



# LEGENDS

## Roleplaying System

# Player Quick Reference - Actions & Maneuvers

As a player, you get one main **Action** per round, which is one significant thing you are focusing on doing. Action occur on your Turn and often require a roll. Examples:

- **Attack** - damage a foe (armed, unarmed, grappling, magical, et al.)
- **Defend** - actively defend with a parry, dodge, magic ward, etc.
- **Recover** - Untap one Trait (roleplay how you do this)
- **Secret** - use a Secret, such as casting a spell or using a special ability
- **Maneuver** - take another Maneuver, or one needing a roll, such a leap over a pit

You also get two **Maneuvers** per round, to take at *any* time you like. However, Maneuvers are less significant than Actions and cannot require a roll. Examples:

- **Move (5 feet)** - move 5 feet (e.g. walk, hop, sit, stand, kneel, turn around)
- **Double Move (10 feet)** - double move forward (e.g. run, charge)
- **Item** - ready a weapon, reload, pick up item, put item away
- **Assist** - aid a roll (counts as PREP or COMBO), such as dodge, aim, feint, etc
- **Cover** - take cover (counts as ASSET)

## Roll the Dice

Roll a **d20** and a **Legend Die**. Your **d20** is an unmodified “natural” roll which succeeds on 15+. You Crit on 20. You Fumble if you roll equal to or less than the **Hazard**, which **starts at 1** but is slowly increased by the GM as the danger and tension grows.

Your **Legend Die** is a custom d6 ( below) which may upgrade or downgrade your natural result by one step. Describe (ideally roleplaying) how your roll succeeded or failed. Legend Die faces are:

1. **THEME** — Name a Theme or Theme Signature that assists your action. For example, when attacking with a sword, you might name Themes like “knight”, “swordsman”, or “strong”. Roleplay your Theme.
2. **COMBO** — Name a combination of two Themes, Theme Signatures, Traits, or Secrets that work together (i.e. enhance each other) to assist your action. For example, if you are attacking with a sword you could name “strong + knight”. You may combine Themes from multiple characters who are working together as a team. Situational Disadvantages or Dark Secrets may increase the Combo to 3+.
3. **EFFORT** — You can push yourself beyond the natural result by Tapping a Trait. If you have a Doom you cannot do this, instead downgrade your natural result.
4. **ASSET** — Describe how you are using an Asset to assist your action. For example, a tinderbox aids in starting a fire and a rope is useful for climbing and many other things. In combat the primary Assets are weapons and armor.
5. **ULT** — Describe how you are the absolute best at your action, out of anyone in the current scene. This is based on player consensus, and nobody gets the bonus if there is no consensus. If your action directly opposes someone, and they have Ult, then downgrade your natural result.
6. **PREP** — Declare a previous Action or Maneuver you took in preparation for the current roll. Usually this requires that you paid attention to clues to get ready for what’s coming and used your wits to prepare yourself. However, if your foes are better prepared than you (e.g. ambush) then downgrade your natural result.

# Saving Throws

While transitioning to your turn, the GM will call for a Saving Throw if you are attacked by a monster, trap, spell, or other danger. Roll the dice during your turn: if you fail you take **Damage**. If you Fumble you take extra Damage or effects. If you Crit you gain a **Counter**, a bonus Action in the context of your defense. You can use a Maneuver to assist your Saving Throw. You could dodge or parry to gain PREP, or cover to gain ASSET, or help an ally to provide them COMBO.

## Damage

You take **Damage** whenever you fail a **Damage Roll** (Saving Throws, Stunts, & Secrets).

- **Tap a Trait to Soak Damage.** Tapping a Trait negates 1 Damage, +1 per important reason why the specific Trait is ideal for opposing the specific Damage. If you do not Soak all Damage you gain a **Doom**.
- **Spend an Action to Un-Tap a Trait.** When you do this, un-Tap one Trait of your choice by erasing the "x" mark you wrote. Describe what you do, e.g. catch your breath, sip water, eat, bind wounds, meditate, taunt foes, or compose haiku.

## Dooms

Dooms are life threatening injuries or afflictions. Dooms have three Countdown boxes:

- Check a box each GM Turn until you receive first aid. You or someone else needs to use an Action to provide first aid as soon as possible after gaining a Doom.
- Check a box if you roll a Fumble, including the roll causing the Doom.
- Check a box to combine additional Dooms of the same kind, such as another wound in the same Hit Location, more poison, etc.

The Doom "Stage" describes how far down the Countdown you've gone. The GM may waive effects when appropriate, e.g. a "wounded leg" does not hinder listening.

Boxes	Doom Stage	Effects	Recovery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stage 0 - First Symptoms	Un-Tap needs 2 Actions	2d6 days
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stage I - Full Onset	downgrade on EFFORT	2d6 weeks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stage II - Incapacitated	cannot take Actions	2d6 months
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stage III - Death	death/retirement	n/a

Recovery typically requires the amount of resting time indicated above. The GM will decrease or increase time for special circumstances, such as special healing (e.g. magic healing spells, potions, etc) or unsanitary/stressful conditions

# L€G€NDS Roleplaying System

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# LEGENDS

## Roleplaying System

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# Introduction

The **LEGENDS Roleplaying System** is purpose built to let you create any kind of character imaginable, and stay immersed in-character.

The LEGENDS Roleplaying System is purpose built to provide you with full creative control to create word-based characters and monsters, and stay immersed in-character throughout the game.

## Your character, in your own words

Characters and monsters are written entirely in your own words. There are no meta-game terms, numbers, or enumerated lists for classes, races, or skills..

Play who you want!

## Legends Dice

A custom d6 Legends Die keeps you immersed in your “words only” character, savoring each facet of your character concept, and keeping all rolls in-character.

## Who will you become?

Your character advances and is refined by accomplishing your goals in-character, not tracking points. Play to find out who you are.

## GM Support

Legends is built from the ground-up to help the GM run the table smoothly. This revolves around an innovative and fast turn-based



play with random encounter seeds to inspire the GM each round and keep players moving ahead, in-character.

## Streamlined turn-based play

Legends streamlines basic game flow. Legends is a turn-based game, where each player is provided one main Action before play passes clockwise to the next player. There is no “initiative” and play proceeds continuously, so it’s always someone’s turn. Notably, the GM also takes a turn. In fact the GM always takes the first turn, during which the scene can be described, along with a random Encounter, followed by narration of maneuvers by monsters and foreshadowing of threats. The result is structured and streamlined game flow than other RPGs, avoiding reliance on “DM fiat” or fudging of rolls.

## Legends Dice keep you in character

Players do all the dice rolling, both for attack and defense. A standard Legends roll consists of a **d20** and a **Legend Die**. The d20 is a simple “natural” roll without modifiers. You succeed on 15+, fail on 14-, crit on 20, and fumble on 1. However, you also fumble if you roll less than or equal to the **Hazard**, which starts at 1 and is slowly increased by the GM as danger and tension rise during the story.

Your **Legend Die** is a custom 1d6 with faces labeled **THEME**, **EFFORT**, **ASSET**, **COMBO**, **ULT**, and **PREP**. Each die face represents one *potential factor* for success. Rolling your Legend Die decides which factor was decisive in this moment. This allows you to experience the various factors separately like a multi-course meal, roleplaying and showcasing each aspect of your character and the scenario.

Your Legend Die takes into account various factors such as 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 other half comes from player decisions and skill, so player agency and choice have a high degree of impact on the outcome. Over the course of many rolls the six factors will be equally important, so none can be safely ignored.

## When to use Legends

Legends excels in a few places that few other RPGs do.

### Newbie Friendly

Legends is easy to learn, making it friendly to novice roleplayers, kids, or anyone who has a creative concept in mind. Characters are in the players own words, so novices can jump in without needing to read any rules. Also, randomly creative ideas such as "tinkerer", "bear", "baby dragon", or "blue fire ninja" pose no problems whatsoever.

### One-Shot Friendly

Legends shines for quick pick-up games with any flavor of campaign. The system is flexible and simple to explain, requiring no up-front reading. The system is also genre-neutral, which is especially handy if you are trying a new genre, or want to mashup different genres.

### Genre Neutral

We've played Legends with all sorts of quick games ranging from quirky one-offs to decade-spanning epic campaigns. This book uses the traditional RPG "medieval high fantasy" genre for tone and flavor text. This is my favorite genre and the one I know best.

- Classic genres:** fantasy, sci-fi, horror, modern, superhero
- Fantasy:** dungeon crawl, fantasy sandbox, epic high fantasy, medieval europe, mythic europe, mythic japan
- Sci-fi:** big ship crew, explorers, starfleet, military, mercs, science explorers, space pirates, space station, time cops

**Modern:** cyber punkers, rock band, spies/agents,

military/mercs, modern w/ magic, wild wild west

**Cross-Genre Mashups:** "connecticut yankee", time travel

## Heroic Realism

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 players consider all their options, because that's a realistic part of how people approach their lives.

Legends is built upon historical martial principles (the author and several contributors are life-long martial artists in multiple fighting systems). Combat in Legends feels like historical combat, keeping all the authentic nuances but without overcomplicating things.

## Getting Started

Gather 2-8 people and nominate one player to be your "Game Master" (GM). Each player takes on the role a player character (PC). Each person will need their own d20 and Legend Die (which you will currently need to make). No other dice are required.

Your Game Master (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 acts as the referee or judge, keeping the game flowing according to its 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 decisions (and dice) of the players. Play to find out what happens.

## Sample Characters

Here are some sample characters.

# Syr Wyndon

Sun Knight of Alglondor

## THEMES

Alglond - *of Tolsiriost*

Knight - *holy paladin*

Strong - *valiant*

Hallow - *pious and brave*

## TRAITS

brave, pious, strong, tall

## ASSETS

Longsword - *father's sword*

Plate armor

Kite shield

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

Wind Mage - nine winds



## TRAITS

agile, deadly, quiet, intense

## ASSETS

Sickle swords

Dart knives

Armored robes

Smoke grenades

## SECRETS

Whispering wind

Vanish into smoke

Wind jump

Gust of wind

## DARK SECRETS

Sole survivor of last mission



# 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!

## Character Sheet

Start with a blank sheet of paper, or a shiny printed character sheet, then write the following elements all in your own words.

**Name** - What do you want everyone to call you? Feel free to include an alias, title, epithet, or anything else you like. Ask the GM for suggestions that might fit into the campaign setting

**Themes** - Write two core concepts that describe what you are. These are freeform but must be familiar concepts such as "Elf" or "swordsman". You also get to write a Signature for each Theme to make it yours.

**Traits** - Write two keywords that describe your personal qualities, e.g. "strong", "patient", or "quick-witted". Traits often support Themes.

**Assets** - Write two items, such as a sword, suit of armor, magic wand, or spellbook. Use your own words but they must exist in your world.

**Secrets** - Write two special skills or abilities that you can do, which most people can't, such as magic spells or secret languages. Optionally, you can take Assets or Traits in place of Secrets.

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

**XP** - Write up to two Experience Paths for motives, goals, or quests.

This is just a summary, see the remainder of this section for details.

## Tips

**Start playing** - Character refinement is an essential part of the game, so don't worry about getting your concept perfect right at the start. Instead, work quickly and then jump into playing the game to find out what you will become.

**Options** - You can optionally take an extra Dark Secret to get one extra Theme, Asset, Secret, or Trait. Also, if you take a spellbook or other secret tome you start with an extra Secret.

**Finishing touches** - You can optionally embellish your character with finishing touches such as a backstory and character portrait.

**Share** - It's nice to share. While your character is "yours" and in your own words, it's a good idea to involve the other players and the GM in your creative process. Role-playing games are social games, and you will be living in a world with other characters. They might have great feedback on how to best fit your ideas into the game world and how the characters can get along and work together as a team.

# Themes

Your character can have up to four core **Themes** that describe you as primary archetypes, such as: "Elf, Swordsman, Wizard, Quickened".

Use your own words, however you must use familiar concepts and wording that the other players will immediately recognize and understand. The other players shouldn't need to ask you to explain what a Theme means. Simpler and more standardized is better.

## Signatures

As you write each Theme, also write a Signature to awesomize the Theme and make it yours. 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 Lorenia", "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" or "only the strong survive".

### **Leclo, moon elf prince**

<b>Elf</b>	moon elf prince
<b>Swordsman</b>	blade dancer of the crescent moon
<b>Wizard</b>	sacred moon magic
<b>Quickened</b>	magically quickened mind and body

While Themes must be in a simple and "standard" voice, 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, COMBO, or ULT. For example, if you are playing "Leclo, moon elf prince" (above) in a sword duel, and roll COMBO, you need to name two Themes, so you might say "Fighter" and "Quick". You can name Signatures in place of Themes, so on COMBO you can name "blade dancer of the crescent moon" and "Swordsman" together.

You must name Themes that work together on the kinds of things you want to excel at doing. Redundant and overlapping Themes will make you perform better at a narrower range of tasks, and better set you up for ULT. Feel free to discuss your Theme strategy with your fellow players, since each of you could specialize in a narrow band of Themes and still be well-rounded as a group.

## Sample Themes

Lists of sample Themes are provided below to give you some ideas for writing your Themes. Notice how familiar RPG tropes such as "race and class" are all possible as Themes, but not required.

### Fantasy Themes

archer	horse lord	paladin
assassin	illusionist	quick
berserker	knight	ranger
bard	magician	rogue
battlemage	magic-user	soldier
charismatic	man-at-arms	sorcerer
cleric	mercenary	swashbuckler
druid	merchant	thief
executioner	monk	tinkerer
fighter	necromancer	tough
hero	nobleman	wizard

### Sci-Fi Themes

assassin	mercenary	space cowboy
asteroid miner	merchant	space marine
belter	pilot	space pirate
courier	psionicist	space samurai
empath	reaver	space trucker
engineer	scitech	star ranger
hacker	smuggler	starfighter pilot
jed'dai	spacer	strategist
lancer	space cop	void navigator

### Wild Wasteland Themes

bandito	mercenary	rider
canny	mutant	sharpshooter
doc	outlaw	soldier
gambler	pure human	survivor
gunslinger	preacher	tinkerer
lucky	rainmaker	tough
marshal	ranger	wanderer

## Race Themes

You can optionally use a Theme for your race. If you don't, you are the most common race in the campaign setting, such as "human". Choosing a race gives your character an anchoring culture and general physical appearance, and races often provide natural advantages. Sample themes are below, but most likely the GM will have some ideas about which races are appropriate for your campaign setting.

### Fantasy

elf	gnome	half-orc
drow	gray elf	high elf
dwarf	halfling	human
dragonkin	half-ogre	wood elf

### Sci-Fi

android	astronaut	belter
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bird man	cyborg	martian
brain-in-a-jar	dog man	saurian
bug man	earthling	slug man
cat man	fish man	super soldier
clone	fungoid	yeti
crystal man	high-g colonist	xenomorph

### Animal Heroes

baby dragon	husky ranger	raven thief
bard beagle	labradoodle bard	sifu shitsu
boxer monk	mouse guardian	st. bernard
bulldogbarian	ninja turtle	stunt eagle
catrabat	poodle paladin	timber wolferine
cat burglar	rat rogue	labradabrador

## Themes for Magic and Faith

You can use Themes to describe any talents in the magic arts or calling as a priest. Any magical powers such as spells, prayers, and such need to be taken as Secrets.

### Magic Arts

alchemist	fire wizard	sorcerer
arcanist	hedge wizard	summoner
battlemage	illusionist	thaumaturge
black wizard	magic-user	warlock
blood mage	magician	war wizard
chiromancer	necromancer	witch
conjurer	oneiromancer	weather wizard
diviner	rune mage	white wizard
enchanter	seer	wild mage
evoker	song mage	wizard

### Faiths

brother	confessor	druid
cleric	destriant	faithful

father	paladin	shaman
hallow	pious	sister
healer	priest	spirit guide
inquisitor	reverend	sword saint
keeper	saint	templar
monk	seer	wise one

## Campaign Setting Themes

The GM may have lists of sample Themes for your campaign setting. Here are a few of mine just to show you how natural and simple this is.

### Races of the Dragon Isles

alglond	elf	kith
alu	gobbah	linnorm
avathar	harn	northman
baal	ifr'it	rochir
belerion	karrock	southmaren
dorthonien	kessrith	tengu
dwur	kitanian	vozen

### Magic Arts of the Dragon Isles

alchemist	dragon priest	necromancer
black wizard	guldurine	sorcerer
cairn mage	hallow / saint	thaumaturge
dracoalchemist	necroalchemist	white wizard

### Species of the Dorado Sector

alpha	Incarnate	Organic
colonist/collie	mot	trilisk
galm	nisibisi	uni
ghost	omega	warg

# Traits

Your character starts with a few minor **Traits**, which are minor qualities and keywords that add detail and fill in around your Themes. Write your Traits in your own words, and while you have few now you can gain more as XP Rewards.

athletic	holy	stable
calm	icy gaze	stalwart
chi	infernal	stoic
cool	intelligent	strong
dashing	intrepid	steely eyed
dextrous	magical	tough
elemental pact	morale	tough as nails
fast	noble	traveler
fit	pious	unbreakable
focused	powerful	unholy
genius	quick	unflappable
gritty	rock steady	unstoppable
handsome	silver tongue	veteran
hardy	smart	wise
healthy	spiritual	witty

## Using Traits

Traits describe your character, so you should use them to help you roleplay. You can also name a Trait when your Legend Die rolls Combo or Ult. For example, a Trait like "handsome" or "silver tongue" would help you at negotiating with the king. However, the main function of Traits is to let you push yourself to your limits. You can Tap a Trait to expend effort when your Legend Die rolls EFFORT. You can also Tap a Trait to Soak Damage that would normally kill a man.

To Tap a Trait, simply mark an "x" by the Trait. A Tapped Trait cannot be used until recovered (see below). If all your Traits are Tapped then

you're "Tapped Out". While there is no immediate effect, you risk a Doom if you fail a roll, since you can't Soak more Damage. Thus, Traits act like a kind of "hit points", allowing you to act like a hero for as long as your Traits last, but when they are gone you're a vulnerable mortal.

You can recover a Trait whenever you spend an Action to take a break. Describe what you do, whether you just catch your breath, sip some water, or eat something. When you do this, recover (or "un-tap") the Trait of your choice by erasing the "x" mark you wrote.

### **Traits Example: G'thar the Northman**

G'thar goes to the pub, fights, and burglarizes a bakery, and had to Tap most of his Traits: ~~icy gaze, tough as nails, abs of steel, lucky~~

Feeling tired G'thar rents a room and rests awhile: *icy gaze, tough as nails, abs of steel, lucky*

Later, G'thar completes a quest to the "ice dryad grove" and gain a new Trait: *icy gaze, tough as nails, abs of steel, lucky, dryad's kiss*

# Assets

Write down a few important **Assets**. These are your most prized possessions, such as your father's sword, armor, shield, Elven bow, wizard staff, or spellbook. You should use your own words, but you must wording that is familiar to the other players. In other words, these should be items which anyone in the campaign setting would recognize.

The GM may require you to explain how you have each Asset and knows how to use it, especially for any complicated Assets. Expertise in heavy military weapons such as a greatsword or longbow requires lifelong training, and you must have an appropriate Theme or Trait. You will also have opportunities to gain new Assets during play. You might buy a sword, loot the body of a dead foe, or steal something. Any specialized gear will similarly require a Theme or Trait.

## Signatures

Similar to Themes, you can add a Signature to awesomize the Assets and make it yours. For example, your "longsword" can be "Longsword - my father's sword". Only the most rare Assets will have Signatures for special abilities or exceptional qualities.

## Simple Assets

Examples of Assets are provided below, but you should outfit your character however you imagine. You can draw from any sources you like, such as novels, movies, other RPGs, or historical sources.

