covering the shoulders, joined by straps of leather or rivets. Unlike pauldrons, spaulders do not cover the armpits, which may be protected by besagews (rondels) or left open.

**Pauldrons** [Class4 Arm Partial] large metal dome ("cop") that covers the shoulder and armpit, with metal bands (lames) to also protect the upper arm similar to spaulders.

## Hands

**Swordsman's Gloves** [Class1 Gauntlet Partial] nimble leather gloves

**Demi-Gauntlet** [Class2 Gauntlet Partial] nimble leather gloves with partial steel coverage on the back of the hand and wrist only.

**Mail Mitten Gauntlet** [Class3 Gauntlet] chain mail mittens

**Mitten Gauntlet** [Class4 Gauntlet] extremely protective steel plate mittens. easy to obtain and ideal if your weapon does not have a hand guard (such as a polearm) and you do not have a buckler.

**Knight's Gauntlet** [Class3 Gauntlet] fully articulated steel finger gauntlets covering the entire hand. Rare and expensive.

## Groin

The Groin Hit Location includes your hips, thighs, and genitals, and thus includes some of the more distinctive pieces in historical armor.

**Purse** [Class1 Groin Partial] a stuffed fabric or leather pouch filled with your metal coins, worn over your irreplaceable valuables.

**Bollock Dagger** [Class1 Close Short Groin Partial] a dagger with distinctive two-balled hilt, worn front and center as a fashion statement, useful and protective at the same time.

**Codpiece** [Class1 Groin Partial] an important fashion item consisting of a stuffed fabric or leather pouch enclosing the genital area, and padded as needed to safeguard or enhance its contents.

**Hero Belt** [Class2 Groin Partial] is an exaggeratedly wide belt with an even larger buckle, worn by champions to safeguard their legacy.

**Faulds** [Class3 Groin Partial] are pieces of articulated plate armour worn below a breastplate to protect the waist and hips.

**Plate Codpiece** [Class3 Groin Partial] a plate armor codpiece.

**Culet** [Class3 Groin Partial] a piece of plate armor consisting of small, horizontal lames that protect the buttocks.

**Cuisses** [Class3 Groin Partial] are pieces of articulated plate armour protecting the thighs.

## Legs

**Shoes** [Class1 Leg Partial] hard leather shoes

**Cloth leg wraps** [Class1 Leg] simple flax or woven cloth strips to provide some protection to the legs and knees when wearing half or three-quarter armor.

**Boots** [Class1 Leg Partial] hard leather boots covering the ankle

**Riding Boots** [Class1 Leg] hard boots coming up to the knees.

**Greaves** [Class3 Leg Partial] metal plates to protect the shin.

## Advanced Armor Tags

**Helm** is armor worn to protect the head. Helms also have an Open or Closed Tag to describe facial protection. All helmets limit your vision and hearing. If your helmet covers the sides of your head (ears), your hearing has Partial Visibility, so you must [-] COMBO for listening or performing related tasks such as oratory, music, etc.

**Gorget** is armor worn to protect the throat.

**Arm** armor protects the arms, up to the hands.

**Gauntlet** is armor worn to protect a hand. If gauntlets are AC1 or better then you must [-] COMBO for delicate work like picking locks, playing musical instruments, etc.

**Groin** armor protects the hips, thighs, and other important parts.

**Leg** armor protects the legs, and sometimes the knees.

**Cap** is armor only covering the crown (top) of the head.

**Civil** armors and helmets are "civil looking", appearing as normal rugged clothing and do not draw attention. They are the only armor legal to wear in cities, towns, inns, etc.

**Closed** helms cover the wearer's face for greater protection, but sacrifice comfort, visibility, and breathability. You have Partial

Visibility and must [-] COMBO for rolls involving keen senses, such as ranged attacks, ranged defenses, observation, hearing, etc.

**Coifs** are protective hoods that cover the neck as well as the forehead, chin, sides and rear of the head. They are always constructed of flexible material such as cloth or mail. You must [-] COMBO for listening, but NOT for vision or ranged attacks/defenses.

**Custom** armor and helms are higher-quality, bespoke and expertly fitted. Rare and expensive both to obtain and also to maintain or repair. You can add a number like Custom2, Custom3, and so on to represent artistic embellishments such as gold leaf or elaborate shapes like wild beasts or dragons.

**Front** armor only covers the front of the body; it is open-backed.

**Hat** helms are hat-shaped, offering protection from the sun and anything dropping from above. They do not cover the face, ears, or rear of the head, so they do not hinder hearing.

**Partial** armor, helms, and gauntlets cover very limited Sub-locations. This armor piece does not count towards number of covered areas when determining maximum Maneuvers per round, as long as other armor pieces are not worn on the same Hit Location. However, the armor piece leaves a large gap which can be targeted.

**Open** helms do not cover the wearer's face, so vision is unimpeded.

**Visor** helms have a moveable plate to open or close the face, becoming an Open or Closed helm. Most visored helms require an Action to adjust the bolts and screws, while the most sophisticated have cunning springs allowing it to snap closed with a Maneuver and also be torn away (and dropped) to open with a Maneuver.

## Shields

**Shields** are pieces of *moveable armor*, primarily used when full Body-Armor is impractical or unavailable. A character without strong armor can pick up a shield and immediately cover some lines of attack, depending on its size and "guard" position held.

# Shield Guards

Shields are moveable armor which can be positioned to a **Guard** by using a Maneuver. Each Guard covers one Hit Location for either right or left, so you can simply say the Hit Location and side you are covering. You will be in "**Left Torso**" Guard unless you declare otherwise. You can change Guards along with a Maneuver, such as the "Guard" or "Parry" Maneuvers. Large shields can protect any Hit Location, but Small shields cannot protect the Knee or Leg and Medium shields cannot protect the Leg.



Small shields cover the hand holding the shield. Medium shields cover the hand, wrist, and forearm. Large shields cover the entire Arm Hit Location.

Shields are also less useful when facing threats from multiple directions. Smaller shields are vulnerable to feints (q.v. "Feint" Maneuver) because they cover smaller areas.

## Shield Class

You can use your Shield Class in place of Armor Class when you are using a Guard to cover a Hit Location. The shield must be between you and the incoming attack. Weapons count as Class 1 shields, or use Weapon Class if the weapon has the Defensive Tag.

Since shields are equivalent to armor, so they are less important if excellent armor is available. Full plate armor is essentially

interlocking plates equivalent to shields, so two-handed weapon is more useful than a shield.

## Medieval Shields

**Buckler** [Class3 Small Centergrip] A small common shield, gripped in the fist, and used as a companion weapon. It could be made of metal or boiled leather, round (brocchiero) or square (targa). Inexpensive, easily carried, and readily available. Bucklers are also a type of "companion weapon" listed on the Weapons table, with some Weapon Tags.

**Target** [Class3 Small Strapped] A small wooden round shield, worn strapped to the arm, such as the Scottish target or smaller Viking shield. Inexpensive and readily available.

**Round shield** [Class4 Medium Centergrip] A light wooden round shield, such as a Viking shield. Inexpensive and common.

**Heater** [Class3 Medium Strapped] A smaller version of the kite shield suited for both mounted and foot combat.

**Rotella** [Class4 Medium Strapped] A strapped metal round shield held at arm's length from the body.

**Large round** [Class3 Large Centergrip] A large wooden round shield, such as a larger Viking shield..

**Kite** [Class4 Large Strapped] A distinctive shield in a reverse teardrop shape used by horsemen to protect the left flank and leg.

**Aspis** [Class5 Large Strapped] A very large, deeply-dished shield made of wood.

**Tower Shield** [Class5 Large Strapped] A rectangular, semi-cylindrical tower shield.

**Pavise** [Class6 Large Standing] A very large semi-portable wall shield to protect crossbowmen in siege warfare.

## Shield Tags

**Small:** shields cover the hand

**Medium:** shields cover the hand, wrist, and forearm, but count as an armor piece for maximum Maneuvers

**Large:** shields cover the entire Arm Hit Location, but count as an armor piece for maximum Maneuvers

## Shield Damage

Your shield may be damaged or broken if you attempt to use it to block a weapon with a weapon Class higher than your shield Class.

Shields are not indestructible. Robust attacks can damage the rim of a shield, and thrusts on the flat shield face can penetrate. Shields must strike a careful balance between weight, protection and cost, and most soldiers prefer a lighter shield even if that means they will need to replace it. Also any hit which is hard enough to damage a strong shield might hurt the arm behind it, so a shield that crumples absorbs some of the damage. A skillful shieldman will angle the shield to deflect attacks rather than block them directly.

## Advanced Shield Tags

**Civil** shields are "civil looking" and will not generally draw attention.

**Centergrip** shields have a handle in the center of the shield, which is gripped so that the shield can be easily moved to various positions. They can be easily equipped or dropped, and the hand can be used to grab. This style of grip results in a more maneuverable shield, so is ideal for one-on-one combat, but only lighter and smaller shields can be held this way (i.e. with a smaller Shield Class).

