EARTHDAWN™

FOURTH EDITION

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EARTHDAWN PLAYER'S GUIDE FOURTH EDITION

Line Developer: Josh Harrison
Fourth Edition Development: Josh Harrison, Morgan Weeks, R Scott Tilton
Additional Material: Brenton Binns, Bryan Little, David Marshall
Editing: Tiffany Ragland, Benjamin Plaga
Art Direction/Book Design: Jeff Laubenstein
Layout: Ian R Liddle
Cover Art: Milivoj Ceran
Interior Black and White Art: Janet Aulisio, David Bezzina, Rick Berry, John Dollar, Liz Danforth, Travis Hanson, Jeff Laubenstein, Eric Lofgren, Pat Ann Lewis, Larry MacDougall, Jeremy McHugh, Jeff Miracola, Tony Sczudlo, Karl Waller
Interior Color: Joel Biske, Milivoj Ceran, Jeremy McHugh
Cover Painting: Milivoj Ceran

Original Earthdawn Material (First through Third Editions): Carlton W Anderson, L Ross Babcock III, Eike-Christian Bertram, Randall N Bills, Steven J Black, Jennifer Brandes, Zach Bush, Robert C Charette, Loren Coleman, Robert Cruz, Kathleen E Czechowski, Carsten Damm, Tom Dowd, Nigel D Findley, Nicole Frein, Robert Fulford, Marc Gascoigne, Greg Gorden, Lars Gottlieb, Keith Graham, Josh Harrison, Attila Hatvagner, Lars Heitmann, Achim Held, Shane Lacy Hensley, Chris Hepler, Michael L Jacobs, Steve Kenson, Jay Krob, Christopher Kubasik, Robin D Laws, Sam Lewis, Jacques Marcotte, Angel Leigh McCoy, Michael A Mulvihill, Mike Nielson, Diane Piron-Gelman, Neal A Porter, Louis J Prosperi, Sean R Rhoades, Bradley Robins, Chris Ryan, Carl Sargent, James Sutton, John J Terra, Richard Tomasso, Allen Varney, Daniel Vitti, Jason U Wallace, Nicholas Warcholak, Jordan Weisman, Olav Wikan, Donovan Winch, Sam Witt, Teeuwynn Woodruff, Hank Woon

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Internet: www.fasagames.com
Contact: earthdawn@fasagames.com
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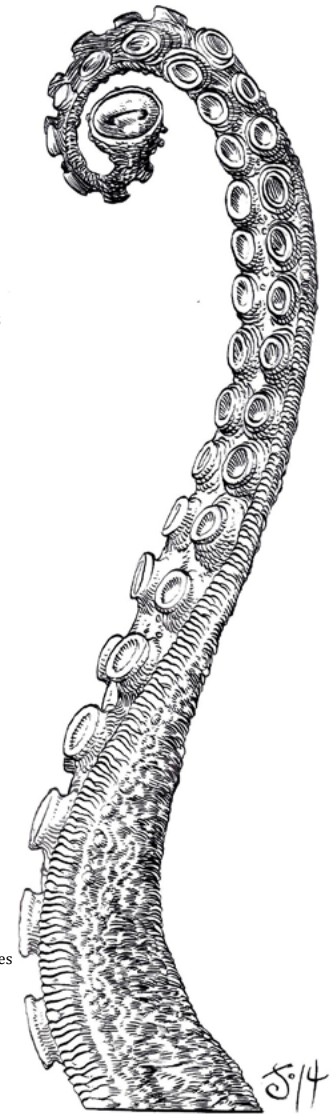

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INTRODUCTION

The Scourge may be over, but there are still dangers lurking in the darker corners of the land. Not all of them are Horrors.
•T'lanthyn the Talespinner •

Once, long ago, the land grew lush and green. Thriving forests sheltered plants and animals. It was an age remembered today in the echoes of myth and legend. Magic was a part of life itself, filling the world and allowing people to grow and prosper off the land's bounty.

Then the Horrors came, and drowned the world in darkness.

The world's flow of magic rose and at its height dread creatures from the depths of astral space crossed into our world, leaving suffering and destruction in their wake. They laid our world to waste in a terrible time known as the Scourge. Lush forests died. Bustling towns vanished. Beautiful grasslands and majestic mountains became blasted, barren terrain, home to the Horrors' twisted mockery of life.

The Horrors lusted to destroy all life, but they did not succeed. Before their coming, the magicians of the Theran Empire warned the world. The people of the Earth took shelter in fantastic underground cities called *kaers*; their descendents grew up within these earthen enclaves, never seeing the light of the sun. For four hundred years the Horrors roamed the land, devouring all they touched while people hid in terror.

Eventually the slow ebb of the world's magic forced these loathsome creatures to retreat to the astral pit that spawned them. The people emerged slowly from their kaers, half in hope that the Scourge had truly ended and half in fear that the Horrors lingered. Though most of the Horrors have left the world, many remain, inflicting anguish and suffering on other living creatures. As humanity struggles to remake the shattered world, they must combat the remaining Horrors who seek to prolong the destruction and despair of the Scourge.

Now heroes travel the land, rediscovering its lost legends and exploring its changed face. For the world has changed, almost beyond recognition. Many people died during the Scourge; the Horrors breached some kaers and destroyed their inhabitants. Other kaers remain sealed, from disaster or simple fear; their contents await discovery by bold explorers. Should they find folk still living within, these brave adventurers may lead such fear-darkened souls out to live again in the light.

In the Age of Legend, heroes band together to fight the Horrors and reclaim the wounded world for those born in it. As they search the altered land for legendary cities and lost treasures, they become the legends that will light the coming days. Tales of their deeds will live forever in people's hearts. Heroes come to join in common cause from many paths. They come from many Disciplines, seeking honor and glory, and battle evil to redeem the world. A band of heroes may include an Illusionist, a magician who combines deception and reality to confuse those around him; a Swordmaster, trained in the art of fighting with melee weapons; or a Beastmaster, able to train and command the beasts of earth and sky.

The world holds countless heroes, but all share one trait: a willingness to fight to reclaim the world from that which threatens it. Through noble deeds and sacrifice, the heroes of the world will forge its future.

THE WORLD OF EARTHDAWN

Earthdawn is a roleplaying game designed for two or more players. Like many other roleplaying games, Earthdawn has an open-ended style of play. That is, the game has no definitive ending, no preset time limit or number of turns of play, and no single goal that marks the end of the game. Unlike other types of games, there is no winner or loser. The object of the game is to have fun while exercising your imagination. When this happens, everybody wins.

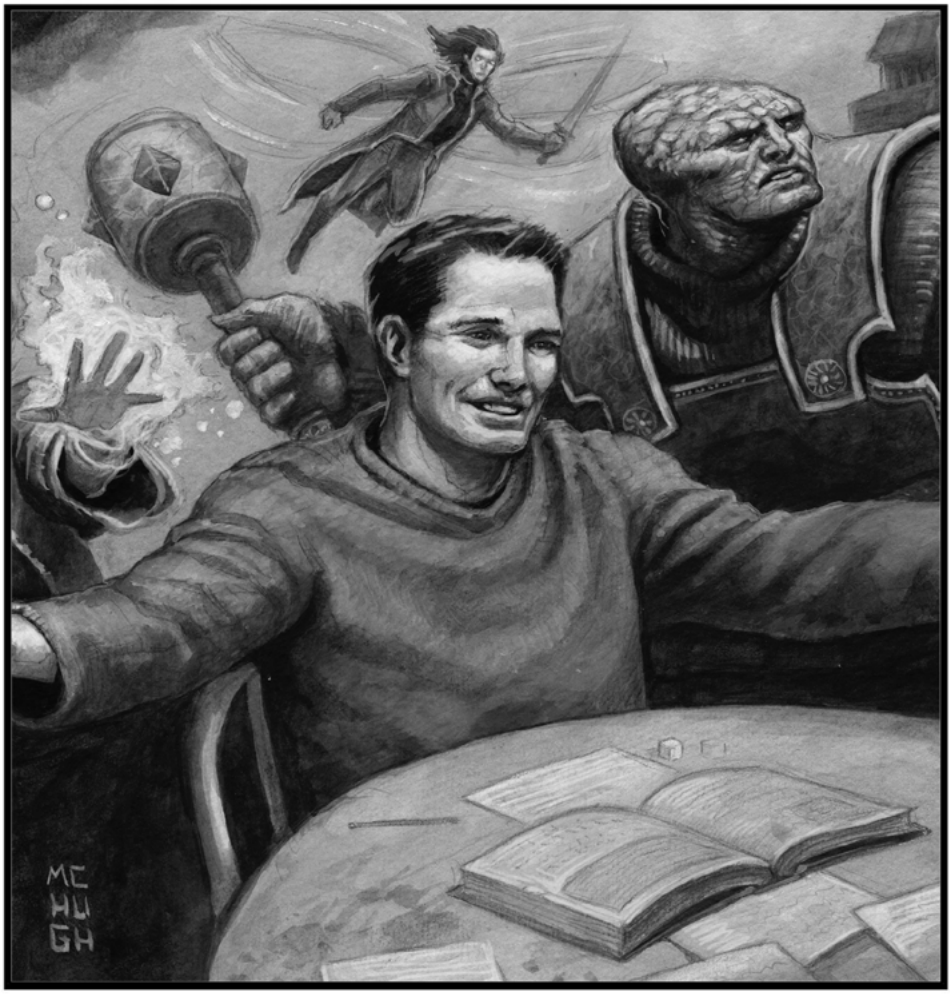
The world of Earthdawn is one of legend. Its people and places are larger than life, the stuff of song and saga. Heroes fight the monsters of this and other worlds; their bold exploits light a beacon of hope for the future, as word of their deeds spreads across the troubled, fearful land. Earthdawn is a world of high adventure, high magic, and terrible danger. Those dangers lurk not only within long-forgotten kaers, but also within the minds of people corrupted by the Horrors. To relaim the land and heal its heart and soul after the devastation of the Scourge, the world needs heroes. The players of Earthdawn, by creating their characters and playing the game, provide these heroes.

In contrast to many other roleplaying games, characters in Earthdawn do not simply survive each adventure and become a little smarter or a little richer. Earthdawn adds another dimension to roleplaying; its characters become heroic figures, accomplishing deeds so impressive that generation after generation will honor their memory in song and story. The world of Earthdawn brims over with legends, heart-stirring tales of famous adventurers. Earthdawn player characters can become the figures in those legends. As they build their characters' legends through play, they create the fireside tales that their descendants will tell about them.

Gaining this heroic stature through daring deeds is as important a part of playing Earthdawn as any lesser gain in riches or experience.

For those with experience in roleplaying, some of the following explanations will sound familiar. Those readers might want to skip ahead to Game Concepts, p.XX or Creating Characters, p.XX, and dive right into the Earthdawn game.

The opening short story—To the Saddle Born—provides atmosphere and a taste of the language and style of Earthdawn. Specific chapters cover aspects of the game and how to play it in detail.



For those who are new to roleplaying, the following section introduces the concept. This introduction will not answer all your questions, because most roleplaying is more easily learned from other players than from reading a book. This brief overview will give you the idea behind roleplaying; to learn more, find others who are familiar with roleplaying games and learn by playing. Together you can explore the world of Earthdawn, and discover the fun of roleplaying in the Age of Legend.

What Is a Roleplaying Game

Everyone has read a book or seen a movie where the protagonist does something so utterly wrong that the reader or viewer wants to shout a warning to the character. But no warning from the audience can keep that character from doing what the plot demands, no matter how much trouble it lands him in.

The readers and viewers can't change the character's behavior; we're just along for the ride. A roleplaying game turns this situation on its ear. In a roleplaying game the players control the actions, or play the roles, of their characters and respond as they wish to the events of the plot. If the player doesn't want his character to go through a door, the character won't. If the player thinks his character can talk himself out of a tight situation rather than resorting to his trusty sword, he can talk away. The plot of a roleplaying game is flexible, ultimately based on the decisions the players make for their characters.

In roleplaying, stories (the adventures) evolve much as they do in a movie or book, but within the flexible story line created by the gamemaster. The story outlines what might happen at certain times or in reaction to other events. The story remains an outline, with few concrete events, until the players become involved. When that happens, the adventure can become a drama as riveting as that great movie you saw last week or the book you stayed up all night to finish.

Though the players all contribute to the story, creating it as they play, the gamemaster creates the overall outline and controls events. The gamemaster keeps track of what happens and when, describes events as they occur so that the players (as characters) can react to them, keeps track of other characters in the game (referred to as gamemaster characters), and uses the game system to resolve the players' attempts to take action. The gamemaster describes the world as the characters see it, functioning as their eyes, ears, and other senses. Gamemastering takes both skill and practice to master, but the thrill of creating an adventure that engages the other players, tests both their gaming skills and the characters' skills in the game world, and captures the players' imaginations makes the gamemaster's job worthwhile.

While there are many published game supplements and adventures to aid the gamemaster, talented gamemasters always adapt the game world to suit their own and their players' style.

A roleplaying game offers its players a level of challenge and personal involvement unmatched by any other type of game. Because the players and gamemaster create the adventures they play, what happens in the course of a roleplaying game is limited only by your imagination. The game is not a contest between the players and the gamemaster, however. The gamemaster may control all the bad guys, but he should work with the players to build and experience a tense, exciting adventure.

How to Use This Book

The Earthdawn game is easy to learn. The Player's and Gamemaster's Guides contain all of the rules you need to run an Earthdawn game. Since most roleplaying games are played as ongoing campaigns, these books provide enough material for years of play. If you can't get enough, additional books introduce advanced rules, high-Circle opponents, legendary spells, and more. However, you only need to be familiar with a fraction of the material in order to get started.

The best advice we can give beginning players and gamemasters is this: only use the rules you need. You can safely ignore everything else; optional rules, for instance, can be integrated later when you are more comfortable with the game. Much of the content in our books is sorted alphabetically (talents, skills, spells, and so on), with other content organized in a similarly accessible order—goods and services, for instance, are grouped by type.

While you might want to read everything from cover to cover, you will soon realize how boring it can be to read dozens of talent descriptions at a sitting. You don't need to memorize everything. Instead, focus on remembering where to find the information you need. A comprehensive Contents and Index are included in each book to help you find things quickly.

The Game Concepts chapter summarizes a number of basic rules and game mechanics that are covered in detail in later chapters. Armed with this knowledge, you should be in a good position to quickly get up to speed with the Earthdawn game and get your first game running as soon as possible. Welcome aboard!

S. MIRACOLA 2014

TO THE SADDLE BORN

The Therans have been driven from Barsaive, but we must remain vigilant. There are other enemies, and I have no doubt the Therans are waiting for an opportunity to return.

•Commander Sigrun Dalben, addressing his troops after the Battle of Sky Point •

Davon woke to the smell of smoke and the sound of battle. He tossed aside his light linen blanket and rolled out of bed. He pulled on a pair of breeches, but didn't bother with a shirt or boots—it was a warm night, and the soles of his feet were toughened by wanderings in the nearby woods.

He was halfway down the ladder from his loft bedroom when he heard the front door crash open, and a quick, startled cry from his mother. Feeling a rush of anger, he leapt to the ground. His balance wavered, but he managed to keep his feet and ran for the opening between the kitchen and the cottage's living area.

Maura stood with her back to her son. In one hand she held the fireplace poker, pointing it towards the unfamiliar figure that loomed in the front door.

Even in the dim light, Davon could tell the threatening figure was a troll. No trolls lived in Aspen Glen, but they occasionally traveled with the caravans that came to visit the village. He stood just over eight feet tall, and the horns that twisted up from his forehead added another nine or ten inches.

The troll was dressed in leather and mail, a patchwork of pieces salvaged from fallen opponents. A coiled whip hung from his belt, and in one hand he held a sword that most people would need two hands to wield.

The troll's eyes met Davon's from across the room, and the hard face shifted into a wicked smile. Dirty canines came into view, half masked by a shaggy black mustache and beard. Fear knotted Davon's gut.

Maura noticed the shift in the troll's attention, and glanced over her shoulder to see her son. She seized the opportunity.

Taking two quick steps, she grabbed a lantern from the side table, and threw it at the invader. Her aim was off, and the lantern shattered against the doorframe. The troll, caught off guard by the assault, growled something in a language Davon couldn't understand, and turned his attention back to the woman.

Maura said one word, "*Ignace*," and the oil that had spattered the troll's face and shoulder burst into flame. He roared in pain, dropped his sword, and began beating at the fire that engulfed his head. The smell of burning flesh filled the room.

"Davon, get your sister!"

His mother's order broke Davon's paralysis. He crossed the kitchen to the room his father had added the summer before his sister was born. He pushed open the door and waited for his eyes to adjust to the darkness.

Anna was sitting up in bed, rubbing her eyes, her voice muffled with sleep. "Davon?"

"We need to leave, Anna. Get up and get dressed, quickly."

For once, the girl listened to him. She got out of bed and began pulling on clothes. While she did, Davon opened the shutters to the room's only window. Outside, several other buildings were on fire. Beyond lay the forest, dark and inviting. If they could reach the line of trees, they would be safe until the attack was over.

There was a crash from the other room, and a scream from Maura—Davon couldn't tell whether it was in pain or anger. Hearing her mother's scream brought Anna out of her groggy half-sleep. "What is happening to momma?" she asked.

Davon didn't answer. He didn't want to think about what might be happening a dozen feet from where they stood. "Help me move the bed to the window."

The girl did her best, but Davon did most of the work. When the bed was in place, Davon boosted himself up, his lanky frame slipping through the window. The mossy ground behind the cottage absorbed his landing, and in moments he was on his feet, helping Anna through the window.

"Come now," urged Davon. "Quietly. We are going to hide in the forest until it's safe to come back."

"What about momma?"

"She will be along soon. Don't worry." Despite his own fear, Davon managed to sound reassuring. Anna took his hand, and they made their way towards the forest. They crossed half the distance to the tree line, the sounds of fighting fading behind them. Their escape appeared to have gone unnoticed, and Davon's hopes began to lift.

A crash sounded from the woodcutter's shed just ahead of them. Davon and Anna froze as a large human emerged from the shed. He was dressed like the troll in the cottage—leather and mail, a broadsword at his side. His head was shaved, and decorated with elaborate tattoos. In one hand he held a sack, in the other a torch. The raider turned and set the thatch roof on fire. He watched the flames spread, his back towards the pair.

Davon thought about making a break for the trees when the raider turned, and saw the children in the light of the blooming fire. The human dropped the sack, and drew his sword. He spoke in that unfamiliar language, and laughed. Davon pushed Anna behind him, placing himself between the raider and his sister.

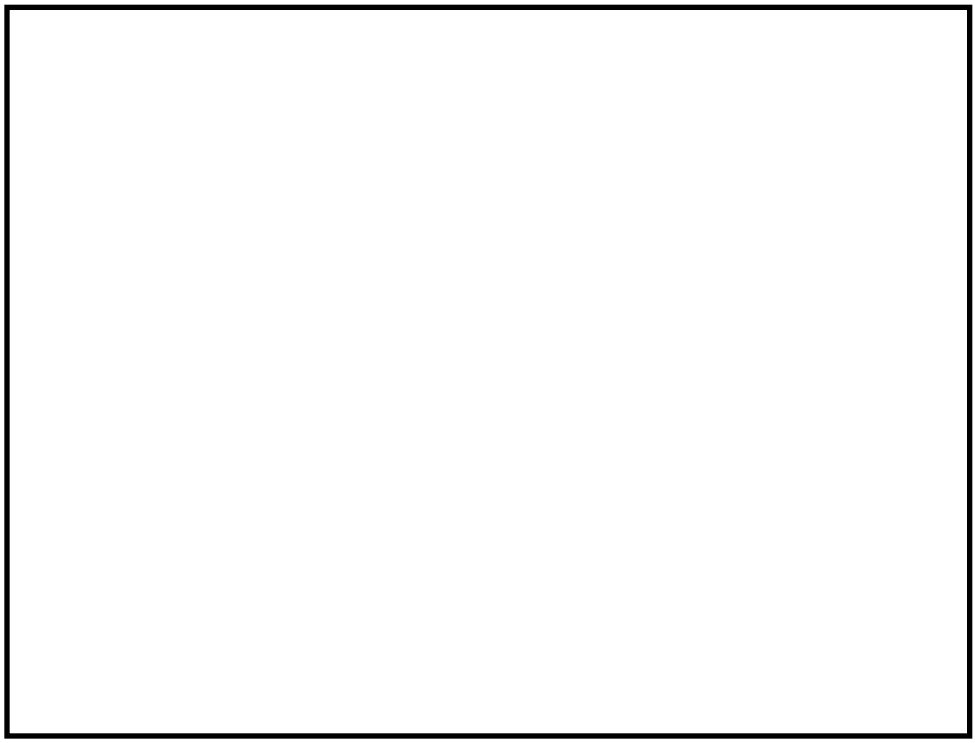
Seeing Davon take a defensive stance, the raider laughed again. Davon didn't like the tone of the laugh—it promised pain, and the raider looked all too willing to deliver on that promise.

The raider called out, and his call was answered with raised voices from the direction of the village green. Davon looked back over his shoulder and saw two more raiders come around the side of a nearby building.

Despite the warm night, Davon felt a chill. They could have lost the raiders in the darkness of the woods, but the human had cut off that avenue of escape.

Anna clutched at Davon, peeking out at the tattooed warrior from behind his leg. Davon could feel her trembling in fear.

Davon looked down at his sister, doing his best to keep his voice steady. "Anna, do you remember the way to the fairy spring?"



The girl nodded.

"Then when I tell you, run into the forest, and tell the fairy to help hide you." Davon hoped the elemental spirit of the spring would be up to the task. "Don't look back. I will be right behind you."

His sister's eyes began to fill with tears. "No crying now. Momma will find us as soon as it's safe." The girl nodded again, her face screwed up with the childish determination not to cry.

Davon gave his sister a gentle pat on the head. "Be brave. Run as fast as you can and do not look back." Before he could talk himself out of it, he pushed his sister to one side and ran towards the tattooed raider, screaming, "Now, Anna! Run!"

The raider expected the charge. He stepped to one side, stuck his leg out, and Davon sprawled to the ground. In the same movement, the raider extended his arm and caught Anna around the waist, scooping the girl up under his sword arm.

Wind knocked out of him, Davon's heart sank as he watched the tattooed raider carry his sister back towards the village. The other two raiders continued approaching, weapons drawn.

The one on the left was another human, short and stocky, wearing a heavy leather doublet studded with rivets. His light brown hair was tied back in a braid, and his left eye was covered with a patch. He held a small axe in his hand. Another axe hung from a loop at his belt. Both blades were stained dark with blood.

The one on the right was an ork, burly and bare-armed. His cropped black hair stuck out from his head in random directions. He wore a dirty wolf skin, and his chipped tusks stuck out over his upper lip. He held a curved sword in his hand, and a broad bladed dagger hung from his belt.

Davon had one chance. He staggered to his feet, acting more dazed than he felt. He watched the way the raiders relaxed, confident the boy posed no threat.

When the raiders were two paces away, he launched himself at Wolfskin with a roar. One hand grabbed the ork's wrist, keeping the raider from bringing his weapon to bear. The other grabbed at the dagger and pulled it free.

Davon's momentum sent the pair tumbling to the ground. With all his strength, Davon plunged the dagger into the ork's belly.

Davon barely registered the blood flowing over his hand. He rolled away from Wolfskin, jabbing the wound with his elbow. The ork bellowed in pain clutched at the wound.

Eyepatch growled and stepped forward, swinging his axe. Davon saw the weapon coming for him and tried to get out of the way.

He almost succeeded. The blow sliced open his left shoulder. Davon cried out in pain and dropped the dagger.

Eyepatch kicked Davon in the stomach, knocking the wind out of him. Davon curled into a ball as the raider continued to kick him. The wound on his shoulder stung in the open air, and the blood smeared across his arm and back picked up dirt and debris from the ground.

Wolfskin got to his feet and staggered over, retrieving his sword and dagger. He said something to Eyepatch, and the raider stopped kicking. The two began talking to each other, the ork's tone indicating that he was planning some kind of painful revenge on the youth.

Davon started to crawl away, hoping that the two were distracted enough to allow him to escape. His shoulder burned, and he found it hard to breathe. He had made it perhaps a dozen feet when he felt a meaty hand close on his ankle.

His hopes of escape dashed, Davon whispered a prayer to Garlen, asking her to watch over his sister.

Before the death blow could land, a voice called out from the center of the village. Wolfskin knelt and grabbed Davon by the hair, lifting his head off the ground and staring the boy in the eye. He snarled a few words, his breath making Davon's eyes water.

Whatever curse or warning he gave Davon drew a laugh from Eyepatch. Wolfskin let go of Davon's hair, and the boy's head thumped into the ground. As the two raiders turned to go, Davon found the strength for one last act of defiance. He raised himself to his elbows, his vision swimming. He called, "If I meet you again, I will kill you."

Wolfskin turned, grunted, and kicked Davon squarely in the jaw. Davon's head snapped back, and he slumped to the ground, unconsciousness dulling the pain.

Errig Quicklance, commander of the Falcon detachment of Terath's Chargers, surveyed the ruined village below. She was tall, and despite her age sat straight in the saddle.

She wore her traveling armor: a hardened-leather tunic and greaves, decorated with abstract patterns that suggested a bird of prey in flight. Her gray hair was knotted back in a braid reaching to the middle of her back.

A handful of survivors moved around the remains of the village, doing what they could to gather the pieces of their shattered lives. Errig heard the jingle of harness and the rustle of two score ork cavalry waiting for her orders.

Her scouts had spotted the smoke at dawn, and the detachment had ridden hard to reach the battle site. It was the fourth village they had come across in the past week, each one telling much the same story.

Errig turned Autumn Thunder, her chestnut mare, and rode back down the hill. Hrogar Blacktusk, her lieutenant, waited on his black stallion, Midnight Justice. Hrogar wore a sleeveless tunic under a green leather cuirass and brown leggings. His bare arms were decorated with a series of tattoos; a tally of the opponents he had defeated in battle.

Errig raised her voice and addressed the troops. "Dismount and take a few minutes rest, but be ready to move again at a moment's notice." She turned to her lieutenant. "Hrogar, come with me."