### Medieval Armor

arming jack	gambeson	open helm
chain maille	gauntlets	plate armor
closed helm	great helm	skullcap
coat of plates	hauberk	vambraces

## Medieval Weapons & Shields

arming sword	falchion	morning star
battle ax	gauntlets	round shield
buckler	kite shield	self bow
closed helm	light crossbow	sidesword
club (1h)	longsword	throwing ax
dagger	mace	war dart

## Medieval Heavy Weapons

arbalest	halberd	polarm
club (2h)	lance (mounted)	spadone
crossbow	longbow	spear
greatsword	polax	Zweihander

## Adventuring / Dungeoneering Gear

acid flask	iron spikes	rope, hemp, 50'
backpack	mirror	sack, burlap
belladonna	lantern	sack, leather
healing potion	ladder, 5'	waterskin
helmet, leather	lockpicks	wolfsbane
holy water flask	oil flask	torch
iron rations, 1d	pole, 10'	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
fishhooks	lockpicks	smoke pot
gloves	padded grapnel	string
grappling hook	pliers	thieves toolkit

## Sci-Fi Equipment

auto-doc	blaster	communicator
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computer	geiger counter	portable radar
drone, recon	gizmo	power armor
drone, repair	grenade	scanner
drone, security	medical kit	vacsuit

## Using Assets

Assets are normally *expected* as part of what you do. If you attack a foe it's naturally expected that you have a weapon. So in most cases, Assets aren't named like Assets are, but the *lack* of an appropriate Asset will cause a penalty, so you need to name an *extra* Theme.

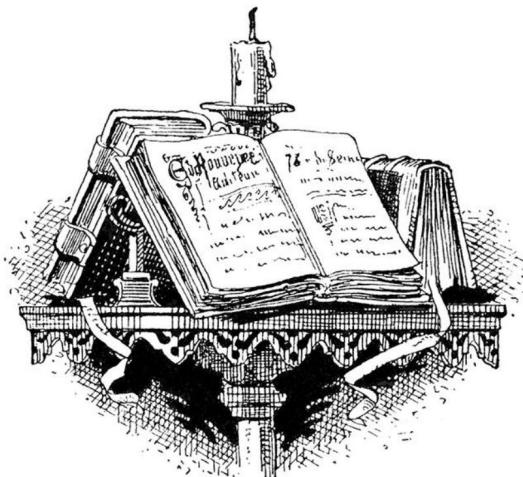
However, Assets with Signatures are special. If you have an Asset with a Signature that is ideal to the task, then you can name it instead of a Theme. For example, an Asset "Longsword - holy sword" could be named when attacking an evil undead or daemonic foe because the Signature is pretty much perfect for putting down evil.

## Special Assets

**Innate Assets** - If your character race has wings, claws, scaled skin, or other "natural" features you need to take them as Assets. Otherwise you won't have those features of your race.

**Magic Items** - You must obtain approval from the GM to start with any Assets which describe magic powers or other special qualities. The GM will probably require you to take an extra Dark Secret.

**Secret Books** - If you start play with a mysterious tome such as a "spellbook" you start with one additional Secret, or two Secrets if you take an additional Dark Secret. Your book might even contain additional Secrets for you to learn later.



# Secrets

Write a few **Secrets**, such as a magic spell, secret language, or a secret master. These are things known by know only to you, or to a select few, and each Secret should only known by one character in your group.

location for teleport spell	contacts/allies
secret base	owed a favor
mastery of a node	has leverage over person x
password to thieves' guild	can bribe person y
the thieves' cant	location of a magic artifact
ogham (language of druids)	secret or long lost language
location of a lost temple	apprentice of an archmage
memorized treasure map	apprentice of a master thief

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

detect magic	knock	shield
fireball	light	teleport
Illusion	rope trick	wizard lock

**Supporting Themes** - Your Secrets should follow your Themes. For example, an Elf “white wizard archer” might start with secrets such as: *Elf light, Blessing of the Elves, Silent bow shot, and Secret language of the Elves*. You must have at least one supporting Theme to know a Secret.

**Supporting Assets** - Many Secrets also require a supporting Asset. For example, our Elf will need a *moonstone* for *Elf light* and *Blessing of the Elves*, as well as a bow for his *silent bow shot*. You may need to revise your Assets depending on which Secrets you want to use.

**Secret Assets** - Some Assets require a Secret for their use. For example, a Moonstone will not glow for someone who does not

understand how to use it. Also some weapons are “Complex” and require a Secret to use their full capabilities.

**Instincts & Habits** - You can use Traits for any habits or instincts you have developed. You can assume you do these things even without saying so at first, but they can sometimes also get you in trouble.

sits with back to wall  
checks the ceiling  
checks for poison  
always wears gloves

covers his tracks  
keeps sword ready  
always checks exits  
keeps weapons clean

Secrets can be simple, but you should read the chapter on Secrets for the full rules if you intend to have a lot of Secrets, such as a wizard or other magic-user with books of spells.

## Dark Secrets

You must also write **one Dark Secret**. This is something that complicates your life or holds you back, such as a debt to the Thieves Guild. Add one Dark Secret per Theme or Signature related to magic (e.g. wizard, priest) or criminal elements (e.g. thief, assassin).

secret identity  
sole survivor of last mission  
outcast/exile from homeland  
haunted by nightmares  
visited by portents/dreams  
sees dead people  
hears voices in my head

zealous/uncompromising  
nosy in others' business  
my friends turn undead  
too honest  
ex-smuggler  
wanted outlaw  
spy from foreign nation

# Experience Paths

Build your legend with Experience Paths ("XP" or "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 also find a new Asset, including a "magic item" or other traditional kind of loot.

Experience Paths fulfill the same purpose as experience points and levels in OSR, but keep the advancement in-character and in your own words. The GM can set a limit on the number of each kind of character detail. Usually Themes are strictly limited to a maximum of four.

**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.

**Dooms** - If you suffer a deadly injury or other affliction you will gain a "Doom". Since this is a character experience it is recorded along with your other Experience Paths. However, Dooms are "dark paths" with a Countdown to death, so they represent your struggle for life.



HUON DEFEATS THE GIANT AGRAPART

# Part 2: Play the Game

Legends uses continuous turns, so it's always someone's turn, even out of combat. The GM is responsible for controlling the flow of turns. The GM takes the first turn, to narrate the fictional world and set the scene for the PCs. The GM then describes a **Transition** to each player to take their turn, flowing clockwise around the table until play circles back around to the GM. Any attacks or other threats requiring a Saving Throw are described during Transitions and handled within player turns.

## GM Turns

The GM takes the first turn of each round. The GM first rolls an **Encounter** as a seed to **Narrate** changes to the scene, then **Maneuvers** scene elements such as monsters. The GM then **Transitions** to the first player.

An **Encounter** is a seed of inspiration to drive narration of changes to the scene. The GM rolls a random **Encounter** at the start of his Turn as an aid to help paint a picture of the scenario spontaneously unfolding before the PCs. The GM vividly describes what the PCs notice about the surroundings, such as "you hear the low growling of wolves in the trees". At this time players are likely to ask questions until everyone can picture the scene.

The GM then **Maneuvers** scene elements, creating a sense of verisimilitude. 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. 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 an NPC, trap, terrain, or even the weather. Any threats may only be "a

shadow of a threat", meaning they are possible threats, and the GM must not call for any Saving Throws yet, since that will be handled during **Transitions** to player turns.

Each player has two Maneuvers per round, which can be used at any time. Players may freely interject their 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, the player might say "I step back to keep my distance". The GM should handle this with a fluid narrative when possible, or can pause play to settle conflicting Maneuvers.

The above is a framework which supports the GM, with guidelines for what to focus on each turn, and limits what the GM does. This helps to keep the game flowing and create a sense of verisimilitude and urgency for players, since there is a new Encounter ever round! Note this is just a summary, see the GM Guide for full details.

## Player Turns

As a player you get one turn per round. 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 may include critical information such as details only you notice, opportunities you have, or declarations of attacks against you.

The spotlight is now yours, use your moment to 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 get one **Action** for your turn. You must also roll a **Saving Throw** for each threat the GM described during the Transition to your turn. Lastly, you 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.

If you and a foe are both attacking each other (whether literally or figuratively) then the GM will determine the order of your Action and Saving Throw rolls. By default they will be simultaneous, unless one or the other is obviously going to happen first. For example, if an dagger-wielding enemy rushes you, and you have a spear set to receive his charge, the GM will let you roll your attack Action first, and follow up with the Saving Throw if your foe survives.

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 players turn.

## Player Actions

As a player you get one Action per round. This Action should be 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	cast spell	punch/kick
rest	grapple/wrestle	intimidate
loot	aim	hide
use secret	overwatch	search

Most Actions will require a dice roll, so when you take an Action, the GM will either say "yes" or "roll the dice". Actions which are so minor

they should never require a roll are usually Maneuvers (see below). A Maneuver that requires a roll (e.g. a difficult climb) requires an Action.

## Rest to Un-Tap a Trait

Spending an Action to “rest” Un-Taps (recovers) one Trait. When you do this, un-Tap one Trait of your choice by erasing the “x” mark you wrote.

Describe what you do, whether you just catch your breath, sip some water, eat something, bind your wounds, meditate, taunt your foes, or compose a haiku. The way you recover says a lot about your character.

# Maneuvers

You may take up to two Maneuvers per round, at any time, even in the middle of someone else's turn. These are minor activities such as moving, opening a door, drawing a weapon, reloading, taking cover, etc. A Maneuver that requires a roll (e.g. a difficult climb) requires an Action.

Maneuvers can be used for quick observation and communication.

Maneuvers can be used for moving a few steps, sitting, standing, taking cover, etc. The normal distance moved for a Maneuver is **five feet**, which is commonly one square or hex space on a tabletop grid for miniatures. Double your movement (to ten feet) if running forward or taking advantage of the environment (e.g. moving downhill or downstream), and triple if sprinting forward on clear ground or falling.

step (5')

run forward (10')

sprint forward (15')

back up (5')

sidestep (5')

step and turn (5')

kneel/crouch

sit/stand

lay prone/stand

crawl/roll (5')

climb up (5')

climb down (10')

fall (15')	leap/hop/jump (5')	spin/turn around
take cover	swim (5')	hit the deck

Maneuvers can be used to interact with items in simple ways.

draw weapon	put item away	drink potion
reload weapon	drop item	open/shut door
check ammo	pick item up	Pull lever
get item ready	throw item	drop backpack

You can use Maneuvers as combat tactics for your attacks and defenses. This can be PREP a single roll, such as "aim" and "shoot".

aim	call target	cover
feint	change guards	dodge
provocation	set shield	keep measure

## I make this look good!

You can use a Maneuver to embellish your Action, adding a touch of your personal style. This has no in-game effect, but is 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

## Not a Maneuver

Maneuvers must be minor and simple, so these are not Maneuvers:

🚫 attack	🚫 deal damage	🚫 oppose an action
🚫 cast a spell	🚫 difficult move	🚫 roll
🚫 use a secret	🚫 take time	🚫 stunt

# Roll the Dice

A standard Legends roll consists of **1d20** and a **Legend Die**. The d20 is a “natural” roll without modifiers. You succeed on 15+, otherwise you fail and suffer the natural consequences. Describe how your action succeeded or failed.

**Damage Rolls** - If you fail a **Damage Roll** then you take **Damage**. Damage Rolls include Saving Throws, Stunts, and Secrets.

**Crits and Fumbles** are extreme successes and failures. You Crit on 20. You Fumble if you roll equal to or less than the **Hazard**, which defaults to 1 but increases during the game as the tension builds.

## Hazard

Hazard is the amount of ambient tension, drama, and risk in the current scene. Hazard starts at 1 and increases as the situation gets more dangerous.

You **Fumble** if you roll less than or equal to the Hazard on your d20, e.g. if Hazard is 5 you Fumble on 1-5.

The GM sets the Hazard of the current scene, which starts at 1 and increases as the situation gets more



dangerous. The GM will increase Hazard in dangerous or risky conditions such as when you are fighting on a narrow crumbling cliff path or in a burning building. Enemy leaders can also increase Hazard by coordinating their troops or fleet, so weak foes can become more dangerous with the right leadership. Players should work together to reduce Hazard, such as by moving the fight to safer location, taking key strategic positions, or eliminating enemy leaders.

## Your Legend Die

**Your Legend Die** presents an opportunity to improve your *natural* result based on your character abilities as well as your skillful gameplay. Each die face is a “potential factor” in success, so each roll has a single “deciding factor”. A Legend Die has six faces: **THEME, EFFORT, ASSET, COMBO, ULT, PREP**. In these rules, anytime you see a capitalized word such as ASSET or PREP it refers to a roll of your Legend Die.

If you can do what your Legend Die says, winning that deciding factor, then your natural result upgrades by one full result step (fumble >> failure >> success >> crit). Otherwise, your natural result stands as-is. Conversely, in some situations your Legend Die will downgrade your result, so crit >> success, success >> fail, and fail >> fumble. Only a total of one upgrade or downgrade is possible per roll. Also, some die faces detail specific effects when you roll a natural Fumble.

**Take it to 11** - An upgraded Crit is a “Legendary Crit”, and a downgraded Fumble is a “Critical Fumble”, both are truly rare and awesome/terrible.

## Legends Die Faces

**THEME** – Name a **Theme or Theme Signature** that assists your action. For example, when attacking with a sword, you might name Themes like “knight”, “swordsman”, or “strong”. You must roleplay how your Theme was the deciding factor.

**COMBO** — Name a combination of **two Themes, Theme Signatures, Traits, or Secrets** that work together (i.e. enhance each other) to assist your action. For example, if you are attacking with a sword you could name “strong + knight”. You may combine Themes from multiple characters who are working together as a team. However, if any situational Disadvantages or Dark Secrets would work against your action, they must be countered by naming an additional Theme, or Theme Signature, or Secret.

**EFFORT** — Going beyond the natural result is possible only if you really push yourself, which requires you to Tap a Trait. If you have Damage you cannot do this, and if your Damage poses a hindrance to your roll you must downgrade your natural result.

**ASSET** — Describe how you are using an Asset to assist your action. For example, a tinderbox aids in starting a fire and a rope is useful for climbing and many other things.

If your action is opposed by someone, compare the Assets each of you are using for the action (e.g. weapon vs armor). This comparison can be based on the Asset Signature, Asset Tags, and situational factors. For a fast and loose game just wing it, or if you want crunch then be strict about the rules for Asset Tags (e.g. the Heavy weapon tag defeats normal armor).

On a **natural Fumble+Asset**, you suffer a minor equipment mishap. Poor quality or damaged gear breaks. Normal or higher quality gear is dropped.

In combat the primary Assets are weapons and armor.

- For attacks, compare the weapon vs the defense. Highly armored foes like dragons do not fear most weapons.

- You can use a melee weapon or shield as a defense against an attack, if it's coming from your front. For example, you can declare your "chainmail hauberk" -or- "arming sword" -or- "heater shield" in your defense.
- For ranged combat, only cover and armor are defenses, so the comparison is the weapon vs the armor or cover.
- Try to apply tactical concepts such as reach and measure. For example, if you have a spear and attack an enemy swordsman at "spear range" then your weapon is superior. Conversely, your spear isn't suitable when in close combat such as wrestling.
- Note that some kinds of characters (e.g. "monks", "serpent people", etc) might have Innate Assets for unarmed attacks and defenses (e.g. "iron hand", "bite", "iron shirt", "scales", etc).

**ULT** — Describe how you are the absolute best at your action, out of anyone in the current scene. This is based on player consensus, and nobody gets the bonus if there is no agreement or on or tie between characters.

Since this is based on the collective voice of all players, it's based on their perception of character traits and role. If you're picking a lock you'll likely win if you're "the thief" of the group, or 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. (However, on a tie nobody gets the bonus, so you may want to guard your Secrets closely.)

If your action directly opposes someone, and they have Ult, then downgrade your natural result. For example, the village baker will win against your PC in duel of cake baking.

**PREP** — Declare a previous Action or Maneuver you took in preparation for the current roll

Usually this requires that you paid attention to clues to get ready for what's coming and used your wits to prepare yourself. For example, you might have laid in ambush, or rigged warning traps around your camp, or plugged your ears with wax before fighting the harpies, or doused yourself with water before fighting the dragon. However, if your foes are better prepared than you (e.g. ambush) then downgrade your natural result.

For example you can use an Action to prepare for a follow-on Action, such as taking careful aim or feinting/taunting a foe. Similarly, if your foes prepared instead of you then downgrade your natural result. You can think of this as Advantages and Disadvantages, but they are limited to just those resulting from actions you have taken. You can use a Maneuver for PREP, such as aiming before shooting, but it only counts for a single roll.

## Advantage / Disadvantage

The concepts of Advantage and Disadvantage are simply whether or not you have the upper hand or some edge over your opponent or situation. For example, you might have an Advantage if you are shooting at a foe who can't shoot back at you, but you might have a Disadvantage if you are trying to swim (or do almost anything else) with your hands tied. Legend Die faces such as COMBO, PREP, and ULT are based on comparisons with your opponent, and use this concept.

## Legend Die Examples

Your Legend Die gives you a natural way to cover a wide variety of situational factors. Here are a few examples.

- **Combo** is a catchall for situational Disadvantages, such as aiming for a specific target on a foe (e.g. head), fighting an invisible foe, or operating in darkness.
- **Asset** includes all kinds of protection, such as cover or resistances (e.g. fire elementals vs fire).

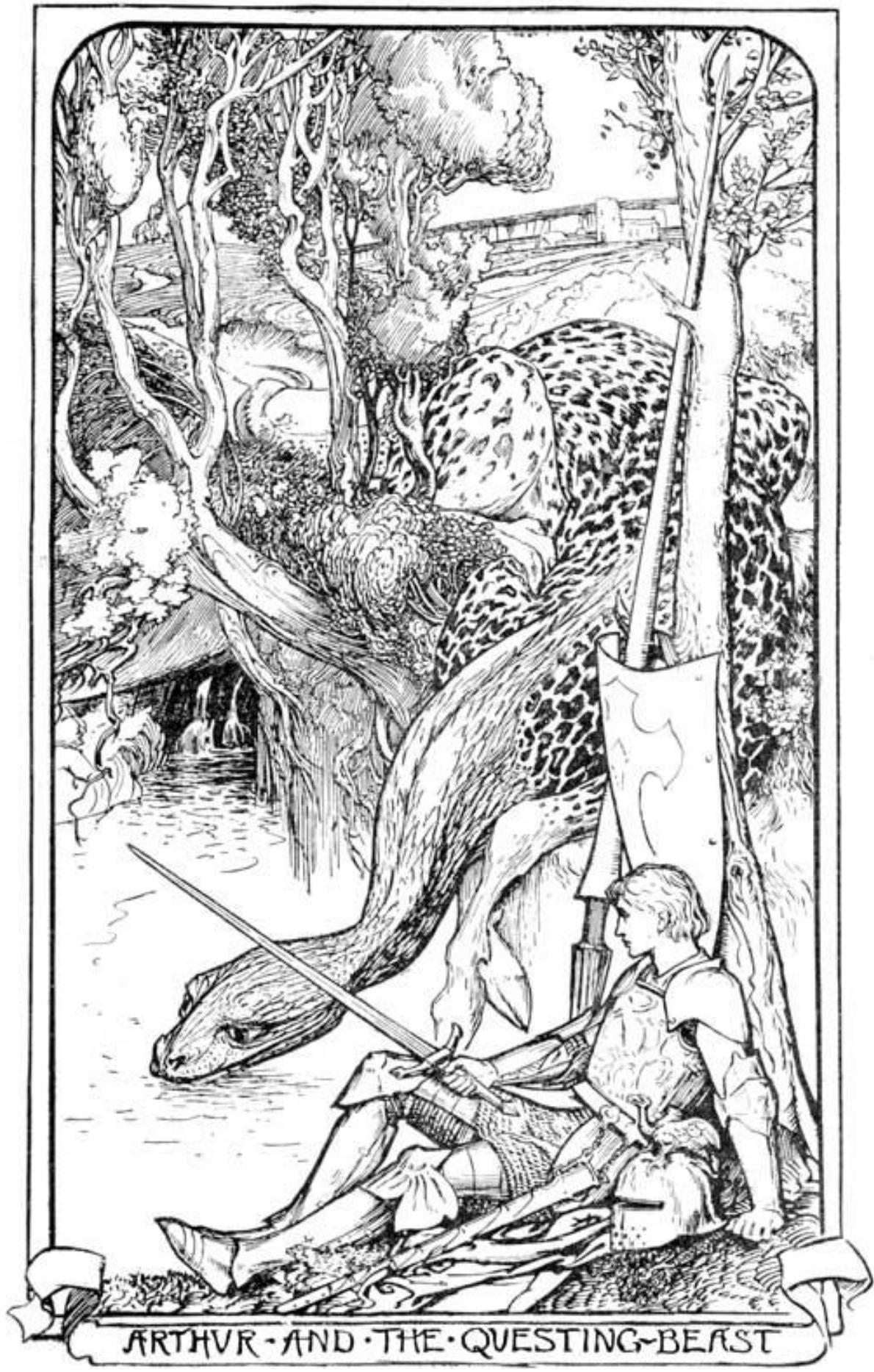
- **Prep** is justified whenever you use an Action or Maneuver to get ready for a follow-on action, such as moving forward while covering a specific angle with your weapon.
- **Ult** can be situational, for example a character who is on watch might be the most perceptive at that time.