**Strapped** shields are attached to the arm by two stout straps (enarmes), and heavier versions often rest on the shoulder. They are simple to use since they close off the left side of the body, and the defender tends not to move them at all. The shield and arm can absorb more force, and thus they have a higher Shield Class.

Strapped shields take longer to equip or drop than a centergrip shield, but unlikely to be dropped by accident. This style of shield works well on horse and on foot, and can support heavier shields than a centergrip. Strapped shields cannot protect the right side of the body (i.e. no "right" Guards are possible) and usually a weapon is used to parry attacks from the right side.

**Custom** shields are higher-quality, bespoke and perfectly made.

**Standing** shields are movable walls on posts or stands, setup as static cover. Moving a Siege shield and setting it back down takes an

Action. The benefit is that the fighter's hands are free, which is useful if you want to reload a crossbow.

## Eldar Assets

The Eldar civilizations of aeons past created many things, some dark and beautiful, others bright and deadly. You might find Eldar relics during your adventures, perhaps lost in deep caverns or in battle with terrible guardians. Or you might encounter Eldar (living or undead) wielding archaic blades of mysterious metals. Some of the mightiest works of the Eldar are named in stories, often born by famous heroes, and sometimes even more famous (or infamous).

## Designing Eldar Assets

Asset design is intentionally flexible in Legends, to give you creative space. When describing Eldar Assets, think in terms of which Signatures and Secrets the Asset should have. For example, A Signature like "Drisi Orichalcum plate armor" protects against hostile magic (Saving Throws vs magic [+1] ASSET). A "Drisi Vakar Dagger" Signature prevent recovery (Stabilization Roll [-1] ULT), or it could be a Secret that prevents normal healing (which might hinder PCs more than NPCs). Lastly, the "Avathar Book of Shadows" is a Book of Secrets Asset with a "shadow magic" Signature. Overall it's more important to be creative and flexible when writing down Assets than to have a definitive list, and you should collaborate with the GM.

## Eldar Materials

Eldar materials are often exotic and wondrous in the eyes of mortals.

**Adamant:** A blued steel renowned for hardness and sharpness. The metal starts as normal steel, which is then alchemically tempered, darkening its color to a beautiful blue-grey.

**Bladegrass:** A fibrous plant that can be used to craft items normally well-suited for leather. The Alu use bladegrass exclusively instead of leather, crafting items such as armor, boots, and saddles. The main benefit over leather is better resistance to moisture, as bladegrass

will not hold soak up or swell with water. In addition, bladegrass is naturally edged and the Alu craft some unusual items such as flexible knives and sharp-edged bladegrass whips.

**Moonsilver:** A silvery steel alloy that can absorb and shed moonlight, making it not only beautiful and useful but revered by devotees to Lunara. The Alu and Elves in particular have a love for moonsilver, and use it to make jewelry, armor, and swords.

**Night Iron:** A dark steel alloy that absorbs light, and thus appears darker than dark, like a hole from which no light escapes. The Alu used night iron to craft armor and blades, and the secrets of its source and manufacture are completely unknown.

**Orichalcum:** A brassy alchemical alloy that can be cast into various shapes, such as amulets, rings, weapons, and armor. Orichalcum is reputed to have some resistance to magic, and was a favored metal of the Alu, Baal, and Drisi, who cast amulets of protection, magic-cutting blades, and magic-soaking armor. You can [+] ASSET on Saving Throws vs magic where the Hit Location is covered by orichalcum, but must [-] ASSET on rolls involving magic and a body part (Hit Location) covered by orichalcum.

**Vakaar:** An alchemical steel alloy, typically blackened, purple, or green in color, and used almost exclusively to make "venom blades" infamous for dealing infected or envenomed wounds that do not heal naturally (Stabilization Rolls [-] ULT). The secrets of making Vakar blades are kept by the Drisi, but thought to be forged in darkness with many layers of folded steel, each infused with poisons, venoms, blood, souls, forged with dark prayers to the Serpent Gods.

## Alu Assets

**Alu Dart Knives (as-en)** [Class1 Close Short Stabbity Thrown-Long]  
the dart-like throwing knives of the Alu warriors

**Alu Sickle Sword (av-tlen)** [Class2 Medium Binding Defensive Hooking Cutty] the deeply curved sickle sword of the Alu, a weapon capable of hooking and trapping a foe's limbs, but also a tool in cutting through jungle overgrowth or bladegrass.

**Alu Kel Sword (av-kel)** [Class3 2H Medium Binding Defensive Cutty] the long sword of the Alu warriors.

**Alu Bladestaff** [Spear Class3 2H Medium Thrown-Long2] an ornate staff with a hidden blade. Variants with other hidden weapons have also been found, such as a spring-dart knife, whip, or smoke egg.

**Alu Bladegrass Cloak** [Class1 Full-Armor Soft] soft woven bladegrass wraps over the entire body, including a fluttering cloak

**Alu Bladegrass Cuirass** [Class2 Body-Armor] thick bladegrass strands covering the torso and head, including a war mask

**Alu Smoke Egg** [Class0 Thrown-Long] An egg or paper-thin metal capsule containing smoke, orichalcum dust, or chili powder. The egg can be thrown or crushed to creat a person-sized cloud.

## Avathar Assets

Avathar have a variety of specialized instruments for delivering potions. The instruments require specialized training only available to members of the *Royal Avathar Guild of Alchemists*.

**Syringe:** Avathars can purchase empty syringes and fill them with potions. This allows the character to deliver potions with pinpoint precision, maximizing their effectiveness. Alternatively, the character can administer the potion to another person as an armed attack (not *unarmed*), although the potion only produces its normal effects.

**Catheter:** Avathars can use a variety of *intravenous catheter lines*, the character can introducing a potion directly into his blood system and precisely controlling the flow. This has the same effect as using a syringe, but the potion is always considered "readied", and using the potion is an Action.

**Dead Man's Switch:** Avathars can hook up a failsafe switch to a catheter that automatically delivers the potion if the character falls unconscious or some other state of helplessness (e.g. paralyzed, petrified, beguiled, etc).

**Blood Flies:** Some Avathars raise blood flies as gruesome pets, fed on the Avathar's own demi-vampiric blood and trained to alert him to potential food ([+] ASSET for related rolls). These Avathars are experts at detecting or tracking creatures of flesh and blood. The

Avathar can call back his flies and hide them on his person, but takes [-] ULT for social interactions since they are disgusting.

## Drisi Assets

The Drisi empires ruled the world aeons ago, and their relics can be found in any land and in many underworlds.

**Adamant Scorpion** [Class3 Long] a long bladed polearm of shadowed steel with incredible cutting properties.

**Orichalcum Serpent Ring** [Class0 Gauntlet Partial] brassy colored Eldar steel ring which absorbs magic. Magic-users generally avoid this ring, unless they do not use this hand for casting spells.

**Orichalcum Scale Armor** [Class2 Half-Armor] is made of small brassy Eldar steel plates attached to each other and to a backing of cloth or leather in interlocking rows

**Orichalcum Buckler** [Class3 Small Centergrip] brassy colored Eldar steel which absorbs magic

**Orichalcum Breastplate** [Class3 Body-Armor] brassy Eldar steel breastplate, only covering the front, worn over clothing

**Vakaar Falchion** [Class3 Medium Binding Defensive Cutty] distinctive curved sword made of cracked dark purple or green steel, which poisons the wound so it does not heal naturally ([-] ULT on Stabilization)

## Dracone necroalchemy Assets

Some of the Baal-Mot, Drisi, and Black Wizards have tapped into the vast power of dead dragons. This brings enmity from Baal.

**Blue Dragon Orb:** A glassy sphere filled with a flickering spark of dragon magic; assists with magic of air, electricity, and weather.

**Dracontia / Dragon Orbs:** are small crystalline spheres that contain a portion of a dragon's soul. A small flickering flame or spark can be usually seen in the sphere. They are prized by wizards of all kinds. Dragon orbs are most often a remnant left behind after a dragon's death. Each orb *is* a shard or fragment of the dragon's soul at the moment of death--the orb itself is a quasi-physical manifestation

similar to an *Incarnation*. The fragment has power based on the strength of the dragon's soul and the manner of its death. The strongest orbs for violent magic come from dragons who were betrayed, which left behind a fragment of the dragon's soul in an angry, vengeful state.

**Dragonbone Dagger:** An assassin's blade dealing a wound that will not heal on its own ([-] ULT Stabilization).

**Dragonbone Staff:** A potent focus for controlling and conjuring fire. The staff is five feet in length to honor (or appease) the Dragon Gods, expertly turned from black dragonbone, and etched with draconic symbols. The staff feels smooth and warm to the touch, or burning hot to those who displease the Dragon Gods. Greatly prized by Black Wizards and seen as heretical by dragon worshipers.