The two orks cantered over the hill and down toward the village. The villagers eyed them warily. Based on the condition of the village, Errig thought it may have been hit as recently as last night. The Falcons were gaining on the raiders.

Errig and Hrogar brought their mounts to a halt a dozen yards outside the edge of the village. Errig stood in the stirrups and called out in the dwarven trading tongue "I would speak with the one in charge here."

One of the villagers, an elf dressed in a simple tunic and breeches, stepped forward. Errig could not tell how old he was. The years did not weigh on an elf's face the same way they did on the other Name-giver races. Her mother had said it was because the elves lived without passion, distancing themselves from the truth of life. Errig wasn't sure either way, but she could not deny that elves often seemed cold, distant, and without emotion.

She raised a hand, palm out, in greeting. "I am Errig Quicklance of Terath's Chargers. My detachment has been following a band of raiders for several days. It seems we are on the right track."

The elf nodded and replied in a clear, strong voice. "Greetings, Errig Quicklance. I am Beras, Songsmith of Aspen Glen. You are right on their heels. We were attacked last night, and many of our kin lie dead. Others were taken from us by these raiders, I fear to be sold as slaves."

Hrogar swore in orkish, and spat to his right.

"I am sorry for your loss," said Errig. "If you would accept our aid, we have some in our troop skilled at tending battle wounds, and strong arms and backs to help you with other tasks."

Beras smiled and bowed. "Thank you for your offer. Our healer was one of those lost to Death's embrace."

Errig turned to Hrogar. "Ride back and organize a squad of volunteers to come down and help these folk. Tell Gaya and Turbaz to come as well to tend the wounded."

Hrogar scowled. "Why are we stopping to aid these ujnort? If we ride hard, we may catch up with those jackals. Let these farmers tend their own, and let us ride to glory!"

"Hrogar, I know your gahad burns to bring these bandits to justice. My own soul cries out for vengeance as well. For now, we honor Garlen. Thystonius and Lochost will get their due in time."

Hrogar was silent, the emotional struggle plain on his face.

"After you have done this, take a squad and patrol the perimeter. Let's make sure we have no surprises while we're here."

Hrogar nodded and spurred Midnight Justice into a gallop that quickly took him out of sight beyond the crest of the hill.

Beras watched him go, and then turned his attention back to Errig. "He did not seem very happy about that."

Errig let the statement pass without comment. Hrogar was young and eager, but he was a long way from being an effective commander.

Errig dismounted. "I would like to speak with your people about the attack. The more we know about these raiders, their numbers, and their tactics, the more effective our strike will be."

"Of course. If you will come with me, I will make arrangements for you and your men."

The Falcons spent about three hours at Aspen Glen. The raiders headed west after the attack, towards the northern foothills of the Tylon Mountains. Based on the tracks, their wagons were heavily loaded. Errig guessed the raiders would meet their contact soon and unload their cargo. She hoped her troops would catch them before the captives were sold.

They had learned some useful information from the villagers. The raiders were reasonably well equipped, but the way the attack was described, they lacked discipline. They used the element of surprise and the confusion that caused to their advantage. In open battle against an experienced force—or if they were ambushed themselves—they would be easily defeated.

Errig gave the order for the Falcons to mount up and make ready to leave. As the orders were carried out, Beras extended his arm.

"Thank you for your aid, Commander Quicklance. When you have run these raiders down, please return as our guest and tell us the tale of your battle."

Errig grasped his forearm. "It would be an honor, Songsmith." She mounted Autumn Thunder, and addressed the gathered villagers. "I swear we will do all we can to bring your kin back to you."

Beras raised his hand in benediction. "Floranuus grant you speed!"

Errig turned Autumn Thunder west and spurred her into a gallop. She met up with the Falcons, and slowed her mare's pace to a trot. Hrogar rode alongside.

They had gone barely two hundred yards when a figure stepped out of the trees, directly into their path. Errig turned Autumn Thunder aside and waved the column to a halt. Hrogar was caught more unaware, and he jerked hard on the reins to keep from trampling the sudden obstacle. Midnight Justice reared and pawed the air.

The newcomer was young elf dressed in simple tunic and trousers, a little bit too large for his lean frame. His tousled hair was light brown, and his left arm was in a sling. He looked perhaps twelve or thirteen summers in age—though given how slowly elves matured, he might be as old as fifteen or sixteen.

"Take me with you." The boy's voice was quiet, but firm.

Hrogar sighed. "We ride to battle, farm boy, not a picnic."

"Take me with you."

Hrogar tried to walk his stallion around the boy, but the youth moved to bar the ork's way.

"Take me with you."

Hrogar snarled in frustration. He dismounted, and moved toward the elf. He placed his hands on the boy's shoulders, intending to move him aside. When he did so, the boy placed his right hand on Hrogar's sword hilt, his left foot on the ork's thigh, and kicked away.

The blade came ringing free, and Hrogar found himself staring down three feet of steel. He took a cautious step back, and glanced at his commander, surprise and anger on his face.

"Take me with you."

Errig looked the boy over. He had the lanky grace of a year-old colt, all limbs and angles. Despite his injury the sword stayed level, though the effort involved was clear. There was a fire in this boy, and Errig did not think there was anything she could do to sway him from his chosen course.

"Can you ride, boy?"

The elf looked at her, and nodded. The point of the sword dipped towards the ground.

"Then you can come," said Errig. She called back over her shoulder, "Bring up one of the spare mounts."

The boy stuck the sword into the ground and walked toward Errig. He looked the ork in the eye and said, "Thank you."

Hrogar looked like he was about to say something, but a glance from his commander stopped him. He stepped forward and pulled his sword out of the ground. Brushing the dirt off with his hand, he stalked back towards Midnight Justice. He mounted the stallion and waited for the boy's horse to be brought forward.

One of the Falcons brought forward a dun-colored mare, saddled and bridled. He passed the reins to Errig, who handed them to the boy.

"This is Winter Cloud. She will carry you well."

The boy stood for a few moments, scratching Winter Cloud's nose and letting her get used to his scent. He clearly had some experience with horses. The mare bore the treatment stoically. She was one of the detachment's older horses, more relaxed than most of the other mounts the Falcons rode.

After a few moments of getting acquainted, the elf mounted. He had some difficulty because of his injury, but he managed to get astride Winter Cloud and settled into the saddle. Errig couldn't resist the urge to smile. The elf boy seemed small and frail in the cavalry saddle, which was sized for an ork warrior.

Hrogar watched all of this with a dark expression, clearly unhappy that the boy had embarrassed him, and that he would be riding with them. "A dalliance or two with a plow horse does not make you a rider, farm boy," he said.

"My name is Davon," the elf replied.

"You will not be with us long enough for it to matter."

"Enough, Hrogar," said Errig. She turned to Davon. "We will not slow our pace for you, so you had better keep up."

The elf nodded.

"All right then," said Errig. She looked back at the Falcons. "Daylight is wasting," she bellowed. "Let us ride!"

The Falcons spurred their horses to a gallop, swerving around Davon, who sat looking back toward Aspen Glen. After a moment, he turned Winter Cloud to the west and urged her to follow.

Later that day, when the cavalry stopped for a break, one of the ork riders came over to Davon and examined his wound.

"Not bad work, but this isn't the sort of thing you want to carry into battle." He grinned and added, "Wear with pride afterwards, perhaps." The ork smeared some foul-smelling paste on the wound, which grew warm and began to itch madly. After a few minutes, the itching faded and Davon found the pain was nearly gone.

"A gift from Garlen," the ork said. "Magic."

As the troop of riders followed the trail left by the slave wagons, other orks came up to Davon. One offered a stiff leather jerkin, which Davon pulled over his head and tightened as best he could. Another brought a short sword, plain but serviceable. In general, the Falcons were friendly and open with Davon. Apparently, his insistence on joining them had impressed them, and they did the best they could to equip him for the coming battle.

Only the one called Hrogar was distant. Davon caught the ork glaring at him from time to time. Davon tried not to let it bother him—he had embarrassed the ork, and clearly the temperamental lieutenant held it against him.

The forward scouts found the slave camp just before nightfall. There were four wagons, and about thirty or forty armed guards. Errig decided to let the slavers get comfortable and complacent, planning their strike for shortly after midnight.

Davon found combat was a loud, bloody, terrifying mess. He felt the horse move

under him, the thunder of hooves rang in his ears. Errig had been right, though; Winter Cloud carried him well. Davon did not guide the mare so much as cling to her back, wildly swinging his sword and hoping he did not die.

If he died, nobody would be left to take care of his sister.

A figure appeared out of the dark, silhouetted against one of the fires. Davon recognized the outline of Eyepatch, and his fear was washed away in a rush of anger. He turned Winter Cloud toward the raider, and kicked her flanks, urging her into a gallop.

The mare's hooves tore up the ground as she sped toward the human. Davon crouched low over her neck, and his grip on the sword tightened. The raider filled his field of vision.

Eyepatch's eye met Davon's, widened briefly, then narrowed. His upper lip curled in a sneer. He faced Davon squarely, sword at the ready, his back to the fire.

The sounds of battle faded. Everything focused down to a few details: the blood pulsing in his ears, the sword's leather grip against his palm, the surge of Winter Cloud's muscles beneath him.

Something opened inside Davon. Winter Cloud's movements became his own. The two beings, for an instant, became one. Davon's hooves tore up the turf as horse and rider bore down on their target, two hearts beating with singular purpose.

The unity passed as quickly as it had come, though Davon did not have time to dwell on it. He launched himself into the air, arms outstretched, sword in hand. Winter Cloud adjusted her course, skirting the edge of the fire and kicking at the other raiders who had taken up defensive positions around the flames.

Davon struck the raider, his momentum knocking the pair backwards into the fire. The smell of burning hair filled Davon's nose. Fortunately, Eyepatch's body shielded Davon from the direct fury of the flames.

Eyepatch roared, wrapped his arms around Davon, and tried to roll over. Davon couldn't bring his blade to bear, and punched the human twice in the face with the pommel.

The raider cried out, and his grip loosened. The boy took that opportunity to push himself upright, knees on Eyepatch's belt. Reversing his grip on the sword, he drove it downward into the human's chest, putting all his weight behind it.

The blade pierced the leather armor, but met resistance just below the flesh. Davon shifted his weight, changing the angle of his thrust. The point of the blade slipped off the rib and sunk into the raider's chest.

His lung pierced, Eyepatch's bellow became a gurgling hiss. His eye widened in shock, and he pawed at Davon, grasping for whatever handhold he could as he slipped into Death's domain.

Davon backed out of the human's reach, pulling his sword free. The raider was no longer a concern, but there were other enemies nearby.

He looked around, and saw that Winter Cloud had been fighting a battle of her own, kicking at the nearby raiders, taking the fight out of them and leaving many with broken arms or legs.

Davon spotted one of the slave wagons, and ran towards it, calling Anna's name.

Halfway there, a dwarf in a chain shirt and wielding a large hammer closed to attack, swinging the hammer in a wide arc.

Davon did his best to keep his sword pointed at the enemy, but the dwarf kept knocking it aside. Davon was forced to retreat, moving away from the wagons. Davon became desperate, looking for some advantage.

Before he could find one, he tripped over the arm of a dead raider. Davon landed hard, and the sword fell from his hand. The dwarf grinned, revealing a lone gold tooth in the midst of several dirty and broken ones.

Davon's sword lay just within reach. He extended his arm, and his fingers wrapped around the hilt. Before he could lift the weapon, the dwarf stomped on Davon's hand. Davon felt the bones crack, and cried out in pain.

The dwarf's grin widened, and he shifted his weight, putting more pressure on Davon's wounded hand. Davon tried to pull free, but his hand was trapped.

The dwarf swung his hammer back, readying it for an overhand smash. For the second time in twenty-four hours, Davon looked Death in the eyes.

Before it could take him, Winter Cloud galloped up and reared, striking at the dwarf with her front hooves. The dwarf, unprepared for the attack, was knocked off balance. He fell back, and Winter Cloud brought her full weight down on the raider's head. The dwarf twitched, then lay still.

Winter Cloud stomped on the dwarf a couple more times, then looked back at Davon. The boy struggled to his feet, cradling his wounded hand against his chest. He walked over to the horse, scratched her chin with his good hand, and laid his cheek against hers.

"Thank you," he said. "You are a noble beast."

Winter Cloud snorted in reply, and gently nudged him with her head.

The immediate danger past, Davon started back toward the slave wagon. Winter Cloud walked alongside. The battle was nearly over—a few raiders still fought, but the more disciplined ork cavalry was making quick work of them.

Thankfully, Davon didn't encounter any more obstacles on the way to the wagons. His sword lay somewhere behind him. Even if he still had it, his wounded hand would make it difficult to use.

Davon's eyes adjusted to the darkness at the edge of the raider camp, and the hope that had been building vanished.

The cages were empty.

The sun was climbing the eastern sky, and the dew glittered like gems on a jeweler's cloth. Errig sat on a flat stone, eating porridge out of a wooden bowl. Autumn Thunder grazed nearby.

Hrogar approached, leading Midnight Justice. "The prisoners are being branded as ordered."

Errig nodded. "When that is done, set them loose and get the troops ready to ride. I want to be back at the main camp as soon as possible."

Hrogar nodded and turned to go. He stopped and swore. Errig looked up and saw Davon coming up the hill.

"When do we go after the slaves?" he asked.

Hrogar rolled her eyes. "We don't."

"But we have to go after them!"

Hrogar stepped forward and crossed his arms over his chest. "No, farm boy. We don't. They were loaded onto an airship—no doubt bound for a slave market somewhere. Even if we knew where it was, they would be sold and shipped Passions know where long before we got there."

Davon glared at Hrogar. Hrogar returned the expression. Davon shifted his gaze to Errig. "You gave your word."

Errig shook her head. "I said I would do all I could. Our orders were to deal with the raiders. We have done that. I'm sorry we didn't catch up with them before they sold off their captives."

The muscles in Davon's jaw flexed as he ground his teeth. His fists clenched, and Hrogar tensed, expecting an assault. Errig watched the pair, impressed at the boy's spirit.

Davon gave a frustrated sigh, then turned and stormed away.

"He's going to get himself killed," said Hrogar.

"Maybe." Errig watched Davon walk down the hill, where Winter Cloud stood waiting. The boy stopped when he reached the horse and absently scratched her shoulder. He glanced back toward Errig and Hrogar, and when he saw them watching, turned and started walking again. Winter Cloud followed close behind.

Errig looked over at Autumn Thunder. The mare sensed her gaze and looked up from grazing. She walked over and lipped Errig's ear. Errig smiled, and scratched Autumn Thunder's chin. "Maybe not," she murmured.

"I'm sorry?" asked Hrogar.

"Nothing." Errig finished her breakfast. "See to the prisoners, and get the troops ready to ride."

Hrogar saluted. "Yes, sir." He turned and led Midnight Justice down the hill toward the camp.

Errig watched him go, and then looked for Davon. The boy had not gone far—he stood on the crest of another hill, looking off to the south.

Errig rubbed Autumn Thunder's shoulder. "Come on, girl. Let's have a talk with the lad."

The mare followed. Davon heard them approaching, looked back over his shoulder, then turned away. Errig stopped and stood quietly beside him.

After a minute, Errig broke the silence. "It's hard, fighting for those you love and feeling like you've failed them."

Davon glanced at Errig, his eyes narrow and his mouth set in a thin line. Errig ignored the look and continued. "You didn't fail them. You may not have rescued them, but you struck back at their captors, and fought well. That is something to be proud of."

Davon scuffed his foot in the dirt. "There is nothing left for me back home. My mother is dead, and my sister is on that airship."

"I'm sorry," said Errig.

Silence fell between them. Errig watched Davon. The boy's gaze didn't rest in one place for long, and he kept fidgeting. Once or twice he looked like he was about to speak, but he kept silent.

After a few minutes, Errig spoke. "There is something else on your mind, lad—something more than the loss of your mother and sister."

Davon took a deep breath and steadied himself. "During the fight, I saw the raider I fought back home. I went after him… and something happened." He paused, and bit his lower lip.

"For a moment, as I charged to attack… I'm not sure how to describe it."

"Take your time, lad. There is no rush."

"It was strange. I was riding Winter Cloud, but I also was Winter Cloud, being ridden. Her hooves were tearing up the ground, but they were my hooves. It was like she could read my thoughts—she would turn without a pull on the reins. We were one mind. One body. It was..."

"Magical?" said Errig.

"Yes." Davon's eyes were wide. "How did you...?"

Errig laughed. "I'm an adept! A Cavalryman. All of the Falcons have felt that oneness at one time or another, and many of us draw power from the special bond between horse and rider. What you felt last night was a taste of that magic."

"Magic," whispered Davon. He was silent for a few moments. "My mother said I didn't have the aptitude for magic."

"She knows magic, does she?"

"Yes. She is..." a pained look passed over Davon's face. "*She was an Elementalist*." He looked down, face red.

"Ah," said Errig, looking into the distance to give the boy a moment to deal with his grief.

After a moment, she continued. "I don't know much about Elementalists, but I know horses." He nodded towards Winter Cloud. "She is telling me you are a rider born."

"Really? You can talk to her?"

"Not exactly, no." Errig chuckled. "But she tells me just the same." She saw Davon's puzzled expression and continued. "I read the body language—the same way you can tell if somebody is excited, or angry, or upset."

Davon nodded, and Errig continued. "She bonded to you last night. That's why she has been following you around all morning."

Davon blushed, and the corner of his mouth turned up in the echo of a smile. "I was wondering about that."

Errig smiled. "It happens from time to time, but the effects fade after a day or two." She saw Davon's expression darken at the thought of the bond fading. *This lad really is a rider born*, she thought. *I wonder.*

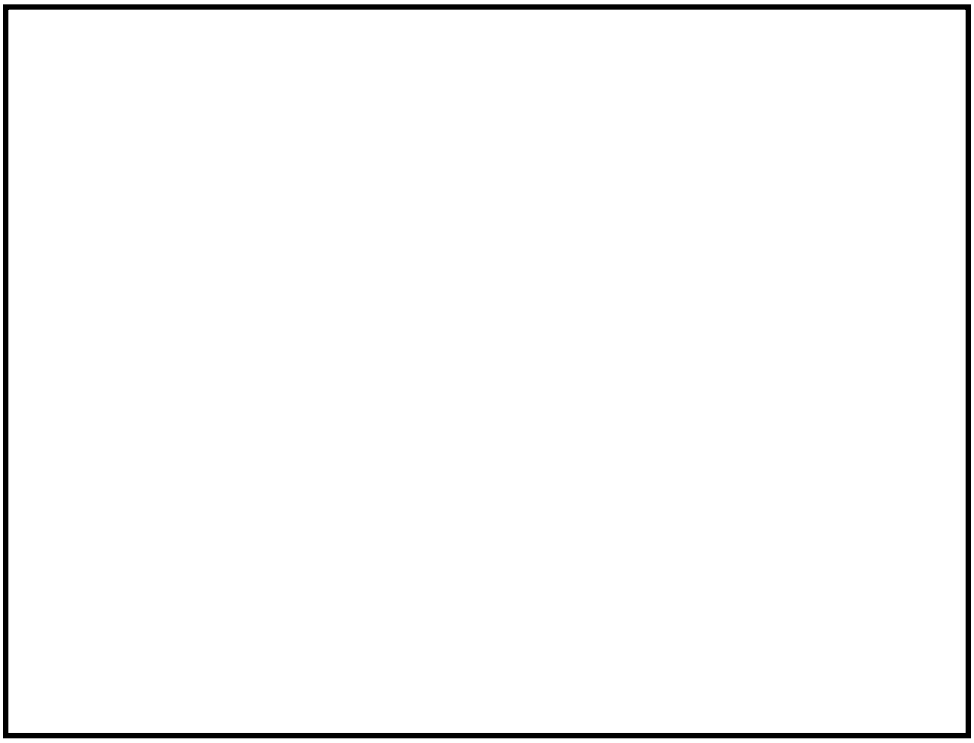
She looked over at Autumn Thunder. The mare looked up from her grazing with an expression that said, *Why are you asking me? You've already made up your mind.*

She turned back to Davon. "We'll have to find you another mount."

"But I am fine with Winter Cloud," protested Davon.

"I know," said Errig. "But that is the effect of the magic from last night. Spending time with Winter Cloud will just make it more difficult to form a proper bond later."

"A proper bond? You mean…?"



"Yes, lad. I am offering to take you with us and see that you are trained as a proper Cavalryman. I won't lie to you—it will be hard work, and you will face more than a bit of trouble from the other recruits. But I think you have got potential, and it would give you the skills you need to go out there after other bands of slavers."

Davon stood with his mouth open.

"I can read people as well as horses, lad," said Errig. "So, do you accept?"

Davon chewed his lower lip, his gaze moving from Errig, to Autumn Thunder, to Winter Cloud, and back to Errig again.

For the first time since Errig had met him, Davon truly smiled. "I accept," he said.

"Wonderful," said Errig. "Come along, Davon. Hrogar is waiting for us at the bottom of the hill—and not very patiently."

"He's not going to be happy about this."

"Maybe not," said Errig. "But I'll handle it." She handed Winter Cloud's reins to the boy, and the pair started down the hill.

GAME CONCEPTS

Do you think you can simply ignore the laws of the universe?
•Gavna Hallok, Wizard •

This chapter introduces you to the Earthdawn game and explains the key concepts and terms used. Some are terms common to most roleplaying games, others are unique to Earthdawn. Whether you are an experienced gamer or new to roleplaying, once you understand how these concepts operate in Earthdawn, the rest of the rules will fall easily into place.

STEPS AND ACTION DICE

Almost all abilities in Earthdawn are rated by Rank and Step numbers. Rank is the measure of proficiency in a talent or skill. Ranks are usually added to an Attribute to determine a Step number. The Step determines what dice a player rolls to perform actions in the game. Steps are ordered on an increasing scale, and each level of this scale corresponds to different dice. The Step/Dice Table lists Step numbers and their corresponding dice.

Darra has a Dexterity Step of 7 and Rank 3 with Melee Weapons. This gives her a Step 10 (7+3=10). Looking up this Step on the Step/Dice Table, Darra's player notes that she rolls 2D8 when using her Melee Weapons.

Earthdawn uses six different types of polyhedral dice: four-sided (D4), six-sided (D6), eight-sided (D8), ten-sided (D10), twelve-sided (D12), and twenty-sided (D20) dice. These dice don't come with the game, but are available in most gaming stores.

Whenever a character attempts an action like casting a spell, swinging a sword at an enemy, tracking a Horror, or flirting with a barmaid, you roll the dice to determine the action's outcome. These dice rolls are called **tests**. To make a test, you roll the appropriate dice based on the Step and add the individual die results together to determine the test result.

In most published Earthdawn products, attributes, talents, skills, and the like are presented Step Number/Dice (for example Step 8/2D6).

Bonus Dice

When you roll the highest possible number on a die, you immediately roll another die of the same type—this is called a **bonus die**. Add the result of the roll to the total of any dice already rolled to determine the final result.

If you roll the maximum value on a bonus die, you roll another one. This continues for as long as the maximum possible result for the die is rolled.

A player rolling for Mica, a dwarf Swordmaster, rolls a Step 9 test, using D8 and a D6. The results are an 8 and a 6, the highest numbers possible on each die, so he gets two bonus die rolls. On his D8 bonus die he rolls a 2, and then a 6 on his D6 bonus die—giving him to another D6 bonus die which rolls a 3. Adding together the final rolls gives the player a total of 25 for his test result (8+6+2+6+3=25).

Step/Action Dice Table

StepNumber	Action Dice	StepNumber	Action Dice
1	D4-2	21	D20+2D8
2	D4-1	22	D20+D10+D8
3	D4	23	D20+2D10
4	D6	24	D20+D12+D10
5	D8	25	D20+2D12
6	D10	26	D20+D12+2D6
7	D12	27	D20+D12+D8+D6
8	2D6	28	D20+D12+2D8
9	D8+D6	29	D20+D12+D10+D8
10	2D8	30	2D20+2D6
11	D10+D8	31	2D20+D8+D6
12	2D10	32	2D20+2D8
13	D12+D10	33	2D20+D10+D8
14	2D12	34	2D20+2D10
15	D12+2D6	35	2D20+D12+D10
16	D12+D8+D6	36	2D20+2D12
17	D12+2D8	37	2D20+D12+2D6
18	D12+D10+D8	38	2D20+D12+D8+D6
19	D20+2D6	39	2D20+D12+2D8
20	D20+D8+D6	40	2D20+D12+D10+D8

Steps 1 and 2

Steps below 3 aren't usually rolled during a game, as they are generally too small to create usable results for an epic game. If, for any reason, you do need to roll dice at those Steps, total any bonus die rolls before subtracting the modifier from the result. Regardless of modifiers, the minimum result on any test is 1.

Bonuses and Penalties

Test results may be modified by a bonus or a penalty, indicated in the rules where appropriate. As a general rule, the modifier is applied to the Step number of the test before the dice are rolled.

For example, a character using the Aggressive Attack combat option adds +3 to his Attack and Damage Steps—increasing a Step 10 (2D8) to a Step 13 (D10+D12). A character who is Harried subtracts –2 from his test Steps—reducing a Step 8 (2D6) to a Step 6 (D10). Regardless of modifiers, the minimum Step is 1.

This method can slow down game play while players recalculate Steps and Action Dice on the fly. If the gamemaster feels that it would be beneficial to the game, he may apply temporary or one-time modifiers to the test result after the dice are rolled. In the example above, Aggressive Attack would add +3 to the character's Attack and Damage test results.

Test Results

A test result can be used in several ways. In most cases, the test result is compared to a **Difficulty Number**, a measure of how hard it is to accomplish a given task. If the result is at least equal to this number, the test succeeds. The Difficulty Number is usually given in the ability's description or determined by the gamemaster.

Optional Rules

By design, the Earthdawn game is flexible. This means there are places where more complex rules can be used by those who like more detail in their games. Throughout this book you will find sections presented as optional rules. These rules should only be used where the gamemaster and players feel they add to the overall play experience. Sometimes this requires trying the rule out for a while to see if it suits the group's play style. We have presented a number of different rule options, but they are by no means the only ones available.