## When to Roll

Always roll for Actions and Saving Throws, but otherwise only roll when the GM asks you to. Normally this will be on your own turn.

**Hidden Rolls** - Sometimes the GM will ask you to roll but not explain the circumstances. There may be some clue or opportunity in the scenario that you could notice, if you were observant or knowledgeable enough, such as a thief tailing you, an ambush ahead, or noticing poison on your foe's blade. In this case the GM will use your character sheet to determine the result, just as you would do, but in secret.

**Players make most rolls** - The players make most rolls. The GM makes an Encounter roll once per round, and can roll for NPCs, but monster attacks are handled as Saving Throws rolled by players.



ARTHUR · AND · THE · QUESTING-BEAST

# Part 3: Experience Paths

Experience Paths ("XP" or "Paths") are important objectives and accomplishments for the characters. These can be quests such as "save the princess from the dragon" or a goal to learn a spell. Examples:

- Lenarin wants a proper Elvish sword
- Hazarak wants to find a grimoire of summoning spells
- The King calls upon you to save the princess
- The townsfolk need your help against raiders
- Krod wants a hunting dog
- Hazarak is experimenting with a "blue fireballs" spell
- Sir Bighead requires a horse befitting his ~~ege~~ status
- The princess asks for help returning to her kingdom
- We should build a secret base
- 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.

## Starting Paths

To start a Path, write down your quest, goal, or objective on a sheet of paper shared by all players. Once you start a Path, you and the other players can make progress. Each player is limited to two active Paths.

## Writing Paths

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 write them in an

exciting voice whenever possible. If you want inspiration, just pull from your favorite books and movies.

### 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.

## Paths are Shared

Since roleplaying is a social game, all Paths are *shared* between the players. The players as a group (including the GM) form the audience for the heroic deeds of the characters.

Keep all Paths on a single sheet of paper (a “Path tracker”) and pass them around the table for all the players to see and use. This transparency makes it clear what kind of game everyone wants to play, and what Paths they think will be interesting and fun. You should look at the shared Paths at the start and end of each game session.

Each player can have at most two active Paths at the same time, so you may need to abandon a Path to make room for new priorities.

# Completing Paths

You **complete** a Path once all the players agree you've made sufficient progress and you've achieved success. Write "success" on the Path. The GM will then provide a suitable **Reward** (see below).

Paths can involve a short or long journey, but should always have some end or resolution. Ideally this ends in a successful completion of the Path, because that nets a Reward.

## Journaling

You should add notes to your Path about progress or details along the way. For example, for "The King wants the heroes to save the princess" you can write down the names of the King and the Princess, her last known location, where she should be taken, and what kind of rewards you expect. This is freeform, so you can just jot random thoughts or use journal entries with dates or "day 1", "day 2", and so on. You can doodle, draw maps, whatever you like. Most importantly, write a final note about how it all turned out, regardless of success or failure.

## Homework

Ask the GM if you can do homework between game sessions to earn progress on your Paths. You might sketch a map of your home village, write a backstory for your character or an NPC, write a session log, etc. This can be a great way to add detail to your campaign world.

## 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.

Day 1: fought off some worm things and found a safe hidey hole

Day 2: Timmek found a pit and died, but we found some dead guys and loot at the bottom. Got swords and a white stone orb

Day 3: found a way out! Need to reach ceiling. Azazrem put the orb into the beam of moonlight and now it's glowing

Day 4: found a subterranean river and built a raft and took the plunge!  
Wizzit fell overboard.

Day 5: **Success!** We emerged from the river into the sunlight.

## Failing Paths

If a Path becomes impossible to complete then mark the Path **Failed**.

For example, if you're supposed to save the princess from the dragon, but she dies in the rescue attempt, your quest has failed. Some Paths are time-sensitive and have a Countdown to failure (see below).

## Abandoning Paths

You can **abandon** one of your Paths if you no longer want to attempt progress. Write "abandoned" on the Path.

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. Paths might need to be abandoned either by choice or by misfortune. If you cannot complete a Path then you should abandon it. Keep in mind natural consequences still apply depending on how the events of the Path played out.

## Countdowns

The GM may give a Path a **Countdown** to create a sense of urgency, such as a race against a ticking clock, a mission to save a hostage, or a wound. To do this, the GM will write three checkboxes on the Path. These will be used to record the Countdown, and the Path **Fails** if you check the third box.

### SAVE PRINCESS LOOKIE

Rescue the princess from the swamp castle before she is married against her will.

The Countdown doesn't change how you make progress and complete the Path, it just adds urgency because you must complete a Path before all Countdown boxes are checked and it **Fails**.

Your **initial reaction** when a Countdown starts is very important. If you do not immediately attempt to make progress then you must check a Countdown box. For example, after taking a serious injury it's critical to immediately apply first aid, so if you instead keep fighting or if you flee then check a box.

You must also check a box with an "X" if you encounter a **serious setback**, such as a Fumble on a roll related to the countdown.

Also check a box if **significant time passes** without progress. Assume "one day" of in-game time, but this should vary depending on the situation. The point is to keep making best efforts at progress. Paths are very loose and flexible and rely on the collective judgement of the players.

The GM can give a Path a Countdown at any time, since it's possible for a Path to develop sudden urgency.

## Scars

When you **complete**, **fail**, or **abandon** a Path, any natural consequences still apply. Experiences can leave scars. Surviving a harrowing experience can lead to long-lasting trauma or a quest for vengeance. The GM should liberally assign Dark Secrets whenever it appears a character might have internal motivations affected by a Path. For example, if a character escapes from a spider's web cocoon, assign a Dark Secret such as "fear of spiders".

### ESCAPE FROM THE DUNGEONS OF THE MAD KING!

...

Scars: Everyone gains a Dark Secret "wronged by the mad king" or similar.

## Best Efforts

Some Paths are more difficult than others to make progress, and players may feel stuck in a logjam. When this happens focus on making "best efforts" and keep pushing forward. The point of Paths is to affect character choices and highlight their experiences, and sometimes that involves trying different approaches. Also, if your Path has a Countdown then making best efforts will pause or slow the Countdown.

# 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 Theme (up to four), modify a Theme, or rid yourself of a Dark Secret. You could also find a new Asset, including a "magic item" or other traditional kind of loot.

Experience Paths fulfill the same purpose as experience points and levels in other games, but keep the advancement in-character and in your own words.



## 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 does not necessarily need to be a core component of your character (e.g. Theme, Trait, etc). Some examples are below.

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

## Using Paths

Players typically use Paths for personal wish lists, character objectives, personal quests, spell research, creation of magic items, finding a teacher, etc. See the GM Guide for how GM's used Paths.

### My Precious Asset

Players can write a Path when their character is seeking out hard to obtain 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 the player highlight the character's journey to find and claim the prized possession. Naturally, the reward is an Asset with a Signature.

#### MY FATHER'S SWORD

The creepy cultists in the mountain stole my father's sword, which was passed down through seven generations. I will reclaim it to save our family honor.

Characters with crafting skills might build an item rather than buy or quest for it, but this is still a Path.

### CLOAK OF BLADES

I'm crafting a magic cloak with swords and daggers incorporated into the cloth and hem. This cloak will function as both weapons and armor.

## Magic Research

Players should use Paths for any spell or magic item research.

### BLUE FIREBALLS

Hazarak is experimenting with a blue fireball spell. The blue fireball will be a melding of his blue spark and fireball spells, a ball of commingled lightning and fire.

Day 1: cast a fireball during electrical storm to observe storm's effects

Day 2: experimented using a lightning rod to cast a fireball

Success! The spell works using the lightning rod. Learned Blue Fireball

## Flashbacks

Most paths represent current goals and possible futures. However, it's also possible for a Path to be a "flashback" to past events. To make this work with a group of players, you will either need to write the Path so it can involve all the characters, or ask each player to write their own flashback Path that can be played at the same time. Similarly, you can use Paths for dream sequences, trips through magical planes, or other nonlinear time sequences.



THE ARCHERS THREATEN LANCELOT

Wrestle well and wield lance, spear, sword, and dagger manfully, whose use in others hands is wasted. -  
Johannes Lichtenauer

## Part 4: Conflict

This section deals with exciting topics like slaying foes, keeping yourself safe from harm, attempting amazing stunts, and getting hurt. 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. Thus, “combat” is not treated as separate mini-game (there is no initiative roll) but woven into the main game flow.

### Attack Rolls

When you attack you must roll the dice to hit your target.

If you **succeed** you hit your target and inflict **1 Damage**. Some factors add +1 damage, such as if you are using a heavy weapon, or you hit a location without armor. Foes have a damage limit (i.e. hit points) and the GM will remove them from play (possibly with visceral detail) once that limit is reached.

If you **fail** then your attack misses. There is usually no other consequence of failure. However, if you are attempting a special attack



with greater risk than normal, such as a Stunt or Secret, then you take Damage as if you were hit. If you roll a **fumble** you fail as above, but the GM will take a **Counter**,

If you roll a **Critical Success** you deal damage as above and can also describe a grievous wound ("critical hit") which can limit or remove a capability of the foe. For example, you could remove the weapon hand of an evil champion or lop off the wing of a dragon. Choose wisely and make it dramatic. However, you may not describe something that kills the foe outright, such as removing its head or chopping it in half.

You can use a Maneuver to assist your attack, such as choosing your target hit location, feinting to gain PREP on your attack roll, or stepping to your ideal attack range. Similarly you can use a Maneuver for defense, e.g. dodging or using your weapon to close a line of attack.

## Counters

A **Counter** is a free opportunistic Action such as a counterattack, friendly fire, or a gear mishap such as dropping your weapon. The GM takes a Counter whenever you Fumble an Action, and you take a Counter whenever you Crit a Saving Throw. A Counter is a new Action, related to the failed Action. Counters do not grant new Maneuvers.

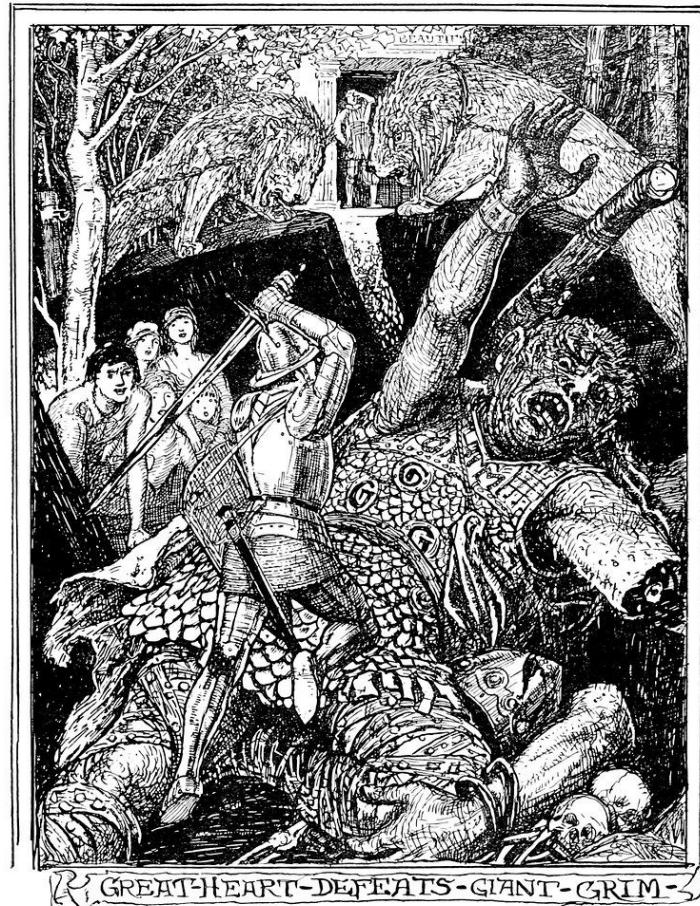
**GM Counters** - The GM will use your Action against you if you Fumble. If you use large-scale attacks like grenades or *fireball* spells, you can blow yourself up, and your allies too. Consider the scope of your actions, and the risk they bring.

## Crush your enemies

When you attack a monster and deal damage, it can Tap Traits to **Soak** damage (just like you). When a monster can't soak damage from an attack it gains a **Doom** (just like you). The GM will keep track of damage for monsters and let you know when it is "doomed".

Most “doomed” monsters skip directly to Doom Stage 3 (“incapacitated”), and are thus out of the fight. The GM might describe a “Doomed” monster as bloodied and broken.

An incapacitated foe is “mostly dead” and no longer poses an immediate threat. It is incapable of taking Actions (such as attacking you), but might still limp off to lick its wounds, make annoying dying sounds, kick and twitch, or make a leaky mess.



If you roll a Critical Success for the finishing blow the GM will instead describe how the foe is killed outright. The GM might add visceral detail if your players are into that kind of thing, or make a remark like “finish him!” to let you know you can describe some awful end. Either way you’ll know it’s dead.

You can spend an Action to put incapacitated foes out of your misery, either dispatching (killing) them or taking prisoners. Sometimes the way you describe this matters, for example you might need to use holy water or prayers to put undeads to rest, or fire to put down a regenerating creature. The GM will not tell you what you need to do, that’s part of your adventure.

You can spend an Action to loot foes (Doomed or dead) after a battle. Sometimes the way you describe this matters, for example a foe might have something hidden in its boot, or a fake tooth, or the monster

might have gems inside. The GM will not tell you if you missed something.

The GM rolls a random Encounter at the start of each turn, and it's possible for this to indicate an unfinished foe makes an attack.

## Saving Throws

If you are attacked by a foe or other danger you must roll for your defense. This is typically called a "Saving Throw", which is just like a roll for an Action, but if you fail you will take **Damage**.

Attacks from foes are a common kind of saving throw, but Saving Throws are used for all death-defying situations, such as a trap, collapsing cliff, pit filled with snakes, or poisoned drink. 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 **succeed** on your Saving Throw you avoid taking Damage.

If you **fail** your Saving Throw you take Damage. The GM will tell you how much Damage you take. You can Tap a Trait to "soak" (reduce) Damage, see below. If you roll a **Fumble** on your Saving Throw you take +1 damage.

If you roll a **Critical Success** you gain a **Counter**, which is a free Action in the scope of the attack you defended against. If you were attacked by a swordsman you can counterattack that foe, or if you defended against the baalfyres of a goblin warlock you can describe how the fire scorches his goblin allies. Counters do not grant new Maneuvers.

You can declare **Maneuvers** to assist your roll, for example a dodge or parry will grant PREP, or you can position your shield to guard a hit location to gain ASSET if the attack lands there

Saving Throws are used for ALL kinds of character injuries and dangers. If not Soaked the resulting Damage will cause a Doom.

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

## Hit Locations

Every attack or defense applies to a specific Hit Location, which is a body part. The GM determines the Hit Location, either by deciding or rolling on a table. You spend a Maneuver to choose the hit location, whether aiming your attack or by presenting an open body part to be hit when defending.

The Hit Location determines what armor you can apply for your defense. Historical armor and shields did not cover everything (e.g. groin, armpits, palms) and the wearer had to make choices about what to protect. You can use a Maneuver to position your shield to cover a specific hit location.

## Hit Location Table \*

1. Head	8. R Hand	15. R Leg
2. Face	9. L Hand	16. L Leg
3. Neck	10. Chest	17. R Knee
4. R Arm	11. Ribs	18. L Knee
5. L Arm	12. Guts	19. R Foot
6. R Elbow	13. Hips	20. L Foot
7. L Elbow	14. Groin	

\* Roll 1d20 for a random hit location. Roll 1d10 if only the upper body is visible. Roll 1d10+10 if only the lower body is visible. Roll 1d4+10 for a ranged weapon fired accurately at "center of mass". Roll twice (taking most appropriate result) for a less random location, such as when an attack is coming from a particular angle (left, right, or behind) or was aimed but not very well.

## Damage

If you fail a **Damage Roll** you take **Damage**. Damage Rolls are Saving Throws, Stunts, and Secrets. The GM will tell you how much Damage you take, usually 1-4 Damage.

Damage represents *any* kind of harm to your character, not necessarily physical, so this encompasses concepts such as "hits", "wounds", "stress", "strain", etc. Damage is specific to the damage source, such as an arrow wound, burn, paralyzation, or mind-control. If your character sees an "eldritch horror" he might take Damage related to stress, fear, and dread. Wizards who fail a roll to cast a spell (spells are Secrets) take Damage, so Wizards can actually blow themselves up.

## Soak Damage

You can Tap a Trait to "Soak" Damage, negating 1 Damage per Trait you Tap. Any Damage you do not Soak you gain a **Doom**, a very serious life-threatening injury, so always Soak Damage if possible.

## Defensive Traits

A Trait can potentially Soak extra Damage if the Trait is ideal for your particular Saving Throw, especially if the Trait is defensive or a specialized skill related to your action. All players must agree your Trait is ideal, possibly soaking an extra 1 Damage per good reason why the Trait is ideal, such as "my rocky skin is good at deflecting cuts", or "my skill at rock climbing should help me not get hurt if I fall".

## Damage vs Dooms

You can think of Damage is "potential damage" and Dooms are "actual damage". If you Soak all Damage from a hit then you were "hit but not hurt". That arrow might have grazed you and left a scratch, or you might see nothing at all. However, if you don't Soak the Damage the arrow is sticking in your leg and you're bleeding out...you are doomed.

## Counting Damage

The GM will tell you how much Damage you take, but this works the same as when you hit a foe. The base Damage is 1, then add +1 damage for each damage factor that applies. In combat typical damage factors are a lack of armor, a hit by a heavy weapon, or if you rolled a fumble. The GM can add modifiers for various attacks such as a giant weapon, falling from a great height, etc, but usually this is in +1 increments.

## Falling Damage

Base Damage is 1 for a fall of *up to 15 feet (~5 m)* onto a hard surface or if thrown by an opponent. Add +1 for each additional 15 feet or fraction thereof. Thus a fall of 16-30 feet is 2 Damage, and 31-45 feet is 3 Damage. Feet first landings are safest, so if you are intentionally jumping feet first then you win PREP, and a fumble means you didn't land on your feet.

# Using Assets

This section describes the simple cases for how Assets are used. See the Advanced Assets section for more detailed rules.

## ASSET Legend Die

When you roll ASSET on your Legend Die, the deciding factor for success is the Assets you are using for your roll, and how they compare to any used against you. If you are in combat and attacking, then compare your weapon with your foe's armor, and do the opposite for defenses.

This comparison is usually easy, especially if one of you is not using an Asset at all.

If you chose a "pack" as an Asset for your character, don't forget that it can be declared as an Asset for Actions related to the mission of your pack. A "thief's pack" could assist for *many* Actions such as burglarizing, pick-pocketing, climbing, opening locks, etc.

## Armor and Cover

Armor protects you from attacks. If you roll ASSET, compare the attacking weapon with your armor for the Hit Location of the attack. If you do not have armor in the Hit Location, or if the attacking weapon is better than your armor, you must downgrade your natural result. If you do not have armor in the Hit Location you also take +1 Damage.

Cover counts as armor. 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 has basic armor but is facing Heavy Weapons. Taking cover is an Action. When you take cover, specify what body parts are being covered and from which direction. However, the character's position is considered static and

areas covered cannot be used to take actions in the direction of the cover. 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 just knelt behind the wall then your lower body and legs would be covered but you could still shoot.

## Readyng Assets

Reading an Asset such as drawing a weapon is a Maneuver. Players can simply describe this as part of an attack Action, such as "I draw my sword and cut the priest down!".

However, since combat typically starts with the GM taking Actions including attacks from monsters, you are better off being proactive about declaring which Asset (e.g. weapon) you have "out" or readied. Otherwise, you might not be able to use an Asset at the right time.

