

NERO
9'th Edition
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CHAPTER 1 : GETTING STARTED

Introduction

I call upon chaos to create undead! Arise, my minions! Arise and slay them all!" The voice of the necromancer echoed like a funeral song through the cave, bouncing off the walls and ringing in our ears. We could not see her beyond the flickering light of our torch, and at first it seemed as though nothing had happened. I exchanged a few glances with my companions but found little confidence in their nervous expressions. Tightening my grip on my sword and drawing my shield closer to my chest, I strained my eyes to see into the pitch-black tunnel before me. Slowly, as though the noise was being dredged up from the heart of the cave, the soft sound of feet dragging along gravel and rocks being scratched sifted into our ears. I looked at my companions and saw looks of dismayed realization cross over their faces. The necromancer's spell had worked.

Too cowardly to handle us herself she had desecrated the bodies of the dead and reanimated them to serve her. If we had known any of these people in life, they were unrecognizable now. As they lurched slowly into the circle of light around us I heard a few of my comrades gasp in horror at their appearances, and I could hardly blame them. Decayed flesh hung off the bones of the undead, displaying their ivory white bones and the remains of their innards. Though their eyes had rotted away long ago they still seemed to see us through their empty sockets.

Gritting my teeth, I stepped forward, determined to get rid of these monsters. The undead nearest to me swung a stone mace at my chest, but I blocked it deftly with my shield and hacked him in two with a swipe of my sword. Undead were not difficult opponents, their brains are too rotted and maggot-ridden to direct their actions, but that was not what made them such terrifying opponents. While there were only a small handful of us in the cave, the undead could be as numerous as the necromancer desired. She only had to animate more of the corpses she had dredged up and send them in our direction. It was unlikely a single undead would fell one of us in combat, but a horde of them could overwhelm our party in no time.

I tried to conserve my energy, for the darkness hid just how many she had sent to assault us. Beside me my friends were doing the same, but it was clear we could not fight forever. The undead moved with uneven steps toward us with the tireless energy of the afterlife. I suddenly froze as I heard someone cry out in pain. Peering around wildly, I saw that one of the undead had managed to latch its claws into the left arm of our rogue, Ivan. He managed to fight it off before it did him any more harm, but it was clear his arm was too mangled to be of any use now.

"Don't worry, I'll take care of him." Erin, our healer, said before she swept quickly over to Ivan, who was cradling his arm unhappily against his chest. I had no time to thank her, for without Ivan holding one end of the line the undead were beginning to push us back. I managed to cut several more to pieces before one with a significant amount of muscle left undecayed on its form shoved me to the ground. My weapon clattered loudly onto the stone floor beside me and as I looked from it to my opponent I could see there would be no time to recover it before the undead would be upon me.

"I call forth a flame bolt 20!" Shouted Kryssa, our celestial scholar, and I found myself sighing quietly with relief as the undead leering over me was incinerated by her spell. The stream of fire illuminated the cave briefly as it left her hands and I glimpsed a pale face glaring hatefully at me from across the room. As the room faded to darkness once more I was suddenly grasped with comprehension. It was the necromancer!

"She's here, only a few yards away!" I cried, grabbing my sword and leaping to my feet. The sound of footsteps announced the necromancer had heard my call and, alarmed, began to flee. Determined not to let her escape I attacked her small army with renewed vigor. Anything my blade did not manage to slice in two was swiftly turned to ash by Kryssa's magic. Soon the undead lay at our feet, at peace once more. I lunged forward to pursue the cause of this mess but felt a hand firmly grasping my upper arm. Irritated, I swung around and found Kryssa holding onto me.

"We can't leave those two behind," She said, nodding at the other end of the tunnel, where Erin was still tending carefully to Ivan's wound. "We wiped out everything she tried to throw at us," the woman added reassuringly, "She won't be coming back to bother the people around here again, because she knows we'll be here waiting."

Still eager to chase down our foe, but seeing the sense in her words, I nodded and began to walk back to our other two comrades. The necromancer had escaped, but we were confident this was one village she would never torment again.

Where fantasy becomes a reality...

NERO, an acronym that stands for the New England Role-playing Organization, allows you to play a character in a live action fantasy adventure. Under NERO's unique rule system, people gather to populate an entire fantasy medieval town.

In the NERO game, you create a character concept for a fantasy story and actually play the character. It is much like improvisational theater in that you have a framework created by the props and supporting characters and must develop your part as you progress through the storyline. Your character's attitudes, ambitions, and history are yours to define.

If the adventurous life is your calling, you may play the part of a wanderer, meeting with some friends in the tavern. While swapping tales, your party could get hired by a poor farmer in desperate straits, and spend the afternoon slaying a foul necromancer and his undead abominations.

If the epic life is not your style, then you can play the part of a town merchant. You can make your money selling your wares and information for the right price. Or perhaps you wish to be one who investigates the magical arts, selling your scrolls and potions to earn the money you need to continue your studies. Or would you rather try to become the leader of the Mages' Guild? The choice is yours.

NERO is dedicated to the legendary days of high fantasy, while running a fun (and above all safe) game. We have fierce warriors, crafty scouts, powerful mages, loyal knights, and benevolent healers. There are smelly goblins, blood-chilling specters, evil necromancers, and villainous spies to fight, and your very own legends to create.

How NERO Works

In NERO, a cast of non-player characters (NPCs) are used to set the tone and provide background for the player characters (PCs). They may serve important town functions (such as Guild leaders or high plot and action. Much of what happens at an event, however, is completely decided by the players.

NERO uses padded weapons to simulate actual combat, and a magic system that uses packets made of fabric and bird seed to represent the hurling of spells. Mock (and sometimes real) armor and other costumes are used to enhance the atmosphere.

There are many types of NERO events. The most common are day events, weekend events, and long events. Each type of event runs non-stop from start to completion. Day events start and end on the same day and may last for 8 or more hours. A day event is usually composed of a single scenario (module) and may be very linear in nature. Weekend events run from Friday night to Sunday morning/afternoon. Long events are any event that runs longer than a weekend event. The most common long event lasts for 4

days (Friday to Monday), but it is not unheard of for a long event to last for 9 or more consecutive days. Weekend and long events are composed of collections of modules with multiple plot-lines and bring to life a medieval town with all its inhabitants and intrigues. There is nothing to compare with the feeling of playing for 24 hours

a day along with possibly hundreds of other players, each with their own desires, fears, and aspirations.

It sounds simple, but when you are in the middle of a dungeon with shadowy shapes moving towards you in the darkness and strange sounds echoing down the halls, trying to remember what that fellow in the tavern said a half hour ago about how to get through this infernal door, your perspective on the difficulty of the situation may change.

As you play your character, you will gain abilities and influence, and may one day gain a noble title or great fame and wealth. Tales of your adventures may someday be sung by bards, or retold time and again by storytellers sitting by the fire with a cup of spiced cider.

What your character does is entirely up to you. You decide what you want and where you want to be. The future is yours to define and create.

The 4 Most Important Rules

This book has many rules and requirements and for new players it can sometimes be overwhelming. There are some rules that are much more important than the others. The rules listed below are required for NERO to continue to be a safe game, and there are no exceptions to these rules—they apply to all players and NPCs. Breaking these rules may require your removal from the game.

****The Body Contact Rule:**** NERO prohibits all body contact during combat. All combat must take place with NERO approved safe weapons, and certain parts of the body (head, groin, hands) are not allowed to be hit, even with these NERO safe weapons. This rule does not apply to packet delivered attacks, which may hit any part of the body.

****The Alcohol Rule:**** NERO absolutely forbids alcohol and illegal drugs at its events, and you are not permitted to use these off site and then come to the game drunk or high.

****The Hold Rule:**** If you hear someone yell “Hold!” stop everything you are doing and drop to one knee. Holds should only be called if there is a real need, and usually only for safety reasons. You cannot call a hold to check on a rule, or ask if someone knows that you hit them with a spell or ability, unless that rule or effect is so integral to the situation that it would affect every person involved in that situation.

****The Sneaking Rule:**** If you wish to sneak into a building or tent (regardless of whether you are sleeping in that building or tent for the event), you must have a marshal present. This rule helps ensure that out-of-game items (the personal property of other players) are not accidentally taken if your character chooses to steal items from another player’s building or tent.

Please follow these rules completely and report anyone who does not to a marshal.

An Introduction to the Rules

A lot of what you will read in the upcoming pages may be confusing; there seems to be a lot of rules, and some rules rely on other rules to a degree that understanding one is not possible until you understand the other—but how can you do both at the same time? Don't be discouraged. It's really a lot easier than it seems. There is also a quick character generation guide at the back of the book.

A Basic Overview

You, the player, will portray a character for the duration of the event. Your character has certain skills. Some of these are usable whenever you'd like (such as your skill in a specific weapon) and some are usable a limited number of times per day (like the ability to cast a spell). In order to learn more skills, or to be able to cast a large number of spells per day, you will have to gain experience.

You gain experience by attending events. The amount of experience you earn is based on whether you PC or NPC. If you PC you will receive a base amount of experience that you can then double in a number of different ways. You may turn in game money at the end of the event, perform a number of hours of NPC duty (if the chapter allows this), or the chapter may grant all PCs double experience just for attending the event. If you NPC the entire event you will receive the maximum possible amount of experience as a reward for your service.

Awarded Experience Points (XP) are then transferred into Build Points (BP). Build Points are what you use to buy new skills. Every 10 BP you earn increases your level. The amount of XP needed to earn a new Build Point increase each time your level increases, so the higher level you become, the slower you gain new skills.

Your character must be one of the currently allowed races, such as Human, Elf, Dwarf, or Sarr. For a complete list of races and their advantages and disadvantages, see the Classes and Races section in this rule book.