Another reason for including optional rules is for those players using older published rulebooks and supplements. Some optional rules in this book are actually rules from earlier editions of the Earthdawn game. They are included here for players and gamemasters who prefer to use them.

In many cases when the player characters must make a test, the required ability is shown with the Difficulty Number of the task in parentheses. For example, a Perception (13) test means a character uses his Perception Step to make a test against a Difficulty Number of 13.

Success Levels

Sometimes a test result determines not only success or failure, but the degree of success. This is referred to as the **success level**. The result is compared to the Difficulty Number. Equaling the Difficulty Number counts as one success. For every five points the result exceeds the Difficulty Number, the player gets an additional success.

Extra successes may give the character an extra reward for his efforts—additional information or clues, increased damage on attacks, and so on. The extra benefit for each success is usually provided in the ability's description, but is ultimately determined by the gamemaster.

Kira swings her sword at a charging ork scorcher. The Difficulty Number to hit the ork is 9. Kira's player rolls a 20 on her Action Dice. This result is ten points over the Difficulty Number, and scores Kira two extra successes! The gamemaster tells the player that each extra success adds +2 Steps to her Damage test, for a total bonus of +4. The extra damage helps Kira overcome the protection the ork's armor normally provides.

Older editions of Earthdawn used a different system for measuring degrees of success. If you are using older products, here is a guide to converting older success levels to the current rules.

Average = 1 success
Good = 2 successes
Excellent = 3 successes
Extraordinary = 4 successes

Older editions also used Worse than Poor (or Pathetic) result levels to measure degree of failure. There is no equivalent to these result levels in Fourth Edition. If you wish to use these result levels in your game, it is recommended that you have the negative consequences of these results occur if the test result is more than ten points below the Difficulty Number.

Effect Tests

Sometimes the test result represents a value. The most common examples of these tests are Damage tests, which determine the amount of damage inflicted on a target; Initiative tests, which are used to find out who acts when and in what order during a combat round; and Recovery tests, in which the die roll result equals the amount of damage healed. These types of tests are known as **Effect tests**.

Effect test results can be used to determine the duration of a spell, a creature's Attribute values, the Difficulty Number for tests made by opponents, and so on. For example, a magician casting the Mind Dagger spell makes a Spellcasting test to determine whether he affects his target. If successful, he makes an Effect test to determine how much damage the spell inflicts.

The Rule of One

If all of the Action Dice rolled for a test each show a result of one (1), then the character automatically fails to accomplish the action, even if the total would otherwise succeed. This is known as the Rule of One. At the gamemaster's discretion, additional negative consequences may result from a Rule of One.

The Rule of One is not applicable to Effect tests. It is recommended that the Rule of One only apply to the results of tests where two or more dice are rolled.

Time

Time can be important in Earthdawn. A standard day is twenty-four hours long. A week is seven days, corresponding to the length of the Throalic week. (The Theran Empire, by comparison, measures the passage of time in five-day weeks.) Unless stated otherwise, all references to a week in the game rules are assumed to be a seven-day period.

A month is thirty days long. On the Throalic calendar, each year has twelve months, with a five-day festival in the middle of the year, bringing the total number of days per year to 365.

A **round** is a time-keeping unit usually used to keep the action flowing when the timing of events is important. It represents the time required to carry out most actions and equals approximately six seconds of game time. During combat, a round is referred to as a combat round. See the Combat chapter, p. XX, for more information on what you can do during a combat round.

Distances and Weights

Throughout the Earthdawn game you will see references to distances and weights expressed in the Imperial system of inches, feet, yards, miles, and pounds. Recognizing that many gamers are more familiar with the metric system, we have attempted to make conversions from Imperial to metric as simple as possible.

While not strictly accurate, Imperial units can be converted to metric units for game purposes as shown in the Distance/Weight Conversion Table.

These approximations have been used to make the math simpler for 'on-the-fly' game calculations.

Most distances are given in yards in the Earthdawn game, making it a simple matter to replace "yards" with "meters" to get a (near) metric equivalent. This is especially useful when taking into account the distances at which most action occurs in Earthdawn.

Distance/Weight Conversion Table

Distance

1 inch = 2.5 centimeters

1 foot = 30 centimeters

1 yard = 1 meter

1 mile = 1.6 kilometers

Weight

2 pounds = 1 kilogram

2 pints = 1 liter

1 quart = 4 pints

1 ton = 1,000 kilograms

General

1 foot = 12 inches

1 yard or meter = 3 feet

1 mile = 1,760 yards

1 pound = 16 ounces

1 ton = 2,000 pounds

Adepts and Disciplines

The world of Earthdawn is suffused with magic. The most talented characters, including yours, are initiated in the use of magic. Such characters are called adepts. Some adepts train to cast spells; some train to use swords or other weapons; others train to work with animals. The form of magical training chosen by your character is his Discipline. This training focuses the magical energies of your character into special abilities called talents. Each Discipline offers a unique selection of talents.

Characters of some Disciplines—collectively known as magicians—possess the ability to cast spells.

All adepts are rated in their Discipline according to their knowledge and experience. These ratings are called Circles. Adept characters usually begin the game at First Circle. Though characters tend to specialize in one Discipline, some learn talents from other Disciplines, or learn a new Discipline in addition to their first.

The different Disciplines are described in the Disciplines chapter, starting on p.XX. The talents available to each Discipline are described in the Talents chapter, p. XX. Descriptions for non-magical skills can be found in the Skills chapter, p. XX. The Workings of Magic chapter, p.XX, explains more about magic and magical theory.

After each game session, the gamemaster awards Legend Points based on how well your character and his allies performed during the session. You can also earn Legend Points based on how well you portrayed, or roleplayed, your character. You spend Legend Points to increase the ranks of your character's talents and abilities, eventually allowing him to advance his Circle. When an adept reaches a new Discipline Circle, he gets access to new talents and abilities.

The Building Your Legend chapter, p.XX, has information on how you use Legend Points to improve your character's talents and skills, and how the accumulation of Legend Points affects those who come into contact with the character, in person or by reputation.

CHARACTER SHEET

Much of the information you need about your character's abilities, possessions, physical appearance, and other facts will be noted on a Character Sheet. A sample Character Sheet can be found on p. XX, or you can download one from our website at earthdawn.fasagames.com.

Attributes measure a character's natural abilities, what he can accomplish without training or magic. The **talents**, **skills**, and **spells** a character knows also appear on the Character Sheet.

The **Health** section of your Character Sheet tracks damage your character takes. The number of damage points a character has taken is reflected in his Current Damage total. When your Current Damage equals or exceeds your character's Unconsciousness Rating, he falls unconscious. When your Current Damage equals or exceeds your character's Death Rating, he dies.

The **Wound Threshold** represents the amount of damage it takes to wound your character from a single attack. Wounds are serious injuries that heal more slowly than normal damage and can impair your character's ability to carry out actions. You use your character's **Recovery** to recover from injury. The test result reduces your character's Current Damage or allows you to heal Wounds. Your character may only make a limited number of Recovery tests each day.

During the course of the game, the gamemaster will describe to you events or situations. Using your Character Sheet as a guide, you tell the gamemaster what your character would do in a given situation. The gamemaster will probably ask you to roll some dice, and the resulting numbers will represent your character's attempted action. The gamemaster uses the rules of the game to interpret the dice rolls and the outcome of your character's action.

More information on the game statistics of your character can be found in the Creating Characters chapter, p. XX.

KARMA

All adepts, as well as some of the more powerful creatures of the world, are able to tap into the magical energy of the world to enhance their abilities. This magical energy is known as **Karma**. The use of Karma is simulated through Karma Points and Karma dice.

Adepts use Karma to enhance their magical talents. Unless noted otherwise, spending a Karma Point on a talent allows the adept to roll an additional D6 and add it to the result of the test. As with all dice rolled on a test, Karma dice can result in bonus dice. Special circumstances, magic, or even Horror taint can increase a character's Karma Step later in the game.

Magic

The world of Earthdawn is touched by magic in every aspect. The rising tide of magic brought the Horrors into the world, but also enabled magicians to develop ways to protect people from them. Heroes wield powerful magical weapons, and magic has allowed civilizations to be built and maintained as airships travel the sky and structures that defy the laws of physics are erected in the cities. There are a number of established magical theories, facts, and laws that are recognized by all scholars throughout Barsaive and the Theran Empire.

Names

Names hold power, and the ability to Name an object, place, or person bestows power over, and a link to, that object through magical means. Some say that even though the Therans have been driven from Barsiave, because they Named it, they will forever hold power over it—unless that Name is forgotten and not used anymore.

The power, imagination, and will to create things by Naming them is what makes the races of Barsaive, and lands beyond, **Namegivers**.

Most scholars include the dragons among the Namegivers, although their abilities and motives are beyond the short lives of the other races, and their numbers are few.

Patterns

Naming a thing or place solidifies its magical **pattern**, stabilizing its interaction with the world's magic. All living things have patterns, as do objects and places that have interacted with powerful magic. When successfully Named, these items and places gain a sort of life of their own, and from then on are able to magically influence all with which they interact. The Name and knowledge of the deeds done with an item grant access to the power in such patterns. Heroes are famous for seeking out powerful magic items and researching their patterns, which enables them to make use of these objects.

Blood Magic

Blood magic is magic fueled by the life force of a living being, and as such is available to those who cannot otherwise wield magic. Blood magic comes at a price, though, as the life force nourishing it is weakened while the magic is in effect. Magical scholars divide blood magic into two categories.

Life magic is the sacrifice of small amounts of life energy to create or uphold minor magical effects.

The most common ways of using it are to empower minor magical items known as blood charms, or to spill blood during a ritual to strengthen its effects or make oaths binding.

Death magic usually results in the death of the donor of life force, and often the donation is not voluntary (if it is voluntary, the term sacrifice magic is usually used). Dark rumors are spoken of the Therans' use of blood magic, burning away the lives of their slaves to empower great rituals and propel their magical vessels.

LEGENDS

Legends, tales, and stories are said to play a major part in the balance of all things magical. As all things interact with magic, so do the stories of Adepts' heroic deeds, tales and news from faraway places, and legends from olden times. Scholars believe that just as a city is shaped by the actions of its inhabitants, or a company grows rich and influential by the efforts of its founders and employees, a magical pattern grows from the attention it receives when its tale is told.

The people of Barsaive recognize someone's or something's legend as a measure of that object or person's status in the world of magic. Thus, people strive to make their legend noteworthy, to be recognized in the way they deem right and remembered in the centuries to come. Many of the greatest legends told in Barsaive and the Theran Empire are about famous people, places, and magical items.

THE PLANES

Beyond the physical world, there are myriad domains, realms, and planes—only accessible by magic—that are collectively known as the **netherworlds**. One of those distant realms is the original home of the Horrors, though none in Barsaive know which it might be. Other planes bear stranger life or none at all. Some have been visited by travelers and are known throughout the magical community, while more remain to be found and explored. Bizarre laws rule the netherworlds.

The netherworlds are home to various spirits, including those of deceased Namegivers as well as others alien to the physical world. Some magicians can summon these spirits to serve their whims, although spirits may appear without a summoner's call. They seldom have reason to do so, however, as their motives have passed beyond the physical world.

The Elemental Planes

Among the netherworlds are the elemental planes. They are each mostly made up of one of the True elements, the planes of air, earth, fire, water, and wood. Travelers cannot usually survive on these planes without powerful magic, and they are home only to elemental spirits.

The elemental planes are said to intersect with the physical world in numerous places, frequently attracting elemental spirits and leaving behind kernels of True elements that are gathered or mined to be used in enchantments. Orichalcum, a perfect combination of the True elements, is the most potent magical ingredient known.

THE HORRORS

For hundreds of years, the world of Earthdawn suffered under a reign of terror perpetrated by beings known collectively as the **Horrors**. Though the world always had magic, the level of ambient magic gradually increased, and so did the activity of the Horrors. Magic eventually reached a level that allowed the Horrors to routinely breach the extra-dimensional barriers between their world and the world of Earthdawn.

The time during which the Horrors freely roamed the world, causing terror and destruction, is known by many names, the most common being the **Scourge**. During the Scourge, many cities and nations fell to the Horrors' power. Some embraced dark magics to defend themselves, becoming little better than that which they feared.

Now the Scourge is over. Many Horrors remain, but their power is diminished enough that civilization has begun to rebuild. Many people still tremble inside the walls they built to protect themselves and their families, afraid to venture out into the strange, changed world. The few brave enough to face it are the heroes of Earthdawn.

Taint and Corruption

While the forces of magic were never to be fooled around with, the Scourge has changed much of the magical energy in the physical world. The destruction wrought by a Horror or caused by its mere presence can corrupt magical energies, and during the Scourge, the Horrors were everywhere. As a result, drawing on magical energy became dangerous for magicians outside the shelter of the kaers (which were safe as long as no Horror had entered them). Using tainted magical energy could not only harm the magician, but could even attract Horrors.

To protect from this danger, magical constructs called spell matrices were devised as a way to filter the most dangerous taint from the world's magical energies. Spells became less powerful, but could be used safely. Not using matrices can ease the casting of a spell, but using magic in its raw form can spell doom for the unwary magician.

Traces of Taint

While the taint of magical energies is only visible to those with command over magic, the physical representation of the Horrors' corruption can sometimes be observed by mundane means. The taint and corruption caused by any one particular Horror is unique to it, but there are often common themes to the taint. For example, a Horror lairing in a natural environment might cause plants and animals in the vicinity to become mutated and wicked, resembling undead life or the terrible constructs that Horrors forge. In such an environment, animals may become hostile, stone may develop sharp edges, and even plants may lash out at explorers, spreading newly developed poisons.

The most dangerous form of corruption is that of Namegivers. People under the influence of a Horror might open their kaers' doors at the Horror's command or slaughter innocents to satisfy the Horror's hunger for misery.

Horrors can even mark the patterns, thus exerting greater control over a person, thing, or place. Such corruption is difficult to detect, but a great many people believe the loss of beauty and the inability to create art is a clear sign of corruption, as Horrors do not seem to be able to create, only mimic and despoil.

Passions and Questors

The people of Barsaive worship twelve **Passions**: living, physical embodiments of the wishes, hopes, beliefs, and strongest emotions of Barsaive's people.

Some say the Passions are mysterious magical beings given control over pieces of people's lives by the universe. Some say they are the people's hopes given form by the legend that springs from the Namegivers' collective thoughts. Some say that whether a Passion exists or not is up to the believer alone, created by the moment. Whatever the truth, it cannot be denied that the Passions exist, wandering the roads, visiting Barsaive's towns, and helping lift people's burdens through gifts of healing, comfort, or strength.

The Passions do not appear in any single place or in any one form. Rather, they shape their surroundings and likenesses in a fashion that gives either slight clues or absolute certainty about their identity—the former when they set a test, the latter when they bring a message.

While a Passion can be summoned wherever its ideals are strongly felt, grievously violated, or aggressively defended, even the Passions cannot be everywhere. For this, they have their questors: Namegivers pursuing the ideals of the Passions. **Questors** serve to bridge the gap between their patron Passions and the people of the world. To be a questor means to regard all of the Passions, but to quest for the ideals of one. The Passions grant magical powers to their questors, with which they inspire and help Barsaive's people.

NAMEGIVER RACES

The dragons call us the 'younger races'. Those patronizing wyrms can't see past their own snouts. After all, its wasn't the dragons who shared the Rites with the world!
•Orlan Quillsong, Theran Scholar •

Many different types of people live in the world of Earthdawn. They vary in size and shape, color and culture, and together bring the world to life. These people are the Namegivers. Barsaive is home to eight Namegiver races, and there are rumors of more in the lands beyond. Besides humans there are dwarfs, elves, orks, trolls, and even more exotic races such as the obsidimen, windlings, and the t'skrang. The descriptions in this chapter provide basic information about each of the races populating the lands of Barsaive.

These descriptions are broad generalizations. While we may describe orks as slow thinking but quick tempered, you may choose to create an ork who is quick thinking and quick tempered. Players are free to portray their characters however they wish. Remember, however, that other people may treat your character as though he is a stereotype. You may even be able to take advantage of their preconceptions.

While the descriptions below include information on each race's preferred living arrangements, many settlements are inhabited by members of different races. This mixing largely began in the kaers, as many settlements would band together to build the shelters they would need to survive. Single-race settlements certainly exist, but are not all there is in Barsaive.

Also included in this chapter is game information needed for creating characters. See the Creating Characters chapter, p.XX, for a full explanation of how to use this information.

DWARFS

Our trade caravans travel the land, carrying our goods to the elves, humans, t'skrang, and even the orks. Those same caravans bring their riches home to us. But just because we trade with the other races, it doesn't mean we want them living next door.

— Amelanna of House Chaozun

Dwarfs are short and stocky, averaging just over four feet in height, and weighing about 120 pounds. Their hair is thick and abundant, especially the hair on their heads, and male dwarfs commonly grow long beards, well-groomed and sometimes braided into elaborate patterns. Their skin tones range from pale pinkish-white to dark ebony, largely divided along tribal lines.

Dwarfs are broad-chested, tough, and strong for their size. Their short legs are ill-suited to running, and also make it difficult for them to swim or ride horses. As a result, dwarfs prefer riding in carts, using ponies, or other animals better suited to their proportions. Their ears are gently pointed, less so than elves and windlings. Dwarfs reach physical maturity in their late teens, and tend to live for about 100 years.

Dwarfs have an affinity for the earth, feeling a kinship with stone and metal. This, coupled with a strong inclination for organization and attention to detail, makes them a race of builders and craftsmen. Indeed, this tendency is what led the Therans to appoint the dwarfs of Throal as the province's administrators before the Scourge, and helped Throal become the dominant power in Barsaive in the decades after the Scourge.

A dwarf's first loyalty is to their family and tribe, but they easily transfer that loyalty to their home town, city, or kingdom. Dwarfs prefer to live close to, or even under, the earth, with multiple generations of extended family under the same roof.

While loyal and efficient, dwarfs can be quick to latch onto a single solution and stubbornly resist change. Dwarfs frequently come across as curt or lacking in social graces, but at the same time they can be friendly and open to those they consider friends. There is nothing a dwarf likes more than talking about his craft to those who show an interest—much to the chagrin of those who don't care to explore a subject in exhaustive detail.

Game Information

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 9, STR 10, TOU 12, PER 11, WIL 11, CHA 10
Movement Rate: 10
Karma Modifier: 4

Racial Abilities

Heat Sight: Characters with Heat Sight can see heat radiated by another character or object, which translates into different colors. The colors depend on the relative heat given out by an object. The hottest objects show up as white, with the spectrum dropping through red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and down into violet or even black for the coldest objects.

Heat Sight tends to fade into the background the more light is present, but it allows the character to see in the dark, at the expense of detail.

Magical effects that limit normal sight, for example magical darkness, also affect Heat Sight, and Heat Sight does not penetrate objects.

Strong Back: Dwarf characters have a +2 bonus to their Strength for the purposes of determining carrying capacity.

ELVES

The loss of Wyrm Wood and the corruption of the elven court is a tragedy. It is made worse by Alachia's insistence that her court is still the center of our culture. Any who speak out against this state of affairs finds themselves in one of her many dungeons. This should not stand, but many of our kin would rather ignore these truths than face them.

— Monus Byre, leader of the Seekers of the Heart

Elves are tall and thin, averaging over six feet in height and weighing about 150 pounds. Their facial features appear symmetrical, almost uncannily so, and even other races tend to find elves attractive. Skin color can vary, ranging from almost pure white to tan, brown, even midnight black. Some rare individuals are even pale green, or an iridescent mother-of-pearl color called *cetharel*. Their body hair is fine and sparse, but facial and head hair is commonly long and luxuriant with colors ranging from white blond to brown, and black, with naturally occurring blue, violet or metallic colors being rare but not unheard of.

Elves have long, pointed ears and move with a natural grace, but their slight build makes them a little more susceptible to injury. They reach physical maturity in their early twenties, and have a natural lifespan of nearly

three hundred years—though some individuals have been known to live longer.

Elves revere nature and beauty, and have an affinity with magic and the natural world. They prefer living in open areas, especially ones that blend into the environment. These traits, along with their keen vision and grace, result in artists and magicians being common. Those of a more martial bent are attracted to the Archer and Swordmaster Disciplines.

Elves are mainly loyal to their family, feeling that blood ties are the most binding relationship in their lives. Tribal or national ties are weaker, though it is not uncommon for an elf to view their village or town as an extended family.

Prior to the Scourge, Wyrm Wood was seen as the center of elven culture, and most elves felt some loyalty to the court. These days, however, the Ritual of Thorns and the court's isolationist attitudes have led some elves to see themselves as a lost people, and the Blood Elves are an all too painful reminder of how the Horrors were not responsible for all that was lost during the Scourge.

Game Information

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 12, STR 10, TOU 8, PER 11, WIL 11, CHA 11
Movement Rate: 14
Karma Modifier: 4

Racial Abilities

Low-Light Vision: Low-Light Vision allows a character to see at much lower light levels than humans. For a character with Low-Light Vision, a single torch easily illuminates a 30-yard by 30-yard meeting hall.

Starlight provides plenty of light on a clear night, and even on a night shrouded by thick cloud cover the character can see as well as a human sees at dusk. Characters with Low-Light Vision are no more susceptible to flash-blindness than humans. Complete darkness—the complete absence of light—will render a character with Low-Light Vision unable to see, like other characters requiring normal vision.

HUMANS

We may not be as strong as the trolls, or as swift as the elves. We do not have the numbers of the orks, or the kingdoms of the dwarfs. What we lack in those areas, we make up for in adaptability. While we may sometimes be overlooked, Barsaive would not be where it is without us. We fill in the gaps left by the other races, the grease that keeps the wheel of civilization turning.

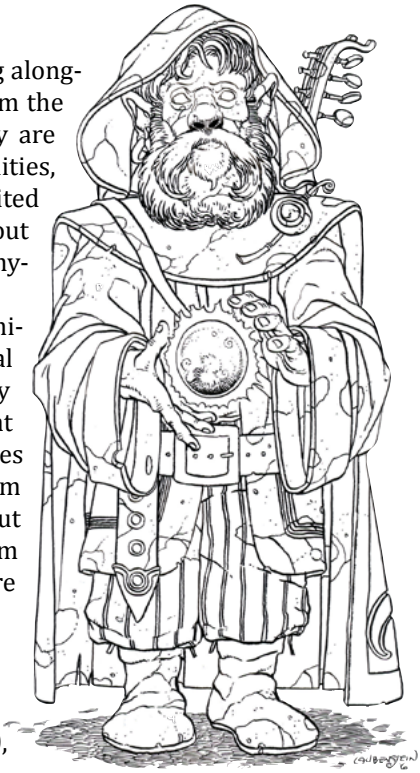
— Kelryn Stormspear, commander of the Far Strider Mercenaries

Humans average between five and a half and six feet tall, and weigh 160 pounds. They produce less body hair than most other races except elves. Skin tone ranges from pinkish-white to tan and dark chocolate. Their ears are small and rounded. Humans reach physical maturity in their teens, and tend to live about seventy-five years,

though some can live up to a century.

Humans are scattered across the land, living alongside the other races of Barsaive. They are seldom the largest racial group in a town or city, but they are found almost everywhere. In many communities, they take on the roles other races are not as suited to. The only consistent thing that can be said about humans is that they can be found just about anywhere, doing just about anything.

Humans feel a natural loyalty to their family, but easily transfer that loyalty to larger social groups like cities and kingdoms. However, they do not have the same tendency to organize that dwarfs do, so large, dedicated human communities remain rare. This doesn't prevent humans from rising to influential positions in other places, but humans in present-day Barsaive sometimes seem to be happiest when they can fill in where they are needed.



Game Information

Starting Attribute Values:

DEX 10, STR 10, TOU 10, PER 10, WIL 10, CHA 10

Movement Rate: 12

Karma Modifier: 5

Racial Abilities

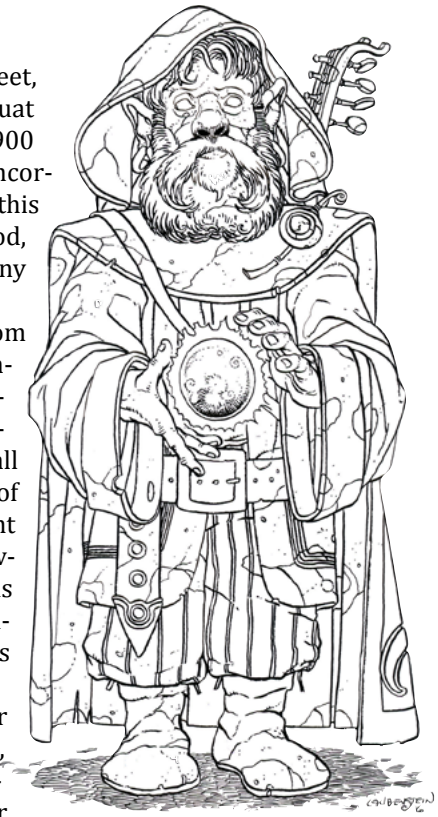
Versatility: Human adepts have a special racial talent available to them from First Circle: Versatility. This talent allows them to learn talents from Disciplines other than their own (see the Talents chapter, p. XX, for a full description).

Human adepts starting play with no Ranks assigned to their Versatility talent know it at Rank 0. They may purchase ranks for it during the game using Legend Points, just like other talents, treating it as a Novice talent. Non-adept humans cannot learn the Versatility talent.

Obsidimen

We are born of the bones of the earth. Remember, as you travel among the other races, that their time is but a breath of wind. They are a flame that burns brightly and is gone. You must watch and remember, so that the other children of the earth are not forgotten.

— Elder Yantar of the Cliffside Brotherhood



Obsidimen are tall, averaging around seven feet, but their massive build makes them appear squat from a distance. Obsidimen weigh an average of 900 pounds, and their craggy skin and body tissue incorporate many of the properties of stone. Despite this rocky appearance, obsidimen are flesh and blood, and need food, water, and air to survive just as any other Namegiver.