## Reloading

Ranged weapons require ammo, and must be loaded before each shot. The first shot is generally included with reading the weapon. Reloading a ranged weapon normally requires one Maneuver, but some weapons such as crossbows and firearms may require multiple Maneuvres.

## Wrestling & Unarmed

Generally speaking, you want to have a weapon in a fight. If you and your opponent are both unarmed it's a wash, but if you are unarmed and only your foe has weapon they have a huge advantage.

If you roll ASSET on an attack or saving throw, and you are unarmed



(but your foe is armed), you must *downgrade* your natural result. So if you are unarmed and your foe has a dagger, or you are wrestling with a tiger, you must *downgrade* your natural result if you roll ASSET.

However, weapons larger than a dagger are not easy to use while wrestling, so if you can wrestle with your foe you do not suffer this disadvantage.

To wrestle with a foe you must use an Action and make an attack roll to establish that you have closed the gap and are wrestling. This roll is subject to all of the above rules, but you do not suffer a disadvantage if you made a successful attack or saving throw against this foe in the same or previous round. In other words, it's safe to start wrestling with an opponent immediately after you land a hit or avoid a hit with that opponent.

All of the above also works in reverse, if you are armed and your foe is unarmed.

## Movement

Here are some details about how to move in combat. If using a battlemap for 25-28mm miniatures, the scale is 1-inch equals 5-feet.

**Move Maneuver** - You can take a couple of steps as a Maneuver. The maximum distance is 1 inch (5 feet). The same distance applies to climbing, swimming, crawling, etc. If you run forward you move double (10 feet), and if you sprint forward on open ground you move triple.

**Move and Attack** - A statement like "I charge across the room and attack the sorcerer" requires you to use your Maneuvers to move.

**Actions as Maneuvers** - You can use your Action to perform a third Maneuver. This is required when the GM tells you to roll for the movement, such as jumping over a wide pit.

**Unit Moment** - You can use your Action to move your character, or to move a “unit” of multiple characters. Thus, you can move all of the PCs as a unit together by spending an Action. The characters in the unit all move together on the player’s turn. This streamlines the process of getting all of the characters (and possibly miniatures on a battlemap) to move together, without bumping into each other. Naturally, this requires the agreement/consent of the other players, but hopefully the players are already working as a team, so this rule keeps simple things simple.

## Secrets & Stunts

### Secrets

Secrets are special abilities such as flying, using poison, spells, and hurling lightning bolt spells. You will only have a few Secrets when your character starts out, but you can gain more over time as XP Rewards.

Using a Secret is an Action which requires a Damage Roll, so failure results in Damage. (See Part 3: Conflict).

The GM will set the Hazard for your roll based on the power level of your Secret, which is on the same scale as “spell levels” in classic RPGs. Wizards can literally blow themselves up if they aren’t careful.

### Stunts

Any Action which involves significant risk or pushes beyond the limits of a normal Action is a “Stunt”. A very common example is when a player describes an Action which is actually a combination of two similar Actions, such as “I shoot them both” or “I charge and attack”. The GM should allow this only if the Actions are interrelated, but declare it to be a Stunt.

Stunts are inherently risky, so they are Damage Rolls (so failure results in Damage). The GM can increase the Hazard for your roll if your stunt seems especially risky.

You don't need to declare your Action is a stunt prior to rolling. However, if you (or GM or other players) say "that was a stunt" after your Action, it still counts as a Stunt, so you may want to ask before you roll if that would change your mind.

## Dark Secrets

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.

If you take an Action which opposes one of your Dark Secrets the GM gets a free Action to account for the "karmic debt" of going against your own nature. For example, if you have "always shoots first" and you decide to ignore or overcome that part of your persona, the GM gets a free Action. The GM can instead call for a Saving Throw to determine the result of your internal struggle.

## 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 you up success for PREP or ASSET. 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.

**Ready weapon** - Since drawing a weapon is a Maneuver, players can describe that as part of an attack Action. However, it's best to establish what weapon you have "at the ready" well in advance, since the GM can launch attacks during his turn.

**Overwatch** - A common tactic is to take an Action 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'm waiting for their wizard to show his face"). This entitles you to take your next Action (i.e. your attack) out of turn without Tapping a Trait.

**Positioning** - An Action taken to position yourself on high ground can set you up to win PREP. This is easy to combine with "overwatch".

**Aiming** - An Action "I aim my bow at the clearing" sets you up to win PREP, and also take your next Action out of turn to shoot anyone crossing the clearing. Similarly, if you take an Action to kneel or lay prone, you could claim PREP when defending against ranged weapons. Ranged weapons with the "Accurate" Tag also work better if you roll ASSET.

**Shooting on the Move** - There is no penalty for attacking while moving. However, moving uses a Maneuver, and aiming also uses a Maneuver, so attacks while moving are less effective.

**Hit Location** - You can use a Maneuver to pick a specific Hit Location, such as the sword hand of a dangerous swordsman. There is normally no penalty unless the hit location is tiny, which will merely incur a Disadvantage on COMBO. You can also do this for Saving Throws, picking the hit location where you will be struck.

*If you've played other RPGs, this might seem different since they usually give you a penalty on a "called shot". However, in real fights attacks are always aimed. There is no real-world concept of "I attack his whatever".*

**Cover** - The use of cover is critical when facing ranged weapons, especially if they are heavier than your armor. You can use an Action to

position yourself behind cover, against attacks from specific directions. This helps you to win ASSET and sometimes PREP.

**Keep Down** - You can crouch, kneel, or crawl to reduce your target area against ranged attackers. This counts as PREP but not ASSET. Also, you may suffer a Disadvantage on some Actions or Saving Throws (especially in melee) which will come up if you roll "Combo".

**Opportunity** - You should pay attention to the little details the GM describes, and look for opportunities in every situation. This can mean countering the tactics of a foe, such as denying cover or high ground.

**Ambush/Stealth** - An ambush or "backstab" can set up a combination of factors described above, such as *overwatch*, *positioning*, and *aiming*.

**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 ASSET.

**Asset Tags** - Use Asset Tags to create Advantages in specific situations, as written in the rules for that Tag. For example, the "Heavy" Tag only applies as a benefit if your opponent does not have "Heavy" armor, and a spear with "Long" can only be applied if at long range and



the opponent does not also have a long weapon. In other words, Asset Tags are not freeform like Themes, but are instead fully driven by rules. This adds tactics and crunchiness to the otherwise freeform game.

## Enemy Tactics

Your enemies can also use tactics against you. Be sure to listen to the GM's narrative of what enemies are doing during the GM Turn. When the GM foreshadows a threat, this is both to help you decide what choices to make, and will also set up a disadvantage for you during your turn.

**Aiming** - Pay attention to where enemies are aiming. Since aiming grants PREP, this means the PC making the Saving Throw for the attack will need to downgrade the natural result on a roll of PREP. You can cancel this out by taking a Maneuver that gives you PREP, such as dodging.

**Swarming** - Pay attention to groups, teams, or swarms of enemies. If these attack en masse the PC making the Saving Throw will need to downgrade the natural result on a roll of COMBO. You can cancel this by taking a Maneuver that gives you COMBO, such as pulling your allies close and locking shields, or creating a barrier the swarm can't cross.

## Disadvantages

Here are some specific examples of Disadvantages that can affect your Legend Die in a conflict. In most cases these are simply the opposite of their corresponding tactic.

unarmed	surrounded	held down
unarmored	flanked	tied up
need tools/gear	kneeling	grappled
ambushed	prone	unconscious



The death of BEOWULF

# Part 5: Dooms

**Dooms** are traumatic experiences such as wounds, disease, starvation, and poisoning. Dooms are the result of unsoaked Damage from failed Damage Rolls such as Saving Throws. In other words, any Damage you take will become a Doom unless you Soak it.

Dooms reduce your chances of success on rolls, but only you roll EFFORT on your Legend Die. As the Doom worsens the effects become more severe, eventually leading to death.

## Gaining Dooms

Dooms are the result of unsoaked Damage from Damage Rolls such as Saving Throws. You take Damage if you fail a Damage Roll, and if you do not Soak all of the Damage you gain a Doom. This works the same for all afflictions, from injuries to petrification. Dooms are the common mechanism used for every kind of injury or affliction. Here are just some examples; if you are lucky the GM will invent more.

wound	fear/terror	radiation
injury/trauma	freezing	burns
concussion	insanity	starving
deaf/blind	lycanthropy	taint
disease	curse	undead drain
drowning	paralysis	rot grubs
magical charm	petrification	soul drain
domination	poison	morale
magical sleep	venom	other bad stuff

Write Dooms in your “Experience Path Tracker” along with your Experience Paths. Dooms are a kind of Path, but are “dark paths” that

the universe (and your dice) have forced upon you. Dooms are the “suck” of surviving in a dangerous and uncertain world.

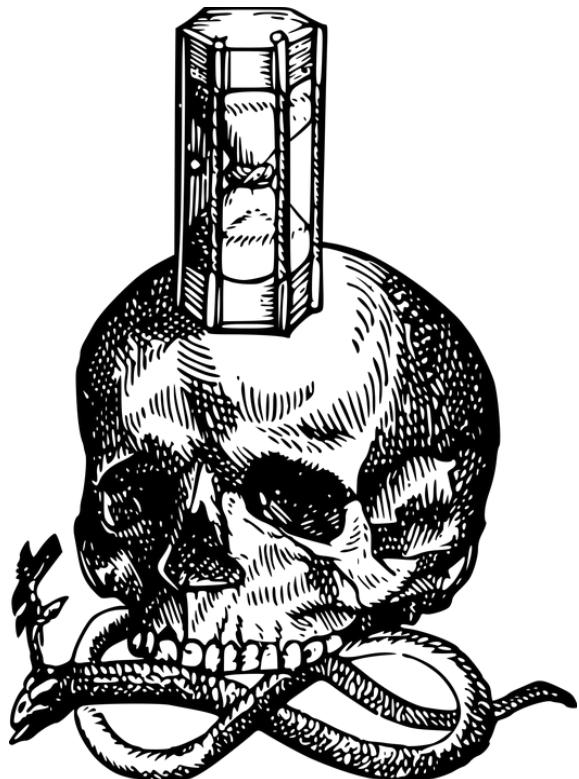
Dooms are urgent and always have a **Countdown**, so write three checkboxes (☐☐☐) for your Doom. The effects worsen as each Countdown box is checked. This builds dramatic tension and may force you to adapt to limitations.

You should do everything you can to avoid Dooms, whether avoiding them in the first place or “successfully completing” them as a Path. Like any Path, you can complete a Doom once all the players agree sufficient progress has been made. However this gets more difficult the longer you wait.

## Doom Countdown (☒☐☐)

Dooms are urgent and always have a **Countdown**, so write three checkboxes (☐☐☐) for your Doom. Check a box in the following situations:

- ☒ Check a box each GM Turn until you receive first aid. You or someone else needs to use an Action to provide first aid as soon as possible after gaining a Doom.
- ☒ Check a box if you roll a Critical Fumble, including the roll which caused the Doom. (Only check one box on one Doom.)
- ☒ Check a box to combine additional Dooms of the same kind, such as another wound in the same Hit Location, more poison, etc.



# Doom Stages (0-3)

Each Doom has a "Stage" which is a simple way to describe severity and how far down the Countdown you've gone. There are four Doom Stages named 0-3. These correspond to the Countdown checkboxes, so Stage 0 is when no Countdown boxes are checked, and Stage 3 is when all are checked.

## Stage 0 (□□□) - First Symptoms

You feel the first symptoms of your Doom, such as pain or nausea, although these do not stop you (yet). You know something is horribly wrong, but you might not know exactly what and onlookers might not realize something is wrong. You don't feel well and find it difficult to rest or sleep.

- Your character needs two Actions to recover one Trait.
- Recovery time is typically 2-12 (2d6) days.

## Stage I (☒□□) - Full Onset

You feel the full onset of symptoms as appropriate such as pain, nausea, swelling, vomiting, and crying. The Doom is fully upon you, isn't pretty, and is obvious to onlookers.

- Your character must downgrade your result if you roll EFFORT \*
- Recovery time is typically 2-12 (2d6) weeks.

\* The GM can waive the above penalties if your Doom does not hamper your specific action. For example, a very specific Doom (e.g. "wounded leg") might not apply to your roll (e.g. "pick lock"). Multiple Dooms do not add together, but create a broader range of applicable situations.

## Stage II (☒☒□) - Incapacitated

At Stage 2 you are incapacitated by severe pain, nausea, leakage, etc. Your character cannot take any Actions or do anything except complain and cry.

- Your character cannot take Actions.\*
- Recovery time is typically 2-12 (2d6) months.

\* The GM might waive the above penalties if your Doom wouldn't hamper a specific Action.

\* As a player you still get one Action and two Maneuvers per round, but you can't use it to make your character do anything. Other characters or nearby NPCs might be able to save your character, and you can use your Action to have them help. Ask the GM if you need an explanation of how "players have Actions".

## Stage III (☒☒☒) - Death / Retirement

Stage 3 is the final stage, which results in immediate death or retirement of your character.

In other words if you check the third Countdown box of a Doom your character dies or is otherwise removed from play. Roleplay "the end" as appropriate to the situation. 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".

If the Doom was limited to a limb, then your character might live but lose the limb. In this case it's possible for you to continue to play your character, although most people would probably retire from adventuring at that point.

Afterwards, immediately 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.



## Recovery

The Doom Stage determines the typically recovery time. This assumes you are making appropriate progress, e.g. if you have a leg wound then you need to stay off your leg as much as possible.

The GM may increase or decrease recovery time as appropriate. For example, if you will recover from a leg wound faster if you receive professional healing and remain in a restful camp, inn, or hospital. The simplest way to do this is to change the standard roll of 2-12 (2d6) to roll fewer or more dice, or reduce the amount of time.

Similarly, some injuries might be harder to recover, such as a wound from a giant fly or claws of an undead ghoul. The GM will tell you to roll more d6's than the standard 2d6.

## Likely Dooms

Here are some Dooms that you are likely to encounter.

### Wounds

Wounds are physical injuries such as hits from weapons or accidents falling from heights.

Record specific details about your wound as well as the hit location, e.g. "sword stab in belly", "smashed face", or "burned hands". It's always more favorable to have an injury limited to a small area, so don't forget.

#### Example: Bleeding Leg Wound

Hazarak has been ambushed by goblins. He fights well and slays many of them, but is finally wounded by an arrow and gains a Doom representing his wound. The GM or Hazarak's player writes a new Countdown Path on the XP Tracker.

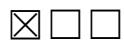
HAZARAK - BLEEDING LEG!



A black goblin arrow is embedded deep in his leg

Hazarak's **immediate reaction** should be to apply or obtain first aid, otherwise he must check a countdown box.

HAZARAK - BLEEDING LEG!



A black goblin arrow is embedded deep in his leg

Had to fight free of the goblins

Hazarak needs to avoid using the wounded body part aggressively, which will require him to check a countdown box. If he checks the second box he won't be able to take Actions that involve his leg.

#### HAZARAK - BLEEDING LEG!

A black goblin arrow is embedded deep in his leg

- Had to fight free of the goblins
- Had to run and landed hard jumping off a cliff

Drags himself to a stream

Washed the wound in a clean stream and rebound it

Hazarak can't use his leg, and will need to mark a box if significant time passes without caring for the wound or making any progress on healing. If Hazarak checks the third box he will die or lose his leg.

#### HAZARAK - BLEEDING LEG!

A black goblin arrow is embedded deep in his leg

- Had to fight free of the goblins
- Had to run and landed hard jumping off a cliff

Drags himself to a stream

wrapped it in a scrap of shirt

Washed the wound in a clean stream and rebound it

With enough progress and time on healing Hazarak will recover.

## HAZARAK - BLEEDING LEG!

A black goblin arrow is embedded deep in his leg

- Had to fight free of the goblins
- Had to run and landed hard jumping off a cliff

Drags himself to a stream

wrapped it in a scrap of shirt

Washed the wound in a clean stream and rebound it

Success - after spending 2 months healing

## Essentials of Life

People require five basic essentials of life to survive: air, water, food, shelter, and sleep. You are expected to use some of your Actions to describe how you take breaks to rest, drink, eat, sleep, etc. You might describe how you buy sausages and cheese from a merchant, forage in the forest, or take cat naps.

You do not need detailed logistics or bookkeeping, however, you should frequently talk about how you go about keeping alive and healthy. You should also protect your provisions, since losing your pack horse with all your food will leave you hungry.

If you fail to do these things, the GM will sometimes call for a Saving Throw or write a Doom. These checks are random, so with your luck it might happen at inopportune times!

## STARVING!

Rats got into your stores and you're down two rolls, clearly not enough for all of you to live on.

### SUPPLIES GONE!

□ □ □

You fell into an underground river and washed up on the shores somewhere. Your supplies (food, water, bedrolls) are gone.

### ALONE IN THE DARK

□ □ □

You're down to a candle stub, and not quite sure where you are in these deep dungeon tunnels. It's weirding you out and you feel like the walls are closing in. Find your way out or at least find light before you suffer a panic attack.

## Arcane Dooms

Arcane dooms occur if you fail to cast a spell and cannot Soak Damage. Highlight your character's specific magic school/art/style.

### DOOM OF FALSE DEATHS

□ □ □

You die, and then come back to life on your next turn, but have a small patch of dead skin the size of an eye or a bite. Your companions probably won't notice this, but if they do you could say it's just dry skin. 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, became wounded by undead, or received a death curse. Avoid this doom by setting to right the curse that you encountered, or finding religion and entrusting your soul to the safe keeping of a god. Whether or not you continue to play as an undead character 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 directly 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 "very creepy person" whom everyone avoids and you will be very, very 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 and take care of it and it stays around on its own volition. Most animals will avoid you, so you need to find "your pet", i.e. your familiar.

## ACCELERATED AGING

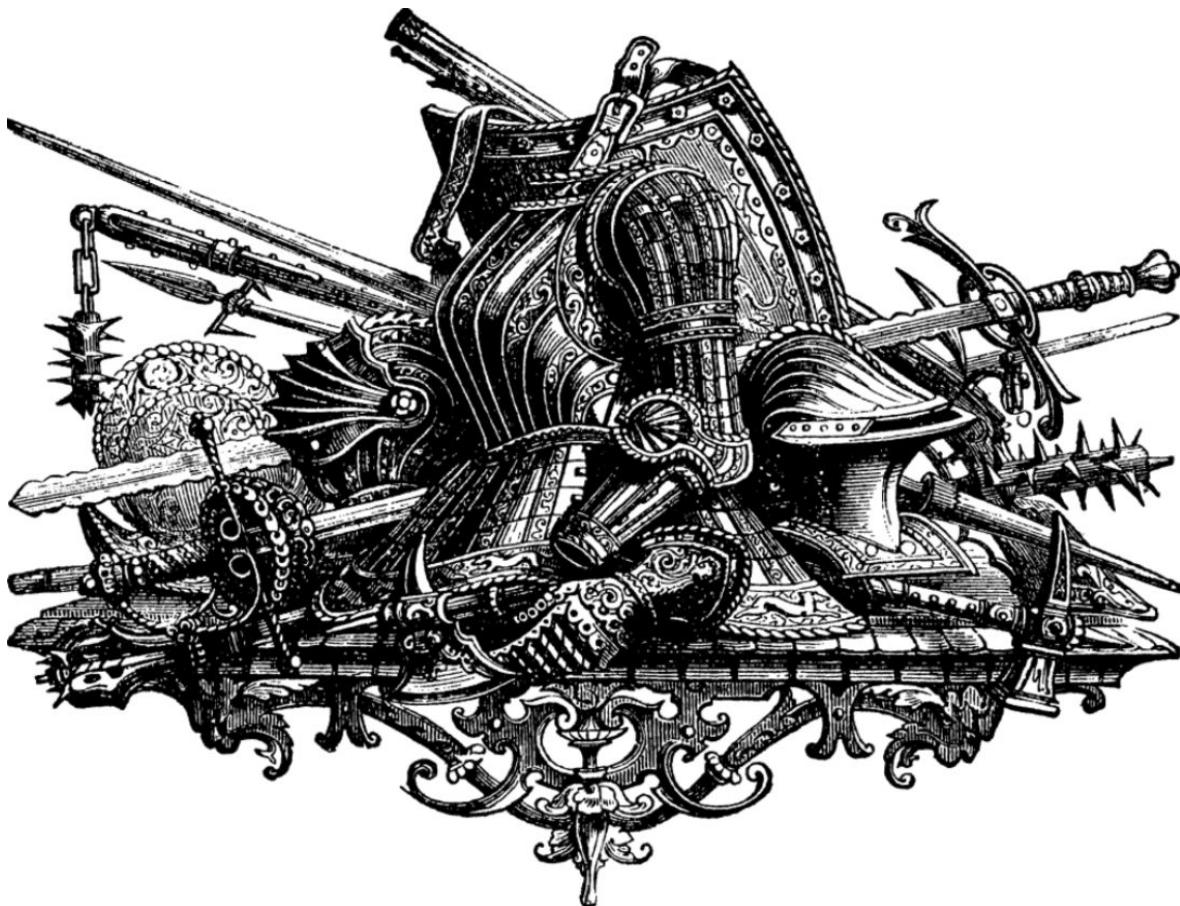
□ □ □

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, plus  $1d6$  per countdown checkbox, and if the total is over 40 you die.