Your character also has a specific class which determines the number of BP that a skill will cost, the total number of Armor Points you can wear to start, and the number of body points that you gain per level.

Sometimes you will get into battles. When swinging a weapon, you will call out the amount of damage your weapon will do.

A standard long sword does 2 points of damage. When you get hit, you will subtract from your Armor Points and your Body Points

until you are at zero or below. Your opponent will do the same.

Spells may be cast during battles and they can affect the battle in many ways. You need to know the spells in order to get the most out of your NERO experience. Spells are represented by foam golf or tennis balls purchasable at most sporting good stores, or small cloth packets filled with birdseed that you can make yourself. You must say the specific words (incantation) associated with the spell (such as "With mystic force I web you!") and hit your target with the spell aura for the spell to work.

You may have tags or a character skill sheet which you use to keep track of your current Body Points, Armor Points, skills and spells. After each battle, you and your opponents must adjust the tags to keep track of your new status.

Now let's look at a typical NERO weekend and see how some of these rules are applied.

First Weekend Example of Play

Here's an example of a typical NERO weekend as experienced by a new player (You!):

Once you have your character established, you check in for a NERO event. You are given a small amount of starting money tags representing your starting equipment and a character card which lists your current skills and other pertinent information. You will get a new card for every event in order to keep this information accurate and up to date. This allows you, other characters, and the game marshals to keep track of your abilities should any disputes arise. You will also receive either tags for each of your abilities or a character skill sheet.

You also have to get your weapon checked. Even players who attend every event must get their weapons checked each time. If your weapon is approved, you are given a safety tag that is attached to your weapon. If you do not have one already, you are given a cabin assignment. Once you have finished checking in to the event, you put on a white headband (signifying that you are out-of-game) and carry your bedding and other equipment to your room. You are then ready to get into your costume.

One thing you notice is that everyone in the NERO game wears a costume. The type of clothes you wear can also help with your Armor Points. If your costume looks like it fits the IG atmosphere you will be able to wear more armor.

The time that game begins will vary based on the chapter and the length of the event, but all weekend and longer events typically start between 9 pm and 11 pm Friday night. Prior to the start of game will be opening ceremonies where the weekend coordinators go over the chapter's policies, camp rules, and any plot information that would be known by all characters.

It's Friday night and the town is buzzing. Guilds are having meetings, adventuring groups are planning strategy, the elves are having a ceremony, and the tavern is packed. Rumors of a zombie attack are floating about and the political situation doesn't look too secure. Life could be easier—but it could also be boring. You adjust your boots, make sure your dagger is handy, and start walking at a leisurely pace over to the tavern, but only get a few steps before something jumps out at you. It's a goblin! You can tell by the ugly green face. Goblins and other monsters are some of the Non-Player Characters in NERO. Members who want to play monsters get special benefits for that event but must do what the chapter hosting the event tells them.

The goblin advances and swings his sword. You pull out your trusty dagger. Weapons in NERO are soft "boffer" weapons. They are basically PVC piping covered with foam rubber, with very soft

ends. Injuries are very rare occurrences at NERO events—a game of little league baseball is more dangerous than a NERO combat. Players in NERO buy their equipment and weapons though we also provide instructions for making them. A dagger only does one point of damage while a long sword (which the goblin has) does two. The goblin knows this and smiles (or at least you think he does behind his goblin mask). What the goblin doesn't know is that one of the skills you bought with your Build Points is a Critical Attack which allows you to do an extra point of damage. The battle begins. Each of you calls out what damage you are doing so the other player can keep track. "Two Normal!" yells the goblin. "Two Normal!" you reply, using your Critical Attack in the hopes of finishing off the goblin before he finishes you!

The goblin lunges at your chest, but you jump aside just at the last moment! As he passes by, you jab at his back with your dagger. "Ow!" screams the goblin. "Dat hurt! Me no like you!" You grin and swing out again, just to tease and torment the creature.

He advances. "Me now teach you lesson!"

With a lightning quick thrust, he swings at your chest. You try to block with your dagger, but fail to bring your weapon up in time to block the attack... Your now ruined shirt tells you that it might be a good idea to be a bit more careful with this foe.

You make a mental note to find someone to teach you how to fight with a long sword as soon as possible.

You now have both taken two points of damage. Since you've never fought a goblin before, you don't know how many total points he has. Will the next hit bring him down?

"Give up, smelly human?"

"Never!" you reply, jumping in and taking the foul creature by surprise. His yelp of pain as your dagger slices his chest is very satisfying...but he's still up! Perhaps running away might be a good option.

The goblin senses your apprehension and follows with a flurry of attacks. You are able to block most of them, but one lands its target,

cutting through your torn shirt and releasing a spray of blood. The goblin laughs triumphantly.

That does it! This really sparks your anger and you lunge in like a mad man, hacking away at the green-skinned creature. This is more than he can take, and he falls to the ground. You stand there breathing heavily for a minute, and then you lean over him and search him.

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"I search you," you say. He hands you three silver pieces and a strange locked box he had on him.

Now that the fight is over you must mark (by removing tags or marking your character skill sheet) that you've used a critical attack, and that you have taken four points of damage. You only have four Body Points left! Better find some healing before your next encounter.

If you die either in battle or by execution, your character can then be resurrected. See the section of the rule book dealing with Death for more information on what happens when your character dies.

You walk into the bustling tavern. Some local bards are playing quietly in a corner. As you look around the tavern you are surprised to see the local Baron himself, sitting with the Magistrate and the Sheriff! They seem to be arguing over something and it must be important given how many other people are sitting nearby trying to pretend they're not listening. You find a spot and sit. The gypsy tavern keeper dances over to you and brings you a drink for a silver piece. A woman sits nearby and pulls out a book and begins reading, by the glow of her hands, you can tell that she is a spell caster. You walk over. "Good evening," you say. "Might you be a healer?" "Yes I am," she replies. "I am Arcadia. Are you in need of help?"

You tell her about your encounter with the goblin and ask if she can spare a Cure Light Wounds spell. She states that such a spell would cost three silver pieces.

"I only have two," you reply, showing her your meager wealth. She glances at you and sighs. "Very well," she says. "I have to make a living, but I took an oath to help those in need. I will cure you, but you will owe me a favor in the future!"

"Agreed," you reply, handing her the coins. She calls up her power and touches your shoulder.

"I call upon the earth to cure light wounds 5" she says. A burst of warmth fills your body and you can feel the wound healing itself.

You then have to adjust tags or mark your character skill sheet to reflect the fact that you have been healed and your missing body points have been restored.

A warrior in chain mail then comes up to both of you. With her are a venerable mage and a rather shifty-looking individual. "Pardon me," she states, "but we were just wondering if you've heard anything about a goblin treasure map. We'd be willing to pay for information that proves to be true." You try not to show any reaction as she speaks about a rumor she had heard

involving a map kept in a small box. Better find out more about these people before making any commitments. You introduce yourself and they do as well, and you all spend some time discussing your pasts and talking about other rumors and bits of decide information you have heard. You finally decide that they can be trusted and you suggest that you all go someplace where no one can overhear.

You travel to the mage's cabin where you show the box to the shifty-eyed person, who turns out to be a "locksmith." He smiles at the challenge and pulls out his tools.

In the world of NERO, real locks are used. Buying the required Pick Locks skill does not guarantee success; it only allows you to make the attempt at picking the lock. Likewise, boxes are really trapped with electronic buzzers or other noisemakers. To check for traps you must actually check the object for traps by carefully examining the object without accidentally setting off a trap you have not yet detected. Once you know a trap is present, you can then try to disarm or bypass the trap if you have the skill Disarm/Arm Trap. Depending on the state where a chapter is located, it may be against the law for you to possess any tools designed to pick a lock.

In this case, the local chapter will use the Alternate Pick Locks rule, as described in the entry for the Pick Locks skill. The rogue picks the lock. Inside the box he finds a strange amulet, some coins, and a map written in a strange language! Tomorrow you will go to the Merchants' Guild to have your amulet appraised for its value. You will also go to the Mages' Guild and have it checked to see if it's magic! However, you and your new companions spend most of the night decoding the map. Outside, you can hear the sounds of battle as a lich has called forth his undead to destroy as much of the town as possible. You decide that the knights can handle it and wisely stay inside.

After you decode the map, you find the small note at the bottom which says "See a marshal when you're ready to go on this adventure." You decide to rest for the night and start in the morning and you head to bed with visions of treasure and future adventures in your head!

This is one way that a group may get into a weekend adventure module. Some modules are repeating in that more than one group can go through at different times, while others are one time only. The one time only modules may be major affairs, and can affect the whole storyline, or they may be modules that simply cannot be repeated (saving a coastal town from a ghost ship). You can see that a NERO adventure is like no other—the possibilities are endless for creative players. So welcome to NERO, where you can be all that you can't be!

Multiple Characters

Unless you are NPC'ing, you cannot play more than one character during an event (unless your character dies permanently and you start a new one). It is too confusing to other players – they will think you are playing the same PC but wearing different clothes. When you create a second character, please have that character be as different from your original character as possible: your new character should have a different adventuring party, different costume, and hopefully be of a different race and class as well. Multiple characters belonging to the same player may never directly interact in any way.

Play-testing Rules

Each NERO chapter abides by the rules listed in this book. Additionally, these rules can be modified and new rules added by official NERO play tests. The NERO International Office makes available an official list of rules that are being play tested on their website www.nerolarp.com. Each chapter must make available a list of the play tests that they are using, so that players attending events at a chapter can find out ahead of time which play tests will be in use.