Obsidimen are sexless, born fully-grown from a Liferock: large stone formations naturally imbued with powerful elemental magic. These formations are rare, and usually found in wild or remote areas. Obsidimen from the same Liferock call themselves a brotherhood, and the skin colors of a brotherhood commonly resemble the dominant stone of the area, with some individuals showing metallic highlights or veins of semi-precious gems. Their blood, unlike the other races, is bluish-grey. They have no body hair, and their ears are internal, covered over by a thin flap of skin.

Obsidimen spend the first century of their life attached to their Liferock. During this time, the obsidiman communes with the spirits of other obsidimen in a state called the Dreaming. After this time, they emerge with a Name, and are free to travel as they wish.

The natural lifespan of an obsidiman is measured in centuries, with individuals commonly reaching 900 years or more.

Obsidimen tend to be slow and deliberate as befits their size, and the hastiness of the other races often mystifies and unsettles them. Their primary loyalty is to their brotherhood, and obsidimen do not form larger communities.

Much like the stones they resemble, they are steady and patient, but when angered they are as implacable as an avalanche.

Game Information

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 8, STR 18, TOU 13, PER 9, WIL 10, CHA 9
Movement Rate: 10
Karma Modifier: 3

Racial Abilities

Increased Wound Threshold: Add +3 to the Wound Threshold of obsidimen to represent this race's inherent resistance to damage because of their stone-like skin.

Natural Armor: Obsidimen have very tough skin, which serves them as armor.

Obsidiman skin has a Physical Armor Rating of 3. However, obsidimen can only wear other types of living armor, which add their protection to the character's Natural Armor. (See Armor and Shields, p.XX; types of armor considered "living" are indicated as such in the armor's description.)

ORKS

Much of our history and culture has been forgotten, swallowed by the jungle and lost to the Scourge. Today we are free, but we must never forget where we came from, and why we fight.

— Rogan Crossbite, rider with Asok's Armbreakers

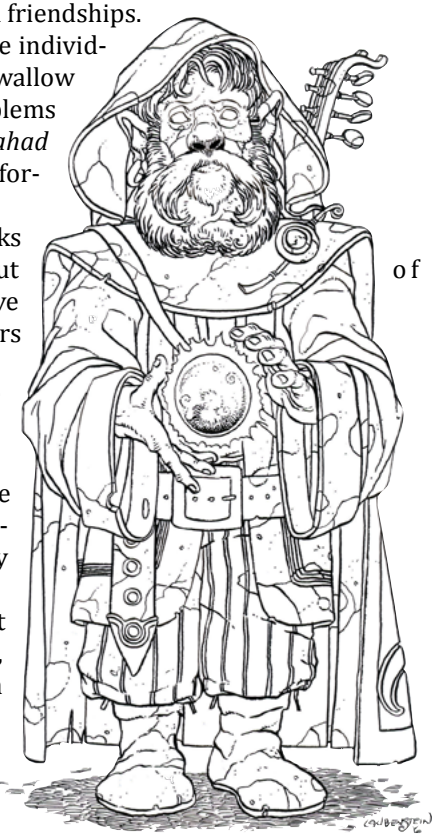
Orks are tall and powerfully built, averaging about six feet in height and weighing over 200 pounds. They are more muscular than humans, and two large lower canines protrude from their mouth and cover their upper lip. Their body hair is coarse, and facial and head hair is frequently the texture of fine wire. Skin color ranges from beige to olive green, with tan, pinkish-white, or ebony possible, but less common.

Orks are impulsive and their emotions burn swift and hot, a trait they call *gahad*. They anger quickly, and are just as quick to form friendships. When an ork is driven to act, they act, and some individuals report physical discomfort when they "swallow their *gahad*." While this tendency can cause problems for their companions, orks generally consider *gahad* as a positive thing, a spiritual fire pushing them forward.

With a lifespan averaging only 40 years, orks tend to seize life by the throat and get the most out of it they can. Given their emotional and impulsive natures, ork families tend to be sprawling affairs of half-siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins.

The most common social group is a tribe or clan, living a nomadic existence on the plains of Barsaive. Even the reborn kingdom of Cara Fahd is not much more than an affiliation of multiple tribes and clans. Still, the orks are taking to nation-building as fiercely as anything else they attempt.

While all the races have faced the prospect of slavery at the hands of the Theran Empire, the orks have a longer and deeper history with the institution. Ork legends tell that at one time, they were all slaves until they won their freedom centuries before the Scourge. As a result of this cultural legacy, many orks believe freedom to be one of the highest ideals in existence.



PLACEHOLDER

Game Information

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 10, STR 13, TOU 11, PER 10, WIL 8, CHA 9
Movement Rate: 12
Karma Modifier: 5

Racial Abilities

Gahad: Gahad is largely a roleplaying concept, best described as a physical sensation similar to intense heartburn.

It is triggered by certain circumstances or situations, causing orks to feel a drive to eradicate the situation triggering the gahad or take revenge on the perpetrator. Each ork experiences gahad in response to unique circumstances or stimuli, and different orks feel this impulse to greater or lesser degrees.

For groups that want to use some game rules to enforce gahad, they should describe a couple of impulses that always trigger gahad, using short sentences.

For example, a player might specify that "Grisalk's gahad is triggered when his mother is insulted." The player may specify limits or exceptions for these triggers, for example that "Grisalk's gahad is triggered when his mother is insulted, except by someone in the family."

When his gahad is triggered, the player may choose to have his character give in to it or try to resist the impulse. To resist gahad, the character has to succeed at a Willpower (6) Test, requiring a success level based on how severe the trigger is. In the above example, an ambiguous comment about Grisalk's mother may only require a single success, while an obvious and vicious obscenity could require three (or more) successes.

Successfully resisting, or "swallowing", gahad causes a gahad hangover. The hangover begins within an hour of swallowing gahad and lasts for one hour per success required on the original Willpower Test. The hangover manifests as localized pains and cramps, headaches, and in extreme cases, hallucinations about the object of the trigger. While it lasts, the character is considered Harried (p.XX).

When giving in to gahad (or if the attempt to resist it fails), the character is driven to end the stimuli that triggered gahad, or take revenge on a character that caused it. In the above example, Grisalk would react violently towards the person who insulted his mother or, if the insult consisted of an obscene picture drawn on a wall, he would destroy the picture. This drive lasts for as long as the hangover would have lasted, regardless of whether or not a resistance test was attempted. The character gets a +1 bonus to any Action or Effect test made towards ending the stimulus or taking revenge, for example to attack the insulting party or tear down the wall.

Gahad is not intended to be a game mechanic giving orks a test bonus on every flimsy excuse. The use and application of gahad, and the bonuses or penalties it confers, are always at the discretion of the gamemaster. In addition, violent reactions, while common, are not a requirement to a triggered gahad—any kind of forceful, decisive action could satisfy the urge to act.

Low-Light Vision: Like elves, ork characters have the racial Low-Light Vision ability (see p.XX).

TROLLS

Honor is the blood and bone of our people. The other races may use the word, but do not understand it as we do. Our highland cousins forget this, and their anger lessens us all. Act with honor in all things. Respect those who do the same, and remember those who do not.

— Shara Spearcraft, Weaponsmith

Trolls are massive, standing eight and a half feet tall and weighing 500 pounds or more on average. Many trolls sport pronounced lower canines similar to orks. Skin color ranges from beige to olive and dark brown, and their skin has a rough texture with minor ridges and plating made of *trolthelia*, a material similar to rhinoceros horn or deer antler. *Trolthelia* is also the material that makes up a troll's most prominent physical feature, the horns that grow from their heads. These horns grow slowly throughout a troll's life, frequently into asymmetrical shapes. Some isolated clans have practices that shape their horns, while others may inscribe runic designs into them.

Strong and tough, trolls live primarily in the mountainous regions of Barsaive, and due to their size and weight find it difficult to live among the other races. They frequently feel a kinship with obsidimen, who they call "rock brothers", and find their serenity deeply moving.

Trolls are fiercely loyal to their families, and organize themselves into clans and moots—an alliance of several clans.

The largest population of trolls in Barsaive—the Crystal Raiders of the Twilight Peaks—are known for their airships, which they use to raid lowland settlements and caravans, carrying the spoils back to their mountain homes. The clans of the Twilight Peaks are believed to have been the originators of the Sky Raider Discipline, and trolls are the most common race to practice that Discipline to this day.

Trolls place great value on honor, following complex rules and guidelines for personal behavior that frequently baffle other races. There are three main concepts in troll honor: *katorr, kat'ral,* and *katera,* loosely translated as personal, clan, and racial honor. Individual trolls define these values in different ways and to varying degrees, and a troll that lives among other Namegivers is less likely to react violently to an insult than a Crystal Raider, but a troll will defend his honor if he believes it has been slighted. Highland trolls guilty of crimes against honor will sometimes have their horns cut off, marking them as *kava*, or "mud people", and exiled from troll society. Some trolls voluntarily undergo this punishment as a way of maintaining personal honor, and take pride in their status as outcasts.

Game Information

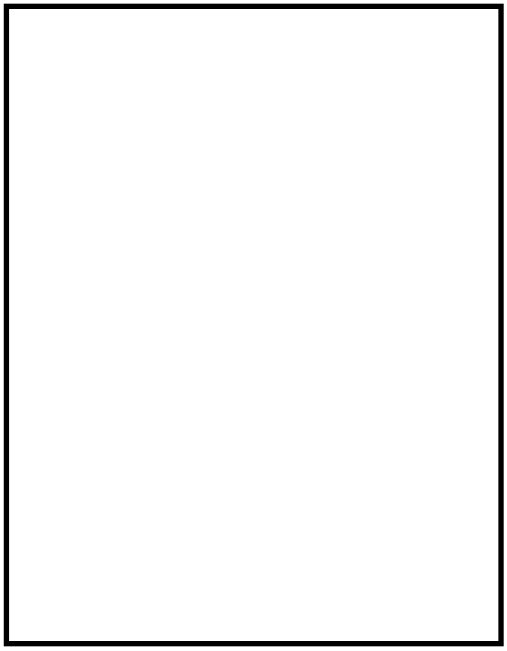
Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 10, STR 14, TOU 12, PER 9, WIL 11, CHA 10
Movement Rate: 14
Karma Modifier: 3

Racial Abilities

Heat Sight: Like dwarfs, troll characters have the racial Heat Sight ability (see p.XX).

T'SKRANG

Why are you obsessed with origins? The story of my people changes with the river, flowing from the high springs down to the sea. Ride the waves before you, and navigate tomorrow's rapids when the current takes you there.
— K'dan Whitecrest, Captain of the Dauntless



T'skrang are reptilian beings that stand 5 feet 9 inches tall on average, with a tail that adds another five to six feet in length. They typically weigh around 200 pounds, of which the tail can be as much as a quarter. Skin color ranges from yellow-green to emerald and aquamarine, with deep blue and sunset red variants also possible. T'skrang are hairless, but most indiviuduals sport a head crest of some sort. Their ears are small and cauliflower-shaped.

T'skrang are semi-aquatic, living on and around the lakes and rivers of Barsaive. They love to swim and tend to get irritable when they can't regularly submerge themselves in water.

Their villages and towns are frequently housed in underwater domes, with towers that reach to the water's surface, with facilities to dock riverboats and ferries. These communities are made up of tightly-knit, communal groups called *nialls*, with the entire *niall* an extended family that follows a matriarch called a *lahala.* Sometimes several *nialls* will band together to form an *aropagoi*, or great house, which will follow a *shivalahala*.

T'skrang lay eggs, which take eight to ten months to hatch. The eggs of a *niall* are incubated together in a special room in the village, and after hatching the young are raised together. As a result, t'skrang do not generally know who their egg-mother is,

and view their egg-mates as siblings.

Young t'skrang come into the world with their gender unknown. When they undergo puberty after their first decade, their sex is revealed. T'skrang live an average of 80 years, though tales of individuals living well over a century are not unheard of.

The t'skrang are known as merchants and traders, sailing their riverboats up and down the length of the Serpent River and its tributaries. The riverboats are driven by magical engines powered by elemental air and fire, and their operation is a closely guarded secret. Attempts by dwarf scholars and engineers to unlock the mysteries of this magic have—thus far—met with failure.

T'skrang have a flair for the dramatic, and their culture reveres the ideals of fearlessness, passion, and bravery. Other races frequently interpret this as mere bravado. Because of the communal nature of their villages, t'skrang do very well in groups, and are a sociable people. They frequently consider other Namegivers as dull and boring, while the other races consider them flamboyant and foolish.

Game Information

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 11, STR 10, TOU 11, PER 10, WIL 10, CHA 11
Movement Rate: 12
Karma Modifier: 4

Racial Abilities

Tail Combat: T'skrang often make use of their tails when engaged in combat. A t'skrang can use his tail to whip at opponents in unarmed combat much like striking with an arm or kicking with a leg, using an appropriate unarmed combat talent or skill for any Attack tests. The Damage Step used is the character's Strength Step, unless modified by abilities that enhance unarmed combat Damage. A t'skrang may also attach a melee weapon of up to Size 2 to his tail, and this is treated as an Attached Weapon (see p.XX). Tail Combat allows t'skrang to use the Tail Attack Combat Option (see p.XX).

WINDLINGS

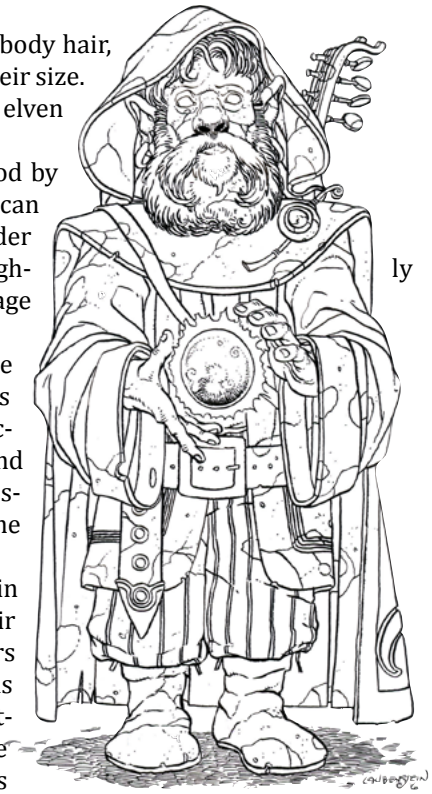
Do not mistake size of body for size of heart. We may be small in stature, but we make up for it in spirit. We live life with a passion that none can match. We'll guard your back and protect your loved ones. Look to the skies! An army of windlings is a terrible thing, aren't you glad it was only me?

—Bonal, Swordmaster

Windlings are small winged Namegivers, standing around 18 inches tall and weighing about 13 pounds. Windlings have paired wings similar to a dragonfly, and can fly for limited stretches at a time. A winding's skin and hair color match the brightest-colored features of their home environment: the icy white of a snowy mountain, the red and yellow of wildflowers, even the glazed blue of city roof tiles. After a winding has lived in the same place for three or four months, their skin color will change

to match their new home. They have almost no body hair, but the hair on their heads is thick and rich for their size. Their ears come to an even sharper point than elven ears.

Windlings mature slowly, reaching adulthood by around age thirty, though their general attitude can frequently come across as childlike, even in older individuals. The average windling lifespan is roughly 170 years, and they do not appear to physically age during their lifetime.



While their small size and somewhat fragile nature makes them more aware of the world's dangers, windlings love traveling and experiencing new things. Indeed, they have a passion and zest for life that few can equal, though their curiosity and fascination with new experiences can come across as flighty and unfocused.

Windlings typically live in forested areas, in dwellings made from the local environment. Their society is best described as haphazard—members of a clan frequently bring back practices and fads they pick up in their travels, so there can be little consistency from village to village. There are tales of windling nobles, but scholars believe this to be no more than a rumor.

Windlings frequently have a live and let live attitude, but their ability to fly gives them a strong love of freedom and as a general rule they abhor slavery.

They are a gregarious and outgoing people, and their love of life is frequently expressed through finding the bright side of things. They have a reputation among the other races as incorrigible pranksters, and their almost permanent perky and optimistic attitude can come across as grating.

Perhaps more than any other Namegiver race, windlings are in tune with the magic of the world. Almost all windlings can sense the magical world, and winding adepts have been known to develop this ability to high degrees.

Game Information

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 11, STR 4, TOU 8, PER 11, WIL 10, CHA 12
Movement Rate: 6/16*
* Flying Movement Rate
Karma Modifier: 6

Racial Abilities

Astral Sight: All windlings have access to the Astral Sight Talent (see p.XX). Windling adepts starting play with no Ranks assigned to their Astral Sight talent know it at Rank 0. They may purchase Ranks for the talent during the game using Legend Points, just like other talents, treating it as a Novice talent.

Flight: Windlings can fly, but it is not their primary method of movement. Flying tires them quickly and windlings usually limit their flights to short periods of around fifteen to twenty minutes. When flying for extended periods of time, a windling may suffer Strain. After 20 minutes in flight a windling must make a Toughness (5) test. Failure means the character takes 1 Strain. Each five-minute period spent flying beyond the additional twenty minutes requires an additional Toughness test with a cumulative +2 modifier.

Brief interruptions do not reset the time spent flying, it reduces it on a one-to-one basis: a windling who has spent twenty minutes in flight and then rests five minutes can only fly for five more minutes before having to make Toughness Tests again.

Though windling wings are durable, they become heavy and fragile when wet, severely impairing the windling's ability to fly. When soaked with water, like falling into a stream or in heavy rain, their flight duration is reduced from twenty minutes to five, and the Difficulty Number of the Toughness tests increases by +2 every minute, instead of every five. When flying with wet wings, the windling is considered Harried (see p.XX). Windling wings dry within ten minutes of being in a dry place, or within five minutes of being in a warm place, such as in front of a fire.

Increased Physical Defense: The natural mobility of windlings, combined with their small size, adds +2 to their Physical Defense.

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CREATING CHARACTERS

Our past is littered with tales of heroes and villains. When your legend is written, how will you be remembered?
•Rilenda, Troubadour •

A player character in Earthdawn is similar to a character in a novel or movie. The character is part of a story, interacts with other characters, villains, and monsters, and makes decisions that affect how the story turns out. The important difference between a character in a novel and your Earthdawn character is that you, the player, decide how your character views life, how he conducts himself around other people, what he is particularly good at; and you control his actions.

Every player character has certain basic attributes, talents, and skills, but they are more than a collection of game statistics. They have a connection to the magic of the world that makes them an above-average, often outstanding, person who lives in the world of Earthdawn. Player characters have an instinct for adventure, and the courage and personal integrity to follow that instinct. By behaving in an extraordinary fashion, player characters become the heroes others admire, trust, and depend on. They become the legends that will lead the renaissance of their world.

BUILDING A HERO

You should now know what role-playing in Earthdawn involves. You have a feel for the world and its races. You've read about another group of adventurers' travels and encounters in the province of Barsaive. Now it is time to create your own hero and find your character's place in this world.

Each step is described in detail below, demonstrating the process at each stage by creating a sample character.

Once you reach step ten, and finish filling out your Character Record Sheet, your character stands ready to become a hero.

Creating a Character

1. Choose a Discipline
2. Choose a Race
3. Generate Attributes
4. Determine Characteristics
5. Record Racial Abilities
6. Assign Talent Ranks and Spells
7. Assign Skill Ranks
8. Equip the Character
9. Flesh out the Character
10. Play the Game!

Getting Started

In addition to a blank Character Sheet and a pen or pencil, you will need another sheet of paper (useful for making notes as you build your character).

Many decisions made when creating a character are affected by other decisions; your choice of race affects your Attributes, your choice of Discipline affects the talents available to your character, and so on. For this reason, it can be helpful to familiarize yourself with the rules in this chapter and in the Disciplines (p. XX), Talents (p. XX), and Skills (p. XX) chapters. It's better to have the facts before you start, rather than be disappointed later on as a result of making uninformed choices.

Character Sheet

As you create your character, fill in the appropriate spaces on a Character Sheet. A reproducible copy is provided with this book, or one can be downloaded from our web site at earthdawn.fasagames.com.

You have permission to make as many personal copies of the Character Record Sheet as you need for your games. Bear in mind that the set of sheets provided is fairly flexible—you won't need all pages for a beginning character, but you might want to add additional pages as your character advances or learns additional Disciplines. For example, the Grimoire page is only used by spellcasters.

1. Choose a Discipline

The first step in creating an Earthdawn character is to choose that character's Discipline. This is the most important decision you will make about your character, for a Discipline is much more than a character's profession; it is a way of life. A character's Discipline determines how he interacts with magic and how he can use magical energy to power his talents. A Discipline colors the character's view of the world, gives him special abilities and restrictions, and defines much of what he is.

The fifteen most common Earthdawn Disciplines are described in the Disciplines chapter, p. XX.

Circle

Next to the Discipline line on the Character Sheet is a notation for "Circle." Earthdawn measures expertise in a given Discipline in Circles: the higher the character's Circle, the more proficient (and more powerful) that character becomes.

Every player character begins at First Circle—write a "1" on the Circle line of your Character Sheet. Some day, assuming things go the character's way, he could even reach Fifteenth Circle!

Doug is sitting down to create a new Earthdawn character. While flipping through the pages of the Player's Guide, he is intrigued by the Swordmaster Discipline description. Doug decides his new character will be a Swordmaster.

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2. Choose a Race

After selecting a Discipline, the next step is to choose your character's race. The different races populating the world of Earthdawn are described in the Namegiver Races chapter, p.XX.

Reading through the description of the different races, Doug thinks that the t'skrang provide interesting possibilities, and their bravado and flair for the dramatic seem a good fit for the Swordmaster. He decides his character will be a t'skrang.

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3. Generate Attributes

Each character in Earthdawn possesses six Attributes that define the character's natural, unlearned physical and mental abilities. These Attributes—Dexterity, Strength, Toughness, Perception, Willpower, and Charisma—are of greater or lesser importance to different Disciplines. For example, a Thief needs a high Dexterity, which makes him faster, more coordinated, and better at performing sleight-of-hand tricks and other tasks requiring fine motor control. A Nethermancer needs a high Willpower Value, not only to make his spells more effective, but also to keep the spirits he summons in check.

The following descriptions also list the various Disciplines for which that Attribute is considered important. When assigning values to Attributes, you will want to favor those Attributes especially related to your character's Discipline.

Dexterity (DEX)

Dexterity measures your character's agility, speed, and hand-eye coordination. Dexterity determines your character's basic ability to engage in and avoid physical attacks.

Important For: Air Sailor, Archer, Beastmaster, Cavalryman, Scout, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, Thief, Warrior

Strength (STR)

Strength measures a character's muscle power. It determines the base damage inflicted by physical attacks, what weapons he can use, and how much a character can lift and carry.

Important For: Sky Raider, Warrior

Toughness (TOU)

Toughness measures a character's endurance and general health. It gauges a character's ability to absorb damage and keep going, as well as his natural ability to heal himself.

Important For: Warrior

Perception (PER)

Perception measures a character's mental quickness, alertness, and ability to notice things. Perception is important to the casting of magical spells, as well as avoiding the effects of spells.

Important For: Archer, Cavalryman, Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Scout, Thief, Troubadour, Weaponsmith, Wizard

Willpower (WIL)

Willpower measures a character's concentration, sense of self, and determination. It helps characters resist magic and potentially damaging spells. Willpower also increases the effectiveness of spellcasting.

Important For: Air Sailor, Beastmaster, Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, Wizard

Charisma (CHA)

Charisma measures a character's persuasiveness, social savvy, and ability to create a positive impression on others. Charisma determines a character's success or failure at using charm, persuasion, or other social skills.

Important For: Air Sailor, Beastmaster, Cavalryman, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, Thief, Troubadour, Weaponsmith, Wizard

Assign Attribute Points

Every character starts with the Attribute Values for his race, as outlined in Namegiver Races (p. XX). Each player receives 25 Attribute Points which he uses to modify his character's Attributes. The Attribute Point cost for doing so appears in the Attribute Modifier Cost Table.

A player can also lower an Attribute to gain more Attribute Points, as outlined on the Additional Attribute Points Table.

Doug notes that Dexterity and Charisma are important Attributes for a Swordmaster. He decides to provide his t'skrang with high Dexterity and Charisma and checks their starting racial values. T'skrang start with Dexterity and Charisma values of 11. He adds +5 to his Dexterity and +5 to his Charisma, so that both Attributes will have values of 16. These adjustments cost 7 Attribute Points each, so Doug has spent 14 of his 25 Attribute Points.

Doug wants his t'skrang to have an above average Strength and Toughness, so that his attacks will do more damage, and so he can take more damage in combat. He purchases a +4 bonus to his Strength for 5 Attribute Points, and a +3 bonus to his Toughness for 3 Attribute Points. He has spent 22 of his 25 Attribute Points, and has raised his Strength and Toughness to 14.

This leaves him with 3 Attribute Points to spend. He buys a +2 bonus to his Perception for 2 Attribute Points, raising his Perception from a 10 to a 12. This leaves him with a +1 bonus to his Willpower with 1 Attribute Point, bringing it from a 10 to an 11.

Attribute Modifier Cost Table

Modifier	*Attribute Point Cost*
+1	1
+2	2
+3	3
+4	5
+5	7
+6	9
+7	12
+8	15

Additional Attribute Points Table

Modifier	*Attribute Point Cost*
-1	+1
-2	+2

Unused Attribute Points

Sometimes, a player will have left-over Attribute Points after purchasing his character's Attribute values. Any unused Attribute Points convert into additional Maximum Karma at a one-to-one ratio. See Karma, p.XX, for more information.

Note that this is one-way; you can not sacrifice Maximum Karma to gain additional Attribute Points.

If Doug wanted to leave his t'skrang with a Willpower of 10, he would have 1 Attribute Point remaining. Instead of spending it on increasing another Attribute, he could choose to have his Maximum Karma be increased by 1.

Record Values and Step Numbers

After determining your Attributes, consult the Characteristics Table for each Attribute Value to determine your character's Attribute Steps.

Record the Value and Step Number beside each Attribute on your Character Record Sheet.

Doug notes Attribute values and Step Numbers on his t'skrang's Character Sheet, after consulting the Characteristics Table (the value in parentheses is the character's Attribute Value):

DEX (16): 7 STR (14): 6 TOU (14): 6
PER (12): 5 WIL (11): 5 CHA (16): 7

Doug's character is very sociable, and above average physically, but about average when it comes to puzzling things out or resisting magic.