## 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, plus 1 per countdown checkbox. You feel like you should be able to remember them, unless the countdown is completed.



## Part 6: Advanced Assets

This section provides additional detail and options for you to use Assets. You can skip this section for a casual game.

### Rolling ASSET

When your Legend Die rolls ASSET, you must compare your Asset with that of your opponent. The best Asset for the situation wins.

For a casual game this comparison is done qualitatively, but for an advanced game you will use Asset Tags to measure which Asset is best. **Asset Tags**, describe specific cases when they grant “advantage” or “disadvantage”. You then count advantages and disadvantages to see which Asset is better. This is situational, since a spear is a fine weapon on the battlefield, but not in a cramped space.

## Assets are Expected

Characters are expected to use normal and appropriate Assets for most actions. Players usually describe this naturally, such as "I cut down the wizard with my sword".

Characters attempting actions *without* supporting Assets will suffer a penalty since this is *not* the normal case. Characters will suffer a Disadvantage at best (which applies if you roll ASSET), and at worst the action will be ruled an automatic failure by the GM since some tasks are clearly impossible without the correct tools.

**Weapons and Armor** are expected for all characters in combat.

Otherwise the character (or foe) suffers penalties on attack and defense actions, and possibly others. Any lethal instrument counts as a weapon, and most heavy clothing such as a doublet or a sturdy cloak can count as armor, so in normal circumstances there is little reason to be completely unarmed or unarmored.

- **Unarmed Attacks:** Attacks without weapons suffer Disadvantage.
- **Unarmored Defense:** If a character must defend against an attack and does not have any armor in the location being attacked, a Disadvantage applies, and is doubled for the head, neck, or torso. Some weapons like swords make this worse.
- **Unchallenged Attacks:** An attacker can choose the Hit Location if the defender does not have a weapon which can reach him.

**Specific Tools** are required for many professional jobs or special abilities. For example a wizard needs a wand or other Focus to cast spells.

**Prerequisites:** Some Assets require specific Themes. Even if other characters cannot use these Assets, they are still a normal part of everyday life and usually recognizable. For example, everyone recognizes a wizard's wand, knows generally what it is for ("magic

stuff"), and might consider taking the wand away to keep the wizard from waving it around.

# Asset Tags

Assets add a tactical, crunchy element to an otherwise freeform game. Most Assets have **Asset Tags**, specific features of the item that add tactical advantages, disadvantages, abilities, and tradeoffs. Most Tags create advantages that apply in specific circumstances, as well as counterbalancing disadvantages in other situations.

## Tag Magnitudes

Occasionally some Tags are followed by a number, such as Far2, Far3, etc. This indicates better capabilities than the standard Tag. This doesn't change the way the Tag is used, and often doesn't matter unless opposed by another Tag. Penalties are indicated by -2, -3, etc.

Examples:

- A **Far3** bow has a longer range than Far2 or Far bows.
- **Custom2** armor is fancier than Custom.
- **Hard2** armor is not countered by Anti-Armor Weapon (AAW).
- **AAW2** weapons cancel both Hard and Hard2
- **Clumsy-2** armor causes 2 Disadvantages on rolls where mobility is important. For example, if you try to leap across a pit and roll ASSET your result will be downgraded.

Tag Magnitudes are rarely used, so the GM could use this to create unusual or magical items.

## Asset Quality Tags

Most Assets are standard quality, but when appropriate an Asset can have a Tag for quality.

**Cheap:** The Asset is very cheaply made, or a "bad knockoff". The price is usually less than a standard item, up to half (50%) less. The item works fine, but is fiddly and fragile and more likely to break, even when

used properly. A Cheap Asset will break unless the character achieves an Extra Success result, in which case the "extra" benefit is that the item didn't break.

**Normal:** Most items are of standard quality. For weapons and armor this is commonly called "munitions grade", mass-produced yet fully functional and well-suited for warfare.

**Luxury:** The Asset is very nicely made, and a joy to use. Weapons built for nobility are usually artistically engraved or etched, but are no more functional than munitions grade.

**Exceptional:** If a weapon has exceptional quality then it should be given additional Tags. For example, an "enchanted Elven sword" should be given an additional Weapon Tag. Note that there are no "+1" weapons in this game.

**Advanced:** The Asset works exceptionally well. One of the Asset Tags grants an Advanced

Advantage instead of a standard Advantage. Write this as a modifier on one of the Asset Tags, such as "Advanced Aiming" for a sniper rifle with an advanced scope.

## Weapons

**Weapons** are designed to defeat armor and kill the foe. Characters suffer a Disadvantage if attacking or defending without a weapon. Weapons must be wielded in the hands, a single hand unless noted below by the "2H" tag.



**Melee Weapons** are used in hand-to-hand combat in the “melee ranges” of Short, Medium, and Long. Melee weapons gain an Advantage when used in their optimal Range (as specified by their range tag). Only longer weapons such as polearms and thrown weapons can attack at Long range. Melee weapons cannot attack at **Far** Range and suffer a Disadvantage at **Close** Range.

**Ranged Weapons** can attack at any range, but suffer a Disadvantage if within reach of an opponent (e.g. in melee). So it is preferable to attack at **Far** Range since that is always out of reach of all melee weapons.



## Close Combat Weapons

**Wrestling** [Close Unarmed] attacks requiring very close range such as grabbing, grappling, holding, throwing, punching, biting, etc.

**Pugilism** [Short Unarmed] unarmed punch and kick

**Knife** [Close Short Cutty Stabbity] a common belt or house knife

**Pommel** [Close] a sword or dagger pommel (the counterweight at the end of the grip) which is a separate weapon from the sword.

**Shield** [Close Binding Parrying Nonlethal] punch with face or rim

**Dagger** [Close Cutty Stabbity] a military dagger or rondel

**Parrying Dagger** [Close Binding Guard Parrying Stabbity]

# Swords

**Cutlass** [Short Cutty Parrying] short curved cutting sword

**Short Sword** [Short Binding Parrying Cutty Stabbity] a short sword (or huge knife), useful for chopping and stabbing, such as a machete, langes messer, katzbälzer, cinquedea



**Sabre** [Medium Parrying Cutty] longer curved cutting sword

**Falchion** [Medium Binding Parrying Cutty] distinctive curved sword with a clipped tip which can bind with an opponent's [possibly longer) weapon, also known as a storta or scimitar

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

**Arming sword** [Medium Binding Parrying Cutty] a simple thrust sword with a cross hilt

**Viking Sword** [Medium Binding Parrying Cutty]

**Rapier** [Long Guard Binding Parrying Cutty] a long civilian thrusting sword

**Longsword** [2H Medium Binding Parrying Cutty] longsword, bastard sword, or kriegsmesser

**Swiss Saber** [2H Medium Binding Guard Parrying Cutty] a long saber with an elaborate hilt

**Greatsword** [Heavy Medium-Long AAW Guard Binding Parrying Control Cutty Secret] a large two-handed sword such as a spadone, montante, or zweihander. Complex but deadly and able to attack in any direction.

## Common and Peasant Weapons

**Knife** [Close Short Cutty Stabbity] a common belt or house knife

**Stick** [Short Nonlethal] lightweight stick, baton, or light club

**Stone** [Short Thrown-Long] a rock or brick

**Sickle** [Short Tool Fragile] grain sickle

**Hatchet** [Short Tool] small ax

**Wood Ax** [2H Medium Tool] chops wood and other stuff

**Cudgel** [2H Short Nonlethal] stout heavy stick, heavy club (or baseball bat)

**Scythe** [2H Medium Fragile] farmer's tool for reaping wheat, or foes

**Grain Flail** [2H Medium Fragile] long and heavy

**Great Club** [Heavy Medium] big tree branch

**Staff** [2H Medium] stout staff around nose-height

**Short Spear** [2H Long Stabbity] common weapon, easy to use and deadly

**Long Staff** [2H Long] stout staff above head-height

## Military Hafted 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 Mark Fines or have their weapons confiscated.

**Small Ax** [Short Binding Tool] war hatchet or tomahawk

**Mace** [Short AAW Indestructible] wooden or metal club with flanges or spikes for crushing armored foes

**Hammer** [Short AAW Indestructible]

**Javelin** [Medium Thrown-Long-Far] throwing spear

**Battle Ax** [Heavy Medium] war axe

**Spear** [2H Long Parrying Stabbiy] common primary weapon, simple to wield and deadly

**Military Pick** [Heavy AAW Medium]

**Military Flail** [Heavy Medium]

**Poleaxe** [Heavy Medium AAW Indestructible Parrying] a knightly polearm for crushing armor, a staff topped with an axe, hammer, and spike

**Halberd** [Heavy Long AAW Binding Parrying]

**Partisan** [Heavy Medium Long Binding Parrying] polearm with a sword-like guard that allows the wielder to shorten the weapon

**Polearm** [Heavy Long] various other pole-weapons

## Bows & Crossbows

Bows are superior to crossbows and early firearms 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, making them impractical for fielding large armies. Elite archers can outperform crossbows or early firearms, making them a compelling choice for adventurers even though militias and armies might make other choices.

**self bow** [2H Far2 Accurate Reload] short bow, suitable for hunting or horseback.

**longbow** [Heavy Far3 Accurate Reload] the deadly longbow is large and requires great strength to use.

**hunting crossbow** [2H Far2 Accurate Reload3] light hunting crossbow. Reloading takes 3 Actions without moving. Can be fired in one hand, but the range drops to Long.



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

**siege arbalest** [Heavy Far3 Accurate Reload10] very heavy and powerful crossbow, but extremely slow to reload.

## Early Firearms

Early firearms are similar to crossbows in terms of their advantages compared with bows, and require even less strength. Thus firearms can be used even when hurt or weakened by malnutrition or disease. Reloading a gun requires one or more Actions equal to the Reload tag, per gun barrel.

**handgonne** [Heavy Far3 Reload4] a hand cannon consisting of a heavy barrel, handle, and socket for inserting a stock or staff. These weapons were introduced to the Alglonds by their Dwur allies, adopting the Dwur Thaumatagonne designs for widespread fabrication and use by Alorn troops. A trained soldier can load the cannon in a Cutscene, and firing is by a lit match, so these weapons are best used in siege warfare or for a first-strike volley.

**arquebus** [Heavy Far3 Accurate Reload5] a newer, more accurate version of the hand cannon with a true rifle shape and a matchlock. Developed by the Lyonese and beginning to spread west across Alornea.

**flintlock pistol** [Far Accurate Reload4] a Dwur-made pistol using a flintlock.

**doublloon** [Far Accurate Reload4 (each)] a double-shot flintlock pistol. Each barrel must be loaded, primed, and fired independently.

**shotgonne** [Heavy Far Reload5 (each)] a double-barreled shotgun meant for "intimate encounters", i.e. up-close and personal combat. Each barrel must be loaded, primed, and fired independently.



**flintlock rifle** [Heavy Far3 Accurate Reload5] a Dwur-made rifle using a flintlock.

## Weapon Tags

Weapons have Tags to represent their characteristics. Most weapons grant an **Attack Advantage** in certain circumstances, as specified by weapon Tags. Gaining an Attack Advantage often requires a Preparation Action for a specific combat tactic. In other words, this is not a static benefit, but something that the player needs to gain or earn via character actions.

## Weapon Size Tags

Weapons tend to fall into three general sizes, the largest being a primary battle weapon such as a spear, then a sidearm such as swords, and then weapons of last resort such as daggers. Size affects the weapon Reach tags. Larger weapons are inherently more powerful and thus tend to have more Tags than smaller weapons. The largest weapons also have Tags such as **2H** and **Heavy**, which have additional benefits and restrictions.

**2H** (two-handed) weapons such as spears are optimized for use in two hands. They tend to be longer weapons and often have better Range tags, but lose such Advantages if wielded in one hand. Most 2H weapons must be carried in hand rather than in a sheath. These weapons are often military battle weapons, which may make them illegal to carry in towns and cities.

**Heavy** weapons such as two-handed swords and polearms are primary battle weapons, always two-handed (2H) and requiring special military training. Their primary benefit is the ability to ignore armor without the Heavy armor tag (which provides an Advantage on the attack). Similar to 2H weapons, they lose such Advantages if wielded in one hand. Heavy weapons cannot be used unless the character has a supporting Theme indicating they have specialized military weapon training or are

unusually strong (e.g. Fighter, Paladin, Soldier, Strong, et al). Heavy weapons are bulky and must be carried in hand, so a character may only carry one Heavy weapon at a time. Most Heavy weapons are also 2H weapons. Heavy weapons are military battle weapons which often makes them illegal to carry in most towns and cities

## 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. There are five general Range categories, each of which allows only certain kinds of weapons to make attacks. If you position yourself correctly you can claim PREP. A very few weapons list multiple Ranges, and are considered optimal for all of them. Players will need to use smart tactics to setup the attacks they want, or use cover to avoid attacks by foes.

**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. Weapons suffer a Disadvantage unless they have the "Close" Tag (such as knives and daggers). Note that using a weapon pommel is considered to be equivalent to a gauntleted fist.

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

**Medium:** is the optimal measure for longer weapons such as swords. Weapons suffer a Disadvantage unless they have the "Medium" Tag, such as swords.

**Long:** is the optimal measure for longer weapons such as spears. Weapons must have the "Long" Tag to attack.

**Far, Far2, Far3:** is too far for melee and most thrown weapons, so only projectile 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".

## Advanced Weapon Tags

**Accurate:** accurate but slow to aim two-handed weapon, such as a longbow or arquebus. Adv on ranged attack if Aimed, Dis otherwise.

**AAW (Anti-Armor Weapons)** are specialized at defeating Hard armor. The AAW tag cancels the Hard armor tag.

**Binding** weapons excels at *binding* with an opponent's weapon, and can momentarily *trap* and *control* an opposing weapon, such as a spear or sword. Parrying daggers can catch a weapon, falchions can bind with the broad blade tip, swords can bind with the blade, hilt, or lugs. Rolling a Preparation Action for Binding grants an Advantage on Attack.

**Control** weapons such as the two-handed sword are ideal for controlling an area. They can be easily turned to strike in any direction. The character gains an Advantage on Actions to control the distance between himself and his foes. The character can also attack foes in any direction around him, not just directly in front.

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

**Cutty** weapons such as swords are adept at cutting up and slicing unarmored foes, such as civilians. They can be claimed for an Advantage against unarmored targets. (Note that there is no inherent drawback to this, as Heavy and Hard armors already provided bonuses against these weapons.)

**Guard** indicates a 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 armor for the hand wielding the weapon.

**Fragile** weapons are more fragile than most, and break apart if a Fumble is rolled.

**Indestructible** weapons are sturdy and never break.

**Nonlethal** are *less lethal* than other weapons, such as a stick or staff in comparison with a mace or spear. They are not as damaging and *less likely* to be lethal than most weapons. They are less threatening and more likely to be legally carried in towns. Attacks may cause Stress instead of Damage.

**Parrying** weapons excel at parrying or deflecting incoming attacks, and can work as well as a shield. Parrying daggers and swords are equivalent to a small shield and noted on the list of Shields. Note that any weapon can be used to parry, and this is expected in normal combat (hence the defense penalty if you are unarmed), but Parrying weapons excel at this.

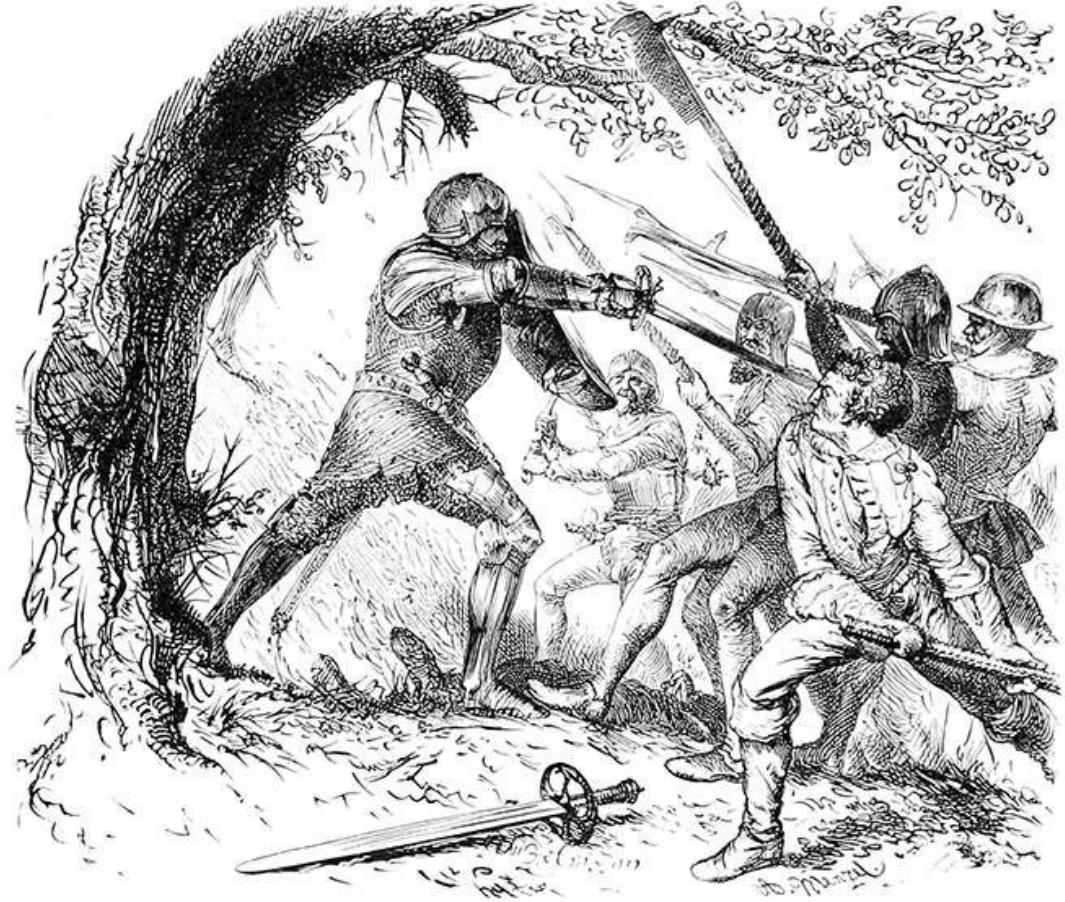
**Reload** indicates the weapon must be reloaded before attacking again. This applies to ranged weapons such as bows, crossbows, and firearms. Normally this requires one Maneuver, but a number after the Reload Tag (e.g. Reload3) indicates that multiple Maneuvers are needed.

**Stabbity** weapons are optimized for lots of stabbing or "shanking". If the first attack hits then the character may make a free second attack on the same target area. Only one extra attack is allowed, but this represents *lots*. Also known as "Stabbity Stabbity".

**Secret** weapons are unusual or difficult to use and require a Secret. Otherwise the character suffers a Disadvantage using the weapon, and cannot use any of the beneficial Tags.

**Thrown** weapons can be thrown at the Range specified, such as "Thrown-Long" or "Thrown-Far1". Most Thrown weapons such as daggers can be thrown at Long range only, while some aerodynamic weapons such as Javelins can be thrown Long and Far1.

**Unarmed** fighters suffer a Disadvantage on attack and defense rolls if his opponent has a weapon. A character who is a martial arts expert may list a particular attack such as "iron fist" as an Asset, which then counts as a weapon, not unarmed.