Being a Successful NERO Player

Creating a believable and fun character history is a significant key to enjoying a NERO event. Knowing your character's persona can give you wide reaching role-playing possibilities. Written character histories are not required to play NERO but they will provide you with background and us with opportunities to give you plot.

Once your history is finished, it should be submitted to your local Plot Committee for approval. They will use it to make your adventuring more interesting by tying your history into what you are doing now.

Understand, however, that the committee has the right to overrule your choices if they would violate game rules or give your character too much of an advantage in the game. After all, you can't just say that you're the son of a famous king with superhuman abilities and a million gold pieces and expect us to allow it.

Avoid the clichés common in so many fantasy films and literature. And that includes thinking of a name for your character. Although we have yet to see a Conan or a Bilbo Baggins, we have had our share of Vlad Taltos, Rand al'Thors, Belgarions, Elrics, and Skeeves. What, do you think you're the only person in the world to have read these books?

Be creative in your ideas and your presentation! Some players have written their character histories as letters to family, interviews or even once a confession after being caught stealing, explaining why the person was a thief! Use your imagination!

Bad Character History Example

*My name is Deathbringer Bloodblade Darkshadow. My father was a Count and my mother was the heir to the throne of the Elven Kingdom. When I was but a baby, my parents were killed by a marauding group of bandits from Rotaria who left me and my twin brother to die. They captured my beautiful sister and sold her to Eastern barbarians where she now serves in the harem of their evil leader Konad. My brother was later kidnapped by gypsies and I had to fend for myself. I proved my worth and strength at an early age when I killed an armed troll with my bare hands.**

I taught myself to be the best swordsman in the kingdom. However, I keep my abilities secret as I do not wish for my enemies to find me. I now travel mysteriously from town to town, dressed all in black. I appear without a sound and disappear as a mere shadow flicking through the night. When I enter the tavern, the crowd grows silent as

I sit alone in the corner with my back to the wall. I do not have many friends but I do have the respect of all. Although I do not seek permanent female companionship, I secretly enjoy the lavish attention that the women give me. I search for my long-lost brother who I know can help me regain my birthright, rescue my sister and wreak my vengeance against any Rotarian I come across. I will be able to recognize him and my sister by our distinctive family birthmark—a scarlet rose on our left elbow.

Oh yeah, I am also searching for my father's sword Doomblade which will only work for members of my family. This sword was created by the finest dwarven craftsmen specifically for my father after he single-handedly saved the dwarven kingdom from the attacking hordes of mountain trolls and death elementals that once plagued the peaceful people. This sword allows me to double any proficiencies I may already have (Plot committee: Can I have this?).

**Although I have often been asked to join with other adventuring groups, I keep to myself and to mine own self I am true. I do adventure from time to time when the cause is worthy.*

Bad Character History Notes

There are lots of problems with this history - first of all, it contains every hackneyed cliché overused in bad literature of this type. One or two may have been acceptable, but this is ridiculous. (And who names their kids Deathbringer Bloodblade Darkshadow, anyway?) Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, if this person has done all of these great heroic things, then why in the world is he entering game as a lowly second level character?

Most character histories that are rejected fail because of that reason. Players write histories naming themselves as great heroes who can cast amazing spells and have written great learned treatises or have killed great monsters, but as a starting player in our game, they can't afford to buy Read and Write or Weapon Proficiencies. What, did your character forget everything all of a sudden?

A well fleshed-out and detailed character history need not be filled with adventure and excitement. Its primary purpose should be to establish your character's personality - why does your character act and feel the way he or she does?

Think about your own life as a guideline. What is it in your past that has made you what you are today? What is your family like? Your schooling? Your friends? The types of places you have lived? Your jobs? After all, every experience you have shapes your personality.

Good Character History Example

*My name is Trin Hallison. I am the eldest son of Lorin and Frinda Hallison. I have two younger brothers and two older sisters. I was born in the mining city of Ironvale in the duchy of Ravenholt in the kingdom of Evendarr in 576. My father was the head cook of one of the mines in the area and my mother worked in the payroll department.**

They held different shifts so that at different times I was raised by both my father and my mother.

My father had served in the army of Westmarch under Goodwyn Northridge as a short swordsman I have many fine memories of afternoons spent with my father practicing sparring - I never could beat him! (I could, however, beat my younger brothers and sisters, and I gained even more experience playing with them). My mother knew a

few healing spells which came in handy when we kids hurt ourselves in our games. She tried to teach us to read and write, but only my sister Burra took an interest.

At the young age of ten, while on a picnic with my family, I found a cave and began exploring. I soon was lost in the darkness and I was certain that every sound was a goblin or a troll out to get me. I spent a few hours crying in the darkness before I was discovered and ever since I have had a great fear of caves and extreme darkness even though I know my fears are unfounded. When Vandal Northridge became Baron of Westmarch, things changed a bit in Ironvale - the town guards became surlier and some of the nobles he appointed cared more for fattening their pockets than for the commoners whom they were supposed to be helping. I believe that all nobles in their hearts are the same even if they pretend to be caring. I would never work for nobility. When I was old enough, I became apprenticed to a local cooper, making barrels for the town. It was boring work but it brought in the money my family needed. It was during this time that I became fascinated with magic, for next door to the coopers' was the local Healers' Guild.

The healers there noticed my interest in their activities, and one - a nice old lady named Hindy - often delighted me with her tales of adventures in Ashbury where she had fought many monsters in her younger days.

It was she who finally taught me how to perform first aid, and it was she who taught me my first spell.

**My father died permanently when I was 14. It was a very traumatic experience for all of my family. He had died previously—a few times while in the army and once when a large boulder fell on him, but he had been successfully resurrected each time. This*

*time he had a terrible disease, and the Healers' Guild could do nothing for him. I cried myself to sleep every night as he lay in bed in pain as the disease took over his body.**

Finally, I could take no more, and I placed a pillow over his head and held it down until he stopped breathing. I finally put him out of his misery. I have never told anyone of this and I feel very guilty about it. I made a vow to myself that I would never kill again, and that any enemy I would ever encounter would be captured if at all possible, and if dying would be first-aided.

When I turned 16, I felt that it was time to strike out on my own, and I decided to head to the area that Hindy had told me about. I decided to move to the big city where life is more exciting.

**I have now arrived in the city of Ashbury, where I hope soon to obtain a job and maybe - just maybe - find some adventure!*

Good Character History Notes

Notice how this history establishes a few character traits with which the player can have lots of fun—a dislike and mistrust of nobility, a fear of enclosed spaces and darkness, and a desire never to kill. Imagine the complications in game when his views and desires run up against situations which require him to confront his fears.

This history also explains how he got the skills with which he will be entering the game: One Handed Edged, Healing Arts, First Aid, Read and Write, and a spell.

If your character is older, you may have to think of a reason why your character is only second level. For example, perhaps you have been a farmer or a trapper for many years and now you have been kicked out of the family / evicted from your farm / mistreated by an evil bad guy / stirred into action by some injustice and now after all those years have decided to become an adventurer.

So go to it! Write an interesting character history and see how much more fun NERO will become.

Character Profile

Use these questions as a way to help “flesh out” your character history:

General:

Where and when were you born?

Are you aware of your parent’s names? If so, what are they?

What were their occupations?

Do you know if they are alive or dead? If they are dead, how did they die?

Family:

Do you have any siblings? Are you aware of them, and if so, how did you get along as children?

Do you know where they are now, and if so, how do you get along now?

Where are your siblings and what are they like?

Your Past:

What was your childhood like?

What were your parents’ childhoods like?

Where, how, and from whom did you learn your trade?

Ambitions:

What do you want out of life?

What are your personal goals and ambitions?

Is there anything about your life that you would change?

What tempts you?

Do you have any phobias?

Do you have any superstitions?

Profession

Are you an adventurer, and if so, why? What would cause you to give up adventuring?

Do you have any close friends?

Do you have any enemies?

Opinions

What is your attitude about fighting and killing? How about mercenaries?

What is your attitude about magic?

How about mages?

What do you think about necromancy?

Do you think it is wrong to cast necromantic spells?

What is your attitude towards theft and thieves in general?

How about someone in your group who steals?

How about someone who steals from your group, especially if they are a member?

What is your opinion about Good and Evil?

What is your attitude towards the law?

How do you feel about nobility?

What are your future plans?

CHAPTER 2 : THE BASICS

Classes

Classes describe your character's natural talents. This may or may not have anything to do with your character's profession. For example, not all rogues are thieves and not all scholars are spell casters.

Your own physical characteristics and abilities need not match those of your chosen character but it can help you in your adventuring career if your actual physical skills are congruent with your character's fantasy skills. The NERO system allows players to play characters that are very different from themselves and still be able to prosper.

You must pick one of these classes Fighter, Rogue, Scholar, Templar.

Fighter

Fighters take naturally to the physical combat arts and rely mainly on strength and stamina to accomplish their goals. They can wear more armor than any other class.

Body: Start with 6 Body. Gain 2 Body per level.

Armor Max: 20 (Can be extended with the wear extra armor skill)

Rogue

Rogues have a natural bent towards dexterity based skills, and the practice of alchemy. Rogues are limited in how much armor they can wear. Their lower Body Points, lighter armor and relatively high costs for combat skills does not make them well suited for front line combat roles.

Body: Start with 4 Body. Gain 1 Body per level

Armor Max: 15

Scholar

Scholars are adept at many mental skills and readily learn the magical arts. Scholars are even more limited in how many Armor Points they can use than Rogues.

Body: Start with 3 Body. Gain 1 Body every other level

Armor Max: 10

Templar

Templars are spell casters who are somewhat more adept than scholars at physical combat. They are not religious in any way because NERO specifically prohibits religion in the game. Their combat training leaves them better able to fight but takes away from their studies. They wear as many Armor Points of armor as Fighters, but can wear more than Scholars.