## Dwur Assets

Thaumatagonnes ('Runelocks") are the famous and formidable Dwur firearms and cannons. The heavy metal barrels of these weapons are forged in fantastical shaped and covered in Thaumaturgical runes. The runes strengthen the barrel, allowing the use of more powerful alchemical powder than the simple black powder used in Alorn handgonnes. Some Thaumatagonnes bear additional enchantments or improvements that the Alglonds firearms cannot replicate. Runelocks are a form of flintlock with a Thaumaturgical rune on the "runelock" striker which magically reset the strike when the rune is spoken. However, these weapons can only be reloaded if you have the "Runelock" Secret, only known by Dwur, and the Themes Dwur and Thaumaturge reduce the Reload time by 1 each.

**Runelock Dwuringer pistol** [Class2 Long Accurate Reload4 Secret] is a single-shot holdout pistol that fits inside a belt buckle or boot

**Runelock Pistol** [Class3 Far Accurate Reload3 Secret] single shot

**Runelock Doppelpistol** [Class3 Far Accurate Reload3 Secret] two barrels, each of must be loaded and fired independently.

**Runelock Revolver** [Class4 Far Accurate Reload6 Secret] six-shots

**Runelock tunnel sweeper** [Class5 2H Far Reload3 Secret] is a short ("sawed-off") double-barreled shotgun for up-close and personal combat. Each barrel must be loaded and fired independently.

**Runelock holy water sprinkler** [Class5 2H Far Reload3 Secret] is a "hand-cannon-mace-pistol" with the mace head containing four pistols. Each barrel must be loaded and fired independently.

**Runelock dungeon sweeper** [Class6 2H Far Reload4 Secret] is a double-barreled shotgun meant for up-close and personal combat. Each barrel must be loaded and fired independently.

**Runelock carbine** [Class7 2H Far2 Reload4 Secret] a light rifle

**Runelock longrifle** [Class8 2H Far3 Heavy Accurate Reload4 Secret] a long-barreled heavy rifle

**Thaumasweeper** [Class6 2H Far Reload4 Secret] a Dwur

Thaumaturgical "dungeon sweeper" cast in alchemist's iron and etched with thaumaturgical runes.

**Thaumagonne** [Class7 2H Far3 Reload6 Secret] a Dwur

Thaumaturgical handgonne cast in alchemist's iron and etched with thaumaturgical runes.

**Thaumacannon** [Class8 Crew Far3 Reload8 Secret] a Dwur

Thaumaturgical cannon cast in alchemist's iron and etched with thaumaturgical runes. The cannon barrel is heavy (20#) and usually fitted to a stock, staff, or wheeled frame. The barrels are often cast in fantastical shapes such as dragons, rockets, or mountain scenes. An alchemist can load the cannon with fire, stones, bullets, or any number of explosive or incendiary magic concoctions or fireworks. This charges the cannon with a single, specific spell (such as *fireball* or *lightning bolt*) which you must describe in detail.

## Magic-User Assets

Magic-users use wands, orbs, and other "magical focuses" to help them channel magic, such as the items below. Otherwise, if you have no Asset then [-] ASSET, just as if attacking without a weapon.

**Book of Shadows:** A grimoire of *Umbracala* shadow magic spells.

**Diadem of the Third Eye** a pendant suspended above your brow, in the position of your third eye, usually A of jewel or precious stone.

**Eye of Horus** one of your palms has been tattooed with magical patterns resembling a third eye

**Hamsa** this ornate amulet depicts the "hand of the goddess" with the third eye, which can be worn on a chain or pin.

**Hex Hands** your hands are covered in magical tattoos, and very potent when used together.

**Ioun Stone** a rare stone, crystal ball, or dracontia. Held in one or two hands when used, or with a Secret can be released to hover by you.

**Runesword** [varies by specific sword type] legendary rune-inscribed sword wielded by Eldar battlesingers

**Singing Bow** Elven warbow exquisitely carved and inlaid with silver leaf, which channels vim into the arrows as they leave the bow.

**Sorcerer's Focus** your clean-shaven head is tattooed with magical ink, tracing magical patterns to project your thoughts into reality

**Summoners Grimoire:** A book of summoning and binding rituals and spells. The magic-user must recite the ritual spell directly from the book, often inscribing magic circles or patterns on the floor according to the specific ritual.

**The Evil Eye** one of your eyes is capable of a truly malevolent glare, yet prone to becoming bloodshot if used too often

**The Magic Finger** one of your fingers (you pick!) is tattooed with magical inks and can shoot a ray of magic

**Wizard's Wand** a sturdy rod the length of your arm from finger tips to elbow, often made of bundles of sticks to help channel magic.

**Wizard's Staff** stout staff, ideal for defense and focusing power.

# Part 8: Game Master's Guide

This last part of the book contains advice for you, the GM, to run your game, along with some additional game rules, options, and quick reference tables.

Whether you are creating your own world or reusing an existing work, you need to describe the fictional world to the players. Without this, there is no game. Vividly portray NPCs, monsters, and other elements; add drama, voices, and detail. Find ways to draw the players and their characters into the world and create verisimilitude. Also describe imminent threats and foreshadow future dangers.



## Starting a Campaign

Follow these steps to get a new campaign up and running quickly.

1. **Introduce the setting** - Pick a genre and come up with some idea of the game world and starting scene. You can use an existing campaign setting or come up with your own. Legends works with any genre, but pick something familiar unless you have time to prepare.
2. **Introduce characters** - Work with each player to help them make characters. Try to create a group chemistry that works together. Introduce the characters to each other, and prompt each player to give a summary of his character.

3. **Experience Paths** - Ask each player to write one or two paths so that everyone has a good idea of what motivates them. Also set one Path before the players for a rumor or quest they have heard about, so that the world feels alive. Players can update their characters to add relationships or better align goals.
4. **Strong Start** - The game session is ready to start; kick it off with a "strong start" such as a battle or other challenge. Be sure to roll an Encounter, narrate the scene, set Hazard, and follow turns so that you can teach the players how to play the game.
5. **Resolution** - Once players resolve the challenge, let them take a few turns looting, resting, or exploring. Point out how those require Actions, and that turns are continuous so you are continuing to roll Encounters. Ideally let the players find a clue that kicks off another Path.
6. **Next** - Add a GM Path and check on Dooms. Also prompt the players to choose a new Experience Path and start making progress. Roll an Encounter to add pressure.

## Managing the Game

You are responsible for explaining the rules and ensuring the game runs smoothly. Make rulings that are consistent, sensible, and fair, so that players understand their choices and know those choices matter. You may need to make "house rulings" for anything not explicitly covered in the rules, and you should try to track those and keep them consistent for your campaign. Keep the current Hazard visible so players understand their odds for success.

## Flow of Play

The game is structured in **Rounds**; where each player can take one **Turn** per round. The GM starts each round, and manages transitions into/out of the round, as well as into player Turns.

- **GM Turn:**
  - GM rolls an **Encounter** (hidden) for inspiration, if desired.

- GM narrates the scene, describing urgent updates to the situation, attacks, obvious threats, changes such as movement of foes or NPCs, as well as details about the environment or foreshadowing of future threats.
- GM sets pace, either by **Cutting Hazard** to 10 to usher in a slow narrative scene, or **Raising Hazard** to add tension to a fast scene.
- GM describes one Action (or possibly more than one if there are many NPCs / monsters).
- Players may interrupt with **Maneuvers** and GM can use a Maneuver Phase if necessary. (Saving Throws and Action rolls must wait for the player's turn.)
- GM prompts the Player Leader (or "party leader") to describe the intentions of the group of players. If appropriate, narratively fast-forward to a new round.
- **Player Turns** (for each player):
  - GM chooses a player (usually clockwise around the table) and **Transitions** into the player's turn. GM describes any new or urgent info and declares required Saving Throws.
  - Player Turn
    - Player says what they will do for their turn
    - Player rolls Saving Throws (if applicable)
    - If Hazard is 10 the Player should take a long narrative Action for as long a time as appropriate.
    - If Hazard is 11+ Player takes 1 Action and 1-3 Maneuvers, which must be compressed in time
  - GM takes a Counter on a Fumble or risky roll.
  - GM **Transitions** out of player's turn

## Pace

Pace is the speed of which the game flows, typically more slowly for long narratives and more quickly for exciting action scenes such as combat. **Hazard controls pace!** Set Hazard to 10 to slow the game to a zero-risk narrative scene, and Raise Hazard to speed up the game (nobody wants to test the odds of Hazard 19). By setting Hazard to 10, you are signaling the players that they are 100% safe

and can take their time to explore, be introspective, or engage in a long drawn-out narrative. By Raising Hazard you are telling the players that they are in imminent danger and need to move quickly before things fall apart.

## GM Turns

Roll an Encounter at the start of your turn, or whenever a player rolls a Fumble or takes a risky action. This provides a random seed for inspiration and reminds you to check a few game details.