## Armor

**Armor** protects the wearer from physical harm, such as weapons and fire. Characters should choose a base **Body Armor** listed below, and optionally consider additional **Armor Pieces**.

**Coverage:** All **body armor** covers at least the **torso** and **head**. The body and head are the most critical areas to protect, and many armors also serve as warm clothing. Any other areas covered will be noted by **Tags**. Additional specific pieces can be worn to protect open areas or upgrade defenses of a critical area.

**Unarmored Disadvantage:** Wearing armor of some kind is critical for survival in combat. If a character is attacked by a weapon and not protected by armor in the location being attacked, he suffers a Disadvantage on the Saving Throw to survive. An extra Disadvantage applies for the head, neck, and torso, so most armor and helms focus

on protecting these critical locations. All **Body Armors** listed below uniformly removes the Disadvantage by putting the best protection on the most critical areas.

**Underarmored Damage Penalty:** If hit in a location and the weapon is better than the armor, take +1 Damage. Soft Armor always has this penalty.

**Armor Tags** may describe additional protection. For example the "Heavy" armor Tag grants an Advantage on defenses, but is also hot, heavy, and reduces mobility, so a soldier generally only wears heavy armor if expecting a full-scale battle on level ground. This usually only applies to the critical areas of the **torso**, which is the chest and abdomen, unless noted with the "Full" Tag.

Mobility can become an issue with armor, especially if the armor is heavy or covers the entire body. The Tag "Clumsy" indicates the armor causes a Disadvantage on rolls involving maneuverability.

## Body Armor

Characters should choose one **Body Armor** listed below. All Body Armors cover at least the **torso** and **head**. The body and head are the most critical areas to protect, and many armors also serve as warm clothing. Any other areas covered will be noted by **Tags**.

**Doublet** [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** [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** [Armor Heavy Clumsy] 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** [Armor Heavy Clumsy] 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** [Armor Heavy Clumsy] 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 legs are covered in cloth, not mail. The head is protected by a mail coif.

**Full Mail** [Armor Heavy Full Clumsy-2] 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** [Armor Hard Heavy Full Clumsy-2] armor is mail covered by embedded metal plates, this heavy armor was worn by the early knights.

**Three-Quarters Plate** [Armor Hard Heavy Visor] is a lighter suit of, fully articulated light metal plate armor. Designed for mobile foot combat, this armor leaves the lower legs unprotected.

**Custom Three-Quarters Plate** [Armor Hard Heavy Visor Custom] is an advanced, fully articulated light metal plate armor, designed for mobile foot combat. Rare and expensive.

**Custom Full Plate** [Armor Hard Heavy Full Visor Custom Clumsy] is an advanced, fully articulated light metal plate armor, the pinnacle of protection. Rare and expensive.

# Armor Pieces

Characters may wear specific armor pieces as **upgrades** 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** [Armor-Head Coif] are hoods of stitched leather. Protects the neck and head.

**Mail coif** [Armor-Head Heavy Coif] is a hood of mail (chainmail) or scale, often incorporated into a hauberk or camail. Protects the neck and head.



## Neck

**Bevor** [Armor-Neck Hard Heavy] is a hard plate collar to protect the throat.

**Gorget** [Armor-Neck Hard] are stiff collars of brigandine to protect the throat.

## Head

**Plumed hat** [Armor-Head Civil Hat] are huge, feathered hats that counts as some padding.

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

**Cervelliere** [Armor-Head Hard Cap] are round, close-fitting steel skull caps.

**Kettle Hat** [Armor-Head Hard Hat] is a helmet made of steel in the shape of a wide-brimmed hat. Inexpensive and popular with infantry because they offer many advantages, but are not seen as fashionable.

**Great Helm** [Armor-Head Closed] are flat-topped cylinders of steel that completely covers the head and has only very small openings for the

eyes and mouth. This helm does not have a moveable visor, so it was sometimes taken off for foot combat.

**Spangenhelm** [Armor-Head Hard] are conical, pointed metal helms made of metal strips and plates.

**Barbute** [Armor-Head Hard Closed] a visor-less helm with a distinctive "T" shaped opening for the eyes and mouth. The barbute resembles classical Greek helms. Includes an integral lining, so no arming cap is needed.

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

**Sallet** [Armor-Head Hard Open] are open-faced helms. Includes an integral lining, so no arming cap is needed.

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

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

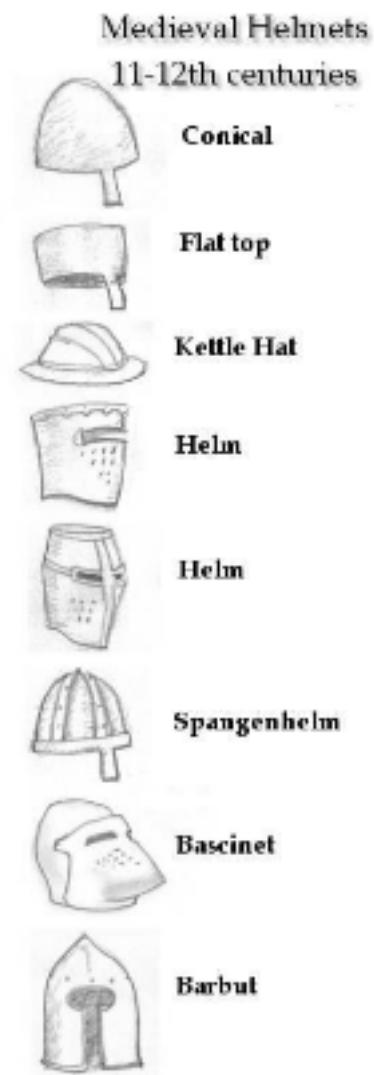
**Hounskull** [Armor-Head Hard Visored] are bascinets with a "dog faced" conical visor and aventail. Includes an integral lining, so no arming cap is needed.

**Armet** [Armor-Head Hard Visored] are early fully-enclosed visored helmets which are compact and light enough to move with the wearer.

## Torso

**Breastplate** [Armor Hard Partial Layerable] are steel breastplates, only covering the front, and often worn over other armor.

**Cuirass** [Armor Hard Partial] are steel breastplate and backplate, often worn over other armor.



**Cuirie** [Armor Hard Front] a hardened leather breastplate made of cuir-bouilli (boiled leather), often worn over other armor.

## Hands

**Swordsman's Gloves** [Armor-Hand Partial] nimble leather gloves with very limited protection

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

**Mitten Gauntlet** [Armor-Hand Heavy Full Hard Clumsy-2] extremely protective steel mittens, but also very clumsy. Easy to obtain and ideal for characters whose weapon does not have a hand **Guard** (such as a polearm) and do not have a buckler.

**Knight's Gauntlet** [Armor-Hand Hard Full Custom] fully articulated, custom made steel gauntlets, covering the entire hand. Rare and expensive.

## Armor Maneuverability Tags

Armor must make a careful tradeoff between protection, comfort, style, and bulk. Many kinds of armor are Clumsy, meaning they adversely affect movement and maneuvers.

**Clumsy** armor causes a Disadvantage on Actions involving maneuverability. This stacks, so two Clumsy tags might be written as "Clumsy-2" and cause two Disadvantages.

## Armor Protection Tags

The main armor Tags are **Hard**, **Heavy**, and **Full**, which determine the Defense Advantage and whether the armor is Clumsy.

**Armor** is the basic armor Tag, indicating the Asset provides protection. This can specify a limited hit location, such as Armor-Head, Armor-Neck, or Armor-Hand

**Heavy** armors rely on multiple layers and grant an Advantage against weapons, except those with the **Heavy** weapon tags. The Advantage only applies to the **head and torso** unless the armor also has the **Full** tag. However, this armor is truly heavy, so add the **Clumsy** armor tag.

**Full** armors cover all hit targets. However this armor restricts movement, so add the **Clumsy** armor tag.

**Hard** armors have rigid plates and grant an Advantage against weapons, except those with the **Anti-Armor Weapon (AAW)** tag. The Advantage only applies to the **head and torso** unless the armor also has the **Full** tag. Hard armors are rare and expensive to buy and maintain.

Note that **Heavy Anti-Armor Weapons** are only effectively countered by **Heavy Hard** armor.

The above Tags are often combined for additional protection, for example:

**Hard Full** protects all hit locations with the Hard tag, but is Clumsy.

**Heavy Full** armor combines Heavy and Full, so the Heavy tag is granted in all locations, but the two Clumsy tags add together for a total of Clumsy-2.

**Hard Heavy Full** armor is more protective and no more clumsy than Heavy Full, but is rare.

## Advanced Armor Tags

**Armor-Head** are helms, so they protect the head. Note that helms also have an Open or Closed Tag to describe facial protection.

**Armor-Hand** armors are gloves or gauntlets that protect the hands. If Clumsy, this causes a Disadvantage on delicate work, such as picking locks, playing music instruments, etc.

**Armor-Neck** applies to armor and helms that cover the throat.

**Caps** are skull-caps that only cover the top of the head. They do not cover the face, ears, or rear of the head.

**Civil** armors and helms are “civil looking”, appearing as normal rugged clothing and does not draw attention.

**Closed** helms cover the wearer's face for greater protection, but sacrifice comfort, visibility, and breathability. This causes a

Disadvantage that applies to any rolls involving clear sight or hearing, such as ranged combat or observing something.

**Coifs** are protective hoods that covers 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. They only cause a Disadvantage on hearing, not sight.

**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 indicate represent artistic embellishments such as gold leaf or elaborate shapes like wild beasts or dragons. Removes one Clumsy tag.

**Front** armor only covers the front of the torso; it is open-backed. Any Disadvantage caused by the item drops by one die size.

**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.

**Partial** armor, helms, and gauntlets cover very limited areas. Removes one Clumsy tag.

**Open** helms do not cover the wearer's face. They only cause a Disadvantage on hearing, not sight.

**Visored** helms have a moveable plate to open or close the face, becoming an Open or Closed helm whenever the wearer likes.

## 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



# Shield Guards

Shields are moveable armor, able to be positioned during between **guards** (for free within a player's turn). Each guard provides armor for specific Hit Locations, so the player will need to choose the best guard for their situation.

All shields have at least two **basic front guards**, so named since they protect from attacks coming at the character's front facing. These protect the Hit Location(s) listed, plus the Left Hand and Left Arm.

- **Left** - Torso (default)
- **High** - Head (causes Disadvantage on vision)

Additional front guards are available only to some shields, by Shield Tags.

- **Right** - Right Hand (bucklers) but not Left Arm
- **Middle** - Head and Torso (round shields, tower shields)
- **Low** - Torso and Legs (tower shields)

Lastly, specialty **flank guards** protect a side rather than the front:

- **Left Flank** - Head, Left Arm, Left Hand, Left Torso (most strapped shields) *from attacks coming from the left*
- **Right Flank** - Head, Right Arm, Right Torso (centergrip shields) *from attacks coming from the right*
- **Horseman's Guard** - Left Arm, Left Torso, Left Hand, Left Leg (kite shields) *from attacks coming from the left*

# Concepts

Just like armor, shields do not protect against **Heavy** weapons unless the shield also has the Heavy tag.

Shields equivalent to armor, so they are less useful when good armor is available. A knight in full plate armor is already covered in equivalent protection, so he is better off wielding a heavy two-handed weapon.

Shields are also less useful when facing threats from multiple directions, since they can only protect the front facing.

Smaller shields are vulnerable to longer weapons because they cover few areas. Remember that an attacker can choose the Hit Location if the defender does not have a weapon which can reach him.

## Shields

**Buckler** [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** [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** [Medium Centergrip Clumsy] A light wooden round shield, such as a Viking shield. Inexpensive and readily available.

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

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

**Large round** [Large Centergrip Clumsy-2] A large wooden round shield, such as a larger Viking shield. Inexpensive and readily available.

**Kite** [Large Strapped Clumsy-2] A distinctive shield in a reverse teardrop shape used by mounted warriors to protect the left flank and leg.

**Aspis** [Heavy Large Strapped Clumsy-3] A very large, deeply-dished shield made of wood.

**Tower Shield** [Heavy Large Strapped Clumsy-3] A rectangular, semi-cylindrical tower shield.

**Pavise** [Heavy Large Standing Clumsy-4] A very large semi-portable wall shield to protect crossbowmen in siege warfare.

## Other Shields

Some weapons and objects can be used as shields. The same Asset cannot also be used as an offensive weapon during the same Round.

**Parrying Weapon** [Parrying] weapons such as daggers and swords can be used to parry, but not against Heavy weapons.

**2H Parrying Weapon** [2H Parrying] weapons such as larger swords can be used to parry.

**Furniture** [Medium Improvised Clumsy-3] a chair, table, or bar stool

**Umbrella** [Civil Fragile Small Improvised Clumsy-1] while open, not against Heavy weapons, and will immediately break if the bonus is used

## Heavy Weapons vs Shields

Attacks from Heavy weapons will damage a shield unless it is also Heavy. A damaged shield provides no benefit, but still applies all drawbacks such as the Clumsy tag.

**Background** - 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.

## Shield Tags

**Small:** shields can be used once per round

**Medium:** shields can be used two times per round

**Large:** shields can be used three times per round

**Clumsy:** shields cause a Disadvantage on Actions involving maneuverability. This tag works the same as the Clumsy armor tag, and they stack.

**Heavy** shields are able to block attacks from **Heavy** weapons without being damaged. Add Clumsy.

## 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. Centergrip shields are more actively wielded than Strapped shields, requiring more advanced skills (from both character and player) because the player must designate which direction (front, left, or right) the shield is positioned. *Centergrip shields may not be Heavy.*

**Parrying** weapons such as daggers and swords are equivalent to a small shield. The same Asset cannot also be used as an offensive weapon during the same Round, so the first parry or attack during a Round sets the purpose of the item.

**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. Strapped shields are harder to equip than a center-gripped shield, but also unlikely to be dropped by accident. This style of shield works well on horse and on foot, and can support heavier shields than a center-grip. Strapped shields cannot protect the right side of the body, so usually a weapon is used to parry attacks from the right side.

**Custom** shields are higher-quality, bespoke and perfectly made. Any Disadvantage caused by the item drops by one.

**Fragile** shields are lighter and more fragile than most, and break apart if a Fumble is rolled.

**Improvised** shields are everyday items used as cover. They are Clumsy and often Fragile..

**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. Crossbowmen might work in teams of two men, so that they can advance on the enemy. Due to the bulk of the stand, they are Clumsy, although some shields have a detachable stand such as loops to put the shield on a post.



## Secret Assets

These Assets assist in using Secrets.

### Books and Scrolls

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.

Studying requires hard work and dedication, so you must use an Experience Path for each topic you are studying. Upon successful completion of your Path you will be rewarded with a new Secret.

Characters who start play with a "book" or similar Asset start play with one additional Secret, presumably from having already spent some time with the book, or perhaps having had a portion of the book explained by a teacher. The book can also be used as the basis for Experience Paths to glean more Secrets from its pages. Books are

tremendously beneficial because they free you from having to travel to find knowledge.

The GM secretly determines how many Secrets each book contains, possibly by rolling 1d6 or some other die based on the size of the book. If you've gleaned all the Secrets from a book, the GM will tell you mid-way through an Experience Path, which you will then need to "abandon". So you should always try to have a spare book on hand.

Scrolls are the same as books, but can only contain one Secret.

## Spell Focuses

Spell Focuses are Assets used by magic-users to assist in casting spells. A Spell Focus grants an Advantage on certain kinds of spells. In order to cast a spell, a magic-user must have a Secret for the spell and an appropriate Theme, this knowledge is not provided by the Spell Focus. Here are some examples, but it's really best to dream up something unique.

**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 shaped and turned from black dragonbone, and etched with Baal 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 Baal.

**Dragonbone Wand:** A thin stick of black dragonbone. Similar to a dragonbone staff, this wand is potent focus for conjuring fire, but far less useful as a weapon.

**Blue Dragon Orb:** A glassy sphere filled with a flickering spark of dragon magic. The orb is a focus for aeromancy and electrical magic.

**Book of Shadows:** A grimoire of *Umbracala* shadow magic spells. The book contains at least one Secret and acts as a Spell Focus for shadow magic.

**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, which requires a Cutscene.

## Custom Assets

You or the GM can create new kinds of Assets, and even Asset Tags. Here are a few examples.

### Glass Weapons

“Glass” weapons have fragile blades designed to break into shards inside the victim, leading to an agonizing and unavoidable death. Some glass weapons are actually volcanic glass, while others are steel with spines or thin blades.

Weapon Tag: Glass

The weapon is designed to break apart inside a victim. This also makes the blade relatively fragile. When making any roll while holding the weapon and EFFORT is rolled, the weapon shatters. On an attack this upgrades the natural result, but there is no benefit for other rolls. If an attack with a glass weapon causes a Doom immediately check a box.

### Runelocks

Runelocks use thaumaturgical runes to speed the reload time of their flintlocks. Speaking the name of the rune performs some of the reloading functions, such as cocking the hammer.

Weapon Tag: Runelock

Reduce Reload Tag by 1 if the wielder has a Secret named “runelock”.



BRADAMANTE DEFEATS THE WIZARD  
WITH THE RING.

# Part 7: Secrets

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

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

## Secret Level

Every Secret has a "Level" which quantifies the degree of skill and power necessary to use the Secret, as well as the inherent risk. A low-level Secret is less powerful than a higher-level Secret, but also much less risky to use.

Levels range from 1-9 and conveniently match "spell levels" common to all classic dungeon RPGs, so "magic missile" is 1st level and "fireball" is 3rd level. This unlocks the full range of classic RPG spells and powers in your own game library and on the internet. You can choose from any spell or power ever written, all you need is the name and level. You can even invent your own.

## Using Secrets

Using a Secret is an Action which requires a Damage Roll, so failure results in Damage. The minimum Hazard of your roll is your Secret Level.

## Side Effects

Even if you succeed in using your Secret there might be side effects or natural consequences. For example, using “blackmail for the Duke” to threaten the Duke might get you what you want for now, but will surely anger the powerful Duke. Casting a magic spell in direct view of others might have ramifications unrelated to the actual spell itself.

Also consider that if you fumble a Secret, the GM gets a Counter. This free Action will be in the scope of your fumbled Action, and of similar proportion. If you attack with a large Action like a grenade or *fireball* spell, you bring the inherent risk it might blow up in the faces of yourself and your allies.

## Risks

Secrets are powerful but risky. Using a Secret requires a Damage Roll, so if you fail you take Damage, and if you do not Soak all Damage you gain a Doom. Thus a wizard’s *flame arrow* spell can slay foes even more surely than the arrow of a war bow, but bears a greater risk.

If you gain a Doom it will be related to your Secret, Themes, and situation. For example, if you are a magic-user and fail to cast your spell, your Doom will be related to your spell (a Secret) and your Theme(s) that represents your magic art, school of magic, etc. If you are a “necromancer” then you’ll get a necromantic-style Doom. The best Dooms are detailed and make good foils for the super-powers that Secrets provide.

Also keep in mind that since the minimum Hazard of your roll is your Secret Level, using higher-level Secrets are more risky for you, and more likely to result in a Doom. You should think about trying to use the minimum power necessary whenever possible.

Lastly, if you fumble your roll the GM gets a **Counter**, which is related to your Action. So casting dramatic spells such as *fireball* or *teleport* exposes you to grave risk, since a fumble could turn the power against you.

## Supporting Traits

Since you will often need to roll when using a Secret, you would be wise to choose some Traits that support your Secrets, for example if you are a wizard with spells you might want Traits such as “mana”, “elemental pact”, or “powerstone”.

As you may realize, magic-users are essentially burning Traits to use their magic. This can be conceptualized as the mental, physical, and magical exhaustion needed to wield Secrets such as magic spells.

## Maintained Secrets

Some Secrets can be “maintained” over time, such as a “protection from fire” spell. For Secrets which can be maintained, you must use an Action to dismiss the ongoing effect safely. You can use a Maneuver but this causes the effect to unravel abruptly and you must roll a Saving Throw against the “backlash”. There is no time limit, so if you cast a “magic guise” spell you can maintain the disguise until you dismiss your spell. However, if you fail *any* roll related to your Secrets (e.g. magic stuff) then *all* your Maintained effects abruptly end, requiring you to make a Saving Throws against backlash.