Body: Start with 4 Body. Gain 1 Body per level

Armor Max: 15

Races

The human race is not the only race in the world of NERO. There are many mythical and unusual races, such as elves, dwarves, half-orcs, and other more exotic races. Some NERO chapters have sub-cultures of the listed races.

Only the races listed are available for play by PCs. Some NERO chapters have additional races or variations of the listed races but these additional races and variations are NPC only and are not available for use by Player Characters. In order to give the game a multiracial feel, each race has been developed individually to add to everyone's enjoyment. To keep the balance of each particular race, there are certain fundamental requirements that each player of that race must observe. We do this so that you will be placing yourself into a real culture that provides the most interaction with other players.

Racial abilities help you to understand a race's outlook on life. You must understand the necessities of role-playing your race based on the advantages and disadvantages of that race. You should purchase your particular racial abilities as soon as possible.

Playing your race means knowing and understanding your races' culture and society. Some races have their culture based on certain societies in our own world, some races are purely fantastic like the elves or hobblings and some are based on popular mythology or folklore. Other races such as the Biata have been created from scratch, creating a unique aspect to our game.

It is important to understand that this rule book only gives you a brief description of your race's society. More detailed information on your race's culture can be found on the NERO International website www.nerolarp.com. It is very important that you learn the culture and behavior of your race so that you seem like a part of that culture.

If you wish to play a non-human race, you must wear the appropriate makeup to distinguish yourself. All exposed skin must be covered with the appropriate makeup. Any props (such as elf ears) must be worn at all times.

You cannot wear makeup to disguise yourself to appear as a race you are not, nor can you act in such a way as to mislead others as to your race. If you are not playing a barbarian or a gadabari, you cannot dress, talk and act like one.

NERO expects you to play your character's race properly. Half-orcs should be slow witted, barbarians should act uncouth, and drae should shun the sunlight. Even though we strongly encourage everyone to avoid clichés and stereotypes when

creating their character histories, you MUST abide by your racial characteristics. You cannot write your history to make you the “outsider” of your race and be the one barbarian who is a genius celestial caster, the one gadabari who is quiet and shy, or the one drae who likes to go sunbathing.

A player not acting as described for his or her character’s race will not be allowed to continue playing that character as a member of that race and will be forced to choose another race for their character. There is no such thing as true half races for purpose of NERO rules. There is nothing wrong with having your parents be of different races, but you can only take the attributes of one of these races. In-game you can tell everyone you’re “half-elf/half-gadabari” but out-of-game, you are one race or the other. You must then take all the advantages, disadvantages and physical characteristics of that single race and none of the unique characteristics of the other. No character may have the powers, physical characteristics, or mannerism of more than one race. It should always be very clear to everyone what race you are.

These role-playing rules are put in place to allow players to make assumptions about the races. When you see someone wearing pointed ears, you know that they may have certain abilities such as Resist sleep and that may change your strategy with dealing with them. You can conclude that every biata you see will dislike celestial magic and every dwarf will appreciate and study well-made weapons. Every race must act like and be identifiable as that race by all other players. By adhering to racial characteristics, this fantasy world of ours becomes much more real.

The following lists the basic NERO races (other than human). This is a very short overview. you play one of these races, you can find find a more thorough explanation for your particular race that will provide more background for your character on the NeroLarp.com website.

The skills mentioned in the descriptions ahead are explained in greater detail in the “Skill Descriptions” on page 33. When reference is made to “Scholarly Skills” or “Stealth Skills,” it means only those skills listed under those categories in the Skill cost tables. (“Scholarly Skills” for example includes Read and Write and Read Magic.) Note that if you are playing a nonhuman, you should buy your racial skills as soon as possible. After all, how can you possibly role-play your race properly if you don’t have the basic skills and abilities that help to define that race? If you reach 5th level or so and still haven’t purchased your skills, other members of your race should treat you as inferior or look at you with pity because you cannot resist sleep or break a charm.

The next section of this book lists the various races other than human. If playing a human, you are free to devise any sort of personality you wish without any benefits or disadvantages

28 (1) GETTING STARTED

Race		
Barbarian	+2 Body Points to Start Barbarian Slay: 10BP, once Detect Celestial Magic: 2BP Break Charm: 2BP	Double cost for Scholarly Skills
Biata	Resist Charm: 3BP Resist Sleep: 2BP Resist Charm: 3BP	Cannot buy Read Magic
Drae	Resist Sleep: 2BP Half Cost for Archery +1 Body Point to Start	-2 Body Points during the day Cannot use Two Handed Sword Cannot use Two Handed Blunt
Dwarf	+1 Body Point to Start Resist Poison: 4BP -1 Cost for Smithing	Double cost for Read Magic Cannot use Polearm >Cannot use Staff >Cannot use Two Handed Blunt
Elf	Resist Charm: 3BP Resist Sleep: 2BP Half Cost for Archery	-1 Body Point Cannot use Two Handed Sword Cannot use Two Handed Blunt
Gadabari	Gadabari Hex/Remove Gadabari Hex: 2BP	None
Half Ogre	+2 Body Points to Start Strong Arm: 10 BP, once	Double cost for Scholarly Skills
Half Orc	+2 Body Points to Start Strong Arm: 10 BP, once	Double cost for Scholarly Skills
Hobling	Resist Poison: 4BP Half cost for Pick Locks Half cost for Arm/Disarm Traps Hobling Dodge: 12BP, once	-1 Body Point to Start Cannot be a fighter Cannot use two handed weapons
Human	None	None
Mystic Wood Elf	Break Charm: 2BP Resist Charm: 3BP Cost for Craftsman	
Sarr		
Scavenger		

Barbarian

Barbarians come from nomadic tribes and are unused to “civilized” society. They are a very superstitious lot and may often perform unusual small ceremonies to rid themselves of their “curse.” (“Oh-oh! Seven hobblings just crossed path! Bad luck! Now I must tie string around finger and walk backwards for an hour!”) This is not to imply that barbarians have to be stupid—merely uncultured and somewhat primitive. In order to be identifiable as barbarians, you should talk poorly, dress in furs and leathers, and otherwise look primitive. Barbarian tribes (usually named after animals) are often very competitive and not too friendly.

Barbarian tribes are very earth friendly and in fact, celestial magic was unheard of by barbarians until the more “civilized” beings began moving into their area. As such, barbarians distrust celestial magic and consider it “not natural.” Barbarians fear and distrust celestial magic and will dislike having celestial protective spells cast upon them. This distrust only applies to Celestial Defensive spells, and does not apply to Celestial Magic Items. It should be noted that there are some characters that refuse to use Celestial Magic Items for role-play reasons of their own. This “Celestial Abstinence” is not required by the rules in any way. All players are encouraged to role-play their characters in any way that they consider fun.

When a barbarian reaches the age of 18, he or she will ask the tribe leader for a Task of Adulthood. This task must require an extreme amount of bravery and challenge and may take many years to accomplish. Only when the task is completed will the barbarian be considered a true member of the tribe. Barbarians who switch tribes are likewise required to perform such a task.

Barbarians are strong and thus start off with two extra body points. They have to pay double for all Scholarly skills. They can also buy the skills Barbarian Slay, and Detect Celestial Magic which, once a day, will allow the barbarian to determine whether an item has any celestial magic present upon

Biata

According to legend, biata are descended from a barbarian tribe, but they do not act or look like barbarians. They have large upturned feathery eyebrows and often grow feathers in their hair and claws on their fingers as well. (The claws are decorative in nature and cannot be used as weapons.)

Biata tend to be very orderly in their philosophy of life—they always act with a purpose. They will not do things “on a whim” and are always working towards some goal. To other races, this tends to make them seem like extremists—either very good or very evil—but even the most evil biata will have his or her own code of ethics and will never act erratically or randomly. This also makes the biata seem very stubborn.

They are also very secretive about the origins of their race and will treat all other races as “outsiders” rarely worthy of complete trust. It is said that biata were formed through magical mating of a gryphon and a human (or perhaps a barbarian). The Gryphon barbarian tribe was made up entirely of biata and until the last Great Celestial Change in 590, all biata looked like humans. Having celestial protective spells cast upon biata causes great discomfort. Most will refuse to sleep behind Wards and will not use celestial magic items. All players are encouraged to role-play their characters in any way that they consider fun.

Mentalist: Biata, like stone elves, have spent years honing mental skills and as such can perform certain mental abilities. These abilities are all completely role-playing in nature. Generally speaking, a biata can remove role-playing insanity based on memories or otherwise “cure” mental damage on any willing subject. You cannot use this ability to tell if another player is telling the truth or to have that player remember events forgotten due to a Forget elixir or otherwise get around any NERO rule. A player always has the right to refuse to role-play any of these skills and can at any time decide to “break off” contact or be cured. In order to use this role-playing skill, you must touch the other person and concentrate completely by either staring into each other’s eyes or by both of you having your eyes closed. You cannot perform any other in game skill while role-playing this. Any biata who simply touches someone and says “There, you no longer have a fear of heights (or whatever)” is not playing the race properly. For more information about these skills, see “Mind Abilities” in the chapter on Special Abilities.

Biata can buy the skills Break Charm , Resist Charm , and Resist Sleep. Biata cannot learn Read Magic.

Drae

Drae are dark elves, a mysterious race that mostly lives underground, shunning sunlight. They have monster grey skin, white or silver hair, and pointed ears. They rarely socialize with other races. They keep to themselves and generally feel themselves to be superior to all other races.