Describe the current scene. Since much of the game is theatre of the mind, it's important to clearly describe what you are imagining, so that your players can make good, well-informed choices.

Encourage the players to ask questions to clarify. Try to repeat the scene description each round, but vary the wording.

After that, introduce new scene elements, such as new information or a detail that could be an opportunity or challenge. This could be a new NPC, some new details of the scene, a trap, an opportunity to gain a new asset or find food, or foreshadowing of an upcoming danger. Also, narrate changes to the scene. If there are foes then describe how they move and what they appear to be doing. Make the environment feel alive.

Always look for opportunities to foreshadow complications or threats, and **Raise Hazard**. Especially foreshadow any immediate dangers such as attacks which will require a roll from a PC.

**End your turn** by narrating a **Transition** into the first player's turn.

## Player Maneuver Interrupts

Players are allowed to interject with **Maneuvers** at any time, and are likely to do so in the middle of your turn or narrative. Acknowledge the Maneuver, interweave it into your narrative, and keep the game flowing. For example, if you are describing how a "dark cowled

figure rises from the mists" a player might say "I draw my sword". Maneuvers are simple and don't require rolls, so you can keep going.

If necessary, you can start a **Maneuver Phase**, to resolve any complicated simultaneous Maneuvers. Simply pause the game and take the Maneuvers in slow motion, allowing players to fine-tune their response to the changing scene.

## Player Turn Transitions

Always describe a **Transition into** each player's turn. This puts the focus on the player, and gives you a crucial chance to re-state and re-describe the area for the player, ensuring clear communication and making meaningful player choices possible. Don't worry about repeating yourself, the players really do need it.

During a Transition, **reiterate all critical information**. Use direct wording like "you see" or "(your name) sees" to **describe what the player's character sees**. Most especially, always **declare immediate threats** such as monster attacks, traps, area-effect attacks, or other dangers which will require the player to roll a Saving Throw.

Since you are Transitioning into each player's turn, you are also controlling turn order. You can use clockwise seating order around the table for simplicity, or use proximity to a threat, or you can bounce around to shake things up. Experiment with this. You can also narrate the **Transition out** of a player's turn if desired.

The floating NPC Turn can happen at any time, but you should Transition into the NPC Turn if you are attacking the NPC. This means you should usually declare attacks on NPCs first, before transitioning into the first player's turn.

## Time Management

It's simplest to stay in **real-time** for most of the game, where each round is just barely long enough to finish one significant action.

When moving around town or a dungeon, this is few minutes per round, and in a fast-paced combat this is a few seconds per round.

## Rest Days

When the PCs rest, you should reset Hazard, Stress, and Vim as appropriate. Usually the PCs will use at least a Field Ritual to recover some Dooms and reset Vim.

## Narrative Fast-Forward

It's important to keep the game flowing, so feel free to fast-forward past boring stretches of time, such as camping for a night, riding for a few days, traveling by ship for a month, etc. You can still use rounds and turns, just remind players during Transition to their turns that the game is on fast-forward, so the timescale is longer (e.g. 1 day rather than 6 seconds) so they can get more done. Go back to normal-time as soon as something interesting happens, such as running out of food, a storm, or an ambush, and don't be afraid to rewind a bit to the start of the interesting event.

## Describing Critical Hits

Players expect Critical Hits to be more awesome than normal rolls. Whenever possible, describe Critical Hits as the best possible outcome of how the player declared their attack. In other words, if the player said they were trying to do something specific then have that work; this takes precedence over other ideas you might have.

**Finishing Blow** - The monster dies dramatically if it has taken Damage in excess of its Hits. Describe a visceral end leaving no doubt the monster is dead (rolling heads, sprays of blood, fine red mist, etc.). If the player targeted a hit location, be sure to use it.

**Aim** - If the player was targeting a specific hit location or capability of the monster, describe how that worked, such as disarming the foe or lopping off an arm, leg, etc. Clever players might even find a way to target and remove specific monster capabilities, such as removing flight by lopping off a wing, or removing a magic shield by hitting a glowing runegorm.

Otherwise, if the player did not describe something specific, then you should come up with something you think is appropriate.

**Weapon Crit** - Describe a dramatic or special benefit of the weapon used, e.g. a mace might crush a skull or a *fireball* might inflict collateral damage. This is a great opportunity to showcase the PCs choice of weapon.

**Morale** - The attack inflicts a wound which causes the monster to panic and flee. If there is a group of monsters they will probably do the same. Intelligent creatures might surrender if they feel that will be honored.

**Wound** - Despite still having Hits remaining, the monster is mortally wounded, but not yet incapacitated. Describe the wound in visceral detail. The monster will probably attempt to flee at the first opportunity, heading for its lair to lick its wounds. However, the monster now has a Stage 1 Doom and will probably die. Intelligent creatures might surrender if they feel that will be honored.

## Using Hazard

Present compelling and challenging adventures to the players and step back to see what they do. Play foes to their true nature and full potential. Wild animals and bandits should craft clever ambushes, and genius villains should be formidable. Be devious, ruthless, and do not hold back. Give the players a game where they must rise to the challenge and respond with intelligent, skillful play, to survive and win. Describe present dangers, foreshadow possible threats and Raise Hazard, making your world ever more exciting and dangerous.

**Hazard** is the level of inherent difficulty and risk in the current scenario, based on terrain, situational dangers, and broad boosts to the foes. A battle in a building on fire is both more difficult and more risky than on level ground.

**Hazard starts at 10**, and then you Raise Hazard as the story becomes more dangerous and the characters become increasingly stressed and burned out.

**Hazard 15 models a "sporting" level of challenge** where the PCs should expect to be reasonably challenged by the opposition. Setting the Hazard under 15 tells the players the situation is "easy mode", below their level, and above 15 means the situation is "hard mode", and they are out of their league.

**Hazard** floats with dramatic tension in the story, rising and falling throughout the game. **Raise Hazard** whenever you narrate anything which makes the situation more dangerous, especially when you foreshadow a threat of some kind. Then, **Cut Hazard** to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of the players to overcome the challenges they face.

You should use Hazard to heighten the dramatic tension in the situation, and to highlight any interesting situational factors, and ideally provide tactical choices to the players. For example, a battle on a rooftop in high winds is risky, so the characters might decide to take the battle somewhere else.

You can also use Hazard in situations when a foe or story element is directly raising the Hazard, which may be something the characters can stop. For example, an unusual device might be sending psychic signals that make it harder for the characters to think; can that be disabled? You can give the players a clue by describing how an adversary might visibly switch on the "psychic scrambler" device after reaching it mid-fight.

Raising hazard is best done as foreshadowing before interaction with a threat, such as by describing remnants of prior victims ("look at the bones!"), deep footprints of a massive beast, claw marks on trees, or blood pools on the steps leading to the next dungeon level. Using foreshadowing adds tension and wonder and gives players a

chance to avoid trouble. If a monster should be particularly dangerous then develop the threat over multiple turns. However you can also raise the hazard as a monster attacks, moves, or uses a special ability, especially for unusual monsters or a hidden threat.

## Encounters

As the GM, describe an Encounter during your turn at the start of every round, and whenever players Fumble or take a risky action. When possible continue any natural chain of events, natural consequences, situational development, etc. Otherwise you can roll 1d20 + Legend Die on the **Encounter Table** at the end of this book for inspiration. Raise Hazard whenever you can describe ominous details, and deal Damage whenever there are direct effects.

The Encounter Table shows conceptual patterns, so once they become familiar you won't always need to look at the table. Encounters are also reminders for you to check on various elements of the campaign and PCs, such as weather, food, light, etc.

Any Encounter is just a starting point, a seed, idea, or concept for you to build on, helping you to spontaneously create wonder and make the game feel more alive. You will need to nurture the seed so it grows, by embellishing, adding detail, connecting it to past events, and possibly using future seeds for more ideas. Encounters are not mandates to follow blindly, only prompts to inspire you.