## Area-Effect Secrets

If your Secret affects an area, such as a *fireball* spell, so be it. Just realize that if you fumble your roll the GM’s **Counter** will likely turn the same effect against you and your allies. Consider whether bringing an area-effect weapon into the scene is really necessary.

# Gaining Secrets

You can gain a new Secret as an XP 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.

## Requirements

The GM may define appropriate prerequisites for any Secret. At a bare minimum you must have an appropriate supporting Theme for every Secret. For example, a "fireball" spell could be supported by Themes like Wizard, Pyromancer, Elementalist, etc.

One hard rule is you can never gain a Secret of a Level more than one higher than your previous highest-level Secret. So you can't gain a 3rd level "fireball" unless you already know a 2nd level spell. Furthermore, you need to have at least one Secret that you can say helped you to learn this new Secret. So if you want to learn a "fireball" then you would need another Secret like "fire arrow" or "fire something".

Also since you might need to Soak damage when using a Secret, you should take Traits which support you. For example, if you are a wizard with spells you might want Traits such as "mana", "elemental pact", or "powerstone".

## 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. By way of analogy, owning a chemistry or physics textbook doesn't necessarily mean you have absorbed the material and can apply it.

# Spells

Magic spells and powers are a staple of fantasy literature and RPGs. Spells are Secrets and you can use the two terms interchangeably. For example you can say "spell" instead of "secret" and "spell level" instead of "secret level". There is no difference, they work the same.

Legends does not have predefined limited lists of Spells. You can create any you like, or reuse spells from classic RPG books and novels. Some sample spell names are provided below to get you started, but it's best to make your own.



## Holy Spells (Elf, Cleric, or Hallow)

aerial servant	create food & water	divination
animate dead	create water	earthquake
animate object	cure blindness	exorcise
astral spell	cure critical wounds	feign death
atonement	cure disease	find the path
augury	cure light wounds	find traps
blade barrier	cure serious	flame strike
bless	wounds	gate
chant	detect charm	glyph of warding
command	detect evil	heal
commune	detect lie	hold person
conjure animals	detect magic	holy (unhol) word
continual light	dispel evil	insect plague
control weather	dispel magic	know alignment

light	regenerate	speak with dead
locate object	remove curse	speak with
lower water	remove fear	monsters
neutralize poison	resist cold	speak with plants
part water	resist fire	spiritual hammer
plane shift	restoration	sticks to snakes
prayer	resurrection	stone tell
prot. from evil	sanctuary	symbol
prot. from evil 10'r.	silence 15' radius	tongues
purify food & drink	slow poison	true seeing
quest	snake charm	wind walk
raise dead	speak with animals	word of recall

#### Fire Spells (Pyromancy or Dragon Magic)

affect normal fires	control flames	flame purification
blight	dance of flames	meteor swarm
burning hands	fire arrow	protection from fire
conjure flame	fire message	summon fire spirit
conjure smoke	fireball	wall of fire
continual flame	flame blade	warming

#### Illusion Spells

blur	illusory script	programmed
color spray	invisibility	illusion
disguise self	minor illusion	shadow blade
dream	mirror image	silent image
fear	phantasmal force	weird
greater invisibility	phantasmal killer	
hallucinatory terrain	phantom steed	

#### Necromancy Spells

animate dead	enervation	raise dead
cause fear	feign death	ray of enfeeblement
chill touch	finger of death	resurrection
circle of death	life transference	speak with dead
create undead	magic jar	vampiric touch



ANTONIO IS NOT AFRAID  
OF THE OGRE,

# Part 8: Game Master's Guide

This section elaborates on the earlier parts of the book with additional advance on how you, the GM, should run the game. Legends takes a different approach than most RPGs and provides a prescriptive approach for how you should manage your table.

## Flow of Play

The game takes place in Rounds, in which each person takes a Turn.

- For each Round:
  - GM Turn
    - GM rolls Encounter (hidden)
    - GM narrates the scene
      - GM declares Maneuvers for monsters
      - Players may interrupt with Maneuvers. GM can use a Maneuver Phase if necessary.
    - GM sets Hazard
  - For each player:
    - GM Transitions into player's turn
      - Declare threats (e.g. attacks) or required rolls
    - Player Turn
      - Player declares response and Action
      - Player rolls one Saving Throw (if applicable)
      - Player rolls one Action (if applicable)
    - GM Transitions out of player's turn

As the GM, you are responsible to keep the game flowing smoothly. Use the formal structure of Rounds and Turns when it's useful, but not when they get in the way. Sometimes it's simpler to focus more on keeping things moving, and make an Encounter roll whenever things stall. The Encounter roll signals a new Round and GM Turn.

# GM Turns

As the GM, take the first turn when the game starts, or whenever you come back from a break. You should also skip ahead to your turn if the players seem lost, stuck, or look to you to tell them what to do.

On your turn, do the following:

1. **Encounter** - roll a random **Encounter** to act as a seed of inspiration
2. **Narrate the Scene** - describe the current scene, narrate changes, and foreshadow possible future changes
3. Set the **Hazard** based on the above

Players are allowed to interject with **Maneuvers** at any time, even during your turn. Just acknowledge the Maneuver and keep flowing with your turn. For example, if you are narrating the scene and describe a "dark cowled figure rising from the mists" one or more players might say "I draw my sword". Maneuvers are simple and do not involve rolls, so just keep narrating.

After your turn, **Transition** to the first player, to kick off their turn.

# Encounters

Roll for a random Encounter at the start of every turn. Roll your 1d20 and Legend Die. This uses the same dice as player rolls, but the way you use them is very different. The dice are the same as what players use for actions, but you will interpret them a bit differently.

Your d20 does not result in success/failure of a particular action, but the kind of Encounter you will present. If your d20 rolls 15+ (what players would call "success") your result is OPPORTUNITY, otherwise on 14- your result is CHALLENGE. An OPPORTUNITY is something which benefits the PCs, and a CHALLENGE goes against them. (Whenever you see these words in all-caps in the rules, this is what they refer to.)

Combine your d20 with your Legend Die to determine what kind of Encounter you will present, such as OPPORTUNITY THEME, CHALLENGE ASSET, CHALLENGE COMBO, etc. There twelve encounter patterns are described below, to spur your imagination, helping you to spontaneously create wonder and make the game feel more alive.



# Encounters Table

As the GM, roll a random Encounter each round to jump start your turn.

	WEAL (d20 15+)	WOE (d20 14-)
<b>THEME</b>	Describe the scene, a location, or an NPC. Provide an opportunity by revealing information. Describe how a Doomed monster fails an attack.	Introduce an NPC or monster using a Theme. In combat, highlight a Theme of a foe, trap, or monster that raises Hazard. Describe how a Doomed monster takes a final Action and dies.
<b>EFFORT</b>	Describe an opportunity to make sudden progress, at the expense of spending Effort. Or have an NPC take initiative in an area of expertise to move the group ahead. Describe how a Doomed monster mutters and makes a leaky mess, and dies.	Highlight aspects of the scenario which expend effort or resources. An NPC does something to set the group back. In combat describe how PCs are fighting hard and getting tired, and must downgrade natural rolls of EFFORT this round. Describe how a Doomed monster attacks and dies.
<b>ASSET</b>	Highlight how a PC/NPC Asset is useful (e.g. armor blocks an attack). Or provide a clue to find a new Asset. For example, they might find food, water, light sources, spent arrows. On a Crit they might find "magic healing berries". Only provide a clue.	Present a challenge caused by superior gear on a foe, poor gear on PC, or special gear for the situation. Check on resources such as food, water, or light. In combat a PC has a gear mishap or attracts an attack due to subpar Asset/armor.
<b>COMBO</b>	Encounter a group of possibly friendly NPCs, or describe an opportunity to use teamwork, or an NPC helps a PC teammate.	Encounter a team of likely hostile NPCs, or a challenge that needs teamwork (e.g. auto-closing door, two-person puzzle). In combat describe how monsters use teamwork, which downgrades rolls of COMBO unless PCs use teamwork.
<b>ULT</b>	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 someone tailing, the "ranger" finds tracks, the "archer" sees a target.	Highlight a Dark Secret of a PC or NPC, or highlight the threat of an NPC boss. Describe how players will need to downgrade rolls of ULT if related to a Dark Secret or boss ability.
<b>PREP</b>	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". Or an	Surprise encounter, ambush, trap, or jump scare. Can reveal something a foe did to prepare. In combat describe how the foes were better

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NPC does something which will prepared, and players downgrade count as PREP for a PC Action. natural rolls of PREP.

# Narrating Scenes

When narrating a scene, do the following:

1. Describe the current scene
2. Introduce new scene elements, and describe changes
3. Foreshadow threats

First, 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. Try to repeat the scene description each round, but vary the wording.

Next, 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 monsters then describe how they move and what they appear to be doing. Make the environment feel alive.

When narrating monsters, try to use Maneuvers similar to those the players can take. For example, you can describe enemy archers aiming their bows at particular targets. Limit each monster to two Maneuvers, similar to players. This will help the players to make well-informed choices during their turns.

Always look for opportunities to foreshadow complications or threats. Especially foreshadow any immediate dangers such as attacks which will require a roll from a PC.

## Maneuver Interrupts

Players are allowed to interrupt your narration at any time to declare Maneuvers. This is common in combat when players want to contest the movement of their foes. Just note the player declaration and interweave it into your narrative.

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.

While they can freely interrupt with Maneuvers, players must wait until their turn to resolve any Actions or Saving Throws.

## Time

As part of narrating the scene, you should set expectations for the amount of time passing during the current round. This might be a few seconds in a wild melee combat or days when traversing the wilderness between cities. You can clarify or remind players during Transitions to their turns as needed. Here are five common tempos.

**Battle Intro** - A Battle Intro is a cinematic scene acting as a transition to initiate a combat. The GM will describe the newly unfolding situation and events, as well as foes. Players can describe heroic battle poses, draw weapons, throw insults and taunts, cast a subtle defensive spell such as “magic armor”, but can’t attack or take other overt actions.

**Combat** - A Combat is used for stressful situations like combat. Each player may describe one Action, such as readying a weapon, moving around, or attempting to flank a foe. The Action and supporting actions must be short, but long enough to do a couple of things such as open a door and move through, draw a weapon and move through an open door, stay put and aim a bow, or sprint.

**Cutscene** - A Cutscene Round is up to a few hours, covering a full cinematic scene. Each player should describe a very long cinematic series of actions. Players can describe broad sweeping actions that cover time loosely, such as running an errand, going shopping, repairing gear, resting, or gathering intel. Describe the cutscene as you would see it done in a film, and avoid getting bogged down in the details.

**Downtime** - A Downtime Round is usually a few days or weeks, during which the characters rest, catch up, or try their hand at crafting.

## Hazard

**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 1, and then you increase it as the scene becomes more dangerous. **Raise Hazard** during the **GM Turn** whenever you narrate something which makes the situation more dangerous, especially when you foreshadow a threat of some kind. Keep in mind the success target number for d20 rolls is always 15, which models a baseline of PC competence in a reasonably challenging situation. So Hazard is the main lever you have to change dice odds.

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. **Lower Hazard** during the GM Turn whenever you narrate something which reduces the danger in the situation. Especially do this if the PCs neutralize some of the danger in the scene.

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 switches on the “psychic scrambler” device after reaching it mid-fight.

Raising hazard is best done as foreshadowing prior to the direct 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. However you can also raise the hazard as the NPC attacks, moves, or uses a special ability, especially for unusual monsters or a hidden threat.

You can only raise the Hazard by 1 point per Encounter and per Action, which is a maximum of +2 during your turn. If an NPC should be particularly dangerous (i.e. with a high Hazard) you should develop the mob, using a sequence of actions to establish why it poses a threat, raising the hazard each time.

## Player Turns

While players can freely interrupt with Maneuvers, they must wait until their turn to resolve any Actions or Saving Throws.

### Player Turn Transitions

Always narrate a **Transition** into each player’s turn. Describe or reiterate any critical information, such as attacks which must be defended.

Any attacks will require the player to roll a Saving Throw. Note that a trap and an NPC attack are handled in the same way; you should simply tell the affected PCs to make Saving Throws.

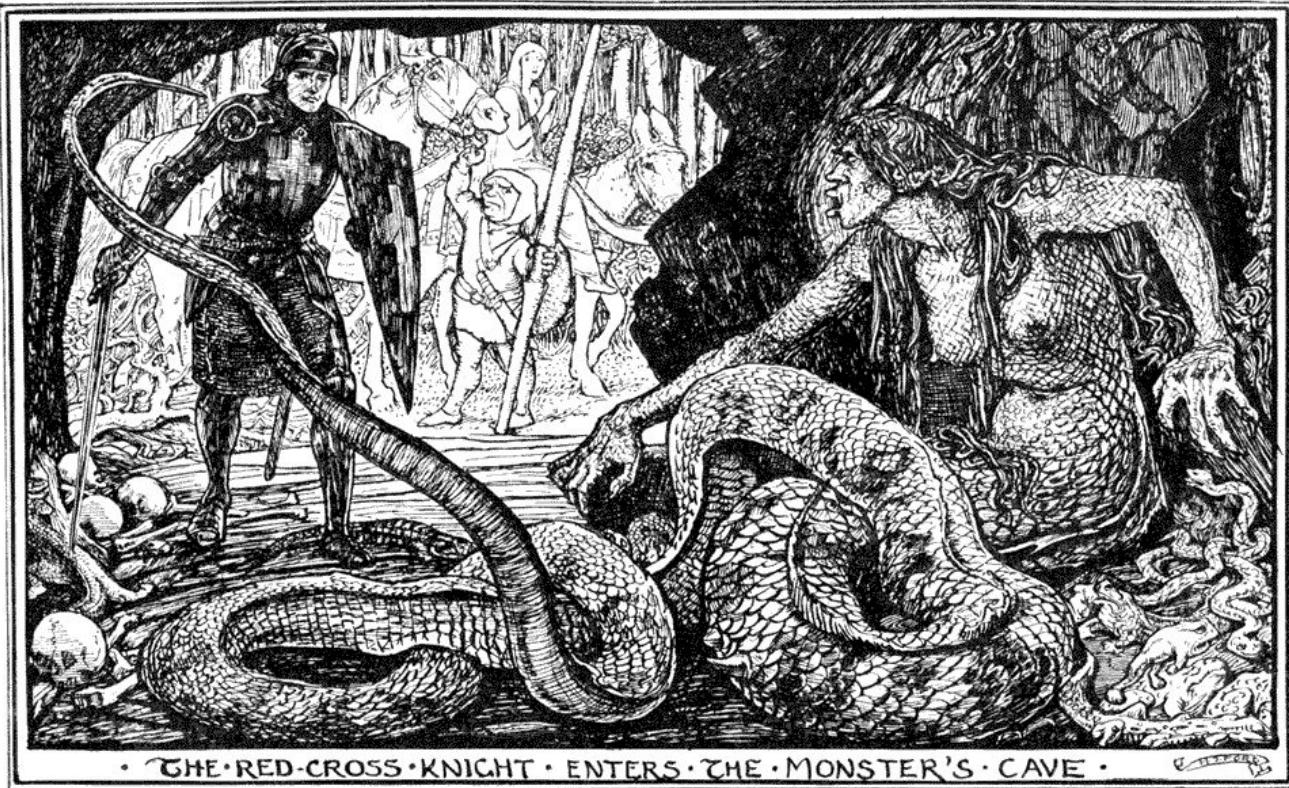
Area-effect attacks such as a squad of enemy archers, a trap, dragonflame, etc will need to be mentioned for each Transition.

While you are not limited to attacks you foreshadowed during your turn, any readied with Maneuvers will result in tougher rolls for the player, since the monster will have gained an advantage such as PREP or COMBO.

You should also narrate a Transition out of a player's turn, if you have any information to share or narrate.

## Player Turn Order

Players can take their turns in whatever order they like. Use clockwise seating order around the table for simplicity, but allow players to swap or adjust their order however they like. This is especially useful when one PC is defending another PC from a threat; simply let the defending PC take their turn first to see if they can neutralize or mitigate the threat.



## Monsters

Monsters are enemies for the PCs to battle and an opportunity for you to be creative and scare your players. Other kinds of threats such as traps and evil spells are effectively “monsters” and use the same rules.

Use your **Encounter** to introduce a monster to the scene. Roleplay this as vividly as possible and use Traits from your monsters, e.g. “A dozen brigands step onto the road, armed with clubs and spears”. Your Encounter can only add the monsters to the scene, develop them by describing them further, or move them; you must use your Action to have them do anything directly against the PCs, such as attack. After introducing the monsters, step back and see what the players do.

You can raise the Hazard as part of any Encounter or Action, as long as you can give yourself a reason. So when introducing a monster which poses a threat then you can also raise the Hazard.

# Sample Monsters

These samples illustrate the principles of creating your own monsters with a minimal of information, but you can add as much detail as you want. The format is **Theme - Traits - Encounters**.

**Ant, giant** - giant warrior ant with deadly bite - COMBO swarm attack

**Dragon** - ancient winged reptilian beings whose breath is death, covered in hard scales, known and feared for their size, physical prowess, and magical abilities - THEME ancient, intelligent, greedy, EFFORT wing buffet causes winds, ASSET deadly bite, scales immune to fire and most weapons, COMBO claw/bite/tail, PREP roaring wind heralds approach, ULT dragonflame from above

**Elemental, fire** - aggressive chaotic spirit of fire and ash - THEME smoke and heat, EFFORT ignites flammable surroundings, ASSET immune to fire, touch sets opponents on fire (Doom), ULT burning things

**Manticore** - huge deadly man-headed lion with bat wings, barbed tail, horns, and thick wiry fur - ASSET fling dart-like spikes from tail; bite/claws are Heavy weapons; ULT ambushing and hunting prey

**Orc** - aggressive tribal warrior - EFFORT may lose morale and flee, ASSET 2H polearm, bow, weapon & shield, COMBO coordinated attack

**Ogre** - giant feral brute of the cold northern wastes with legendary strength and toughness - ASSET 2H giant club (+2 damage), sack of rocks/heads, heavy cleaver, ULT feats of strength and hardiness

**Gorgon** - evil cursed woman with hideous face and head of writhing snakes (and possibly a snake lower body) - THEME rattlesnake sounds, EFFORT she tries to establish a gaze, ASSET dagger and bow, COMBO her snakes are venomous, ULT petrify any creature that meets her gaze

**Snake, asp** - small venomous serpent - ULT venomous bite

**Wraith** - powerful cursed evil undead spirit, feeds on souls - THEME passes through physical objects, EFFORT touch bypasses non-magic armor and chills, ASSET unaffected by non-magical items, COMBO flies through several foes and chills them, ULT drains life (a special Doom)

## Monster Maneuvers

Monsters can take Maneuvers like PCs. Usually monsters will take their Maneuvers during your turn, as part of narrating the scene. Limit each monster to two Maneuvers, just like PCs, and when possible maneuver groups of monsters as units.

Also use Maneuvers to foreshadow monster attacks, such as having a skeletal archer aim its bow. This generally counts as PREP for the monster. If you foreshadow a *group* of monsters attacking a PC, this also counts as COMBO for the group of monsters.

## Hidden Maneuvers

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

Declare monster attacks during **Transitions** to player turns. Whenever you Transition to a player turn and declare a threat such as a monster, trap, etc, the player will need to make a Saving Throw during their turn.

Be sure to apply any Maneuvers that the monsters made. If a monster aimed that counts as PREP, so the player will need to downgrade their natural result if they roll PREP. Your players will learn that threats you foreshadow are more deadly and should be paid close attention, or neutralized with their own Maneuvers.

## Multiple Monsters

You should usually only require one Saving Throw per PC, per turn. If there are multiple monsters who could attack the PC, just pick one of them and highlight that threat.

Limiting yourself to one Saving Throw per PC per turn will help prevent you from unintentionally overwhelming the characters. You can

liberally throw waves and hordes of awful monsters at the PCs without worrying about creating an encounter that accidentally kills the party.

If a group of monsters (or a many-headed hydra) attacks en masse, 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 during the **Transition** as “a black cloud of arrows falls upon you like barbed locusts”. The player will need to downgrade their natural result if they roll COMBO.

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 exact odds.

## Monster Damage

Monsters inflict Damage exactly like PCs. (The base Damage is 1 point, +1 for Heavy weapons, etc.) However, fearsome monsters can have additional bonuses that characters do not have. Add another +1 bonus for 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). So a dragon's bite might be Damage 3-4.