When playing a drae, the most important thing to remember is honor. The Drae culture emphasizes honor to such a degree that a Drae who has lost honor should commit suicide as punishment before honor can be regained. This does not mean that you cannot be an evil Drae; it merely means that you will keep your word once it is given. If you are disgraced in any way, you will publicly do what needs to be done for your honor to be restored.

Drae can have a sense of humor but must take their own actions very seriously. There are drae entertainers (though rare) but even these regard honor as the highest attribute.

Drae have -2 Body Points in the daytime (defined as 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.). At 6 a.m., the drae loses 2 points from their maximum Body Points (never below one Body Point), adjusting their current Body Points to match if necessary. This means that a drae will never fall unconscious due to this penalty. At 6 p.m., the drae's maximum Body Points go up by exactly the same number of points that they went down the night before. This rule cannot be used to circumvent other effects where Body Points are lost.

Drae can buy Resist Sleep and Resist Charm . They can also buy the Archery skill at half cost (round up), but they cannot use Two Handed Blunt weapons or Two Handed Swords.

Elf

Elves are long-lived people with pointed ears. That may be the only thing all the elven races have in common!

All elves can buy the skills Resist Sleep and Resist Charm . They have one less Body Point than a human character of the same class and level. They can buy the Archery skill at half cost (round up), but they cannot use Two Handed Blunt weapons or Two Handed Swords.

There are many varieties of elves. The most common are:

Amani Elf

Amani elves are descendants of Quentari elves. Many years ago, a political rift developed in Quentari and many of the elves moved to the Ash Forest (or the “Amani” forest in their language) in the Duchy of Ashbury in Evendarr to start anew. Since then, they have spread all over the continent.

Amani elves are friendlier and more down-to-earth than their Quentari cousins. They get along much better with other races but still do not socialize a great deal with them. Even though they socialize with other races, they rarely marry any other than their fellow Amani elves. An Amani who falls in love with another race is not shunned from the society, but is obviously not treated with the same degree of respect by his or her fellow Amani elves.

Quentari Elf

Quentari elves come from the elven kingdom of Quentari. They consider themselves to be the most civilized race; all others are barbaric in comparison. To some degree this is true—they have the oldest culture, the greatest cities, and the most learned scholars. It is this attitude however that makes their living with other races a problem, as no one likes being seen as inferior. Quentari elves tend to be scholars, and it is rare to encounter a Quentari elf who does not know how to read and write. When fighting, they tend to prefer bows and short swords, but fighting is seen as a last resort when peaceful negotiations are unsuccessful.

Stone Elf

Stone elves have whitish skin, upturned eyebrows, and pointed ears. Stone elves do not show emotions and as such are viewed by other races as humorless and intense. This is part of their culture as well as being part of their race. This restriction makes the stone elves very hard to role-play—if you cannot keep a straight face when told a funny joke, you should not be playing a stone elf.

They have a natural affinity for celestial magic and make excellent celestial casters. Although there are of course healers in their society, most stone elf casters are celestial.

Mentalist: Stone elves, like Biata, have spent years honing mental skills and as such can perform certain mental abilities. These abilities are all completely role-playing in nature. Generally speaking, a stone elf can remove role-playing insanity based on emotions or otherwise “cure” mental damage on any willing subject. You cannot use this ability to tell if another player is telling the truth or to have that player remember memories lost to Forget elixirs or otherwise get around any NERO rule. A player always has the right to refuse to role-play any of these skills and can at any time decide to “break off” contact or be cured.

In order to use this role-playing skill, you must touch the other person and concentrate completely. Any Stone elf that simply touches someone and says “There, you no longer have a fear of heights (or whatever)” is not playing the race properly. For more information about these skills, see “Mind Abilities” on page 93.

Wild Elf

Wild elves live in nomadic tribes like barbarians and share many barbarian traits. Wild elves are distinguished in-game by their furs and other barbarian clothing, even though they have pointed ears like all other elves.

Wild elves are not treated as “real elves” by most of the rest of the elven race. There is no outright warring going on, but the wild elves often feel as if they are second-class citizens even though they generally have all the rights as any other citizen.

The wild elf society places an emphasis on hunting and tracking skills.

Dwarf

Dwarves are sturdy individuals who live in mountainous regions. Dwarves in NERO are not necessarily short (remember that all players and monsters are the same size as the person playing them), but taller players should think twice about playing a dwarf. In-game, the rumor is that dwarves are the small cousins of hill giants, and so to the giants, they were seen as short.

Dwarves tend to be friendly but secretive. They all have beards, although many females prefer a long goatee. Their race enjoys and appreciates good craftsmanship, especially in weapons, armor, and jewelry. Because they live so much longer than humans, they tend to dislike the humans' faster paced lifestyles (but they generally like the food).

Dwarves have an extreme hatred of trolls who often attack and take the dwarven caves for themselves. Their history is very lengthy but is mostly comprised of stories and legends of great dwarven heroes. Some of these stories can take many hours or even days to tell completely, and no self-respecting dwarf would consider telling an abridged version.

Dwarves are generally peaceful and have no problem with other races—although they think elves are pompous, humans are impatient, hobblings are troublemakers, and half-orcs and half-ogres are incapable of understanding the finer things in life (like a well made weapon and a fine wine).

They start with one extra body point, can buy Resist Poison, and can buy the Smithing skill for one point less. Dwarves cannot use Polearms, Staves, Two Handed Blunt weapons or Two Handed Swords. They must pay double for Read Magic.

Gadabari

Unlike other races that are distinguished by physical features, Gadabari are defined by costume, behavior, and culture. To be a Gadabari means to be boisterous, extroverted, and larger than life. Gadabari, a fiery and passionate race, love to dance and sing. The most important aspect of Gadabari life is family. The Gadabari have enormous loyalty to their people, treating each as a family member and referring to them as “brother” or “sister.”

Many Gadabari tribes may coexist in the same area, each being ruled by its own Bandoleer or “Prince/Princess.” There is a Gadabari King but quite often this figure is far removed from normal Gadabari life and has no great influence over the local tribes. Usually a Gadabari tribe will have its own distinctive predominate color or marking, used to differentiate itself from other tribes in the area.

Gadabari can bestow or remove a Gadabari Hex, the use of which is limited by the Gadabari Code of Honor. The Gadabari Code of Honor requires that a Gadabari be always honest and trustworthy among members of his or her own tribe. The Gadabari will support the other tribe members and will do whatever it takes to help (including lying to, stealing from, and cursing or killing non-tribe members).

The Gadabari Code of Honor means respecting the actions of fellow Gadabari as well. If a Gadabari places a Gadabari Hex on someone, it had better be for a good reason (sometimes, the recipient might take action against the entire tribe). If there was a good reason, then the entire tribe will support that Gadabari.

Half Ogre

Half ogres are not human/ogre hybrids, but rather are a race that closely resembles ogres in coloration and behavior and were dubbed half ogres by those that first encountered them. They have yellow skin and protruding lower fangs. Half ogres are tougher than average and are almost always fighters. They tend to be less intelligent and should role-play difficulty in understanding complicated subjects. Note also that half ogres have a very short life expectancy compared to other races, and they mature faster, so that your starting character may only be four years old!

Half ogres are very tough fighters and they know it. It is very rare for a half ogre to show any fear. They are usually first to run into battle and will almost never run away. However, they have an innate fear of undead and will have to summon up a ton of courage to fight any zombie, skeleton or vampire that comes their way.

Half ogres tend to see the world in simple ways. What good is writing if you can't fight with it? They think most of the other races are spoiled and live too fancily. Half ogres would rather spend their money on new weapons and armor than on fancy homes, fancy food, or fancy clothes. Half ogres think that the concept of nobility is the most ridiculous idea "civilized" society has to offer. In the half ogre tribes, the tribal leaders are the best fighters. In fact, half ogres are constantly fighting among themselves for dominance.

If a half ogre sees another, it is likely that they will fight to establish who is dominant. The fight is never to the death but only until one of the half ogres acknowledges the other's superiority. There is never any cheating nor are there sneak attacks in this sort of battle; there is great honor at stake in the half ogre community.

They start with two extra Body Points and must pay double for all Scholarly skills see Table 3-2 on page 30. Half Ogres may purchase the skill Strong-arm once.

Half Orc

Half orcs may have at one time been human/orc hybrids but have now evolved into a race of their own. They have green skin and protruding lower fangs or teeth. They are a strong people, but tend to be less intelligent and should role-play difficulty in understanding complicated subjects. Because of this Orcish Society is primitive and brutal. Orcish culture is based on the concepts of might makes right. They would rather die in combat than of old age, and would never be seen running from a battle unless the situation was completely overwhelming. Scholars are very respected among the Half Orcs as wise-ones and healers, and the harming of one can carry dire consequences.

The half orc society is clan-based, where families and blood relations are regarded as most important. Individual half orcs may leave the family to adventure with other races in order to gain in strength and earn a name for themselves. Half Orcs reach maturity quickly, and most are capable of using a weapon at age 4.

Half orcs start with two extra Body Points. They must pay double for all Scholarly skills see Table 3-2 on page 30. Half Orcs may purchase the skill Strong-arm once.

Hobling

Hoblings are peaceful people and generally are smaller than average. They have furry feet and hands, as well as bushy sideburns and eyebrows.

Hoblings love working with their hands and as such are often craftsmen. They are friendly and cheerful and have a great sense of humor, and quite often use their charisma to their advantage. Hobblings do not generally like adventure even though they love the treasure that can come from adventuring. Their treasure will be spent on fine food, good clothes, and a high standard of living. Their love of living well means that most Hobblings are business people first. The thought of doing something for free is appalling to them, and although to some this appears to be mere laziness, Hobblings consider this common sense. They are completely honest in their business deals however and always keep to their promises once made—however, you'd better read any contract with a hobling very carefully, as they know all the loopholes. They make excellent spies as long as the money keeps coming in.