4. Determine Characteristics

A character's Attribute values determine his characteristics. These values determine how well the character defends against various kinds of attacks, how much damage he can take before falling unconscious or dying, how much he can carry, and so on. Consult the Characteristics Table to find the value for each characteristic.

Initiative

A character's Initiative Step determines when he acts during a combat round. The Initiative Step is equal to the character's Dexterity Step, minus any modifiers for armor (see Armor and Shields, p.XX). Record the character's Initiative Step on his Character Sheet, noting any modifiers on the Armor Modifiers line. Then record the character's modified Initiative Step and dice.

With a Dexterity Value of 16, Doug's character has an Initiative Step of 7. He has a decent chance of acting early during combat, as long as he doesn't weigh himself down with too much armor. Doug makes a note to keep this in mind when the time comes to purchase his equipment. For now, he marks down his base Initiative Step.

Defense Ratings

Physical Defense represents a character's ability to avoid physical attacks. Based on the character's Dexterity Value, it serves as the Difficulty Number an attacker must overcome when attacking a character with a sword, bow, or similar physical attack. For example, an attack made against a character with a Physical Defense of 6 is successful if the Attack test result is 6 or more.

A character's Mystic Defense represents his innate ability to avoid spells and other magical attacks. Based on the character's Perception value, it is the Difficulty Number a magician must overcome when casting a spell or similar power against the character.

Social Defense is based on a character's Charisma value and represents a character's chance to know when he is being lied to or manipulated by others. In this sense, a lie is an intentional deception, as opposed to a falsehood told through ignorance, and is therefore tested against the character's ability to believe it.

Characteristics Table

Value	*Step*	*Defense Rating*	*Carrying Capacity*	*Uncon. Rating*	*Death Rating*	*Wound Threshold*	*Recovery*
1	2	2	10	2	4	3	1
2	2	2	15	4	6	3	1
3	2	3	20	6	8	4	1
4	3	3	25	8	11	4	1
5	3	4	30	10	13	5	1
6	3	4	40	12	15	5	1
7	4	5	50	14	18	6	2
8	4	5	60	16	20	6	2
9	4	6	70	18	22	7	2
10	5	6	80	20	25	7	2
11	5	7	95	22	27	8	2
12	5	7	110	24	29	8	2
13	6	8	125	26	32	9	3
14	6	8	140	28	34	9	3
15	6	9	155	30	36	10	3
16	7	9	175	32	39	10	3
17	7	10	195	34	41	11	3
18	7	10	215	36	43	11	3
19	8	11	235	38	46	12	4
20	8	11	255	40	48	12	4
21	8	12	280	42	50	13	4
22	9	12	305	44	53	13	4
23	9	13	330	46	55	14	4
24	9	13	355	48	57	14	4
25	10	14	380	50	60	15	5
26	10	14	410	52	62	15	5
27	10	15	440	54	64	16	5
28	11	15	470	56	67	16	5
29	11	16	500	58	69	17	5
30	11	16	530	60	71	17	5

The dwarf to whom your character is talking may genuinely believe that he is the best *hach'var* player in Throal, even if he's not; Social Defense would not help a character detect that the dwarf's statement is false. However, if the dwarf was intentionally trying to deceive someone into believing his sporting prowess when the same dwarf didn't believe it himself, then the character's Social Defense would be the Difficulty Number for the dwarf's test to make the character believe him.

Some races receive special modifiers to their Defense ratings (see the Namegiver Races, p.XX). Record the character's modified Physical, Mystic, and Social Defense Ratings on his Character Sheet.

Based on his Dexterity Value of 16, Doug's character has a Physical Defense of 9. Mystic Defense is based on his Perception value of 12, so the Swordmaster has a Mystic Defense of 7. His Charisma Value of 16 gives him a Social Defense of 9.

Carrying Capacity

A character's Strength value determines his ability to carry or lift weight and ultimately shows how weak or strong he really is. The Carrying Capacity is the number of pounds a character may carry without suffering a penalty for carrying too much weight.

Doug references the Characteristics Table and sees that a Strength Value of 14 allows his character to carry 140 pounds.

Health Ratings

A character's Health Ratings are based on his Toughness Value, and determine how much damage he can take before being knocked unconscious, taking a serious wound, or dying.

Health Ratings also determine how quickly a character heals.

The **Unconsciousness Rating** represents the number of Damage Points required to knock the character unconscious. **Death Rating** represents the number of Damage Points needed to kill the character.

When a character's Current Damage equals or exceeds these values, the character is unconscious or dead, as appropriate.

Any single attack that inflicts a number of Damage Points at least equal to a character's **Wound Threshold** also inflicts a Wound. Wounds heal more slowly than normal damage and reduce the character's ability to perform actions.

Recovery refers to the number of Recovery tests a character may make each day. The test is based on their Toughness Step. The result determines the amount of damage healed. Wounds impair the character's ability to recover damage. Recovery tests can also be used to fuel some magical abilities. See Resolving Attacks, p.XX, and Effects of Injury, p.XX, for more information on how to inflict (and recover from) damage.

Some races receive special modifiers for damage and recovery (see Namegiver Races, p.XX). Record the character's Health Ratings on his Character Sheet.

Doug looks up his character's Health Ratings on the Characteristics Table to see how much abuse his character can take before dying. With a Toughness value of 14, the t'skrang has an Unconsciousness Rating of 28, a Death Rating of 34, a Wound Threshold of 9, and he can make 3 Recovery tests per Day at Step 6/D10, his Toughness Step.

Armor Ratings

Physical Armor represents the physical protection the character wears or carries. Physical Armor is not listed on the Characteristics Table because it is not based on an Attribute. It helps defend against physical attacks by modifying the amount of damage the character takes from attacks. With the exception of the obsidiman Natural Armor racial ability, p.XX, a character's Physical Armor Rating is based solely on the armor he wears.

Mystic Armor helps protect the character from some magical attacks, such as spells, by immediately reducing the spell's damage. For example, 4 points of Mystic Armor reduces the damage from many spells by –4 Damage Points per attack. The character's Willpower value determines his natural Mystic Armor rating. Some equipment can improve this value.

Record the character's Mystic Armor rating on your Character Sheet. You may decide to simply note this rating on a separate sheet of paper until after you purchase equipment for your character, because your equipment may modify the Mystic Armor rating.

Record the character's Physical Armor Rating after you purchase armor and equipment for your character. Shields do not add to Physical or Mystic Armor ratings. Instead, they add to the character's Physical or Mystic Defense rating, making the character harder to hit, but not directly affecting the damage taken.

Mystic Armor Table

WIL Value	*Mystic Armor*
1	0
2	0
3	0
4	0
5	1
6	1
7	1
8	1
9	1
10	2
11	2
12	2
13	2
14	2
15	3
16	3
17	3
18	3
19	3
20	4
21	4
22	4
23	4
24	4
25	5
26	5
27	5
28	5
29	5
30	6

Doug figures his Swordmaster is likely to need some armor for protection, but he skips filling in his character's Physical Armor rating until he has decided what armor he will purchase. Based on his Willpower value of 11, the t'skrang's natural Mystic Armor rating is 2.

Movement Rate

A character's Movement Rate determines how far he can move in combat, and is determined by the character's race. This value allows the character to move a number of yards up to his Movement Rate each combat round (see Combat, p.XX).

Doug checks the game information for t'skrang to figure out his movement rate. His character has a Movement Rate of 12, allowing him to move up to 12 yards each combat round.

Karma

Each race has access to a different amount of Karma. This allows an adept to enhance their talents by adding an additional D6 when they spend a point of Karma on a test. Karma Points may be replenished by using the character's Karma Ritual, p.XX.

A character's Maximum Karma is determined by multiplying the character's Karma Modifier for his race (found in Namegiver Races, p.XX) by his Circle. If the character had leftover Attribute Points, they are added to this total. Characters start with their maximum Karma Points.

Doug notes that his t'skrang has a Karma Modifier of 4, and so will start the game with 4 Karma Points at First Circle. If he had chosen to leave his Willpower at 10 and had 1 remaining Attribute Point, his Maximum Karma Points would be 5.

5. Record Racial Abilities

Every character has abilities specific to his race, such as a special type of vision or a unique attack capability. These abilities, along with detailed explanations, appear in Namegiver Races, p.XX. Record them, along with any other racial modifications, on your Character Sheet.

Doug checks the racial abilities for t'skrang, and sees that his Swordmaster has the racial ability of Tail Attack. This means that his character has access to the Tail Attack combat option, which opens up some interesting tactical options for this Swordmaster!

6. Assign Talent Ranks & Spells

Adepts in the world of Earthdawn possess a number of magical abilities called talents. The talents available to your character are listed with your chosen Discipline.

Talents are rated by Rank—the higher the Rank, the more proficient your character is. Talents usually add a Step bonus equal to the talent Rank to one of your character's Attribute Steps to generate the final Talent Step. The Talents chapter, p.XX, describes all the talents and which Attribute relates to each. For example, a character with a Dexterity Step of 6 and the Melee Weapons talent at Rank 2 uses Step 8 when making a Melee Weapons test (6+2=8).

There are four Disciplines which allow characters to be magicians, capable of casting spells. Magicians need to know the Patterncraft talent to learn spells, the Spellcasting and Thread Weaving talents to weave and cast spells, and one or more Spell Matrices to protect themselves from the negative effects of spell casting. The various spell matrix talents appear multiple times in the Discipline description: magicians can have more than one spell matrix active at a time. Each matrix is a separate talent that is assigned points individually. The Spell Matrix Rank determines the highest-Circle spell that the matrix can hold. For more information on spell matrices, spellcasting, and spells, see Workings of Magic, p.XX, and Spell Magic, p.XX.

Starting Talent Ranks

Players have a total of eight points to assign to the talents their characters start the game with. Each point assigned to a talent improves the Rank by one. You may assign up to three points to a given talent, for a maximum starting Rank of 3. You may only choose talents listed as available to the First Circle of your character's Discipline, but you do not need to put points into all of them. Record the talents you choose on the Character Sheet, adding the information for each talent given in the Talents chapter, p.XX.

With the exception of talents available to your race (see Namegiver Races, p.XX), do not record talents on your character sheet that you did not assign Ranks to. If your character has no Ranks in a talent, he cannot use it, although he can improve it later using Legend Points. Talents available to your character's race are recorded as Racial Abilities.

You may also select one talent from a pool of talents available at First Circle. These talents are called Talent Options and are listed in the Discipline's description. You do not have to choose now, you can choose the talent at a later point during the game and increase its Rank by spending Legend Points.

Doug's Swordmaster is taking shape. According to the Discipline description he can have up to six talents at First Circle. For his Talent Option, he decides to take Wound Balance, as it will help him keep his feet if he gets hit in combat. He assigns one point to each of his six First Circle talents, and then assigns one more point each to Melee Weapons and Avoid Blow to make his attacks and his active defenses a little better.

In order to fill in the information for using the talents on his Character Sheet, Doug reviews the descriptions for each of his character's talents in the Talents chapter, p.XX.

Versatility

Human adepts automatically possess the Versatility talent at Rank 0. If you assign ranks to your character's Versatility talent, you may acquire talents for your character from other Disciplines. You may assign Rank Points to those additional talents, but are still limited to the initial eight points available to assign to talents.

Only human adepts may choose talents from Disciplines other than their own. See Versatility, p.XX, and the talent description, p.XX, for more information on how this talent works. As you will discover by reading the Building Your Legend chapter, p.XX, a character using Versatility to learn many talents from other Disciplines will advance Circles in his Discipline more slowly. Players with human characters should take this into consideration when choosing their character's talents.

Starting Spells

Characters capable of casting spells also choose their starting spells at this time. Spellcasting characters (usually referred to as magicians) may acquire spells using a number of points equal to their Perception Step.

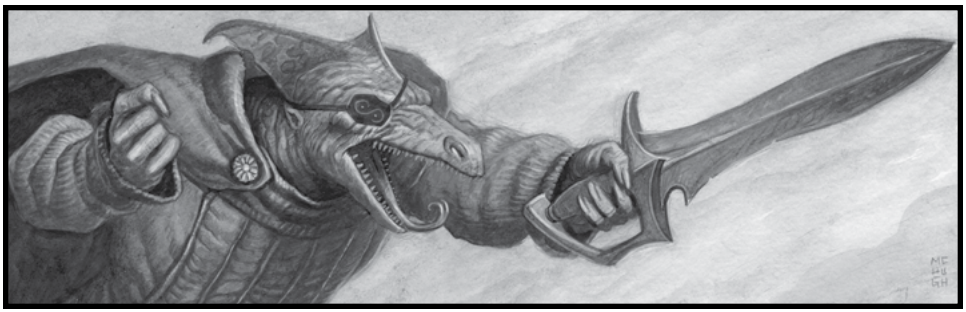
For example, a magician with a Perception Step of 7 has seven points to acquire spells. You may only choose from those spells available to your character's Discipline. When selecting your character's starting spells, you may choose from First and Second Circle spells. Spells cost a number of points equal to their Circle to acquire.

Note that because the character is only First Circle, he can only place First Circle spells into a spell matrix to cast safely. The character may know Second Circle spells, having written them in his grimoire, but he cannot cast them from a spell matrix until he reaches Second Circle in his Discipline. Casting them with risky raw magic or safely from his grimoire are the only options available to him (see Casting From a Grimoire, p.XX).

Leanne is making a Wizard for her upcoming Earthdawn game. Her character has a Perception Step of 7, so she has seven points to spend on her Wizard's starting spells. Reviewing the spells available, she selects the First Circle spells Astral Sense, Crushing Will, Flame Flash, Iron Hand, and Mind Dagger as First Circle spells, and the Second Circle spell Dodge Boost, which she will use in an emergency.

Starting Abilities

Each Discipline has one or more abilities that they start with at First Circle. All Disciplines gain Durability, a magical ability that increases their ability to take damage (see p. XX). Some Disciplines start with a talent or skill that increases as they advance through their Discipline Circles, and magicians start with two Standard Matrices.



Doug looks at the abilities given to Swordmasters at First Circle, and sees that the only ability they are given is Durability 7. This means that he adds +7 to his Unconsciousness Rating, and +8 to his Death Rating (+7 for his Durability, +1 for his Circle). He notes the increased Health Ratings on his character sheet.

7. Assign Skill Ranks

Players receive a number of free Ranks for Knowledge, Artisan, and Language skills. These represent areas of expertise a character cannot do without. For example, he cannot speak a language without knowing a Language skill, so characters must assign points to Language skills.

Starting Talent and Skill Summary

Talents	8 Ranks
Spells	PER Step
Knowledge Skill	2 Ranks
Artisan Skill	1 Rank
Speak Language Skill	2 Ranks
Read/Write Language Skill	1 Rank
Free Skills	8 Ranks

The number of points available for Knowledge, Artisan, and Language skills and how they have to be spent are detailed below. In addition, the player receives an additional eight points to distribute freely among the four skill categories of Knowledge, Artisan, Language, and General skills.

Each point gives a character +1 Rank in that skill, and a skill may be assigned up to three points at character creation. In contrast to talents, some skills can be used without a Rank (see Default Skill Use, p. XX).

Knowledge Skills

Your character has lived in the world of Earthdawn all his life. He should know more about the world than you do as a player, and so starting characters receive two free points for Knowledge skills. These represent areas of study with which your character is familiar. Ranks in Knowledge skills add to your character's Perception Step to determine the Skill Step. See Knowledge, p.XX, for a list of typical Knowledge skills.

Doug looks over the example Knowledge Skills, and chooses Legends and Heroes and Ancient Weapons—the t'skrang will use this knowledge to track down legendary weapons that were used by heroes of the past. He gets two Knowledge skill Ranks for free, so he assigns one point to each.

Artisan Skills

As the influence of the Horrors grew, people learned that those corrupted by the Horrors could not maintain the level of focus needed to perform precise, detailed work. Because artisans and craftsmen were among those capable of displaying such focus, many people began to learn and practice art and craft skills in order to demonstrate that they had not been corrupted by the Horrors.

Performing these Artisan skills did not actually protect against the Horrors, and there is some debate about how reliable they are as a sign of Horror influence. Regardless, many consider a demonstration of these skills to provide clear, visible proof that an individual is free of Horror taint.

Most people pursued fine arts, but some practiced performing arts as well, including acting, singing, dancing, and storytelling. This practice spread until, by the time the kaers and citadels began to close, nearly everyone had learned an art or craft.

Adepts, whose extensive use of magic made them extremely powerful (and therefore more threatening if corrupted), took special care to become proficient with and to constantly practice an art.

Starting characters receive one free point for Artisan skills. Each Discipline lists a number of Artisan skills common to adepts of that Discipline. For example, many magicians learn the art of Robe Embroidery as part of their adept training. They decorate their robes by embroidering intricate sigils and designs, finishing one, carefully picking out the stitching of an existing design, and beginning a new one in its place. Choose one of the Artisan skills from those provided in your character's Discipline or work with your gamemaster to create one of your own. See Artisan Skills, p.XX, for more information; see Artisan, p.XX, for a list of typical Artisan skills.

As a Swordmaster, Doug decides to give his character the Artisan skill of Storytelling at Rank 2. He decides that his character will use this skill to share stories of his adventures at roadside inns and taverns. Since he gets one Artisan skill Rank for free, he needs to spend one additional point for the second Rank.

Language Skills

In Barsaive, the Throalic dialect of the Dwarf tongue has become the common language since the dwarfs distributed the Book of Tomorrow to kaers throughout the province. It was frequently the only book in smaller kaers, and while the people of Barsaive still learned to speak their native languages, they often learned to read and write only in the Dwarf tongue. Throalic did not fall out of use after the Scourge, and today is spoken by anyone with any contact to the wider society of Barsaive. The languages of the other races are still in use, but commonly only spoken in family homes or communities made up predominantly of one race.

The racial languages of Barsaive are: Dwarf, Sperethiel (the elven tongue), Human, Obsidiman, Or'zet (the orkish tongue), Troll, T'skrang, and Windling.

Starting characters assign two free points to the Speak Language skill, and one free point to the Read/Write Language skill.

As each Rank in the skill represents one language known, characters usually speak at least two racial languages and can read and write one racial language. As the Throalic dialect is the common tongue, characters usually choose Dwarf (Throalic) as both their written language and one of their spoken languages. They normally choose the language of their race for their second spoken language. Dwarf characters are not bound to the Throalic dialect if not hailing from Throal, and may learn to speak the language of one of the other races. At the gamemaster's discretion, dwarf characters may assign one of their free Speak Language Ranks to a Knowledge skill.

As a t'skrang, Doug's character speaks both Dwarf and T'skrang, so he assigns Rank 2 to the Speak Language skill for free. He decides to leave the character's Read/Write Language skill at Rank 1, learning Dwarf by default. Lastly, Doug notes in parentheses that his Swordmaster knows the Throalic dialect of the Dwarf tongue. He can pick up other dialects during game play.

General Skills

General skills represent more practical abilities than Knowledge, Language, or Artisan skills. Many talents also have an equivalent skill in the General skills category. Most of a character's eight additional skill points will be spent on General skills (see the Skills chapter, p. XX), but they may also be spent to learn additional languages, more or improved artistic abilities, or represent more knowledge.

A starting character can only spend their free points on Novice-tier skills (see p. XX).

Doug must now decide where to spend his remaining skill points. He has already spent one point to bring his Storytelling skill to Rank 2, leaving him with seven points to spend. He spends two points to learn Unarmed Combat as a skill, and two points on Swimming, both of which relate to his racial traits. He then spends his remaining three points to pick up Throwing Weapons, Conversation, and the Knowledge skill T'skrang Lore all at Rank 1.

Starting Equipment Table

Adventurer's Kit (backpack, bedroll, flint & steel, torch, waterskin, large sack)

Artisan Tools (relevant to character's Artisan skill; needs gamemaster approval)

Dagger or knife (or a similar Size 1 or 2 weapon)

Grimoire (magicians only)

Traveler's Garb (soft boots, shirt, belt, robe or breeches, traveler's cloak)

Trail Rations (1 week)

100 silver pieces

8. Equip Your Character

Your character needs equipment to adventure: food, clothing, armor, weapons, and more are all necessary for the character's survival in the often dangerous life of an adept. All characters begin play with the items and equipment shown in the Starting Equipment Table.

If you purchase armor or a shield for your character, fill in the Physical Armor Rating on your Character Sheet. Some types of armor and shields improve your character's Mystic Armor as well; be sure to check the equipment description and adjust the character's Mystic Armor Rating if necessary.

9. Flesh Out Your Character

Now you know how your character fits into the game, but what kind of person is he? The following suggestions will help you flesh out your character and create a unique individual.

Hidden and Surface Traits

Optional Rule: Most characters act in a manner that fits with their chosen personality traits. That is, their personality traits really describe how they act; they have few or no secrets to hide. For those players and gamemasters who want to add a little more depth to their characters, we provide the following option.

Characters in Earthdawn can have two types of personality traits: surface and hidden. The surface traits are a character's public face, what everyone but his most intimate companions sees him to be. For some characters, the surface trait is a vital part of their personality. They act and think in that manner most of the time. For other characters, however, the surface trait serves as a façade, a mask worn to conceal their real nature or their hidden traits. The character's hidden traits should only rarely come to the surface. These traits describe the character's true motivation, define the character's view of the world, and determine how the character goes about achieving his long-term goals. Hidden traits will also color a character's interaction with others.

Gamemasters who decide to use this option should allow their players to give their characters at least one surface trait and one hidden trait. While multiple traits certainly create more believable characters, they create greater roleplaying challenges.

The demands of certain traits may conflict with other traits. It's hard enough being a real human being and trying to work through these conflicts without worrying about acting them out for the character, too.

Doug decides to give his t'skrang the hidden trait of proud, which gives an interesting slant to his character's personality. His courage and tendency to help those weaker than himself is driven by a sense that he is better than others. This trait could cause him some trouble, as it is possible to push him into rash action by wounding his pride.

Roleplaying your character according to his surface and hidden personality traits may gain him additional Legend Points at the end of a story. How many your character earns depends on the story told, the circumstances, and how well he acted and reacted. If you ignore or play fast and loose with your character's traits as the story unfolds, the gamemaster may remind you to remain true to your character's traits. If you continue to act out of character, or expose his hidden traits, the gamemaster may award fewer Legend Points at the end of the story.

Personality

An individual's personality defines how that person interacts with the world. Is he stubborn? Cynical? Cunning? Spiteful? Trustworthy? Larcenous? Altruistic? Characters in Earthdawn can be defined the same way. The easiest way to define your character's personality is to assign him some personality traits. Personality traits are descriptive labels for the way a character acts and interacts with the world.

Personality Traits

The sample traits given below (positive, neutral, and negative) can help players and gamemasters begin forming their characters' personalities. Choose one or two traits or make up one or two of your own. Make sure your gamemaster approves them.

If you later find that you want to round your character out further by adding more traits, work with your gamemaster to determine what caused your character to change.

Doug's Swordmaster will be courageous and chivalrous, two personality traits that fit the character he has in mind. His t'skrang is almost a stereotype—he is always the first to charge into danger, and protects and defends those he feels need his protection.

Personality and Discipline

Your character's Discipline can be an important element in determining his personality. As mentioned earlier, a character's Discipline provides a framework through which the character sees the world. For example, an Archer might interpret a particular event in a completely different way than a Nethermancer or a Swordmaster.

The individual Discipline descriptions provide guidelines for how characters of each Discipline interact with the world.

One way to further strengthen the effect of your Discipline on your character is to select personality traits that fit with his Discipline. That is, the traits are as much a representation of the character's Discipline as his personality.

Many of the Discipline descriptions use personality traits to create the "feel" of the Discipline. For example, Cavalrymen are described as "fierce mounted warriors," many people consider Nethermancers "eerie," and Sky Raiders are known to be "proud." These simple examples demonstrate how personality traits can help define characters of a given Discipline. Select one or two traits that define your character's behavior as an adept of his Discipline, using these examples as a guide.

Swordmasters focus on perfecting their ability to fight with melee weapons, to the expense of other fighting styles. Doug decides to add "disciplined" to his personality traits, to represent his character's focus on his chosen style.

Character History

Once you establish your character's personality, decide what made him that way. An easy way to do that is by answering the sorts of questions authors and readers might ask about a character in a story. You may decide this information is not that important. That is certainly acceptable, but the more of these questions you answer, the better handle you will have on your character. Besides, this gives you a chance to answer these questions in ways you never would, or could, in real life.

What is your character's gender? Whether your character is male or female can make a difference. T'skrang females hold most of the political power in their communities. In dwarf, human, ork, and elven lands, power is usually distributed fairly evenly between men and women. Trolls perpetuate a male-dominated society. Obsidimen and windlings tend to think most gender roles are pretty silly.

How large (or small) is your character? Are you of average size for your race? Stout? Tall? Skinny? Could anybody but another obsidiman tell a skinny obsidiman when he saw one?

What color is your characters hair, eyes, and skin? The typical options are described in the Namegiver Races chapter, but they should not limit your choices. Personal appearance and style is starting to be accepted again in Barsaive. During the Scourge, conformity was important—if everyone acted and dressed in a similar way, then people could be reasonably sure that the guy with the flame-red eyes wasn't just making a fashion statement. Life is better now; personal freedom and freedom of expression are on the rise. Of course, some guys with flame-red eyes are not doing it just to match the rubies on their dagger handles.

What is your character's general appearance? What would be someone's first impression of your character? Does the character dress stylishly or conservatively? Does he have any distinctive marks or decorative tattoos? Does the character follow the dwarf modes of fashion or reject them for something different?

Is your character attractive? Intimidating? Approachable? Does your character slouch, walk gracefully, or march as if always on patrol?

Where was your character born? Your character's race can be the determining factor for where he was born. Troll clans tend to live in mountain ranges, while elves come from forests and jungles. T'skrang are native to lakes and rivers. Many dwarfs come from the Kingdom of Throal. Humans and orks grow up nearly anywhere, as do obsidimen. Is your elf from a village or town near Blood Wood, or from a forest in the southern part of Barsaive? Is your troll a Sky Raider from the Crystal Peaks or from another mountain range? Does your character even remember where he was born? Some ork tribes roam all over the land, never staying in one place for more than two or three months.