## Custom Encounter Tables

You can create custom Encounter tables for your campaign. Use the standard table as a guide, and fill your own table with your ideas. Reserve ULT for something exotic such as magic, a main villain, etc.

|                   |                  |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| dungeon of the... | mountains        | villain schemes  |
| on the road       | NPC friends/foes | boss battle plan |
| inns & taverns    | ships & ports    | city of thieves  |
| forest            | dungeon traps    | I loot the body! |

## Sample Encounter Table: The City of Thieves

|        | Failure (d20 1-14)  | Success (d20 15-20)  |
|--------|---|--|
| THEME  | Meet a dangerous NPC (e.g. a thief, wizard, corrupt guards) or an off-limits location (e.g. thieves hideout, warehouse with contraband)                           | Meet a reasonably friendly and useful NPC or building (e.g. a shop or tavern). Or a NPC warns PCs they are tailed/pickpocketed.                                      |
| ASSET  | PCs are not dressed right for the neighborhood, attracting attention hindering travel and purpose.  | Find a shop or NPC with something useful to the PCs, or a rare item they've been searching for.  |
| EFFORT | PC loses a coin purse or similar resource. Or the strong rains flood the streets, and shit runs downhill...   | Witness a theft, warning of a dangerous shortcut. Or witness a knifing, clearing a street ahead.   |
| COMBO  | A team of rogues wants to steal PC's expensive gear, e.g. magic items   | Urchins watching... What do they want? Who do they work for?   |
| ULT    | Black wizards walk the streets with impunity, what is their purpose?  | Find a weird shop or black market with exotic goods, maybe magic.  |
| PREP   | Ambushed by an organized band of thieves. Or an urchin grabs an item and runs, leading to an ambush. Or thieves/thugs attack, e.g. from the rooftops of an alley. | Notice the neighborhood is getting dicey. Or notice urchins speaking with some rough guys, watching and pointing at various marks (potential victims) on the street. |

## Using Secrets

You should define appropriate prerequisites for each Secret. For example, if a player wants their PC to learn a "fireball" spell you might tell them they first need to learn "a fire spell, an area-effect spell, and test the spell in a volcano or dragon cave".

## Story Secrets

Sometimes you might decide that a character should *already* know a Secret, such as if you need this to move the plot forward. For

example, you might plant clues in an ancient language, and declare that a certain character always had a Secret “Ancient language of Tharizdul”, but wait to reveal this until the clues are found. Simply tell the player to add the Secret to their PC without an Experience Path.

You should choose a single character and explain why the character knows this information. This is a great way to present a character as the “expert guide” in a strange environment, especially when there is a strong cultural or background tie-in with a particular character (e.g. the Elf in a forest). You can tell the player or pass a note like “Secret: the forest of *Malras* is cursed, any who sleep here become trees”.

## Using Experience Paths

Review Paths with the players at the start of every game session. Add a new GM Path to anchor the players in the story. This can be something immediate such as evading pursuers or a longer-term goal such as returning home. You may need to help players write new Paths, especially new players. Also check on Dooms.

### GM Paths

You can use Paths to write story or campaign goals, group quests, bounties (wanted posters), and requests for aid from NPCs. Mark XP on the Paths as the PCs make progress. Or, in the case of a countdown to something awful, mark XP as the clock ticks by. Here are some examples of Paths you can set for the players.

### Strong Start

Write a Path to create a strong start to each game session. When in doubt throw the players into combat or other action.

DUNGEON CRAWL! - After trekking a week from the city, you stand before the caverns of chaos, the source of .

AMBUSH! - You’re in your camp preparing for your day when you hear a trumpeting-growl and an owlbeast charges out of the forest.

CITY FIRE! - You hear the bells of the fire brigade. It seems like a major fire that will affect most of the city section you are in now.

## Adventures

Write a Path for each adventure the players might pursue. When the Path completes, the players fast-forward to the entrance to the adventure scenario, such as a dungeon, tomb raid, etc. Many GMs do this as a matter of course, railroading the players to the next adventure, but using Paths allows the GM to present a list of *possible adventures* for the players to choose from, which is helpful in long-running or sandbox campaigns where there are many plot threads competing for your attention, and players may not know how to advance to any of them. This also allows players to decide which adventures to opt-into, or even write their own paths, choosing their own adventures!

ESCAPE FROM THE DUNGEONS OF THE MAD KING! - The mad king has thrown you into his dungeons in rags to feed his monstrous “pets”. As far as you’ve heard, nobody has ever escaped from the dungeons, alive or otherwise.

If the Path is time-sensitive then give it a Countdown.

THE WELL’S RUN DRY - Your village well has run dry and there is no rain in the sky.

## Adventure Paths

Write a Path for each adventure the characters might pursue.

TRAVERSE THE DEEP AND WILD WOOD - The river flows through dark woods. Odd sounds and shapes are visible on the shores. The waterway seems to be winding deeper into a heart of darkness. We’re already deep in the woods, so either way we need to find a way out.

THE MOON ORB - Azazrem found a glowing orb in the dungeons of the mad king. He is studying the glowing orb and has already figured out how to make it glow with light and purify water. (two new Secrets)

The orb keeps giving him dreams of good deeds that need doing. (TODO - write an XP for a dream, or maybe a dark secret if he resists?)

**VENGEANCE AGAINST THE MAD KING** - Now that you've escaped, it's payback time! Your Dark Secret of vengeance will be resolved once you've gotten even.  
Day 1: Escaped the dungeons into the deep and wild wood.

## Hunted

Write a Path if the characters are being hunted, pursued, or chased by something awful they don't want to face directly.

**HUNTED BY GOBLYNS** - You escaped the goblin caves and ran into the nearby woods. You can hear the howls of goblins and their wargs hunting you.

**ON THE RUN** - The police were alerted to the burglary and are looking for you.

## In too deep

Write a Doom if the characters become overextended in a dungeon or other or dangerous territory, and need to find their way back to safety before something awful happens. Describe or hint at the dangers surrounding the characters, to raise the level of dramatic tension and urgency. The characters are in over their heads, and the players should be worried.

**CHUTE TRAP!** - Oh, shoot, you fell in a pit on dungeon level 2 and now you're at least 3 levels deeper. You hear skittering noises at the edge of your light. Now what?]

## Adventures

If you are good at thinking on your feet you can create an instant adventure by coming up with a scenario or location. If you have more time, also think about interesting obstacles, challenges, monsters, NPCs, clues, and rewards. Avoid making decisions about what will happen after the players become involved. For example, don't decide what the players will do, or how the adventure ends...this game is about playing to find out what happens.

## Introduce your Adventure as a Path

When the right moment arises, introduce the players to the adventure. You should usually write an Experience Path, especially if the adventure involves urgency or promise of a reward.

## Play to find out what happens

Step back and let the game play out to see what happens. Always let the players freely choose what they do. They might not bite, or they might find a different way than you thought of, but that's fine because the game is about the players and the choices they make. The adventure should live on its own with or without the PCs.

## No-win scenarios

It's possible that some situations will result in character death. That is fine as long as the players chose to be in the deadly situation, rather than being surprised due to a lack of information. Following the guidelines for raising Hazard will ensure you are providing adequate clues and warnings about the danger that is building.

## Rewards

Rewards don't have to be big. Focus on fun. The best rewards are creative, unique, and quirky. Personal connections also make rewards more fun and memorable. Sometimes the reward is written as the Path itself. For example "Lenarin wants a proper Elvish sword" needs to end with Lenarin getting a sword he likes. A reward might also be part of the initial setup, such as the King promising "half his kingdom" for the return of the princess.

Consider scale and how the reward might impact the story going forward. After all, great deeds should bring great rewards, while trivial tasks should have small rewards. Make sure everyone has fun.

It's fine to give indirect or group rewards. Some rewards are direct and affect the character sheet (e.g. Themes and Assets) but others are indirect (e.g. a ship or secret base) or apply to the player group.

Be consistent about promptly giving one reward per Path. Consistently associating "Path = Reward" trains the players to keep making progress on their Paths. That helps with game pace and makes it easier for you to predict the direction the characters will go next, and focus your preparation time on the shared Paths.

## Monsters

Monsters are enemies for the players to encounter, fight or outwit, slay, and loot. They are an opportunity for you to be creative and scare the players. Traps, spells, and other threats are the same.

Introduce monsters to the scene during your turn, using vivid and exciting descriptions. Raise Hazard when introducing a monster or revealing a dangerous capability. Also foreshadow the monster on previous rounds when possible, raising Hazard and dramatic tension more than if you spring the players with a surprise monster.

## Monster Stats

Each monster has a compact stat block. This is a streamlined version of traditional RPG monster stat blocks, so that you reuse all your favorite RPG books, adventure modules, and websites.

**Skeleton** H 2; A 1

**Orc** H 2; A 1

**Hobgoblin** H 2; S Heavy armor

**Dire Wolf** H 5; AC 2; WC3

**Ogre** H 7; AC 3; WC5

**Manticore** H 8; A 3; AC 3; WC 3; S flying, ranged spikes Dam 1

**Hill Giant** H 10; A 2; AC 6; WC 3

**Chimera** H 12; A 4; AC 4; WC 3; S flying, fire breath 15' cone Dam 7

**Medusa** H 17; AC 2; S petrification, poison; W her own gaze

**Monster Name** H 1; [A 1;] [AC 2;] [WC 2;] [S;] [W;]

- **Hits (H)**: Overall toughness of the monster, which is disabled after receiving total damage exceeding Hits.