Hoblings begin with one less Body Point. Hobblings cannot be fighters and cannot use Bows, Crossbows, Polearms, Staves, Two Handed Blunt weapons or Two Handed Swords. They can buy Pick Locks and Disarm /Arm Trap at half price (round up) and can buy the racial ability Resist Poison. Hobblings may purchase the skill Hobling Dodge once.

Mystic Wood Elf

Mystic Wood elves are an eccentric race originally from the Mystic Woods in Northern Evendarr. They are not really elves but were called that by the people who first encountered them. Mystic Wood elves have elven ears but also small horns on their foreheads. Popular theory holds that they are descended from elven-satyr/nymph hybrids, but this has never been proven. Mystic Wood elves hate (or at the very least find distasteful) all forms of enslavement, from slavery and kidnapping to magical charms and alchemical controls. For example, a Mystic Wood elf that finds a Charm elixir will probably destroy it. They may also attempt to break charms they find on others.

Mystic Wood elf society is organized into 3 major clans, and these clans are viewed as family by the Mystic Wood elf. Mystic Wood elves hold oaths to be extremely important. Mystic Wood elves have two names, their “road” name which they commonly use, and their “real” name which they usually only share with their most trusted friends outside the Mystic Wood elven community. Mystic Wood elves have a remarkably high tolerance for alcohol and love travel and adventure. For them, getting there is not half the fun, it’s all the fun.

Mystic Wood elves are natural born artisans and can buy the Craftsman (other) skill for 2 build points instead of the 3 build that it costs other races. For each level attained, a Mystic Wood elf must buy at least one skill from “Magic Skills,” Table 3-2 or “Trades and Crafts,” Table 3-3 on page 30. Mystic Wood elves can also buy Resist Charm for 3 build and Break Charm for 2 build. As they are not elves, Mystic Wood elves do not lose 1 body and can use Two Handed weapons.

SARR

Sarr are a race of felinoids and many, but not all, come from a land known as Myrr. They live in a matriarchal society, with women outnumbering men several times over. There are multiple clans among the Sarr, each one representing a different type of large hunting cat. Each clan has different beliefs, leaders, history, and behaviors.

Sarr are curious, loyal, independent, and extremely proud. Tradition is highly valued among the Sarr. The Sarr race has an affinity for Earth Magic, but members of the Lion clan are known to be very proficient with Celestial Magic. This does not mean that you must play a Lion if you wish to use Celestial Magic, just that you may be looked down upon by the other clans if you break from tradition.

Sarr will form attachments with adventuring groups, but they will also strike out on their own in search of adventure when the urge hits them. Do not think that Sarr are cute little fluffy house cats; they are some of the fiercest warriors of all the races. They never forget an enemy and always seek revenge no matter how long it takes.

Sarr must wear makeup to appear as one of the large hunting cats. The bottom of the nose should be dark. Whiskers, stripes or spots may be added if appropriate. If you play a black panther Sarr, you must wear a prosthetic cat nose, cat ears, or other additions to make it clear to all that you are not a drae.

Scenting: Sarr have superior scenting abilities, and as such may detect an alchemical substance or disease on an item if they spend three seconds inspecting it. This racial skill does not allow them to tell what kind of alchemical substance or disease is present.

Sarr may buy the skill Resist Poison. Sarr cannot use Bows, Crossbows, One Handed Blunt weapons, Staves, Thrown Weapons, or Two Handed Blunt weapons. The only Small Weapon allowable is a dagger or hatchet. All weapons must be edged.

Scavenger

“Scavenger” is a generic term used for any type not covered by the other races. They are humanoids with the characteristics of a mundane animal (rat, badger, skunk, dog, etc.), but not magical animals such as Drakes, Gryphons, Unicorns or the like. Players are free to use their imagination in creating a scavenger as long as makeup is worn and it is obvious that the player is not playing a monster or another player race. (For example, you cannot be a “cat” scavenger because there would be no way out-of-game to differentiate you from a Sarr.)

Scavengers should role-play their particular animal’s characteristics to whatever extent they see fit, but animalistic traits must be evident in some way.

While some scavengers are closer to their animal half and do not understand the concept of possessions or the niceties of civilization as do the other races, others are truly civilized cultures with long histories. There is no commonality between different types of scavengers other than the fact that they appear to be humanoid animals. Some scavengers are very hardy survivors on the fringe of civilization and others are noble beings descended from generations of city dwellers.

There are a few traits that these animalistic humanoids share just from being animal-like.

Scenting: All scavengers have superior senses of smell, and can use Scenting Abilities that allow them to detect an alchemical substance or disease on an item if they spend three seconds inspecting the item. (This racial skill does not allow them to tell what kind of alchemical substance or disease is present.) Scavengers can buy the skill Resist Poison. In addition the animal part of them makes it harder for them to learn to read than it is for other humanoids and thus they must pay double cost for all Scholarly Skills see Table 3-2 on page 30. Note that this does not necessarily make them less intelligent than any other race, just less able to read.

Cultures

In addition to playing various races, it is fun to play a character from an unusual culture as well. The in-game guides to the various countries and duchies of the NERO world can give you some ideas. The more cultures we have in the game, the richer the role-playing experience.

You might also wish to create your own culture. However, understand that you should be very careful about what you say in-game about your culture; because you may end up having to take it all back if the Plot Committee says no. You must make sure that nothing in your concept of this culture violates NERO policies, rules, or the in-game history!

You cannot be a traveler from another planet or from the future or from a modern democratic society; the basic concepts of medieval society should still exist. Use the current countries as described in your chapter's Player's Guide as a guideline.

You should write up your concept of your culture and submit it to your local Plot Committee for approval along with your character history. If you want to show up to an event playing that character before the history is approved, you should refuse to speak about your culture too much in game. Also note that any culture suggestions, once accepted, become the property of NERO.

This is a delicate balance we are creating; we want to encourage players to create more than a strictly European medieval feel to the game while at the same time we want to prevent the game from becoming impossible to manage. We can't have six separate island nations at exactly the same spot on the globe. That is why it is imperative that if you want to talk about your culture in-game, you must get it approved by the Plot Committee. In addition, you should be careful if you wish to play a culture that is based on a real Earth culture. For example, if you wish to play a barbarian based on an American Indian culture, please make sure that you know something about that culture. If you walk around saying "ugh" and "how" and calling people "Kemosabe" you may be asked to stop. The best bet is to not play a character from a real culture with which you are not very familiar. We love having characters from societies based on medieval Japan or ancient Egypt or the Hawaiian Islands or Africa, but we definitely do not want players with no knowledge of those cultures to play insulting stereotypes from those cultures— even if no insult was intended.

The most important thing is to prevent your character from being insulting to people whose heritage really is of that culture. At the risk of saying we want PCPCs (Politically Correct Player Characters), please be careful. Just think first.

Monsters and NPCs

NPCs (Non-Playing Characters) and Monsters are guided by a Monster Master who assigns them duties. The Monster Master, in turn, answers to the Plot Committee and their weekend director. If an NPC character dies or completes his or her assignment, the NPC player must return to the monster cabin (which is off-limits to everyone except NPCs and marshals). They can then be sent out again as another NPC.

Many NPCs are used in set encounters like guarding a tomb or capturing a character. Others simply wander around the woods looking for unsuspecting adventurers to fight. There may be specific monster areas in the woods where certain types of monsters appear from time to time and wait for the adventurers to find them.

All NPCs aren't necessarily monsters nor are they placed out there just for PCs to fight. NPCs may be bards and entertainers, beggars, merchants, hired thugs, or anything else needed to advance the proper town atmosphere. NPCs that are not monsters should be indistinguishable from any player.

There may also be some full-time town NPCs such as the major Guild leaders and some of the highest nobility. They are NPCs because they also serve a logistics function or because they are controlled by the Plot Committee. These NPCs, like all NPCs, have a limited number of lives and in all aspects must follow all game rules.

Players who wish to be NPCs get compensation for the work they do. In exchange, we expect our NPCs to do what they are told and follow the rules.

Monster Size

All monsters are the size of the NPC or physical representation playing the part. There are not any 9 foot tall trolls unless there is a 9 foot tall NPC playing the part or a 9 foot tall apparatus built for that purpose.

Matters of Life and Death

States of Existence

There are three Standard States that someone at a NERO event can be in. These are:

1. OOG: Out Of Game

2. IG: In game and completely visible to those around you (Yes, you can try to hide in bushes, etc... but you actually have to hide.)

3. Spirit: In game and a spirit

Alternate States (such as flying, burrowing, invisible, etc.) are not possible.

Out-of-Game

When someone takes themselves out of the action for their own convenience, they are out-of-game. In order to go out-of-game, you must wear a white headband. This signifies to others that your character is not there. Please do not abuse this, and note that your game items must stay in-game.

Bathhouses or similar facilities are out-of-game. You may not however run into one if monsters are chasing you. Anyone traveling to and from the showers may be out-of-game if they so choose. If they are out-of-game, though, they should have no game items on them.

As a courtesy you can sleep in a cabin out-of-game. However if someone has a real reason to pull you back into game, you may be disturbed. For Example, if you have an important game item that half the players are looking for, then a marshal may come by looking for it. If you have done something to anger another group, or even a bunch of monsters, then you may not run off and put your cabin out-of-game to avoid the consequences. A marshal will likely be involved and you will be presented with several options, such as; you are at the mercy of the injured parties or you may opt to fight, at which point combat could commence. In such cases, you will be given only as much preparatory time as you would have actual warning, again decided by the marshal.