How old is your character? The Scourge ended about a hundred years ago, though some kaers stayed sealed for decades after it ended. Are you young enough that the Scourge seems like ancient history? Are you old enough to remember living in a sealed kaer or citadel?

Does your character have a family? What are they like? Does he have any siblings? Are his mother and father still alive? What do they think of their child's lifestyle? What about the rest of the family? Are they poor, middle-income, wealthy? Are they pillars of the community, or are they working to knock those pillars down? Has your character begun his own family? If not, does he want to start one? Does the rest of your character's family want him to settle down?

What are your character's spiritual beliefs? Your character could be an atheist, but in the world of Barsaive, where the Passions walk the earth, such an attitude would seem mighty strange. Does your character worship any of the Passions? Does your character lean more toward one Passion than the others? Are there one or more Passions your character wants nothing to do with?

What is your character's moral code? Under what conditions will your character kill? Steal? Lie? Does he adhere to a personal code of ethics about violence? What about sex? Or the Horrors? Would your character ever make a deal with a Horror? Even if he was certain he could get away with it?

What special qualities does your character possess? Can your character put a deal together that even dwarfs would envy? Does he have a knack for spotting unusual jewelry? Does your character see the quest through, no matter what it takes? Does he get along with members of other races?

What is it your character simply cannot do? Does gold run through your character's fingers? Does your character find it impossible to pass up a chance to get that really interesting magic item? Does your character freeze during the first moments of a romantic encounter? Does your character panic under stress? Does your character speak his mind at all the wrong times?

What does your character love? Throal? Living in the Caucavic Mountains? The smell of ginger tea? Ale and good tavern talk? The bustle of a busy market? Finding just the right way to finish off a spell? A clever comment? Another person?

What does your character hate? The Therans? Those stuck-up dwarfs? Nethermancers who do icky things to animals? Gate guards who ask personal questions? Kings who think they can order you around? Slow service? Assassins who just haven't got the sense to leave you alone?

What is your character's Name? Your character's Name is very important. In Earthdawn, the Names of people, places, and things have meaning and power. If your character often stares at others with a stern, cold look, he might be Named Ice-stare or Shiver-eyes. Was your character born with the same Name he uses now? Is his current Name a nickname? If so, who gave it to him?

10. Play the Game

Congratulations! You have completed your character. Finish filling out your Character Sheet. Your character now stands ready to become a hero in the world of Earthdawn.

Sample Character

Doug's character, created in the examples in this chapter, is detailed below.

Landal is a male t'skrang that hails from a village on the Coil River, not far from the city of Urupa. Even for a t'skrang he was a daring and outgoing child, always willing to accept dares and challenges from the other children in his village. He also would frequently champion the weaker children, standing up to bullies, which would often result in fights that Landal would win more often than not.

Landal was introduced to the Swordmaster Discipline by one of his cousins, who returned home after serving a stint as a riverboat guard. He took to the Discipline like a fish to water, and when his training was complete he decided to travel Barsaive, seeking adventure and protecting the weak.

Landal is brave, and sometimes foolhardy. He can often be pushed to take on a bit more than he can handle, either by appealing to his chivalrous nature, or by hinting he might not be able to complete a certain task. This sometimes frustrates his traveling companions, as they end up getting dragged into trouble along with the t'skrang. Once he sets his mind to a task, he does his best to see it through, and loves telling tales of his exploits in exchange for drinks.

Landal
First Circle T'skrang Swordmaster.

DEX (16):	7	STR (14):	6	TOU (14):	6
PER (12):	5	WIL (11):	5	CHA (16):	7

Initiative:	6	Physical Defense:	10
Physical Armor:	5	Mystic Defense:	7
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	9
Uncon. Rating:	35	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	42	Knockdown:	7*
Wound Threshold:	7	Movement:	12 yards
Karma Points:	4	* Knows the Wound Balance talent	

Swordmaster Talents: Avoid Blow (2): 9, Maneuver (1): 8, Melee Weapons (2): 9, Taunt (1): 8, Weapon Weaving (1): 6, Wound Balance (1): 7

Skills: Ancient Weapons (1): 6, Conversation (1): 8, Legends and Heroes (1): 6, Read/Write Language (1): 6—Dwarf (Throalic), Speak Language (2): 7—Dwarf (Throalic), T'skrang, Storytelling (2): 9, Swimming (2): 8, Throwing Weapons (1): 8, T'skrang Lore (1): 6, Unarmed Combat (2): 9

Armor: Hardened Leather (Physical Armor 5), Buckler (Physical Defense +1)

Weapons: Broadsword (Damage 11), Dagger (Damage 8; range 2-10)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 30 silver pieces

Notes: As a t'skrang, Landal has the Tail Attack racial ability

Personality Traits: Courageous, Chivalrous, Disciplined, Proud (hidden)

SZCZUDLO 14

DISCIPLINES

What's the difference? My good man, I kill bandits with style!
•Corys, Blade of the North •

Player characters in Earthdawn are adepts, people able to use magic to power special abilities called talents. To become an adept, a character chooses a Discipline. In one sense, your character's Discipline is his profession, but a Discipline involves much more than that. Your character's Discipline provides a metaphor for how he sees the world. For example, an Elementalist might see the world as a struggle between competing elemental forces, while a Weaponsmith may see the world through the eyes of a craftsman, looking to build things that last. This metaphor allows the adept to tap into and use the world's ambient magical energy to power their talents.

This chapter provides game rules and advice for bringing these aspects to life in your Earthdawn game. It also includes descriptions of the fifteen most common Disciplines in Barsaive. Each Discipline is divided into Circles, representing a character's proficiency in their chosen Discipline. The description includes a list of the talents a character may learn at each Circle, along with other abilities or options the character gains at that Circle. New characters begin the game at First Circle, and advance to higher Circles as they gain experience.

A sample archetype character for each Discipline—one that players can use as a character in the game instead of creating their own—can be found in the Appendix (p. XX). These archetypes were created using the rules for creating characters presented in the Creating Characters chapter, p.XX. The races shown for each archetype are only suggestions. When creating your own character, you can choose any race, although this may require some alterations to the character's Attributes and abilities. Archetype characters may also be used by the gamemaster as opponents and villains in his games.

Personal Visions

Adepts wield power by finding a connection between their personality and experience on one hand, and the traditions of their Discipline on the other. No two adepts relate to their Discipline in quite the same way; a character cannot become an adept simply by following a set of rules. An adept must bring something personal to his Discipline, building something new rather than simply copying the past.

When creating a character, you should give some thought to your character's vision of his Discipline. Think about the character's beliefs, and perhaps some examples of actions the character regards as taboo.

Personal visions can lend depth and focus to characters, helping provide a foundation for future roleplaying. This character's viewpoint may be a few brief sentences or a detailed essay.

Silar is an Archer that specializes in using a crossbow. His take on the traditional focus of an archer has a different slant. A target is hit as a result of multiple pieces working together, and by extension a group's objectives require all members of the group to do their part.

The gamemaster has final say on personal visions, but as long as it makes some kind of sense, the gamemaster should allow it. A Beastmaster who hates animals or a Swordmaster who hates drawing attention to himself are almost certainly unsuitable, but Barsaive is home to many strange things. Somewhere there may be Warriors without a sense of honor or Nethermancers who are afraid of the dark.

Initiation Into a Discipline

The time it takes for a potential adept to undergo initiation varies widely from Discipline to Discipline and master to master. Becoming a Wizard can take years; becoming a Thief can take as little as a few days.

Initiation uses the metaphor of a Discipline to create a mystical link between the initiate and the world's magic. Disciplines use different initiation methods, usually linked to particular ways of looking at that Discipline. For example, the initiation of a selfish Thief is more brutal than that of a trickster Thief. After initiation, an adept has reached First Circle.

Initiating a student often requires a substantial investment of time, and few masters undertake it lightly. All adepts screen potential adepts carefully to make sure they will perform admirably in the Discipline. Only an adept who has attained at least Journeyman status in a Discipline may initiate others into it.

The time needed to learn additional Disciplines is more standard. The difference in initiation time between acquiring a first Discipline and additional ones stems from the initial difficulty of learning to see the world magically. Once a character achieves this breakthrough moment, learning additional Disciplines becomes a matter of unlearning some old habits and picking up a few new ones. Acquiring a second, third, or even fourth, Discipline is more like Circle advancement than initiation into a first Discipline.

Training for Circle Advancement

As with initiation, the amount of time an adept needs to train for a new Circle varies between Disciplines. Most training consists of practice in the talents available at the new Circle, along with some theoretical discussion. The weight given to each, however, may be very different. For example, the fighting Disciplines often downplay theory, while the spellcasting Disciplines may have a heavier focus on theory.

Adepts advancing to a new Circle learn the basics of that Circle's Discipline Talents, even if they don't learn the talent at that time. An adept can later recall their training and learn talents they may have skipped.

As they advance, adepts are taught rituals that give them new abilities such as increased Defense Ratings or more flexible Karma use. The character may later perform these rituals with others when acting as an instructor.

An adept may train another member of his Discipline for Circle advancement, provided the trainer is a higher Circle than the student. Many instructors are retired adventurers earning a living by passing on the benefits of their experience. Adepts frequently earn money by training lower-Circle colleagues and then pay their earnings to an instructor for their own advancement. Customary fees for training appear in the Building Your Legend chapter, p.XX.

HALF—MAGIC

Though the Earthdawn system accounts for knowledge and skills a character might possess that do not require the power of an adept's magic, that system does not adequately cover the different levels of Discipline-related knowledge that two characters of the same Discipline, but different Circles, might possess.

For example, adepts of all Disciplines learn of the lives and deeds of other adepts who have followed their Disciplines, such as the heroes Nioku the Archer, Venna the Warrior, and any other heroes the gamemaster may add to his Earthdawn world.

An Elementalist character may possess the Knowledge skills of Horror Lore and Pre-Scourge History, but a follower of that Discipline should also know a great deal about plants, weather, rock formations, tides, and other subjects related to the five elements. Further, his knowledge of these topics would increase with time and experience.

The half-magic system offers a way to determine the adept's knowledge in subjects related to their Discipline, but not specifically covered by the Discipline's Talents. At gamemaster discretion, it could also cover more practical tasks related to his Discipline. For example, a Beastmaster could use half-magic to perform basic veterinary techniques, while an Air Sailor would be proficient at tying knots and navigating an airship. These skills would be possessed by any member of the Discipline, and may also fall under the realm of half-magic.

Each of the Discipline descriptions provides possible uses for half-magic. Players and gamemasters are encouraged to work together to develop and describe what areas their character's half-magic covers, but the gamemaster is the final arbiter of whether a Half-Magic test may be used in a given situation.

Making Half-Magic Tests

When you make a Half-Magic test, the gamemaster determines the Attribute most appropriate for the action the character wishes to accomplish.

You may suggest what you consider to be an appropriate Attribute, but the gamemaster has final say. Add the character's Circle to the Attribute Step to determine the Step used for the Half-Magic test. Adepts may spend a Karma Point on Half-Magic tests.

Half-Magic and Skills

Half-magic abilities may duplicate Knowledge or General skills, using the character's Circle in place of Rank. This is intentional; Earthdawn is primarily focused on adepts and their magical talents. Keeping track of the many mundane skills an adept might have adds another layer of record keeping that detracts from that focus. If the gamemaster wishes to downplay the role of half-magic, and add more emphasis on mundane skills, he may do so, but should compensate by awarding more Legend Points and time to advance the character's skill Ranks.

Racial Restrictions

Optional Rule: Earlier editions of Earthdawn placed racial limitations on some Disciplines; characters of certain races could not follow certain Disciplines unless the gamemaster allowed an exception. Most of these restrictions were because a race's culture did not easily allow one to embrace the worldview of certain Disciplines. These restrictions are summarized below. The gamemaster may enforce these if he wishes, or use them as a guideline for uncommon combinations of race and Discipline—either when filling his world with gamemaster characters or to require a more detailed background from a player with such a combination.

Obsidimen seldom become Sky Raiders or Air Sailors, as their deep bond to the earth urges them to stay on the ground. They do not normally get an opportunity to bond with a mount and become a Cavalryman simply because so few mounts exist that can carry them. The ways of the Archer and Swordmaster require a little too much finesse for obsidimen to follow them frequently; if they do, they favor weapons appropriate to their physique.

Trolls usually do not become Thieves, as their culture's honor forbids them from stealing in secret, but dictates they take openly with a show of force. This stance is the way of life of highland trolls, but trolls integrated into other societies do not follow it.

Windlings seldom become Nethermancers, as their culture celebrates life, and contact with the afterlife is unsettling to them. They also seldom become Sky Raiders, as the way of the Sky Raider emphasizes physical prowess and brute force over cunning and subtlety.

Future Earthdawn products will introduce Disciplines that are restricted to a single race, rather than excluding specific races– for example, Disciplines that can only be learned by windlings or obsidimen. In contrast to the restrictions presented here, these future restrictions are suggested to be enforced, with only rare exceptions.

Discipline Descriptions

Players are encouraged to use the information given in this chapter as a guideline. How you, as a player, choose to portray your character is entirely your own choice! That is largely the point of roleplaying, after all.

The individual Discipline descriptions detail the abilities provided to members of that Discipline. The next section describes how these different abilities are used in Earthdawn. Archetype characters can be found in the Appendix chapter, p.XX, created using the rules in the Creating Characters chapter, p.XX. These characters can be used by players who want to get into the game quickly, or by gamemasters looking for examples of First Circle adepts they can use as gamemaster characters.

Important Attributes

Players with characters of this Discipline should emphasize these Attributes when creating their characters. Important Attributes include those on which many of a Discipline's key talents are based.

Karma Ritual

The mindset required to practice a Discipline requires a lot of focus. As a result, all adepts practice a meditative rite, called the Karma Ritual, that keeps them in touch with the fundamental precepts of their Discipline. The adept can draw on this connection to provide an extra boost to their magical talents. This is represented in game terms through the use of Karma Points.

Each Discipline includes a sample ritual that allows characters of that Discipline to regain Karma Points. The player need not make any tests to perform the Karma Ritual; it is always successful. Your character may perform his Karma Ritual once each day, and the ritual takes about half an hour to perform. After he performs his Karma Ritual, all of his Karma Points are restored. A character's maximum Karma is determined by his highest Discipline Circle, multiplied by the Karma Modifier for his race. For example, a Third Circle human adept has 15 maximum Karma Points.

While there are many similarities between the rituals practiced by adepts of the same Discipline, every Karma Ritual is unique. Individuals will adapt their ritual to fit their personal vision for the Discipline. Players are encouraged to create unique Karma Rituals for their characters.

Artisan Skills

Each Discipline lists some Artisan skills common to that Discipline. They are typically picked up during training to become an Initiate. For example, it is traditional for magicians to learn Robe Embroidery as an Artisan skill. Cavalrymen learn to take care of their mounts, and often learn the Braiding skill to braid their mounts' manes. The Artisan skills listed are not absolute. Players can choose an Artisan skill not listed for their character's Discipline. Under some circumstances, players may want to learn an Artisan skill normally unconnected to their Discipline; for example one picked up in their childhood, before training to become an adept.

Half-Magic

The Disciplines list examples or special uses for that Discipline's Half-Magic tests. These are suggestions; it is up to individual groups to decide the scope of Half-Magic in their game.

Talents and Abilities

The most important part of the gifts conveyed by a Discipline come in the form of Discipline Talents, Talent Options, and Discipline Abilities.

Discipline Talents form the core of a Discipline and are the same for all followers of that Discipline. A Discipline Talent is always available at the indicated Circle. An adept learns five Discipline Talents at First Circle, and an additional Discipline Talent each Circle thereafter.

Talent Options are more versatile. At each Circle, an adept can choose one talent from a pool of optional talents, keyed to his status level in the Discipline (Novice, Journeyman, Warden, and Master). While Talent Options can be chosen from pools of lower status, the cost of advancing the talent is based on the Circle at which it was learned. Characters cannot fill a talent slot with a talent available in a higher pool.

Discipline Abilities are magical abilities based on an adept's Discipline—unlike talents, the adept has access to them as soon as he completes his training to reach that Circle, and can use it at any time thereafter. Discipline abilities come in many different types—Defense Ratings, special uses for Karma, free talents, or other special magical powers.

Durability

Durability increases the adept's ability to take damage. At each Circle, the adept permanently adds the indicated Durability value to his Unconsciousness and Death Ratings. He also adds his Circle to his Death Rating.

Based on his Toughness, Brighton the Troubadour has an Unconsciousness Rating of 28 and a Death Rating of 34. According to the Discipline description, Troubadours have Durability 5. At First Circle, Brighton adds +5 to his Unconsciousness Rating, giving him a 33. He adds +6 to his Death Rating (+5 from Durability, +1 for First Circle), bringing that up to a 40. This happens each time he increases his Circle. So when he has advanced to Third Circle, his Unconsciousness Rating will have increased to 43 (base value of 28, +15 from Durability) and his Death Rating to 52 (base value of 34, +15 from Durability, +3 for Third Circle).

Free Talents

Some Disciplines are given a free talent upon gaining a Circle. This talent advances with the character's Circle—he does not need to spend Legend Points to advance its rank. The talent does not count for the purposes of qualifying for the next Circle, but in all other respects behaves as a talent, including the ability to spend Karma on tests for that talent, and the ability to weave threads to them with thread magic (see the Workings of Magic chapter).

Haldin is an Air Sailor. According to the Discipline description, Air Sailors get the Air Sailing talent for free. Haldin is considered to have the Air Sailing talent at a Rank equal to his Circle, and may spend karma when making tests using Air Sailing.

Spell Matrices

Spell Matrices are astral constructs used by magicians to safely cast spells. Magicians get two standard matrices for free at First Circle. These function like the talent of the same name, and their Rank advances with the character's Circle, just as with other free talents.

Magicians also have different spell matrix talents available as Talent Options. These are purchased the same way as other talent options, and need to have their ranks purchased with Legend Points.

Tomas the Wizard learns two standard matrices at First Circle. According to the Discipline description, he has one more standard matrix available as a Talent Option. This means that if he wishes to spend his First Circle Talent Option to learn a third standard matrix, he can.

For more about Spell Matrices and how they are used by magicians to cast spells, see the Spell Magic chapter, p. XX.

Humans and Versatility

The Talent Options for a single Discipline cover only a fraction of all the talents available, leaving more than enough room for acquiring multiple Disciplines and the use of human versatility. The Versatility talent is the only way to learn talents from other Disciplines without resorting to additional Disciplines.

A human can learn additional talents using the rules for Versatility (see p.XX). Talents learned in this way do not count towards Circle advancement, and the adept may not spend karma on them. The Circle of the talent is equivalent to the Circle at which his teacher learned it, and the character learning the talent must at least be that Circle to learn the talent.

The sheer number of optional talents gives a player enough flexibility for customization—characters of the same Discipline can be developed with a different focus. For example, one player could choose to create a stealthy Archer—a sniper—while another could make his Archer more socially competent. A player could even shift his focus as his character advances in Circle. But no matter what choices he makes, the character remains an Archer at his core. The limitation of one Talent Option per Circle ensures that the choices a player faces will be significant but not overwhelming.

Characteristics Bonuses

As your character advances in Circle, he automatically gains bonuses to some of his characteristics. Descriptions of these bonuses appear under each Circle.

Defense bonuses permanently increase your character's Physical, Mystic, or Social Defense by the amount listed. Only the highest bonus applies to a given Defense rating.

Initiative bonuses permanently increase your character's Initiative Step by the number listed.

Recovery bonuses permanently increase the number of Recovery tests per day your character can make.

Mystic Armor bonuses permanently increase the character's Mystic Defense rating.

Karma Bonuses

Karma bonuses allow your character to spend a Karma Point on the types of actions listed for the ability. At higher Circles, characters gain another type of Karma bonus: they increase their Karma Die by one Step (from a d6 to a d8).

AIR SAILOR

Air Sailors are the swashbuckling brotherhood of the sky. Air Sailors never leave their fellows behind and embrace the idea of togetherness, working to protect and spread civilization, rather than preying upon it.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity, Willpower

Karma Ritual: The Air Sailor sits alone in silent meditation under the open sky for several minutes, picturing in his mind's eye his airship sailing through the clouds at the start of a long journey. The adept envisions an aerial journey he hopes to make one day, imagining scenes of this journey, including the risks and perils, and how his training and skills might help make the journey a safe one. The ritual is complete when, half an hour later, the imagined journey ends safely.

Artisan Skills: Rune Carving, Sail Embroidery

Half-Magic: The Air Sailor's uses for Half-Magic include knowledge of airship designs, recognition of different types of airships, commonly followed flight paths, and airship crew complements. It may also cover the maintenance, repair, and construction of airships.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Acrobatic Defense, Distract, First Impression, Great Leap, Haggle, Maneuver, Navigation, Speak Language, Taunt, Throwing Weapons

PLACEHOLDER

First Circle

Free Talent: Air Sailing
Durability 5
Karma: The adept may spend Karma once per round on any action taken while on board an airship.
Discipline Talents: Avoid Blow, Climbing, Melee Weapons, Thread Weaving (Air Weaving), Wind Catcher

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Awareness

Third Circle

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Initiative tests.
Discipline Talent: Empathic Sense

Fourth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Wound Balance

Journeyman Talent Options: Air Speaking, Battle Bellow, Conceal Object, Engaging Banter, Etiquette, Graceful Exit, Leadership, Resist Taunt, Second Weapon, Surprise Strike

Fifth Circle

Collaborate: Once per round as a Simple action, the adept may take 1 Strain to give an ally a +2 bonus to a test towards achieving a common goal. The player should describe how they are assisting their ally.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Interaction Tests
Discipline Talent: Heartening Laugh

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Air Dance

Seventh Circle

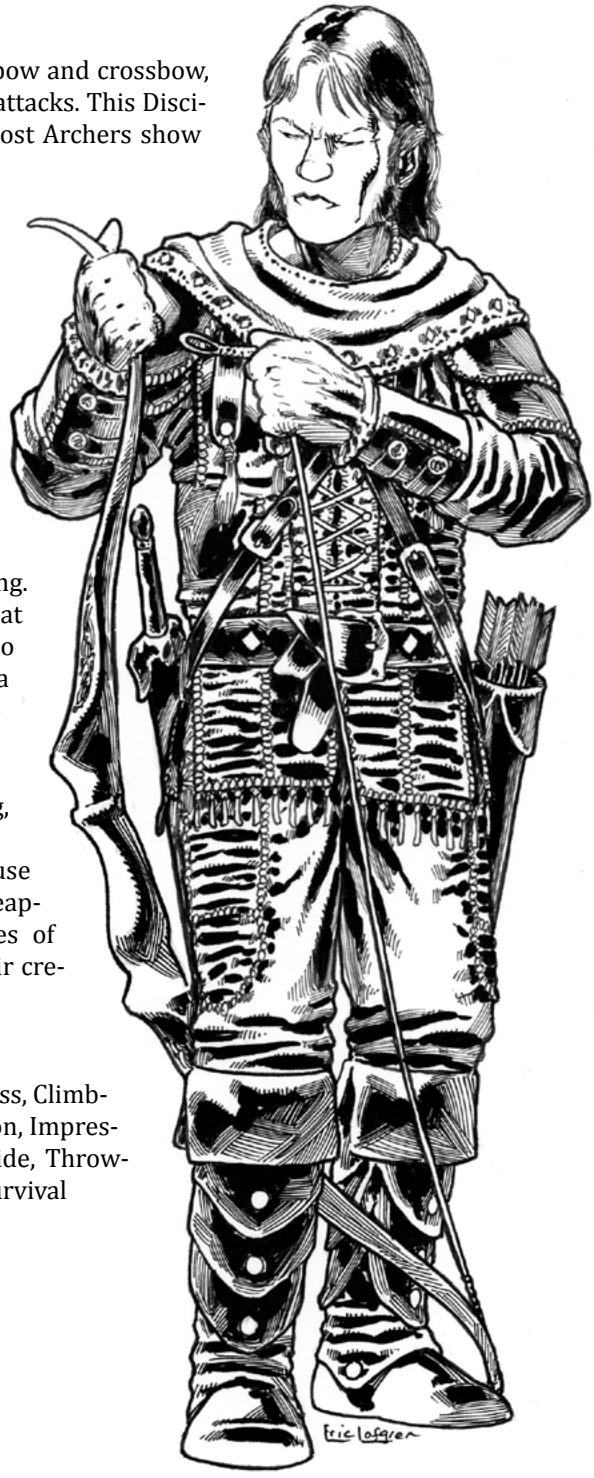
Recovery: The adept gains an additional Recovery test.
Discipline Talent: Inspire Others

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Lion Heart

ARCHER

The Archer learns the art of the bow and crossbow, and by extension, all types of ranged attacks. This Discipline stresses accuracy and speed. Most Archers show greatly enhanced perceptive powers, frequently noticing things that others miss.



Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception

Karma Ritual: The Archer spends a few minutes oiling and stringing his bow, then starts meditating, with the bow in front of him and his arrows fanned out beside him on the ground. As he meditates, he seeks the stillness before the arrow is released from the string. The Archer then fires three arrows at a target, forming a rough triangle no more than a foot wide, then fires a fourth arrow into the center of the triangle. The ritual is complete when the last arrow hits.