- **Attacks (A)**: Number of attacks per round
- **Armor Class (AC)**: Armor Class for defenses; defaults to 2
- **Weapon Class (WC)**: Weapon Class for attacks; defaults to 2
- **Damage (D)**: Damage for attacks, defaults to 1, rarely change
- **Special (S)**: Secrets, special attacks, and special defenses such as Heavy armor, breath weapons, poison, spells, resistances, immunities etc. Most monsters can see in the dark.
- **Weaknesses (W)**: Vulnerabilities that can be exploited to make the monster easier to defeat.

Reuse stats from your favorite RPG directly except as follows:

- **H**: Use double the HD from OSR sources, ignoring modifiers. For example, OSR HD "4 + 2" is H 8. Use HD directly from 5e.
- **WC**: Use human weapon when applicable. Otherwise count damage dice and add +1, so 1d8 is 2, 2d4 is 3, 3d6 is 4, etc. Add +1 if there is a large damage bonus.
- **D**: Use Damage 1 as a standard. Only increase Damage for attacks which would be "certain death" for normal people, such as the bite of a huge crocodile bite, t-rex bite, megalodon, etc, giant soldiers with giant weapons, crushing "death traps", falls from a great height, etc.
- **AC**: By human armor when applicable. Otherwise AC3 if the monster is equivalent to chainmail, AC4 if plate, etc.

For monsters which use equipment, list their Assets such as weapons and armor. You can vary Assets to differentiate similar monsters. Scatter a few projectile weapons, heavy melee weapons, and heavy armor amongst a group of goblins to create a variety of challenges for the PCs. Assets are often the most distinctive aspect of groups of creatures, such as "the goblin with the arbalest". Raise Hazard when describing anything scary or unusual such as poison arrows or man-catching nets.

Try to use special abilities such as spells, powers, special attacks, and special defenses directly as much as possible. These are often central to the monster concept so don't avoid using them.

Some RPG resources may provide additional details, such as size or movement, either as stats or in a text description. They are not formally used in Legends, but can be useful to add detail.

You may also find it helpful to give each monster an epithet or signature phrase, such as "Ogre - huge ferocious brute w/ strength of ten men", or "Tiger - huge muscled sharp-toothed fast hunting beast". This helps you visualize the monster at a glance, and gives you words you can use to describe your monster to your players.

## Monster Hazard

Always Raise Hazard when foreshadowing monsters, or when the monster appears, or when revealing special abilities. If you visualize the monster and describe how dangerous it is in detail, you will naturally Raise Hazard appropriate to the monster. Your players will quickly learn to read these cues and get a sense of how tough you think the monster will be. You can also mix things up and have a high-power monster with a low Hazard if it's been caught out of its element, or low-power monsters at a high Hazard due to terrain (e.g. goblins defending a rope bridge over lava).

## Monster Maneuvers

As part of narrating the scene during your turn, describe how Monsters take Maneuvers to aim or move to flank the PCs. This will help the players to make well-informed choices. Always foreshadow attacks with a Maneuver of some kind, such as describing a goblin archer or troll aiming at a PC, especially if they are targeting a specific Hit Location. Limit each monster to one or two Maneuvers, according to its quickness and tactical abilities.

When possible maneuver groups of monsters as units. If you foreshadow a group of monsters ganging up on a PC, [-] COMBO on saves against those attackers. Only reveal Maneuvers to the players if their PCs can notice them. Otherwise, you can keep them secret or hint at them vaguely.

# Monster Attacks

When a monster attacks a PC, the player must roll a Saving Throw or take Damage. You must declare monster attacks on **Transitions** to player turns, because the Saving Throw occurs during the player's turn and is considered simultaneous with any actions the player takes during their turn. You can also Raise Hazard if you also foreshadow the attack during your turn.

Try to add visual imagery and detail when possible, for example "the orc attacks you" isn't as interesting as "the grey orc stabs at your unarmored leg with a rusty spear". If you are teaching new players the game you might need to tell them directly to "[make a Saving Throw]", but over time they should roll without being prompted.

Reiterate any details you described during your turn; for example, if you said a monster was targeting a Hit Location without armor you should say it again in the Transition. Your players will learn that threats you foreshadow are more deadly and should be paid close attention, or neutralized with their own Maneuvers.

## Special Attacks

The hallmark of many monsters is one or more kinds of special attacks, such as petrification, poison, or energy drain. Special attacks usually result in special Dooms, which can have immediate effects (e.g. petrification) or require special treatment (e.g. venom).

In general it's a good idea to use special attacks in moderation and foreshadow them in order to keep them special. Apply special attacks when you feel they will have the most dramatic impact. For example, a dragon shouldn't breathe fire every round, because that wouldn't be as dramatic as leading up to the breath of death by foreshadowing how the dragon breathes in and glares balefully. However, always highlight special attacks or other special abilities when you roll ULT so they can surprise you and your players.

Special attacks result in special Dooms, but are otherwise resolved as normal attacks. For example, if a basilisk attacks a PC with a "petrifying gaze", call for a Saving Throw, let the player Soak Damage if possible, otherwise the PC gains a Doom "petrified".

Special attacks deal Damage like normal attacks (i.e. 1 on a hit, 2 on a fumble, etc). If you want to make the creature more deadly, you can foreshadow and Raise Hazard, which gives the players the ability to prepare and make choices.

Some special Dooms may be difficult or even impossible to treat with first aid. The venomous bite of a cobra needs to be treated with an anti-venom potion, spell, or the like. Similarly, a wound caused by an unholy wraith dagger might not be treatable except by a few people in the world, and will otherwise fester and lead to undeath. Lastly, the players are unlikely to have Traits to Soak rare kinds of Damage. Thus, you should limit the use of special attacks that are especially deadly or are hard to treat, such as by limiting the frequency of those monsters or by only firing them off when you roll ULT. A wraith doesn't have to do its best undeath touch on *every* attack, and making it happen less often makes it more scary.

## Multiple Monsters

For most combat encounters, try to call for one Saving Throw per PC per turn. If there are multiple monsters who could attack the PC, just require one Saving Throw. Avoid calling for multiple Saving Throws per PC unless you want to dramatically increase danger.

Limiting Saving Throws will help prevent the PC from becoming unintentionally overwhelmed by numbers of foes. You can liberally throw waves and hordes of awful monsters at the PCs without worrying about accidentally killing the party, since skillful players will have time to react and flee. Monsters are not required to take an action or attack each turn, it's often more natural to have some monsters act in an uncoordinated manner, get distracted, pull back cautiously, or stop to feed on fresh meat.

If a group of monsters (or a many-headed hydra) attacks en masse or as a team, then treat it as a single Saving Throw, but be sure to foreshadow the attack so that it gains COMBO. For example, if there are a hundred goblin archers you can declare the attack as "a black cloud of arrows falls upon you like barbed locusts". The player must [-] COMBO. Reiterate this during Transitions to player turns.

Lastly, you don't always need to tell the players how many monsters there are. The PCs might fall into a dark pit on a pile of bodies and feel "many cold hands attempt to drag you down". Each PC in the pit would roll one Saving Throw, regardless of how many monsters are down there. Sometimes this is more creepy than knowing the odds.

## Monster Attacks

Monsters attack and inflict Damage exactly like PCs. You can use a high Weapon Class if the monster is huge (e.g. a giant), or has an especially deadly attack (e.g. a great white shark or dragon bite), or is venomous (e.g. scorpion sting).

## Defeating Monsters

When a monster is hit and takes Damage, subtract that from its Hits. The monster is disabled when its Hits reach zero, and further Damage kills it.

## Resistances and Weaknesses

Some monsters have special resistances and weaknesses. For example ghosts aren't hurt by iron weapons but hate silver. For some monsters this applies only to specific Hit Locations, for example the dread wyrm might be invulnerable except for a weakness right above its heart. Apply a Damage modifier of +1/-1 as applicable.

only vulnerable on belly  
immune to fire  
immune to cold  
ward pact vs swords

immune to weapons  
mostly made of air  
ghostly  
armored head

## Death Throes

A Doomed creature drops, goes into shock, and loses their ability to take actions other than random “death throes”, such as thrashing about, making messes and pitiful sounds, bleeding on or biting someone who gets too close, or maybe even one last attack before going out. Even “as good as dead”, monsters can still be dangerous. Some monsters like snakes can even be deadly after they are dead.

## Regeneration

Monsters which have powerful regenerative or auto-healing abilities will recover all Hits each round except Damage caused by specific weaknesses. For example, trolls are only hurt by fire and acid, rapidly regenerating any other damage. You will need to track Hits by Damage type. You can choose to have the monster always regenerate all damage at the start of your turn each round, or when you roll EFFORT, or just regenerate +1 Hit each round.

## Interacting with Monsters

Monsters should **always want something** specific, whether that's food, water, territory, treasure, allies against enemies, or new music. Ideally this is something the players have, are blocking, or can obtain, which gives the players a way to interact with the monster other than combat, and possibly even manipulate the monster. There can be competing priorities, for example, a tribe of ferocious baboons might want “man's red fire or man's red flesh”, causing players to carry extra torches in case they need to trade for their lives. Motivations make monsters feel real.