You cannot go out-of-game in the middle of a combat unless you have a medical reason.

Life and Death

Knowing the rules in this section can literally make the difference between life and death. Some of this will be confusing upon a first reading, as this section makes references to rules that have not yet been covered. If this is your first reading of the NERO© Rule Book©, get the general idea of this section and then come back after you've read more.

Hit Points

Your character's health and the quality of his or her armor are represented by the use of Hit Points.

There are two types of Hit Points: Armor Points and Body Points. Armor Points represent the additional protection that is gained from armor. These points are usually lost first.

Body Points represent how strong and healthy your body is at that moment. When in a battle, armor usually takes damage first and then Body Points. There are exceptions. Some spells and skills state that only body or armor is affected.

Body Points do not regenerate from day to day but you will receive your full amount of Body Points at the start of each new NERO event.

Please note that there is no mechanism to dismember bodies in NERO.

You must update your Armor Points and Body Points at the end of a battle to reflect those lost during combat. This is done by adjusting your tags or updating your character skill sheet. Armor tags do not need to match the physical representation worn. If you are wearing a phys-rep for 6 points of armor you can use a 15 point tag, but you can only gain the benefit of 6 points of armor from that tag. In order to get full benefit from the 15 point armor tag, you must be wearing a phys-rep for armor that gives at least 15 points.

Unconscious

If you are reduced to exactly zero Body Points, then you are unconscious. You will regain consciousness at one Body Point only after one minute.

You can make no sounds at all while unconscious or dying. If your party doesn't notice you lying there, you can't moan or say "Well, it looks like I'm unconscious."

Carrying the Incapacitated

To carry another character or creature that is incapacitated, you must place a hand near the torso and tell the other player “I am carrying you”. The recipient must

get up and stand in front of you. Then you hold both hands over their shoulders to indicate you are carrying them. Both hands must be free. You must walk at a normal pace. You may walk forward or drag them by walking with them backwards. Whether walking or running you must wait for the person playing the body to get up and follow you. You cannot “tag” them and sprint, claiming that you have the body. The person must move with you. If a packet, weapon, or other game effect strikes you or the body being carried, you must drop the body. You may pick it up again once it stops moving. The effect is applied to whomever it hit, following all normal NERO rules.

All of the same rules apply if you use a game effect upon yourself, including Imprison, healing spells, or gaseous form. If you cast Imprison upon yourself or go gaseous, the carried body must be dropped and hence cannot be included in the effect.

Dying

Any time you are reduced below zero Body Points, you drop to -1 and no further, even if the last blow to you did 48 points of damage. Once you are reduced to -1, then your character is dying. You will die unless given First Aid or curing within one minute. This one minute is referred to as your “death countdown.” First Aid takes a complete uninterrupted minute to be successful.

Once First Aid has begun; with the call “First Aid“, the one minute death countdown freezes. If you receive another hit while in this condition, then the aid is considered to be interrupted and you will continue the death countdown from where it was frozen by the First Aid. If the First Aid is completed, then you will be at zero Body Points (unconscious) and will wake in 1 minute with 1 Body Point. First Aid is not required if you are at 0. Curing that brings you to at least 1 Body Point will immediately bring you to consciousness without the minute needed for First Aid. If you are at -1, then for all healing it only takes 1 point to reach zero. So, for example, if you received 5 points of healing you would have 4 Body Points.

Dead

If you are still at -1 Body Points after completing your Death Countdown, then you are dead. Death may also come from Killing Blows (see below) and certain effects. All of your active spells, alchemical substances, and other effects will immediately disappear. The only things that will remain are Gadabari Hex, Forget-it-Well, Forget-me-Not, and Enslavement. Sometimes, a Curse of Transformation or an Infection might disappear when a character dies. No other game effect is active after death, except for certain

Formal Magic Spells (this will be stated on the tag). The only thing that can save you now is a Life spell delivered within five minutes. Even if a Life spell is given to you, all your active spells, alchemical substances and other effects (except those listed above) are lost. If the five minutes pass without a Life spell then your body dissipates, all of your in game items drop to the ground, and you must immediately become a spirit and can only be brought back by a resurrection

Killing Blows

There are many ways in our game to render an opponent completely helpless. These include Web spells, Paralyze spells, tying them up physically (thus making them immobile from the neck down), or just hitting them until they drop unconscious.

Once a person has been incapacitated, it is not too difficult to kill them. This is represented by a Killing Blow.

If the character is being actively guarded by companions, however, it is another matter entirely! When you have leisure to do so, it is easy to find a chink in the armor or slip a dagger under the helmet and deliver a Killing Blow. It is considerably more difficult to do so if someone is trying to prevent you from accomplishing that very feat. Therefore, there are a few restrictions as to its use. To administer a killing blow, you must place your weapon or touch a packet in your hand somewhere on the victim's torso and remain in that position while you recite "Killing Blow One; Killing Blow Two; Killing Blow Three <damage type>."

If anyone strikes you during the count or knocks your weapon away, then the Killing Blow is interrupted and fails to kill the person.

Please note that even though there is a three- count for Killing Blows, the Killing Blow only counts as one strike.

A Killing Blow must be administered to the torso of the victim; an arm, leg, or shoulder is not sufficient. Likewise, the blow cannot be struck on a moving target. If you have Waylaid someone, you must wait for the body to come to rest before you can deliver the Killing Blow.

A Killing Blow can be delivered by anyone, whether they have a weapon or not. Some creatures are immune to normal weapons. To be effective, the Killing Blow must be applied with a weapon that can damage the creature. No skill in the weapon is necessary. For example, if a creature is affected by silvered or magical weapons but not normal weapons, the Killing Blow must be applied with a silvered or magical weapon. In such a case, using a hand to perform the Killing Blow would not work.

Once a Killing blow has been given to you, you are dead and should begin your death count.

Spirits

When your character dies and their body dissipates (after the point at which a Life spell will no longer work) you must become a spirit.

You must drop all in game items, put on a white headband and head immediately and directly to your chapter's resurrection point (usually the Healers' Guild) to register your death. The spirit is completely invisible to the world around it and may not interact in any manner with other characters (no noises, no charades . . . nothing!). Spirits travel only as fast as the player walks—no running to the Healers' Guild.

It is impossible to burn or otherwise completely destroy the body before the five minute Life spell requirement is used up. There can be no effects that can accelerate the destruction of the body of a PC except for the specific exceptions outlined in the Formal Magic System. We know this doesn't make complete in-game sense but this rule is to prevent every single kill from turning into a "Let's burn the body!" situation.

Resurrections

Spirits are resurrected in Extended Earth Circles created through Formal Magic. Very often a local Healers Guild safeguards such a Circle in order to perform resurrections. Upon entering the Extended Earth Circle, the spirit remains unable to interact with characters, but anyone inside the Circle and Invested in the Circle will "sense" a presence and will know the identity of that presence if it is someone they know. They may then resurrect that spirit, and after five minutes the body will be restored to the spirit. The identity of the spirit does not have to be known in order to be resurrected. You must be invested in the Circle to be able to start the resurrection, but once it is begun anyone with the skill of Healing Arts can complete it. If no one is available with Healing Arts, then the spirit can resurrect on its own once the Invested member has begun the resurrection. However, in-game this is very painful emotionally to the resurrecting character.

A spirit can reject a specific healer but stay in the Circle waiting for another person to perform the resurrection. The rejected healer will be aware that the spirit is refusing to resurrect under his or her guidance but will not be able to tell which healer the spirit is "requesting" or waiting for.

The spirit is not aware of any character plans to resurrect in specific circles based on the means of death. Thus you cannot say to your friends "If I resurrect in Bristol, that means that Enemy X killed me; and if I resurrect in Wildwood, that means Enemy Y."

The spirit will normally go to the closest Extended Earth Circle of Power to resurrect. No in-game knowledge is necessary for your

spirit to find the “closest” Earth Circle. This includes Circles that your character has never seen in game. A spirit can choose to go to a different Circle than the closest one if the closest Circle is hostile, but the character, once resurrected, will not be aware of this decision. The Player, not the character, determines “hostility”. This is a fine point at best, but it means that out-of-game knowledge is used when deciding whether to resurrect at a given circle. For example, let’s suppose your character dies and a Forget poison is used. When your body dissipates, you go to the Earth Circle. When you get there, you see your character’s killer hiding behind the cabin where the Earth Circle is located. You decide to resurrect elsewhere because the circle is “hostile” to you. This is allowed and is well within the rules. As a matter of fact, no one in the game, not even a marshal, can require another player to justify why they decided that a particular circle is “hostile”. It’s an out-of-game decision made by the player, and can be made for no reason at all. The decision to resurrect elsewhere can even be made after the resurrection has started. Of course, once the resurrection is finished it’s too late.

If your character decides to go to another Circle other than the designated in-game Circle during a weekend event, you must go to the resurrection point out of-game to record the death and let them know what you are planning. You may be required to stay out-of-game for a period of time to represent the amount of time it would take for your spirit to travel to the next closest Extended earth Circle and for your body to then travel back. It is impossible to tell how someone died from looking at their spirit so at this point determining the method of death is not possible.

Many resurrections are performed by a character who tells a story about the events of what occurs during the five minutes and the person receiving the resurrection may choose to have their character believe that story, or any other as they prefer. Each and every story should abide by NERO rules and any problems should be reported to a Marshal.

At the end of the resurrection, the player must say “I reform one, I reform two, I reform three”. There is nothing that will successfully affect a resurrecting body during this three count. The last three seconds are considered part of the time in which the spirit “cannot interact with the world around it” and hence nothing will affect the character. You cannot begin any three count, including a killing blow, upon a resurrecting body until after the resurrection count is over.