Artisan Skills: Arrow Fletching, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: Archers may use half-magic when caring for ranged weapons and to recognize different types of ranged weapons, ammunition, or their creators.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Awareness, Climbing, Creature Analysis, First Impression, Impressive Display, Navigation, Stealthy Stride, Throwing Weapons, Tracking, Wilderness Survival

First Circle

Free Talent: Call Missile
Durability 5
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Perception tests that rely on sight.
Discipline Talents: Avoid Blow, Missile Weapons, Mystic Aim, Thread Weaving (Arrow Weaving), True Shot

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Direction Arrow

Third Circle

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Initiative tests.
Discipline Talent: Anticipate Blow

Fourth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Long Shot

Journeyman Talent Options: Conversation, Danger Sense, Distract, Etiquette, Evidence Analysis, Resist Taunt, Speak Language, Steel Thought, Stopping Aim, Tiger Spring

Fifth Circle

Create Projectile: Once per round as a Standard action, the adept may take 1 Strain, and make an Arrow Weaving (6) test. Each success creates one arrow, bolt, or throwing weapon. All items created must be of the same type. The projectiles last for Arrow Weaving Rank in minutes, after which they disappear. They are treated as normal weapons or ammunition for the purpose of talents or spells that require it.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Damage tests made with ranged weapons.
Discipline Talent: Spot Armor Flaw

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Bank Shot

Seventh Circle

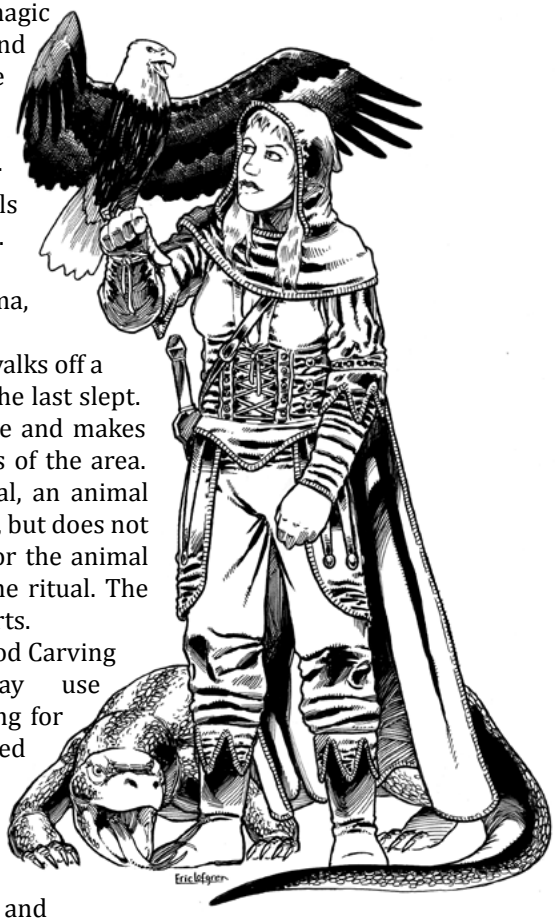
Initiative: The adept gains +1 Step to their Initiative.
Discipline Talent: Flame Arrow

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Second Shot

BEASTMASTER

Beastmasters are adepts that use magic to emulate and interact with animals and other creatures. Some develop these abilities to become expert trackers and survivalists, while others forge magical bonds with animal companions, or train and care for the domestic animals that support day to day life in Barsaive.



Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity, Willpower

Karma Ritual: The Beastmaster walks off a large circle around the area on which he last slept. Then he sits in the center of the circle and makes a silent, meditative call to the animals of the area. At the end of the half-hour-long ritual, an animal typical of the local wildlife approaches, but does not enter, the circle. The adept motions for the animal to enter the circle, thus completing the ritual. The animal then leaves the circle and departs.

Artisan Skills: Body Painting, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: Beastmasters may use half-magic when dealing with or caring for animals in ways beyond those described by their talents, including animal husbandry and first aid. Beastmasters may use half-magic when recognizing different animals, animal tracks, and abnormal behavior among animals and creatures.

Note: Many of the Beastmaster's talents and abilities refer to Animal Companions. An animal may be considered an Animal Companion if it has a Loyal attitude towards the Beastmaster. See the Animal Bond talent on p.XX for details.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Acrobatic Defense, Animal Bond, Animal Training, Borrow Sense, Climbing, Creature Analysis, Danger Sense, Enhance Animal Companion, Stealthy Stride, Tracking

First Circle

Durability 7

Discipline Talents: Avoid Blow, Claw Shape, Thread Weaving (Beast Weaving), Unarmed Combat, Wilderness Survival

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Awareness

Third Circle

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Recovery tests.
Discipline Talent: Dominate Beast

Fourth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Great Leap

Journeyman Talent Options: Animal Companion Durability, Animal Possession, Battle Bellow, Call Animal Companion, Cobra Strike, Iron Constitution, Lion Heart, Sprint, Swift Kick, Tiger Spring

Fifth Circle

Cat's Grace: The adept automatically succeeds at tests to maintain balance (not including Knockdown tests) and may stand up as a simple action with no cost or test.
Karma: The adept may spend a point of Karma on any unarmed Damage test.
Discipline Talent: Blood Share

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Animal Talk

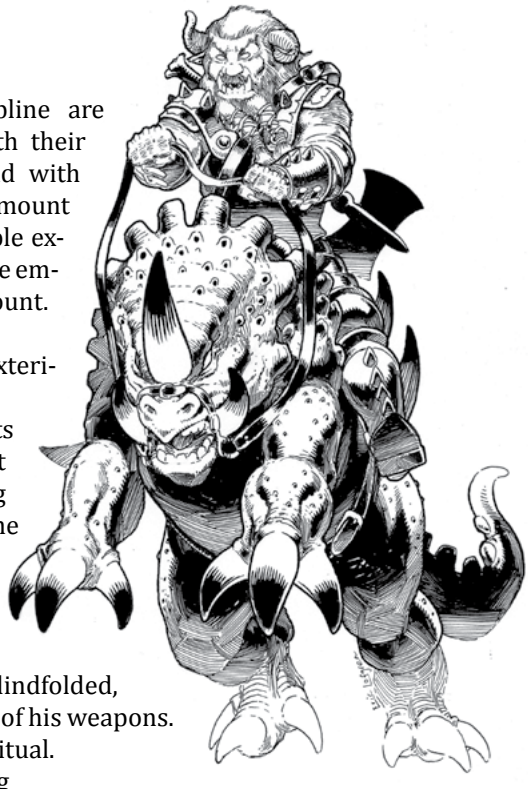
Seventh Circle

Recovery: The adept gains an additional Recovery test.
Discipline Talent: Down Strike

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Claw Frenzy

CAVALRYMAN



Members of the Cavalryman Discipline are fierce, mounted warriors. They train with their mounts and form a close empathic bond with them. A Cavalryman typically respects his mount more than any Namegiver, with the possible exception of other Cavalrymen. This Discipline emphasizes motion and empathy for one's mount.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity, Perception

Karma Ritual: The Cavalryman plants a target in the ground, then rides his mount several minutes distance away. Blindfolding himself, he directs his mount to return to the target. Once he closes to about 100 yards, the Cavalryman uses the almost psychic connection with his mount, and whatever other empathic talents he possesses, to urge his mount to charge the target. Still blindfolded, the Cavalryman strikes the target with one of his weapons. He then removes the blindfold to end the ritual.

Artisan Skills: Body Painting, Braiding

Half-Magic: Cavalrymen may use half-magic for knowledge of different types of mounts used by the Namegiver races, upkeep of riding gear, animal husbandry and first aid, and knowledge of significant cavalry units in Barsaive.

Mount: Cavalrymen begin the game with a mount of the gamemaster's approval (see p. XX for a selection). The mount is trained for riding only; the Cavalryman needs to combat-train it (p. XX). Humans, orks, and elves prefer horses, although many tribal ork Cavalrymen use thundra beasts. Trolls, windlings and dwarfs find horses awkward to ride. Some dwarf Cavalrymen ride ponies due to their short size; some use the troajin or the huttawa. Because of their size and weight, troll Cavalrymen are known to ride large war horses, but most ride an unusually strong and sturdy breed of horse called a granlain. Too small to ride normal horses, windling Cavalrymen most often ride small lizard-like mounts known as kues, or large birds called zoaks.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Battle Shout, Blood Share, Conversation, Creature Analysis, Dominate Beast, First Impression, Heartening Laugh, Speak Language, Sure Mount

First Circle

Durability 7

Discipline Talents: Animal Bond, Charge, Melee Weapons, Thread Weaving (Rider Weaving), Trick Riding

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Animal Training

Third Circle

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Attack tests made while charging.
Discipline Talent: Enhance Animal Companion

Fourth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Call Animal Companion

Journeyman Talent Options: Animal Companion Durability, Empathic Sense, Etiquette, Fearsome Charge, Leadership, Lion Heart, Missile Weapons, Mount Attack, Spirit Mount, Tactics

Fifth Circle

One Soul, Two Bodies: The adept gains a +2 bonus to any non-combat test involving his connection to his favored mount. For example, Animal Bond, Animal Training, and Blood Share would get the bonus, but Trick Riding in combat would not.

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on any Damage tests made while mounted.

Discipline Talent: Armor Mount

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Wheeling Attack

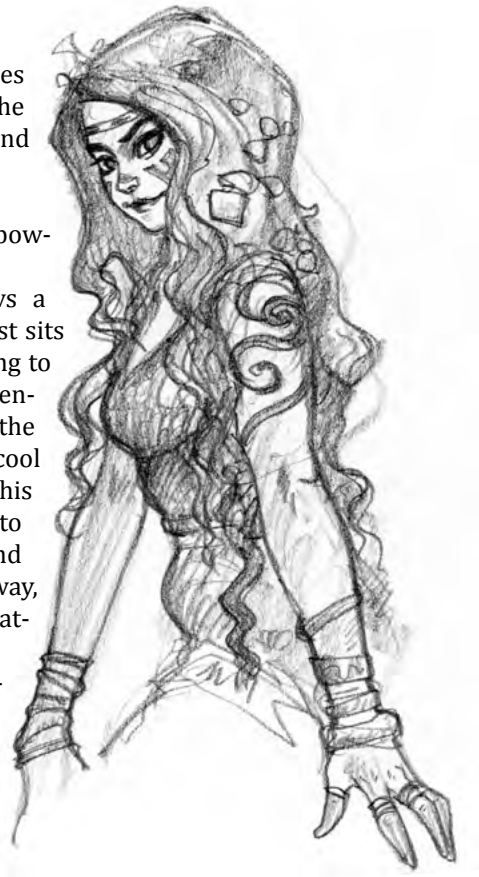
Seventh Circle

Recovery: The adept gains an additional Recovery test.
Discipline Talent: Wheeling Defense

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Double-Charge

ELEMENTALIST



An Elementalist is a magician who focuses on learning about, and gaining power over, the five magical elements: air, earth, fire, water, and wood.

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: The Elementalist draws a large triangle on the ground. The Elementalist sits in the triangle and boils a pot of water, singing to the fire to encourage its heat. Then the Elementalist extinguishes the fire and adds earth to the water, turning it into hot mud. After letting it cool for a few minutes, the Elementalist covers his face with the mud like war paint, and sings to the wind, calling a small breeze. As the wind dries the mud, much of it cracks and blows away, leaving behind a series of intricate, swirling patterns. The Karma ritual is then complete.

Artisan Skills: Robe Embroidery, Sculpting

Half-Magic: Elementalists use half-magic for knowledge of nature, the elements, uses of elemental magic, and other magical rituals. The Elementalist may make a Perception-based Half-Magic test to detect the presence of elemental spirits within 30 yards. The Difficulty Number for sensing an elemental spirit is the spirit's Mystic Defense. If the test succeeds, the character can sense the presence of the elemental spirit and can use spells, or talents such as Elemental Tongues and Elemental Hold, to communicate and interact with it. The gamemaster may choose to make this Half-Magic Test on behalf of an Elementalist character at any time, as this innate sense is always active.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Air Speaking, Arcane Mutterings, Astral Sight, Avoid Blow, Climbing, Item History, Standard Matrix, Tracking, Wilderness Survival, Wind Catcher

First Circle

Durability 3

Free talent: Standard Matrix

Free talent: Standard Matrix

Discipline Talents: Awareness, Patterncraft, Spellcasting, Thread Weaving (Elementalism), Wood Skin

Second Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Fire Heal

Third Circle
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Recovery tests.
Discipline Talent: Elemental Tongues

Fourth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Elemental Hold

Journeyman Talent Options: Banish, Cold Purify, Dispel Magic, Enhanced Matrix, Fireblood, Gliding Stride, Navigation, Safe Path, Steel Thought, Tenacious Weave

Fifth Circle
Free talent: One of the adept's free Standard Matrix talents is upgraded to an Enhanced Matrix.

Fire and Ice: For 1 Strain the adept may do one of the following as a Standard action with a successful Elementalism Test against the higher of the target's Mystic Defense or a Difficulty Number of 6:

1. Create a small flame between his thumb and forefinger. This fire lasts for only one round, but is intense enough to light a torch. If used in combat, it inflicts Step 4/D6 fire damage (Physical Armor provides protection).

2. Freeze water by touching it with his middle three fingers. The adept can freeze up to one quart of water from each use of this ability. If used in combat, it inflicts Step 4/D6 cold damage (Physical Armor provides protection).

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point to target an additional ally with a spell he is casting.

Discipline Talent: Summon [Elemental Spirits]

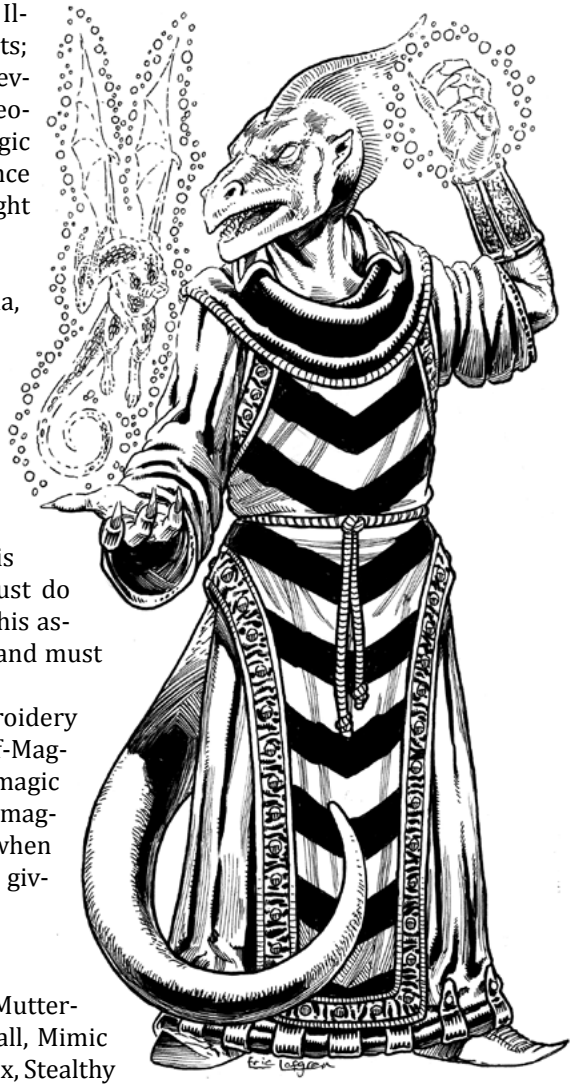
Sixth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Willforce

Seventh Circle
Recovery: The adept gains an additional Recovery test.
Discipline Talent: Earth Skin

Eighth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Hold Thread

ILLUSIONIST

Illusionists cast spells that work through deception. However, some Illusionist spells do have real effects; Illusionists learned long ago that if everything they did was an illusion, people quickly caught on and their magic became less effective. Now they balance real magic, illusions, trickery, and sleight of hand.



Important Attributes: Charisma, Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: The Illusionist does not use the same ritual each time. His Karma ritual does require him to incorporate certain elements every time, however: showy spells, tricks or snappy banter, and an assistant. Other than that, the Illusionist makes up his ritual on the spot. The Illusionist must do his best during this time to convince his assistant that the ritual is very serious and must conform to a precise formula.

Artisan Skills: Acting, Robe Embroidery

Half-Magic: Illusionists make Half-Magic tests to recognize different types of magic use, as well as specific uses of illusion magic. They also make Half-Magic tests when attempting to perceive the "truth" of a given situation.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Arcane Mutterings, Astral Sight, Awareness, Dead Fall, Mimic Voice, Speak Language, Standard Matrix, Stealthy Stride, Taunt, Winning Smile

First Circle

Durability 3

Free Talent: Standard Matrix

Free Talent: Standard Matrix

Discipline Talents: False Sight. First Impression, Patterncraft, Spellcasting, Thread Weaving (Illusionism)

Second Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: True Sight

Third Circle
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Interaction tests.
Discipline Talent: Conversation

Fourth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Disguise Self

Journeyman Talent Options: Conceal Object, Dispel Magic, Engaging Banter, Enhanced Matrix, Fast Hand, Frighten, Resist Taunt, Slough Blame, Steel Thought, Tenacious Weave

Fifth Circle
Free Talent: One of the adept's free Standard Matrix talents is upgraded to an Enhanced Matrix.

Glamour: For 2 Strain, the adept creates a clearly illusory scene (no Sensing test necessary) to delight and entertain onlookers as a Standard action. The adept makes an Illusionism test against the highest Social Defense in the crowd. If successful, the adept gains a +2 bonus to Making an Impression tests for a number of hours equal to the successes scored.

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point to add a +2 bonus to a spell's Effect Step. The bonus lasts for the full spell duration, even if the spell has multiple Effect tests.

Discipline Talent: Power Mask

Sixth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Willforce

Seventh Circle
Initiative: The adept adds +1 Step to his Initiative.
Discipline Talent: Hypnotize

Eighth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Hold Thread

NETHERMANCER

Nethermancers are spellcasters who specialize in the magic of the netherworlds. Their interests focus on other planes, and the spirits and creatures that inhabit those planes. Most people consider Nethermancers to be a little "off" in an eerie sort of way, and consequently followers of this Discipline are unlikely to win many popularity contests.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: The Nethermancer drinks tea with a spirit servant or other otherworldly creature and talks of life beyond this world. The ritual ends after a half hour has passed with the Nethermancer draining the last drop from his final cup of tea.

Artisan Skills: Bone Carving, Robe Embroidery

Half-Magic: Nethermancers use half-magic to recognize uses of nethermantic magic, different types of undead and spirits, and magical rituals—especially blood magic rituals. Nethermancers may also use half-magic to understand the effects of different blood charms, as these are linked with Nethermancy. A Nethermancer may use half-magic to sense the presence of spirits within 30 yards of his location. The Detection Difficulty for sensing a spirit is the spirit's Mystic Defense (determined by the gamemaster). If the test succeeds, the Nethermancer can sense the presence of the spirit and use spells, or talents such as Spirit Hold or Spirit Talk, to communicate and interact with the spirit. The gamemaster may choose to make this Half-Magic test on behalf of a Nethermancer character at any time, as this innate sense is always active.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Arcane Mutterings, Avoid Blow, Awareness, Command Nightflyer, Dispel Magic, Read and Write Languages, Speak Language, Standard Matrix, Stealthy Stride, Suppress Curse

First Circle

Durability 3

Free Talent: Standard Matrix

Free Talent: Standard Matrix

Discipline Talents: Astral Sight, Frighten, Patterncraft, Spellcasting, Thread Weaving [Nethermancy]

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Steel Thought

Third Circle

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point once per round on any test against a Horror, Horror Construct, or undead target.
Discipline Talent: Spirit Talk

Fourth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Spirit Hold

Journeyman Talent Options: Astral Interference, Banish, Blood Share, Enhanced Matrix, Lifesight, Lion Heart, Research, Spirit Mount, Steely Stare, Tenacious Weave

Fifth Circle

Free Talent: One of the adept's free Standard Matrices is upgraded to an Enhanced Matrix.
Blood Summon: The adept may take Blood Magic Damage equal to the Strength rating of a spirit being summoned to gain an extra success on a Summon test. This damage may only be healed a full day after the spirit has left the summoner's service.
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point to increase the target's penalty from a spell he is casting by 2.
Discipline Talent: Summon [Ally Spirits]

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Willforce

Seventh Circle

Mystic Armor: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Armor.
Discipline Talent: Orbiting Spy

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Hold Thread

SCOUT

Scouts are the vanguard, the tracker, and the brave rangers who go where others cannot. Scouts are masters of becoming one with their environment—whether that environment is a primeval forest or the heart of the city.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception

Karma Ritual: The Scout allows his companions to lead him blindfolded, about ten minutes walk from his starting point. The Scout meditates for ten minutes as he visualizes the route back to where he began, then makes the journey, still blindfolded, to his starting point. Removing the blindfold, the half-hour-long ritual is complete.

Artisan Skills: Rune Carving, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: A Scout may use half-magic to recognize tracks and trails left by different types of animals and Namegivers, know about the plants and creatures native to a region, even general information on the different cultures across Barsaive.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Anticipate Blow, Avoid Blow, Creature Analysis, Disarm Trap, Great Leap, Lock Picking, Melee Weapons, Missile Weapons, Speak Language, Read and Write Language

First Circle

Free Talent: Navigation

Durability 5

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on tests made to find something

Discipline Talents: Awareness, Climbing, Thread Weaving (Scout Weaving), Tracking, Wilderness Survival

Second Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Stealthy Stride

Third Circle
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Initiative tests.
Discipline Talent: Direction Arrow

Fourth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Danger Sense

Journeyman Talent Options: Animal Bond, Borrow Sense, Conceal Object, Disguise Self, Spirit Mount, Spot Armor Flaw, Sprint, Surprise Strike, Tiger Spring, True Sight

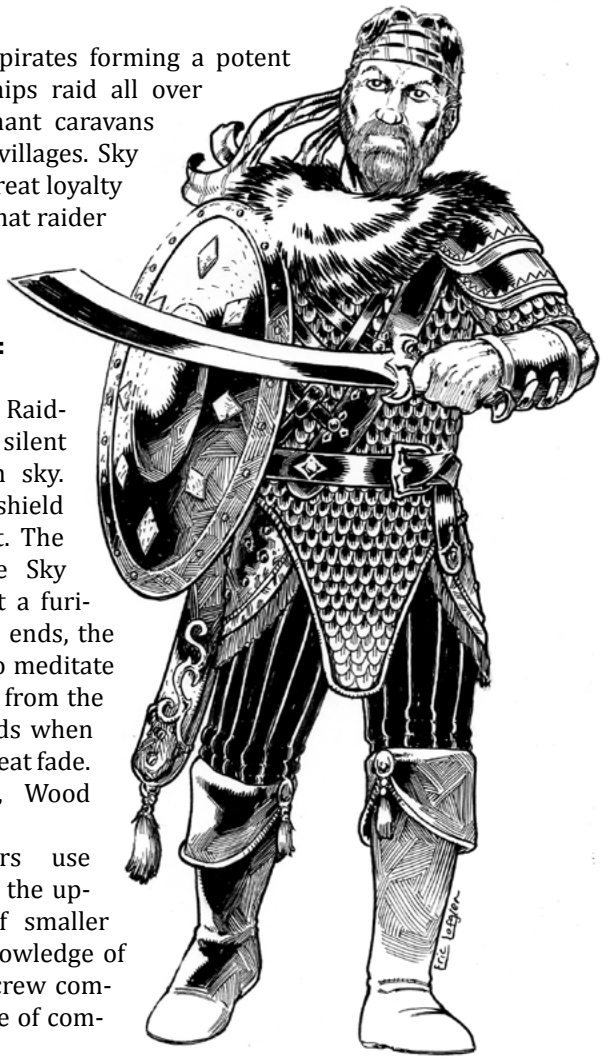
Fifth Circle
Enhanced Senses: For 1 Strain, the adept enhances one of his natural senses as a Simple action and gains a +2 bonus to Perception tests based on the sense for 1 round. If that sense is unhindered, you may ignore Blindness penalties by using your enhanced sense as your primary sense.
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Recovery tests.
Discipline Talent: Evidence Analysis

Sixth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Astral Sight

Seventh Circle
Initiative: The adept adds +1 Step to his Initiative.
Discipline Talent: Safe Path

Eighth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Orbiting Spy

SKY RAIDER



Sky Raiders are ruthless pirates forming a potent force in Barsaive. Their airships raid all over the province, targeting merchant caravans as well as smaller towns and villages. Sky Raiders are proud, and show great loyalty to other Sky Raiders—unless that raider belongs to an enemy clan or moot.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity, Strength

Karma Ritual: The Sky Raider spends several minutes in silent meditation beneath the open sky. Then he begins to strike his shield with a weapon, slowly at first. The striking accelerates until the Sky Raider is beating his shield at a furious rate. Just before the ritual ends, the Sky Raider stops, continuing to meditate while his shield still resonates from the furious bashing. The ritual ends when the echoes from the last drumbeat fade.

Artisan Skills: Painting, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: Sky Raiders use half-magic for tasks related to the upkeep, repair, and building of smaller airships (like the drakkar), knowledge of different airship designs and crew complements, as well as knowledge of commonly followed flight paths.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Air Sailing, Air Speaking, Avoid Blow, Danger Sense, Shield Bash, Navigation, Throwing Weapons, Unarmed Combat, Wilderness Survival, Wind Catcher

First Circle

Durability 7

Discipline Talents: Battle Shout, Climbing, Fireblood, Melee Weapons, Thread Weaving (Sky Weaving)

Second Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Great Leap

Third Circle
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Recovery tests.
Discipline Talent: Wound Balance

Fourth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Fire Heal

Journeyman Talent Options: Distract, First Impression, Iron Constitution, Leadership, Lion Heart, Second Weapon, Sprint, Swift Kick, Tactics, Tiger Spring

Fifth Circle
Overwhelming Force: The adept no longer takes Strain when using the Aggressive Attack Combat Option. If another effect grants them the same bonus, the adept instead reduces the penalties by 1.
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Damage tests made with melee or throwing weapons at or above the character's one-handed Size limit.
Discipline Talent: Battle Bellow

Sixth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Steely Stare

Seventh Circle
Recovery: The adept gains an additional Recovery test.
Discipline Talent: Down Strike

Eighth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Momentum Attack

SWORDMASTER

Swordmasters are fighters who learn the value of a well-handled weapon, training to demonstrate quickness, flash, and panache in a fight. Swordmasters often emphasize style as much as skill in combat. While swords are the most common weapon employed by this Discipline, some schools focus on and train with other weapons.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity

Karma Ritual: The Swordmaster fences against imaginary opponents. He fights the first few bouts as silent, simple exercises. Over the next half hour, the Swordmaster provides sound effects, performs acrobatic moves, and even engages in swashbuckling dialog. The ritual is completed when the last foe falls.