## Resistance and Vulnerabilities

You may give monsters Traits and Assets that represent resistances and vulnerabilities to certain kinds of attacks. For example ghosts aren't hurt by normal weapons but hate silver, and fire elementals can't be hurt by fire. You do not have to Tap these Traits when Soaking Damage they apply to. These Traits can also often apply to ASSET, PREP, and ULT.

## Monster Doom

Your monsters will Tap Traits to **Soak** Damage, just like PCs do. When a monster can't soak damage from an attack it gains a **Doom**. Describe

the monster as “Doomed”, bloodied and broken. This is simpler and more serious than a PC Doom, because your story is unlikely to have a path to recovery for your monster.

A Doomed monster is incapacitated, but might make awful noises, make a mess, and take actions haphazardly. Use your Encounter roll for inspiration, and add visceral detail (noises, messes, etc) so monsters are scary even in defeat. Make the players fear Dooms by using them on monsters. make pose an occasional threat.

	WEAL (d20 15+)	WOE (d20 14-)
THEME	monster menaces PCs	monster makes a Counter attack.
EFFORT	monster messily dies	monster makes a Counter attack, then dies
PREP	monster plays dead	monster prepares for a Counter attack

## Dispatching Monsters

A PC can dispatch a Doomed monster as a Maneuver, such as by sticking a sword into its eye. That's probably fine for most monsters, especially humanoids (e.g. orcs) but to be really thorough the player needs to use an Action. The PC might behead the monster or apply fire, silver, or some other special coup de grace. You might even require a roll if it's especially hard to kill.

## Making Monsters

Monsters are “in your own words” just like the PCs are for your players. Write your monster in the format **Theme - Traits - Encounters**, for example: *Ogre - giant feral brute of the cold northern wastes with legendary strength and toughness - ASSET 2H giant club (+2 damage), sack of rocks/heads, heavy cleaver, ULT feats of strength and hardness*

As you can see, monsters are quite freeform. They have Themes and Traits, so they can be as simple or complex as you like. In addition,

monsters have an “Encounters” section to describe special behaviors or abilities of the monster to be triggered by your Encounter roll.

Most monsters should have a single Theme and up to six Traits, depending on how tough your monster should be. The **Theme** is simply the name of the monster type, e.g. “black orc” or “cave troll”. Use additional Themes as needed to describe any special role or occupation, such as an “orc shaman” or “goblin chief”. The **Traits** should be keywords you’ll use to describe the monster to your players.

The simplest way to write a monster is to make a little 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. A great technique is to foreshadow the monster when you roll CHALLENGE.

Add Traits for any special abilities, defenses, attacks, or reactions to attacks. Ideally these add depth to tactical combat, making the players adjust their approach to deal with the monster’s capabilities. A Trait like “fire resistant” makes the monster harder to burn, a Trait like “bear hug” might add damage if the bear can pull off the hug, and a Trait like “feeding frenzy” might make the monster go crazy (raising the Hazard) if it smells blood. These might seem similar to Secrets, but it’s simpler for you to list them as Traits, and this also has the nice side-effect of making the ability unavailable once that Trait is Tapped, or makes the monster feel more alive and special by triggering a reaction like “cowardly” or “berserker” when the Trait becomes Tapped.

Keep in mind, adding Traits makes the monster more powerful because you will Tap Traits to Soak Damage. Thus, monster Traits are like it’s “hit points”, and when Tapped Out you will declare the monster “Doomed” (or slain if the finishing blow was a Critical Hit).

**Traits as Hazard** - You can use the number of Traits as a soft guideline for your target Hazard. Use Traits to foreshadow the monster, raising the Hazard until it's where you want it to 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).

**Tip: Reuse Classic Monsters** - You can very easily reuse (i.e. convert) all the classic RPG monsters! Use the monster name for the Theme, and pick Traits from keywords in the description. Use "Hit Dice" and/or "Levels" as a loose guide for the number of Traits (e.g. goblin 1, orc 2, ogre 4, etc). Add more Traits for special abilities/attacks/defenses.

**Trait boxes** - If you are pressed for time, you can use checkboxes instead of named Traits, but the monster won't be very interesting.

**Encounter** - Use the "Encounter" section of your monster to write notes about monster behaviors triggered by your Encounter rol (usually CHALLENGE). For example, a dragon might breathe fire on ULT.

**Assets** - All monsters have basic armor and weapons, whether these are carried or innate such as scales and claws. Use the Encounter section for any special or unusual Assets, such as heavy weapons, heavy armor, or special attacks and defenses. You can list them in any section of ENCOUNTER, not necessarily just the ASSET section.

You can also use Assets to vary similar monsters. Scatter a few ranged weapons, heavy weapons, and heavy armor amongst a group of similar monsters (e.g. goblins) to create a variety of challenges for the PCs. Assets are often the most distinctive aspect of mooks like goblins, such as "the goblin with the arbalest". Especially nasty Assets like poison arrows or man-catching nets can even raise the Hazard, but try to foreshadow so your players can react to the challenge.

## Interesting 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.

# NPCs

NPCs are “non-player characters”, essentially anyone in the game universe who isn’t a PC (“player character”).

NPCs are essentially monsters who aren’t necessarily intended to attack the PCs or challenge them. However, NPCs use the same rules as monsters, and there is no reason why PCs couldn’t fight NPCs. You should not tell your players which it is, let them figure it out.



Always use an **Encounter** to introduce an NPC to the scene. Describe the NPC to your players, then step back and see what the players do.

## NPC Themes and Traits

Describe NPCs to the players in terms of their Themes and Traits. Generally each NPC should have one Theme for their occupation (e.g. baker, cook, driver, guard, scout), plus one Trait (e.g. clever, connected, quick, strong). Give NPCs additional Traits to represent greater experience or power, but usually one Theme is enough unless they are an unusual race (e.g. elf, dwarf, etc).

When introducing the NPC (e.g. as part of an Encounter) always describe their Themes and Traits. If the Traits are threatening then consider raising the Hazard.

Thus, rather than giving NPCs detailed statistics like “armor class” or “thaco”, you can simply raise the Hazard if the NPC is more dangerous than what the situation already entailed. This is a good example of how Legends supports you, the busy GM, and lets you focus on the story and the PCs rather than minutiae.

## 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”. This is best done when written as an Experience Path.

### 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 that Secret to their character without an Experience Path.

You should choose a single character and explain why the character knows this secret information. This is a great way to present a particular 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

## 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 a group of characters.

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 prep time on the shared Paths.

## Using Experience Paths

You can use Paths to write story or campaign goals, group quests, bounties (wanted posters), and requests for aid from NPCs. You should add a Countdown if the Path is a race against time.

## Strong Start

Write a Path to create a strong start to each game session. When in doubt start with something immediate like a combat or urgent with a Countdown.

### 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 to kickoff each new adventure. This ensures the players don't miss the cue, and can look at the card and remember it between game sessions.

### 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.

Include an introduction with details to help players picture the adventure. Lots of GMs do this verbally, but they often read from some notes or a prewritten kickoff statement anyways, so you might as well write it down. After all, some players might find it easier to read than to listen, but any new (or absent) players can instantly get a sense of what's been going on.

If the Path is time-sensitive then give it a Countdown. (Note that this does not make it a Doom.)

## 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 new adventure. Always try to keep at least two Paths running for interesting adventures. One natural time to add a new adventure is when a previous adventure concludes.

### TRAVERSE THE DEEP AND WILD WOOD

The river flows through a 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 out 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?

## Campaign Decks

Beyond Paths, you can use index cards to organize other aspects of your campaign.

All Paths are shared by the group, and are part of a campaign. You can create a “campaign deck” with additional index cards for other campaign details and ideas.

- Cover card with the name of the campaign
- Character roster, with names of the characters
- Ally roster, with names of NPC allies
- Cards with doodles, art, and maps

- Cards with brainstorm ideas for places to go, things to do, people to meet, challenges to overcome, villains to defeat, loot to find, etc.

## Campaign Brainstorm

When thinking of starting a new campaign, write cards with various brainstorming topics. Then pass the cards around and ask players to write ideas. Some sample topics are below.

starting area	grim portents	rulers
nearby areas	impending doom	rumors
factions	magic items	secrets
far away areas	news	shops
fronts	npcs	visitors

## Campaign Themes

When starting a new campaign, write four cards each with a core campaign theme/concept. Then pass the cards around and ask players to write whatever comes to mind. Use this as inspiration for your campaign.

### BORDERLANDS

You find yourselves on the edge of civilization. The lands beyond have never been explored. What's out there?

Swamps with lizard people and talking birds

Caves of chaos, where nobody comes back alive

Trails that lead west, left behind by explorers/adventurers

Corrupt jungles with evil plants

Road back to civilization - The Realm in the east

## JUNGLES

The area is a dense tropical rainforest. What's out there?  
jaguars, jaguar worshipers, old jungle temple ruins w/ gems  
vegepygmy headhunters, carnivorous vines, evil plants  
Poisons and healing herbs  
Gems inside

## KEEP / STRONGHOLD

The town is a fortified stronghold. What's it like?

Keep defends The Realm to the east, Lord Protector Kylhelm  
On top of a rocky plateau by the ocean  
Red-gold sandstone, bronze and brass-topped towers  
Lots of shops for explorer/traveler gear

Outerlands Magic- unique magic on the edge of the world  
Talking birds  
Magic gems  
Dangerous jungle plants  
Old temples to forgotten gods, sleeping? watching?  
Guardians of magical prison gems <- "evil" plants/vegepygmies

# Using Dooms

Many of these were described in the previous game sections, but here are some additional tips for you to scare your players.

## Essentials of Life

People require five basic essentials of life to survive: air, water, food, shelter, and sleep. Depending on your campaign setting you might change the list to include other essentials such as honor, reputation, sanity, etc. As the GM, you are responsible for enforcing the natural consequences should the PCs neglect or lack these essentials.

Assuming you do not want to turn the game into a logistical exercise, the simplest solution is to leverage your random Encounter roll. Any time you roll Failure & ASSET check to see if the PCs are lacking an essential, and if they do either call for a Saving Throw or write a Doom.

You should call for a Saving Throw if the PCs are lacking air or are sorely lacking in an essential, such as a clear-cut case of sleep deprivation due to torture.

Otherwise, write a Doom if the players haven't used any Actions to create one or more of these essentials *recently*. How you define "recently" is flexible and can be adapted to your game style, such as "I can't remember the last time they slept" or "they haven't slept in two days". Initially you might find yourself writing Dooms and players reacting in dismay, but this amounts to training your players. Over time your players will learn they should *proactively* drink water, eat, find shelter, and sleep.

## Adventures

One of your most sacred duties as a GM is to introduce the players to new and exciting adventures.

### Create your Adventure

If you are good at thinking on your feet you can create an instance one-shot adventure by coming up with an interesting scenario or location.

If you have more time, also think about interesting obstacles, challenges, Monsters, NPCs, clues, and rewards. See Legends Printables for various GM worksheets. However, you should avoid making decisions about what will happen after the players become involved. For example, don't get stuck or decide what the players will

or must do, or how the adventure will end...this game is about playing to find out what happens.

## Introduce your Adventure as a Path

When the right opportunity arises, introduce characters to the adventure. You must write an Experience Path if your adventure involves any kind of mission, quest, goal, emergency, or reward. This is very important since all character rewards (e.g. new Traits or Secrets) come from Paths.

## Play to find out what happens

Then you must step back and see what happens. Let the characters 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 characters and the choices they make. Player agency is more important than a preconceived plot. What the players do is the entire game. After introducing an adventure, step back and create space. Avoid creating an ending or deciding that anything *must* happen. The adventure should live on its own with or without the PCs.

## No-win scenarios

It's perfectly fine to create no-win situations that will lead to character death. Just be sure to follow the rules for GM Turns and raising Hazard, which will ensure you are providing adequate clues and warnings about the danger that is building. Player agency relies on good information and free will.

## Game Quick Start

Follow these steps to get a game up and running fast.

### 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 is genre neutral, so this can be *anything* you can imagine.

## 2 - Create characters

Prompt each player to create a character. You will need to work with the players and look at each character before starting the game. This helps to understand who the characters are and what they want, help to nudge them to align with the others, give them some ideas, and moderate power level or Assets as needed.

## 3 - Introductions

Describe where the characters are (e.g. a tavern), and prompt the players to introduce their characters, ideally by roleplaying.

**Tavern:** "You're all headed to the Whistling Pig, in town..."

**Ship:** "You're all on a ship, the White Gull, nearing the end of your voyage, going to the galley for some food..."

**Port:** "You've just set down on the docks at Highport, good solid land..."

As the characters meet, each player should give a summary of his character. Players should try to update their character descriptions to add relationships with the others or better align goals.

## 4 - Strong Start

Now it's time for action. You should break up the nice little gathering with an imminent threat, with a "battle intro" to set the stage for a fight.

**Bar:** "A stool falls, fighting words are said, weapons are drawn, bar fight!"

**Hideout:** "You see the local gang rummaging around and in *your* hideout!"

**Ship:** "You hear a loud thump, a bang, and the sound of sails being cut, prepare to repel pirates!"

A “Battle Intro” is a round where the GM and players get to take a couple Maneuvers, but not Actions. So they can draw weapons or ready equipment, shout insults or taunts, but can’t attack. There shouldn’t be any fighting or rolling dice, yet, but we’re not done.

## 5 - Combat

Now that the stage has been set, you should start regular turns. As the GM you take the first turn, first describing a random Encounter to introduce a new element to the scene. Then for your Action describe an attack against some or all of the PCs, which triggers Saving Throws for those PCs. Play then progresses around the table, where each player gets one main Action and one or two supporting Maneuvers, such as “I draw my weapon and charge to attack”. Spend the next few rounds killing all the bad guys.

## 5 - Loot the dead

Once a few turns have gone by rolling dice and shooting bad guys, you should use your Encounter to describe how the clearing smoke reveals all the bad guys are fled/dying/dead. In this situation your Action is to describe the death throes of the opposition.

Each player then uses their turn to describe a long “cutscene” Action of their own, what they do with copious amounts of time after a victorious battle. This should involve lots of looting of the dead, since they no longer need their shiny stuff. As each player describes his character looting, the GM can list some Assets lying on the ground. Players can write them on their character sheets.

# GM Roles

As the GM you get to wear many hats. Some of your hats are at cross-purposes, but they are listed here in order of priority.

**Worldbuilder** - 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.

**Referee** - You are responsible for explaining the rules to the players and ensuring the game runs smoothly and fairly. Strive to be a "benevolent dictator", where rulings are consistent, sensible, and fair. One reason this is important is to allow players to predict the possible outcomes of their decisions. 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. This is a lot like parenting.

**Adversary** - Present compelling and challenging adventures to the players and step back to see what they do. You are responsible for playing monsters according to their true (and often oppositional) nature, and to their full potential. Wild animals and bandits should craft clever ambushes, and genius villains should be formidable. Be devious, ruthless, and do not hold back. However, Adversary cannot overrule Referee, meaning you still need to be fair. If you find you're too good at being a devious Adversary, then try to do more with less.

**Storyteller** - Vividly portray NPCs, monsters, and other elements. Players love drama, voices, and detail.

**Fan** - You should always be a fan of the PCs and the players. Encourage them, highlight their special qualities, and revel in their triumphs. So while you are first a Judge and second the Adversary, you love it when the PCs win and look awesome doing it.

# GM Quick Reference - Encounters

As the GM, roll a random Encounter each round to jump start your turn.

**WEAL (d20 15+)**

**WOE (d20 14-)**

<b>THEME</b>	Describe the scene, a location, or an NPC. Provide an opportunity by revealing information. Describe how a Doomed monster fails an attack.	Introduce an NPC or monster using a Theme. In combat, highlight a Theme of a foe, trap, or monster that raises Hazard. Describe how a Doomed monster takes a final Action and dies.
<b>EFFORT</b>	Describe an opportunity to make sudden progress, at the expense of spending Effort. Or have an NPC take initiative in an area of expertise to move the group ahead. Describe how a Doomed monster mutters and makes a leaky mess, and dies.	Highlight aspects of the scenario which expend effort or resources. An NPC does something to set the group back. In combat describe how PCs are fighting hard and getting tired, and must downgrade natural rolls of EFFORT this round. Describe how a Doomed monster attacks and dies.
<b>ASSET</b>	Highlight how a PC/NPC Asset is useful (e.g. armor blocks an attack). Or provide a clue to find a new Asset. For example, they might find food, water, light sources, spent arrows. On a Crit they might find "magic healing berries". Only provide a clue.	Present a challenge caused by superior gear on a foe, poor gear on PC, or special gear for the situation. Check on resources such as food, water, or light. In combat a PC has a gear mishap or attracts an attack due to subpar Asset/armor.
<b>COMBO</b>	Encounter a group of possibly friendly NPCs, or describe an opportunity to use teamwork, or an NPC helps a PC teammate.	Encounter a team of likely hostile NPCs, or a challenge that needs teamwork (e.g. auto-closing door, two-person puzzle). In combat describe how monsters use teamwork, which downgrades rolls of COMBO unless PCs use teamwork.
<b>ULT</b>	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 someone tailing, the "ranger" finds tracks, the "archer" sees a target.	Highlight a Dark Secret of a PC or NPC, or highlight the threat of an NPC boss. Describe how players will need to downgrade rolls of ULT if related to a Dark Secret or boss ability.
<b>PREP</b>	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". Or an NPC does something which will count as PREP for a PC Action.	Surprise encounter, ambush, trap, or jump scare. Can reveal something a foe did to prepare. In combat describe how the foes were better prepared, and players downgrade natural rolls of PREP.

# GM Quick Reference - Monsters

## Theme - Traits - Encounter

- **Ant, giant** - giant warrior ant with deadly bite - COMBO swarm attack
- **Dragon** - ancient winged reptilian beings whose breath is death, covered in hard scales, known and feared for their size, physical prowess, and magical abilities - THEME ancient, intelligent, greedy, EFFORT wing buffet causes winds, ASSET deadly bite, scales immune to fire and most weapons, COMBO claw/bite/tail, PREP roaring wind heralds approach, ULT dragonflame from above
- **Elemental, fire** - aggressive chaotic spirit of fire and ash - THEME smoke and heat, EFFORT ignites flammable surroundings, ASSET immune to fire, touch sets opponents on fire (Doom), ULT burning things
- **Manticore** - huge deadly man-headed lion with bat wings, barbed tail, horns, and thick wiry fur - ASSET fling dart-like spikes from tail; bite/claws are Heavy weapons; ULT ambushing and hunting prey
- **Orc** - aggressive tribal warrior - EFFORT may lose morale and flee, ASSET 2H polearm, bow, weapon & shield, COMBO coordinated attack
- **Ogre** - giant feral brute of the cold northern wastes with legendary strength and toughness - ASSET 2H giant club (+2 damage), sack of rocks/heads, heavy cleaver, ULT feats of strength and hardiness
- **Gorgon** - evil cursed woman with hideous face and head of writhing snakes (and possibly a snake lower body) - THEME rattlesnake sounds, EFFORT she tries to establish a gaze, ASSET dagger and bow, COMBO her snakes are venomous, ULT petrify any creature that meets her gaze
- **Snake, asp** - small venomous serpent - ULT venomous bite
- **Wraith** - powerful cursed evil undead spirit, feeds on souls - THEME passes through physical objects, EFFORT touch bypasses non-magic armor and chills, ASSET unaffected by non-magical items, COMBO flies through several foes and chills them, ULT drains life (a special Doom)

## Monster Doom

Your monsters will Tap Traits to **Soak** Damage, just like PCs do. When a monster can't soak damage from an attack it gains a **Doom**. Describe the monster as "Doomed", bloodied and broken.

A PC can dispatch a Doomed monster as a Maneuver, such as by sticking a sword into its eye. A Doomed monster is incapacitated, but might make awful noises, make a mess, and take actions haphazardly. Use your Encounter roll for inspiration, and add visceral detail (noises, messes, etc) so monsters are scary even in defeat.

WEAL (d20 15+)	WOE (d20 14-)
<b>THEME</b> monster menaces PCs	monster makes a Counter attack.
<b>EFFORT</b> monster messily dies	monster makes a Counter attack, then dies
<b>PREP</b> monster plays dead	monster prepares for a Counter attack

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