**Talking monsters** should always attempt to communicate. They will relate their needs, ask questions, boast, make demands, threaten, and curse. Give the monster a distinctive voice, such as whispering, gibbering, clacking, clicking, growling, or croaking. Also mix-in non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions, body language,

gestures, and drawing. Magical monsters might use telepathy to whisper, biochemical lights to show pictures, or pheromones to communicate ideas via smell.

## Monster Encounter Triggers

You can use your Encounter roll to trigger special abilities, attacks, or behaviors. For example, giant ants might “swarm” on COMBO, or a dragon might breathe fire on ULT. Simply interpret your Encounter roll in the context of the monster. Some examples are below, but the whole point is to help you make the monster feel more chaotically real, so run this on the fly.

|        | Failure (d20 1-14)   | Success (d20 15-20)   |
|--------|--|---|
| THEME  | Highlight a dangerous aspect of the monster (e.g. huge fangs, thick scales, etc.) and Raise Hazard | Focus on visual appearance, sounds, or smells (e.g. bloodshot eyes, frothing mouth, yellow nails, putrid breath, etc) |
| EFFORT | Monster is furiously energetic, ferocious, feral, manic, or berserk, moving or attacking twice.    | Monster catches its breath, possibly either moving or attacking, but not both, this round.                            |
| ASSET  | Use the best weapon possible, in the most effective way.   | Choose the wrong weapon for the situation, or tip their hand.   |
| COMBO  | Ruthless team, swarming, or mobbing.   | Enemies act like individuals rather than a coordinated team   |
| ULT    | Devastating and defining attacks such as dragonbreath, petrification, death gaze, etc.             | Foreshadow the monster's defining special attack, which it will do next round unless the PCs stop it!                 |
| PREP   | Executes a deviously planned ambush, uses terrain effectively                                      | Attempts to setup a special attack, but is unsuccessful.  |

If you have time to plan a special monster encounter, you can make a custom Encounter table for the monster, or an abbreviated form along with the monster stat block.

Medusa HD 6; SA petrification, poison; THEME rattlesnake sounds, EFFORT tries to establish gaze, ASSET dagger & bow, COMBO venomous snakes, ULT Petrify creature meeting her gaze

## Weird Monsters

Monsters are a staple of the fantasy genre, and are important because they provide fear of the unknown, and let you demonstrate to the players that *there is weird scary shit out there*.

Use weird monsters sparingly, but when you use one take the time to make them interesting. You can pull out all the stops and make a monster really scary and weird. Load it up with special attacks and defenses. Give it an inhuman personality. Make it do or say something mysterious or creepy when it dies.

You can and should leverage the wealth of fantasy literature and books of monsters from old RPGs out there. However, make the monsters yours by mixing and mashing them up, so that the monsters in your campaign are unique, mysterious, and terrifying.

The most important thing to do is to keep the monster mysterious. Never truly explain what it is or where it's from. Foreshadow the monster, revealing fleeting glimpses and clues, but not letting the "camera" of your story reveal the monster until after you've milked it for all the dramatic effect you can.

Lastly, consider whether normal humans might fill the same role you have in mind. Resist adding humanoid monsters (a.k.a. "rubber forehead aliens" in sci-fi) when an interesting human would do. Goblins and orcs are not any more interesting than brigands or highwaymen unless you make the effort to make them interesting.

## Falling

Falls can be very deadly. Short falls are 1 Damage, such as a fall up to 15 feet (~5 m) or if thrown by an opponent. Longer falls over 15 feet require an extra Saving Throw for each additional 15 feet or fraction thereof. Thus a fall of 16-30 feet is 2 Saves, and 31-45 feet is 3 Saves, and so on. It's generally more important how you land than what you land on, so you can claim PREP if you are able to take the time to intentionally jump feet first and roll with the fall.

# Diseases

Characters resist most normal afflictions and diseases, but when they delve into dark and dramatically unclean places call for a Saving Throw if your Encounter roll is **Failure+EFFORT**. You should also do this when PCs have physical contact with something unclean such as a sewer, fungus monster, stale tomb air, etc.

|               |               |                   |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Black spots   | Lycanthropy   | Vampiric hunger   |
| Blood eye     | Mummy rot     | Undead fungus     |
| Bloody flux   | Ocre fever    | Umbral curse      |
| Mange         | Sewer spots   | Werewolf curse    |
| Grey rime     | Sleeping fits | White cysts       |
| Ifr'it fever  | Trog foot     | Wizard's twilight |
| Kha'din taint | Tomb lung     | Wyrmrrosis        |

# NPCs

NPCs are “non-player characters”, essentially anyone in the game universe who isn’t a PC (“player character”) controlled by a player. You control all NPCs, including minions and hirelings of the PCs, and even PCs whose player is absent from the game session.

Quickly create new NPCs with a few descriptive words, with a Theme for an occupation (e.g. baker, cook, driver, guard, scout), a Trait for a strength (e.g. clever, connected, quick, strong), and a Trait for a personality quirk (e.g. friendly, nosy, boorish). Add a Theme for an unusual race (e.g. elf, dwarf, etc), and add Themes or Traits to represent greater experience or power. After introducing an NPC, step back and see what the players do.

While you should make your NPCs come alive, never forget they are the supporting cast of the story. You need to be prepared to “let go” of even your favorite NPCs, allowing them to be marginalized or killed off. This is important for verisimilitude, and so that your NPCs do not eclipse the PCs. You can always make more!

# GM Quick Reference

## NPC Personas & Voices

As the GM, you can choose from these suggestions or roll. Failures are annoying or suggest dishonesty.

|        | Failure (d20 1-14)   | Success (d20 15-20)  |
|--------|--|--|
| THEME  | Arrogant, haughty, self-important, overly proud and overconfident                        | A voice used to giving orders and having them obeyed                                     |
| EFFORT | Starts off quiet and then fades to inaudible, causing you to lean forward to hear better | Brash and bold, often twice as loud as necessary. A booming baritone: "Ho ho my friend!" |
| ASSET  | Sounds like he starts the day gargling hot coals; Like a cat bringing up a hairball      | Smooth and dark, like treacle (molasses) poured into black coffee                        |
| COMBO  | Has friends in low places, like an east end gangster                                     | Everybody's friend. Hey friend! I can definitely help you out...I know a guy...          |
| VLT    | Dripping with false sincerity  | A voice that makes belts unbuckle themselves   |
| PREP   | Every word a sneer, every pause a lie  | A sensible, reasonable voice. "I think we can come to an arrangement"                    |

**Personality Quirks:** always bored, angry drunk, annoyingly cryptic, avant-garde, bigoted, bloody-minded, boastful, bookworm, bossy, bully, calculating, can-do attitude, chatterbox, chirpy, collects small animals, compulsive liar, condescending, conniving, creep, decadent, egomaniac, exquisite dresser, extravagant, loyal, fast-talker, femme-fatale, fiercely ambitious, fits of melancholy, flamboyant, folksy wisdom, gossip, hard-boiled, hears voices, hothead, idealistic, incredibly persistent, insightful observer, jack of all trades, jerk, klutz, love-struck, mad genius, manic, master orator, miser, mopey, naïve, no-nonsense, obsessive, paranoid, perfect manners, pouty, power-hungry, prickly, ruthless, sadist, self-destructive, self-important, self-pitying, senile, serene, shameless flirt, slacker, slimy, slovenly, snarky, snitch, snob, social butterfly, sophist, terrible memory, thick, toady, totally unreliable, twitchy, vain, vengeful, village idiot, well-travelled, whiner, wild child, wisecracking, world weary, debtor, drunk, blackmailed, occultist, murderer, bastard, coward, weak, unfaithful, scapegoat, ex-slave, blackmailer, broke/bankrupt, sole survivor, deserter, angry fits, hears voices, possessed, Kha'din tainted, thief, untrustworthy, selfish, cruel, abused, scarred, tortured, embarrassed, vengeful, cultist, zealous, obsessed, liar, cheat

## NPC Occupations

|                   |               |                 |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| acolyte           | gardener      | sailor          |
| advocate          | gemcutter     | scholar         |
| alchemist         | prospector    | scout           |
| apothecary        | goldsmith     | scribe          |
| arbiter           | groom         | sculptor        |
| armorier          | guard         | shaman          |
| assassin          | guide         | shipwright      |
| assayer           | healer        | shopkeeper      |
| astrologer        | herald/crier  | silversmith     |
| baker             | herbalist     | servant         |
| bard              | hunter        | serving wench   |
| banker            | inquisitor    | shepherd        |
| blacksmith        | jongleur      | singer          |
| bodyguard         | knight        | slave           |
| bounty            | landlord      | slave-trader    |
| brewer            | leatherworker | soldier         |
| butcher           | longshoreman  | sorcerer        |
| butler            | maid          | spinster        |
| candlemaker       | mapmaker      | squire          |
| carpenter         | mercenary     | stable boy/girl |
| cartographer      | midwife       | stonecutter     |
| chamberlain       | merchant      | tailor          |
| chef              | minstrel      | tax             |
| clerk             | miller        | collector       |
| cobbler/shoemaker | milkman       | teacher         |
| concubine         | miner         | thatcher        |
| cook dancer       | monk          | thief           |
| druid             | mortician     | town guard      |
| dyer              | musician      | tracker         |
| engineer          | page          | urchin          |
| executioner       | painter       | vintner         |
| falconer          | panhandler    | wagon           |
| farmer            | peddler       | driver          |
| fisherman         | potter        | weaponsmith     |
| ferryman          | priest        | weaver          |
| fishmonger        | prostitute    | woodsman        |
| furrier           | sage          | wizard          |

# I Loot the Body!

Players can ask for the items they can see at any time, and use a Maneuver to take an unattended item. They can use an Action to quickly loot a body or similarly sized area, and take one item.