A newly resurrected character has his or her maximum Body Points and will awake from resurrection without any game possessions at all but clothed. All remaining spells and elixirs that were present on the character will be gone, including Gadabari Hex and Enslavement.

Anyone who resurrects at a full earth circle will have their skills

renewed. This does not include craftsman skills or production skills, but does reset Formal Magic casting ability and Formal Cantrips. Most of the time, a Curse of Transformation or an Infection will disappear when a character is resurrected. Note that the lost memories from Forget poisons are not restored by resurrection.

No other game effect is active after death, except for certain Formal Magic which will be stated on the magic item tag.

Each time your character dies, he or she adds another Death to their Death Total. Every character gets two guaranteed resurrections. After that, there is a chance of dying permanently and not coming back.

When you show up at the earth Circle to resurrect, a Marshal will update your Death Total and then will ask you to choose from the Bag of Chance.

In the bag will be ten stones. There will be one Death Stone for each time you have died beyond the two free resurrections. In addition, there will be a number of Life Stones put into the bag so that the total number of stones is always ten. If you choose a Life Stone, then you can successfully be resurrected.

If you pick a Death Stone, then your character has permanently died. At this point, your character's body reforms exactly where it dissipated. The body will remain there until someone finds it and takes it.

However, lying out in the middle of the woods all night hoping someone finds your body is not fun for most players. Therefore it is completely acceptable to leave a note saying "You see Raymond's body here." Any spirit-linked items will remain there and will be spirit-linked to the next appropriate person who touches them.

First Event Deaths\

Any first-time NERO player will not have any of the deaths taken during his first event count toward his character. This policy is done as a service to new players so that they can get used to the game before being penalized for their deaths, not as a way to abuse the system and be immortal. This is out-of-game knowledge, so deaths taken by a new player should still be role-played appropriately. Any player that is deemed to be abusing this policy for intentional gain or detriment to the game or other players will be dealt with accordingly, at the discretion of the local chapter affected. This benefit is only given during a player's first game, and experienced players that start a new character will not be allowed these unlimited deaths.

Character Advancement

Experience Points

Experience Points (XP) are used in NERO for the advancement of a player's character. Whenever you attend a regular 2 day weekend event in NERO you receive a "blanket" of Experience Points equal to your current total Build Points.

Event Days	Blankets
Adventure Day	.25
1	.5
2	1
3	1.5

Some events are shorter or longer and therefore worth different amounts of XP.

It is possible to, at maximum, double this experience through several means.

At the end of the event, you may pay to the game staff one silver per additional experience point you wish to gain . This is known as "Maxing Out." You may also pay less than the maximum amount for correspondingly less gain.

Ex. Dave has 40 build points, he receives a Blanket of 40xp for attending a two day event and can pay 1-40 silver for an extra 1-40xp.

Some chapters will let you max out through helping NPC, or clean-up/setup duties and some will let you max out automatically. See your local chapter for their policies on max out.

Build Points

Experience Points are automatically converted to Build Points (BP), which you then use to buy skills for your character. The amount of Experience Points needed to buy a Build Point is based on your level. Your level is determined by how many Build Points your character has. It takes 10 Build Points to gain a level. All characters start with 65 XP which equals 30 Build Points therefore all characters start at second level. These 30 Build Points are used to buy the character's initial skills.

Xp/bp 3 for level 1. Increase by 4 (7) for level 2. Increase by 5 (12) for level 3. Next levels... Increase by 6, 7, 8 for higher levels

Levels

Your level determines how many Body Points you get and how many Experience Points you need to get a Build Point. Table 2-4 shows the character's level based on the total Build Points. It also shows the number of XP needed for the next BP, and the Body Point value per class (fighter, rogue, scholar, and templar) for the level attained.

lvl	Total BP	XP/BP
1	15-24	3
2	25-34	7
3	35-45	12
4	45-54	18
5	55-64	25
6	65-74	33
7	75-84	42
8	85-94	52
9	95-104	63
10	105-114	75
11	115-124	88
12	125-134	102
13	135-144	117
14	145-154	133
15	155-164	150
16	165-174	168
17	175-184	187
18	185-194	207
19	195-204	228
20	205-214	250
21	215-224	273
22	225-234	297
23	235-244	322
24	245-254	348
25	255-264	375
26	265-274	403
27	275-284	432
28	285-294	462
29	295-304	493
30	305-314	525

lvl	Total BP	XP/BP
31	315-324	558
32	325-334	592
33	335-344	627
34	345-354	663
35	355-364	700
36	365-374	738
37	375-384	777
38	385-394	817
39	395-404	858
40	405-414	900
41	415-424	943
42	425-434	987
43	435-444	1032
44	445-454	1078
45	455-464	1125
46	465-474	1173
47	475-484	1222
48	485-494	1272
49	495-504	1323
50	505-515	1375
51	515-524	1428
52	525-534	1482
53	535-544	1537
54	545-554	1593
55	555-564	1650
56	565-574	1708
57	575-584	1767
58	585-594	1827
59	595-604	1888
60	605-614	1950

lvl	F	R	T	S
1	6	4	4	3
2	8	5	5	4
3	10	6	6	4
4	12	7	7	5
5	14	8	8	6
6	16	9	9	6
7	18	10	10	7
8	20	11	11	8
9	22	12	12	8
10	24	13	13	9
11	26	14	14	10
12	28	15	15	10
13	30	16	16	11
14	32	17	17	12
15	34	18	18	12
16	36	19	19	13
17	38	20	20	14
18	40	21	21	14
19	42	22	22	15
20	44	23	23	16
21	46	24	24	16
22	48	25	25	17
23	50	26	26	18
24	52	27	27	18
25	54	28	28	19
26	56	29	29	20
27	58	30	30	20
28	60	31	31	21
29	62	32	32	22
30	64	33	33	22

lvl	F	R	T	S
31	66	34	34	23
32	68	35	35	24
33	70	36	36	24
34	72	37	37	25
35	74	38	38	26
36	76	39	39	26
37	78	40	40	27
38	80	41	41	28
39	82	42	42	28
40	84	43	43	29
41	86	44	44	30
42	88	45	45	30
43	90	46	46	31
44	92	47	47	32
45	94	48	48	32
46	96	49	49	33
47	98	50	50	34
48	100	51	51	34
49	102	52	52	35
50	104	53	53	36
51	106	54	54	36
52	108	55	55	37
53	110	56	56	38
54	112	57	57	38
55	114	58	58	39
56	116	59	59	40
57	118	60	60	41
58	120	61	61	41
59	122	62	62	42
60	124	63	63	43

CHAPTER 3 : THE SKILL SYSTEM

NERO characters advance by purchasing skills.

Each skill you learn allows you to perform a particular task or group of tasks. Many can only be used a limited number of times per day. Some skills allow you to improve your abilities when the skill is bought multiple times. Be sure to carefully read the skill descriptions.

Standard Reset

In any case where a skill can be used only a certain number of times per day (such as Critical Slays or spells), the used skills will not return to you until the next day at 6 PM. This is known as a reset. On adventure days the reset happens before each module or adventure.

Limited Reset

Some chapters offer an additional reset of times-per-day skills at 6 AM. These are called “limited resets” and do not refresh craft/production skills, formal magic skills, Cantrips, or magic items. Information on whether or not your local NERO Chapter is using the Limited Reset rule will be available on their web site, at the event, and often announced at the Opening Ceremonies of the event.

Meditation

Any character may Meditate to regain use of “times per day” or “expendable” skills that were blocked by the Return <type> monster ability. To Meditate, the player must role-play deep concentration for 60 seconds, during which time they may perform no other actions including speaking, moving, or the use of any in-game skills, items or abilities. At the end of the meditation the character regains any skills or abilities lost to the effect “Return <type>.” Only character skills and abilities may be regained by Meditating. (not Magic Items, Scrolls, Alchemy, etc.) A spell-casting character may also Meditate to regain spells that missed a legal target. At the end of the meditation, the character regains the use of any thrown spells that failed to hit a valid target, as well as all spells, skills and abilities lost to the Return <type> effect. Spell casters should not use the Meditate ability to intentionally miss their targets in an attempt to cause confusion for the NPCs. “Decoy” spells that are intentionally thrown away from the target should not be regained by Meditate. In effect, you can only get your spells back from Meditate if you were actually attempting to hit your target and missed. Spells negated by defenses (ex. Dodge, Phase, and Resist) cannot be meditated back.

The Skill System

NERO is a fantasy game. By that, we mean that it is a compilation of rules and customs by which we allow people to simulate doing things that they cannot really do. The most obvious of these things is magic.

You should not be fooled into thinking that your personal skill equates to the character skill it represents. For instance, we have weapon skills. You must have the One Handed Edged weapon skill before you are allowed to use a long sword. Many people have asked if they can at least pick up a sword and block blows with it—after all, anyone could make the attempt, could they not? The answer is no, in our game they cannot.

The level of ability represented by the skill bought can be considerably different from that of your average player. It represents a skill that has required hours of practice a day for months to gain. When such an individual is faced with a person totally unskilled in weapon use, they would strike the person down with ease. The player's skill may be somewhat less than that of the character, however, so the restrictions are used to simulate the skills.

Similarly, the proficiency system represents a level of skill that the player might never obtain. We use it as a way to artificially give a player's character, no matter what his or her real world skill, an advantage over another whose character is not as skilled. It allows a player of indifferent skill to defeat or hold their own against a player of much greater skill.

This is, after all, a fantasy. A person should be able to acquire skills that allow their character to do things that they themselves could not do in real life.

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