Finding concealed items requires players to state they are actively searching, including the method (visual, patdown, or strip), and roll.

Roll to determine what might be found. On a Crit the item is significantly nicer, more valuable, possibly even a magic trinket. However, truly valuable, powerful, or rare items should not be found as random Loot, but as an Experience Path or planned Reward.

|        | Failure ( $\partial 20$ 14-)                                       | Success ( $\partial 20$ 15+)                              |
|--------|--|---|
| THEME  | Something useless related to the main Theme of the owner.          | Something useful related to the main Theme of the owner.  |
| EFFORT | Something exists, and can be found via an invasive (gross) search. | Something exists, and can be found via a thorough search. |
| ASSET  | A tool useful to the owner, but broken or not useful to the PCs.   | A tool useful to the owner, such as a weapon or shield.   |
| COMBO  | Empty coin purse, no loot.   | Coin purse, (Crit) gems, or other valuables               |
| VLT    | Burned out item  | More valuable, unusual, or (Crit) magic trinket.          |
| PREP   | Ruined clothing, once valuable                                     | A valuable article of clothing                            |

**Something Awful** - On a Crit or Fumble there is also "something awful" to find...something disturbing and gross, or possibly horrifying. If found; Raise Stress!

|                     |                     |                   |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| messy wound         | bounty note         | chaos sign        |
| gross diseased bits | gold tooth          | mummified part    |
| body bugs / lice    | piercing(s)         | he's not dead yet |
| trophy scalps       | stolen item / coins | lock of hair      |
| string of ears      | creepy odd lump     | cursed trinket    |
| wanted poster       | worms / maggots     | Eldritch sign     |

# Hit Locations

As the GM, include the **Hit Location** along with each attack, e.g. "The goblin falchion slices wickedly at your knee". You can roll for a suggestion, but should usually choose something both descriptive and appropriate, e.g. rats on the floor will usually attack low targets such as legs, but rats falling from the ceiling attack the head and shoulders, a caltrop trap hits under the foot, etc.

## Hit Location Sub-locations

|        |       |   |
|--------|-------|---|
| THEME  | Head  | neck, chin, nose, face, forehead, skull                   |
| EFFORT | Torso | abdomen, ribs, sternum, chest, clavicle                   |
| ASSET  | Arm   | fingers, hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder |
| COMBO  | Groin | outer thigh, inner thigh, genitals, hip, pelvis           |
| ULT    | Knee  | patella, outer knee, inner knee, back of knee             |
| PREP   | Leg   | shin, calf, ankle, foot, heel, instep, toes               |

## Use the d20 to add details

**Priority Target (Success)** - On a Success, change Hit Location to Head for melee attacks and Torso for ranged attacks, even if those have the best armor.  
**Gap (Fumble)** - On a Fumble, hit a Sub-location with weak armor, if any, such as the face, joints, groin, armpit, back of knee, hand, foot, etc. Melee attacks especially will hand snipe when possible. Closed helms prevent this for Head.  
**Sub-location (Failure)** - Otherwise, map the d20 to a Sub-location low-high, and odd/even as left/right, e.g. Arm 7 is left forearm, Arm 14 is right shoulder.

# Death Throes

As the GM, when you roll a Failure or Fumble on any roll, also describe "death throes" of dying monsters to make dying messy and scary.

## Fumble (d20 Stress-) Failure (d20 Hazard-)

|        |                              |                                 |
|--------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| THEME  | Attacks                      | Mutters, menaces, and curses    |
| EFFORT | Attacks and then dies        | Messily dies, ew, gross!        |
| ASSET  | Clutches a precious item     | Hides loot - you can't have it! |
| COMBO  | Gets hold of a weapon        | Fingers and hands wriggle       |
| ULT    | Uses special attack or spell | Mutters about awful things      |
| PREP   | Prepares for a counterattack | Plays dead                      |

# Encounter Table

As the GM, describe an Encounter at the start of every round, and whenever players Fumble or take a risky action. When possible continue any natural chain of events, natural consequences, situational development, etc. Otherwise you can roll 1d20 + Legend Die for inspiration. Raise Hazard when describing ominous details; call for a Saving Throw for direct effects.

|        | Failure (d20 Hazard-)  | Success (d20 Hazard+)  |
|--------|--|--|
| THEME  | Raise Hazard, and introduce a new threat that is thematic to the current scene, such as a foe, trap, weather, etc.   | Offer useful information and details about the scene, a location, or an NPC. Raise Hazard for dramatic details.  |
| EFFORT | Raise Hazard, and describe how the journey ahead will be arduous. Call for a Save if PCs are already exerting themselves or have unstable Dooms  | Offer an opportunity to rest or find shelter.  |
| ASSET  | Present a challenge caused by superior gear on a foe, poor gear on PC, or special gear for the situation. In combat a PC has a gear mishap or attracts an attack due to arms & armor.                    | Offer a clue to gain a resource (e.g. food, water, light sources, arrows) which might be amazing on a Crit).   |
| COMBO  | Encounter a team of hostile NPCs or challenge that needs teamwork (e.g. auto-closing door, 2-person puzzle). An NPC mistake sets the group back. Foes use teamwork, tactics, and maneuvers to [-] COMBO. | Encounter a group of possibly friendly NPCs, or describe an opportunity to use teamwork, or an NPC helps a PC teammate. Provide an opportunity to show teamwork or describe how an ally proves helpful. Possibly Cut Hazard. |
| ULT    | Advance the plans of a major villain, or foreshadow a major threat. Or highlight an unusual risk (e.g. evil magic, spirits, etc). Or highlight a Dark Secret of a PC or NPC.                             | Highlight an ULT of a PC or NPC, e.g. the "scout" finds a hidden trail; the "wizard" finds a Ley Line, the "thief" spots a tail, the "ranger" finds tracks, the "archer" sees a target.                                      |
| PREP   | Punish recklessness, especially if clear dangers are ignored. Surprise encounter, ambush, trap, jump scare, etc. In combat describe how the foes were better prepared, and players [-] PREP.             | Drop a clue to help players prepare for what's coming, e.g. "the air coming down the corridor is warm and smoky like brimstone". Provide an opportunity to Cut Hazard.   |



# AS ABOVE, SO BELOW

THE WORLD IS NEWBORN, bright and beautiful, full of life and boundless potential. Young races of man build kingdoms on the unspoiled shores of the Dragon Sea. As they explore wildernesses and forge kingdoms they encounter ancient ruins, Eldar, dragons, and monsters, and mysteries of the old worlds.

THE WORLD HAS DIED and risen anew in an infinite cycle. Each new incarnation blossoms and grows for an aeon, then dies in an apocalypse. Every reincarnation is a land for new races and civilizations and dragons, built on the stones and bones of the past. Every death adds another layer of history.

THE UNDERWORLDS are vast subterranean gigadungeons formed by the layers of countless precursor civilizations. Survivors compete for life in the dark cold below, fighting monsters and one another in their struggle to reach the surface. Yet, treasure hunters, adventurers, and doom cults seek tunnels into the Underworlds to plunder the riches of ancient aeons. Within the depths you will find dead cities, riches, artifacts, dragon lairs, monsters, vast tunnels and caverns inside dead dragons, trapped Eldar civilizations, imprisoned horrors, entrances to Kalla, and shrines to Gods with forgotten names.

ELDAR are survivors of previous aeons. Once young races like us, they have been forged, broken, and reforged in world-ending fire to something like fae or daemons. A few Eldar have realms above and below, but most are trapped below and seek the surface, or wander without a people or a home..

BUILD YOUR LEGEND as you explore the world, above and below. Write your character in your own words, with no numbers or limitations, and set your own goals for advancement. Then play in total immersion, with a unique new dice system that keeps you immersed in playing your “words only” character, rewarding good roleplaying and clever tactics.

THIS BOOK includes everything you need to start adventuring in the Dragon Isles, with a setting overview and full game rules.

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