Artisan Skills: Acting, Dancing

Half-Magic: Swordmasters use half-magic to care for their weapons, know the history of legendary weapons, and recognize different types of melee weapons. Swordmasters may also use half-magic to identify another Swordmaster's fighting techniques, including which prominent Swordmasters may have shaped the individual's style.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Acrobatic Defense, Anticipate Blow, Danger Sense, Distract, Impressive Display, Speak Language, Tiger Spring, Unarmed Combat, Winning Smile, Wound Balance

First Circle

Durability 7

Discipline Talents: Avoid Blow, Maneuver, Melee Weapons, Taunt, Thread Weaving (Weapon Weaving)

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Discipline Talent: First Impression

Third Circle

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Interaction tests.

Discipline Talent: Riposte

Fourth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Discipline Talent: Heartening Laugh

Journeyman Talent Options: Cobra Strike, Engaging Banter, Etiquette, Gliding Stride, Graceful Exit, Lasting Impression, Lion Heart, Spot Armor Flaw, Sprint, Swift Kick

Fifth Circle

Size Up: The adept takes 2 Strain, and makes a Weapon Weaving test against an opponent's Mystic Defense. If successful, he may ask one specific question about one of that opponent's traits. This ability works like the Creature Analysis talent (p. XX), but only against Name-giver targets, and only allows one question.

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Damage tests made with a melee weapon.

Discipline Talent: Second Weapon

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Social Defense.

Discipline Talent: Disarm

Seventh Circle

Initiative: The adept adds +1 Step to his Initiative.

Discipline Talent: Resist Taunt

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.

Discipline Talent: Second Attack

THIEF

Thieves learn early to be self-reliant and how to steal. They draw power from their self-confidence and the knowledge that they depend only on themselves. The abundance of rumors governing Thief guilds means such groups may, in fact, exist, but proof or disproof of their reality remains a secret.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity, Perception

Karma Ritual: The Thief sits by himself in a darkened area and concentrates for half an hour on the knowledge that he is alone in the world and can rely, first and foremost, only on himself. With this firmly established in both heart and mind, he sets out to use one of his Discipline talents. The ritual ends as soon as the adept successfully uses the talent.

Artisan Skills: Acting, Poetry

Half-Magic: Thieves may use half-magic to build or bypass security measures intended to prevent theft, and to recognize different types of locking mechanisms.

Talents and Abilities

Initiate Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Climbing, First Impression, Great Leap, Melee Weapons, Missile Weapons, Sprint, Surprise Strike, Taunt, Throwing Weapons

First Circle

Free Talent: Danger Sense

Durability 5

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on any Charisma-based test when the adept is attempting to deceive a target.

Discipline Talents: Awareness, Lock Picking, Picking Pockets, Stealthy Stride, Thread Weaving (Thief Weaving)

Second Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Disarm Trap

Third Circle
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Initiative tests.
Discipline Talent: Haggle

Fourth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Conceal Object

Journeyman Talent Options: Blade Juggle, Call Missile, Dead Fall, Direction Arrow, Disguise Self, Graceful Exit, Mimic Voice, Second Weapon, Spot Armor Flaw, True Sight

Fifth Circle
Shadowcloak: For 2 Strain, the Difficulty Number for any tests made to detect the adept are increased by +2 for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Thief Weaving Rank

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Attack tests against a Surprised or Blindsided opponent.

Discipline Talent: Engaging Banter

Sixth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Slough Blame

Seventh Circle
Initiative: The adept adds +1 Step to his Initiative.
Discipline Talent: Fast Hand

Eighth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: False Sight

TROUBADOUR

Troubadours serve as entertainers, storytellers, actors, and songsmiths. As such, they represent the closest thing to a historian or scholar that common people usually see.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Perception

Karma Ritual: The Troubadour performs a ballad or skit before an audience of at least two others. He can juggle, joke, tell tall tales, or sing serious legends. Half an hour after he starts, the Troubadour finishes the performance with a short story, ending the tale with the phrase, "And there it ends, for such is the truth of the thing."

Artisan Skills: Body Painting, Embroidery, Craftsman

Half-Magic: Troubadours may make Half-Magic tests for knowledge of legends, myths, and folklore of their home province's lands and people. They may also make Half-Magic tests to identify instruments and performing arts of different areas.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Conversation, Haggle, Impressive Display, Melee Weapons, Read and Write Language, Speak Language, Taunt, Throwing Weapons, Winning Smile

First Circle

Free talent: Entertainer. The adept is experienced in the ways of performing before a crowd. This talent works like the Entertainer skill (p. XX), but does not require the adept to choose a specialty.

Durability 5

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Interaction tests

Discipline Talents: Emotion Song, First Impression, Heartening Laugh, Item History, Thread Weaving (Story Weaving)

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Etiquette

Third Circle

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on any test to gain or recall information.
Discipline Talent: Empathic Sense

Fourth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Research

Journeyman Talent Options: Air Speaking, Blade Juggle, Diplomacy, Disguise Self, Engaging Banter, Graceful Exit, Hypnotize, Leadership, Lion Heart, Mimic Voice

Fifth Circle

One Last Word: If the adept fails a test against a target's Social Defense, the adept may take 2 Strain to add a Karma Die to the test result. One Last Word can only be used once per failed test.
Karma: Once per round the adept may spend a Karma Point to add to another character's test by offering encouragement. The target must be able to hear and/or see the Troubadour.
Discipline Talent: Inspire Others

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Lasting Impression

Seventh Circle

Initiative: The adept adds +1 Step to his Initiative.
Discipline Talent: Resist Taunt

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Slough Blame

WARRIOR

Warriors are fighters and soldiers trained to use magic to enhance their combat techniques. They often form groups with other Warriors, living in seclusion in self-sufficient settlements similar to monastic orders.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Strength, Toughness

Karma Ritual: The Warrior sits cross-legged, holding a weapon across his knees. After a few minutes of meditation he levitates, as if using the Air Dance talent; the ritual use of this talent does not cause him any Strain damage. The Warrior then performs a series of four exercises: the earth defense, the water defense, the fire attack, and the air attack. The ritual ends when the Warrior completes the final move of the air attack.

Artisan Skills: Sculpting, Rune Carving

Half-Magic: Warriors can use half-magic when caring for or repairing their weapons and armor, knowledge of military tactics and strategy (recognizing the safest approach to a target when planning a battle, for instance) and to recall events of Barsaive's military history. The also use half-magic to recognize warrior orders, famous ancient Warriors, and ancient arms and armor.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Acrobatic Defense, Anticipate Blow, Danger Sense, Distract, Fireblood, Maneuver, Missile Weapons, Shield Bash, Tactics, Unarmed Combat

First Circle

Durability 7

Discipline Talents: Avoid Blow, Melee Weapons, Tiger Spring, Thread Weaving (War Weaving), Wood Skin

Second Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Wound Balance

Third Circle
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on a Recovery test.
Discipline Talent: Air Dance

Fourth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Waterfall Slam

Journeyman Talent Options: Disarm, Etiquette, Leadership, Life Check, Lion Heart, Momentum Attack, Second Weapon, Spot Armor Flaw, Steely Stare, Swift Kick

Fifth Circle
Battle Rites: The adept spends 30 minutes in meditation and selects a talent. During any encounter over the next 24 hours, the adept may activate Battle Rites by spending a Karma Point as a Simple action. This allows the adept to reduce the Strain cost of the selected talent by 1 once per round for the duration of the encounter. Battle Rites may be used in multiple encounters, but requires a Karma Point be spent for each encounter.

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on any Damage test made in close combat.

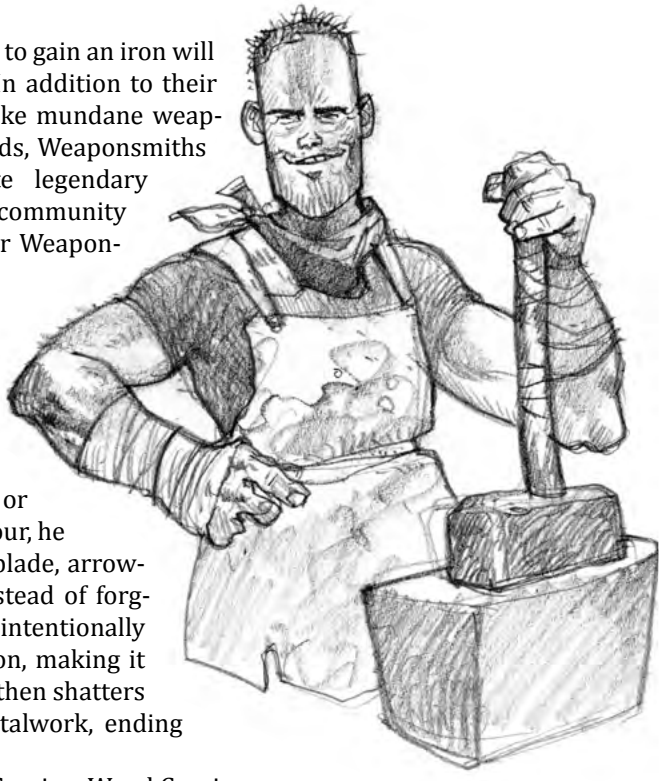
Discipline Talent: Earth Skin

Sixth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Temper Flesh

Seventh Circle
Recovery: The adept gains an additional Recovery test.
Discipline Talent: Crushing Blow

Eighth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Second Attack

WEAPONSMITH



A Weaponsmith trains to gain an iron will and a highly critical eye. In addition to their role as craftsmen that make mundane weapons, armor, and other goods, Weaponsmiths help identify and create legendary weapons. Nearly every community places great value on their Weaponsmiths.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: The Weaponsmith heats a thin strip of metal in a hot fire or forge. Over the next half hour, he fashions the metal into a blade, arrowhead, or spear-tip, but instead of forging an effective item, he intentionally tempers the metal too soon, making it brittle. The Weaponsmith then shatters the defective piece of metalwork, ending the ritual.

Artisan Skills: Rune Carving, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: Weaponsmiths may use half-magic when caring for weapons and armor and to recognize different types of weapons and armor used or worn by different Namegiver races or their creators.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Awareness, Danger Sense, Disarm Trap, Fireblood, First Impression, Haggle, Shield Bash, Speak Language, Read and Write Language

First Circle

Free talent: Craftsman. This talent is similar to the Craftsman skill (p. XX), allowing the adept to on tests to craft and repair mundane items, including weapons and armor.

Durability 5

Karma: The adept can spend a Karma Point on any test to craft or repair an item.

Discipline Talents: Forge Weapon, Item History, Melee Weapons, Steel Thought, Thread Weaving (Thread Smithing)

Second Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Conversation

Third Circle
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on Recovery tests.
Discipline Talent: Suppress Curse

Fourth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Wound Balance

Journeyman Talent Options: Battle Shout, Diplomacy, Earth Skin, Etiquette, Fire Heal, Heartening Laugh, Iron Constitution, Leadership, Missile Weapons, Resist Taunt

Fifth Circle
Traveling Smithy: For 2 Strain, the adept uses magic to create an improvised forge, provided he has the minimum requirements necessary, such as a fire for working metal. The smithy lasts for one day, and gives a -3 penalty to any tests made that use it. Only the Weaponsmith may use the forge for tests.

Karma: The adept can spend a Karma Point on Damage tests made with a weapon he crafted.

Discipline Talent: Forge Armor

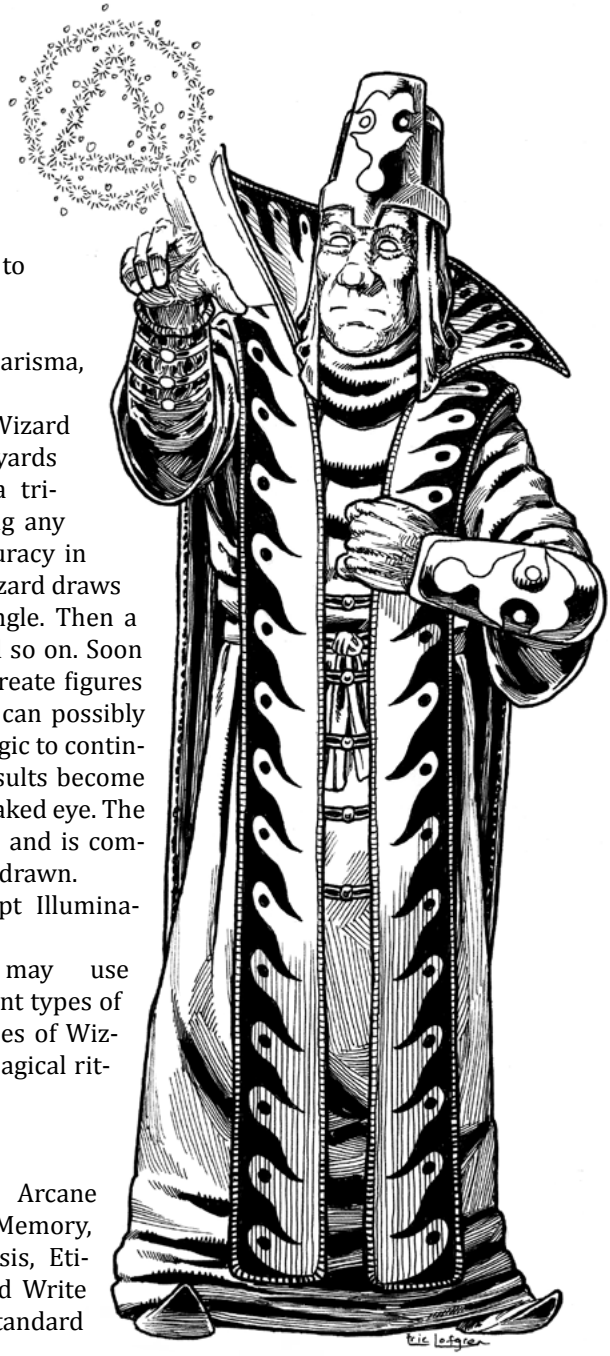
Sixth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Temper Flesh

Seventh Circle
Mystic Armor: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Armor.
Discipline Talent: Spot Armor Flaw

Eighth Circle
Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Lion Heart

WIZARD

Wizards are spellcasters focusing on the theoretical aspects of magic. Those who follow other spellcasting Disciplines sometimes disparage Wizards as being "book magicians," but it is interesting to note that very few have the guts to call a Wizard that to his face.



Important Attributes: Charisma, Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: The Wizard draws a circle at least two yards in diameter, then inscribes a triangle within the circle. Making any corrections necessary for accuracy in drawing the first circle, the Wizard draws another circle inside the triangle. Then a triangle within that circle, and so on. Soon the Wizard will be forced to create figures smaller than hand and stylus can possibly draw. He uses the power of magic to continue to draw, even when the results become too small to be seen with the naked eye. The sequence ends with a triangle and is complete once this final triangle is drawn.

Artisan Skills: Manuscript Illumination, Robe Embroidery

Half-Magic: Wizards may use half-magic to recognize different types of magic use, identify specific uses of Wizardry, and for knowledge of magical rituals.

Talents and Abilities

Novice Talent Options: Arcane Mutterings, Awareness, Book Memory, Conversation, Creature Analysis, Etiquette, Item History, Read and Write Language, Speak Language, Standard Matrix

First Circle

Durability 3
Free talent: Standard Matrix
Free talent: Standard Matrix
Discipline Talents: Dispel Magic, Patterncraft, Research, Spellcasting, Thread Weaving (Wizardry)

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Astral Sight

Third Circle

Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point on any test to recall information (including Knowledge tests).
Discipline Talent: Tenacious Weave

Fourth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Steel Thought

Journeyman Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Diplomacy, Direction Arrow, Enhanced Matrix, Evidence Analysis, Hypnotize, Lifesight, Power Mask, Resist Taunt, True Sight

Fifth Circle

Free talent: One of the adept's free Standard Matrix talents is upgraded to an Enhanced Matrix.
Book Mage: For 1 Strain, the adept gains a +5 to a Thread Weaving test to reattune on the fly if they are looking at the spell in their grimoire.
Karma: The adept may spend a Karma Point to change the range of a spell from Self to Touch.
Discipline Talent: Astral Interference

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Willforce

Seventh Circle

Mystic Armor: The adept adds +1 to his Mystic Armor.
Discipline Talent: Hold Thread

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +3 to his Mystic Defense.
Discipline Talent: Suppress Curse

TALENTS

Where does an adept find the magic to power his talents? Is it an external force to be harnessed, or a light that comes from within, a ray of hope in the face of the Horrors' darkness?
• Aerleen Hearthshade, Troubadour and Magical Scholar •

Talents are the primary way an adept taps into and draws magical energy into the physical world. How he uses this energy is what defines his Discipline. Though the talents available to your character are limited by his Discipline, how effectively and creatively he uses them is only limited by your imagination.

While all talents are magical, some talents are more blatantly magical than others. Some talents allow an adept to perform feats that non-magically gifted folk can only dream of. Others are indistinguishable from their mundane counterpart, but due to their magical nature are easier to learn and improve than skills.

Talents draw on every aspect of the game system: tests, combat, spell magic, and so on. The brief explanations of these elements are referenced to the more complete explanations provided elsewhere in this book.

Using Talents

When an adept uses a talent, he usually makes a test to determine how successfully he used that talent. This test can replace other types of tests, including Attack, Damage, or Initiative tests. The Step Number used for the test is usually determined by adding an Attribute Step to the talent's Rank. The Difficulty Number can be found in the individual talent descriptions, but is often based on the target's Physical, Mystic, or Social Defense.

If a talent has an extended duration, a character can only be affected by a single use of that talent—multiple uses do not stack. If targeted by another use of the same talent, the character is affected by the greater of the two effects, and the lesser one does nothing (the adept still pays any required strain cost).

A character can sometimes extend the duration of his talent effects by using the talent again on the same target. The duration is extended by the amount of the new result, but overrides any duration that might remain from the prior use, effectively 'overwriting' the prior use of the talent.

Talents frequently manifest their magical nature through special effects—for example, Stealthy Stride deepens shadows and muffles the sound of the user's movement. Some talents have distinctive visual cues or indicators, and these can be more noticeable if a character spends karma to boost their effect.

Many of the talents listed in this chapter offer suggested descriptions and effects, but players are encouraged to customize or adapt those descriptions to fit their personal style and add flavor to the character's use of their talents.

Talent Tests

To make a Talent test (usually referred to by the name of the talent, i.e., Missile Weapons test), the adept rolls the dice indicated for the Talent Step against a Difficulty Number. For the test to be successful, the result must be at least equal to the Difficulty Number. If the result exceeds the Difficulty Number by a suitable margin, the adept may have achieved extra success levels, which could increase or otherwise beneficially change the talent's effect.

Replacement Effects

Some talents replace or substitute their Step for a Step Number used in another type of test. For example, the Air Dance talent replaces the adept's Dexterity Step with the Talent Step for the purpose of determining Initiative. If an adept has multiple talents that replace the same type of test, he can only benefit from one of those talents—using two would mean replacing the original Step once, and then replacing the Step again. For example. if the adept has two talents that substitute for his Strength Step for Damage tests (such as Crushing Blow and Down Strike), he would have to choose which talent to use.

Talents and Concentration

Some talents require concentration, requiring the adept to dedicate their Standard Action to maintain the effect. Unless noted otherwise in the talent description, this works the same way as maintaining concentration on a spell (see Concentration, p. XX).

Special Uses and Exceptions

The individual talent descriptions in this chapter give detailed rules for using each talent. Any special uses or exceptions to normal talent use are noted in the talent description.

Talents and Karma

One advantage talents have over skills is the ability to push them a little harder through the use of Karma. When an adept uses a talent, he may spend a Karma Point to roll a Karma Die, adding it to the test result. Spending Karma on a talent does not normally improve the result of any other tests that occur as a result.

Bardin, a Warrior, is using his Melee Weapons talent to attack his opponent. Since Melee Weapons is a Warrior talent, Bardin may spend a Karma Point to increase his chance of success. This Karma Point only affects the Melee Weapons test. If the attack is successful, Bardin does not get to roll his Karma Die again on the Damage test.

Helena, a Cavalryman, has Charge as a talent. This substitutes its Step Number for her Strength Step on Damage tests. Helena may spend a Karma Point and roll a Karma Die with the Damage test enhanced by Charge.

Talents that are always active and not rolled or do not enhance any tests, such as True Sight, do not benefit from the use of Karma. Unless stated otherwise, an adept can spend only one Karma Point when using a given talent, but sometimes multiple talents or other abilities can result in multiple Karma Dice being rolled on a single test.

Adepts who follow multiple Disciplines may have talents that are available to more than one of their Disciplines. Regardless of how many Disciplines the talent is associated with, the adept may spend only one Karma Point on a single talent, unless otherwise noted in the talent description.

If an adept has a Discipline ability that allows Karma to be spent on a particular type of test (for example, a Fifth Circle Warrior may spend Karma on damage tests in close combat), that ability does stack with talents used for that type of test. In this example, a Warrior using the Crushing Blow talent could spend two Karma on the test—one for the talent, and one for his Fifth Circle Discipline ability.

A character may not spend Karma on a talent that is not part of his Discipline. This includes talents available as a racial ability—like a windling's Astral Sight—learned through Versatility or granted by a magical item or other effect.

Dispelling Talents

Because talents are powered by magic, player and gamemaster characters can interrupt or end an opponent's use of a talent by using magic-disrupting abilities such as Dispel Magic (p.XX). The Difficulty Number for dispelling a talent is based on the talent rank. Only talents with an extended duration can be dispelled this way. Some talents are more or less resistant to being dispelled—these talents note the Dispel Difficulty in their description. See Dispelling Magic, p.XX, for more information.

Talent Duration

The effects of some talents vary in duration. Many talents have a duration determined by multiplying the talent rank by a given time unit (rounds, minutes, hours, days, etc.). For example, the effect of Engaging Banter lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Engaging Banter rank. In most cases, if the adept using the talent is knocked unconscious, the talent's effect ends.

Talent Range

Many talents have a variable range based on the talent rank, or a test result to determine a viable target, measure their effects, or determine the area affected.

GAME TERMS

The talent descriptions describe how to use each talent. The text also describes the effects of the talent, and boldface entries above each description summarize important game information. This information falls into the following categories.

Step Number

The Talent Step is usually determined by adding the adept's Talent Rank to the Attribute Step listed under the "Step:" notation. If the talent requires the adept to make a Talent test, the Step Number is used to determine the dice the player rolls.

For example, an adept with a Perception Step of 6 and the Spellcasting talent at Rank 3 would have a Spellcasting Step of 9 (6+3=9).

The Step/Dice Table shows that Step 9 uses D8+D6. Some talents use only a Talent Rank—no Attribute Step is added to the Talent Rank in this case. Some talents do not require a test—their effect is determined differently, as detailed in the talent description.

Action

Certain talents require an adept to perform different types of Actions. Different types of Actions indicate varying types of effort the adept has to put into using that talent (and many other abilities). The type of Action required to use a talent is indicated in the "Action:" notation in the talent's characteristics. A talent requires the indicated Action every time it is used, which normally means every time a test is made. There are five types of Actions: Standard, Simple, Free, Sustained, and NA (Not Applicable).

Standard Actions require most of the adept's attention or govern much of what he can do in one combat round. An adept can use only one Standard action per combat round. Note that some talents explicitly allow several tests be made as part of using that Talent. For example, adepts with the Claw Frenzy talent can make several Attack tests as part of using the talent, because the rules for that talent allow it.

Simple Actions require little effort. There is normally no restriction to the number of Simple Actions an adept can perform, but some groups may want to limit the number of Simple Actions available in one combat round. Simple Actions differ from Free Actions (see below) in that they are usually independent from other Actions the adept makes, but often indicate some sort of obvious activity, such as speaking, moving, or making gestures.

Free Actions, like Simple Actions, are not limited, but are not usually independent from other Actions. They are typically used as part of an adept's general defensive or enhancement abilities. For example, using a talent that enhances Damage Tests is often a Free Action, resulting from the initial attack that used a Standard or Simple Action. Except where otherwise noted, Free Actions are usually not indicated by any special visible effects, but may intensify an existing visible effect. For example, all characters continuously dodge and evade in combat, which is represented by their Physical Defense. An adept using Avoid Blow to dodge attacks might look as if he did so with more effort than normal. Free Actions are normally the only type of Action an adept can use when it is not his turn—they are often reactions to other Actions in this capacity.

Sustained Actions take more than one round to perform, and use the adept's Standard Actions over the course of several consecutive rounds, minutes, or hours, as indicated in the talent description. They usually apply more special rules to how they are used than other talents, or require the player and gamemaster to determine how many Standard Actions are used. Sustained Actions often require complicated activities before they can be used, and these may differ from use to use. While some talents might require efforts over multiple rounds, they are only Sustained Actions if they actually require a Standard Action to be used several times in a row before the talent takes effect. For example, the Book Memory talent requires a Standard Action, despite the adept only being able to memorize a specific number of pages per minute, but the memorization takes place after the Book Memory test is made. The Forge talent, on the other hand, requires the adept to work on a weapon for some time before making the Forge Weapon test, and therefore uses a Sustained Action.

Some talent Actions are shown as NA or Not Applicable. These talents do not use Actions—they are usually active all of the time and typically do not use Talent tests.

Strain

Talents that cause Strain drain small amounts of an adept's life energy to fuel their use. The "Strain:" notation shows the number of Damage Points the adept takes each time he uses the talent. An adept always takes full, unmodified damage from Strain—no armor provides protection—and may take Strain damage multiple times from a single talent during a round. Unless specified, Strain never causes Wounds.

Girr, a winding Beastmaster, knows the Claw Frenzy talent at Rank 3. She may make up to three attacks per round using this talent. Frenzy has a Strain cost of 1. If Girr uses Claw Frenzy to make three attacks, she would take 3 Strain damage.

Skill Use

Many talents can be learned as skills, that is, as the mundane version of the same ability. If a character can learn a given talent as a skill, then this entry will show Yes. Learning skills is harder, takes longer, and costs more, but does allow a character to use a talent without magic. This is the most common way for characters to learn talents that are not available to their Discipline.

If the talent can be learned as a skill, this entry will also indicate a tier cost in parentheses, for example (Journeyman). This refers to the Legend Point cost to increase the skill version of the talent. See Improving Skill Ranks, p. XX, for more information on learning and increasing skills.

Sometimes there are differences between the magical and non-magical versions of a talent. These are noted as part of the talent description.

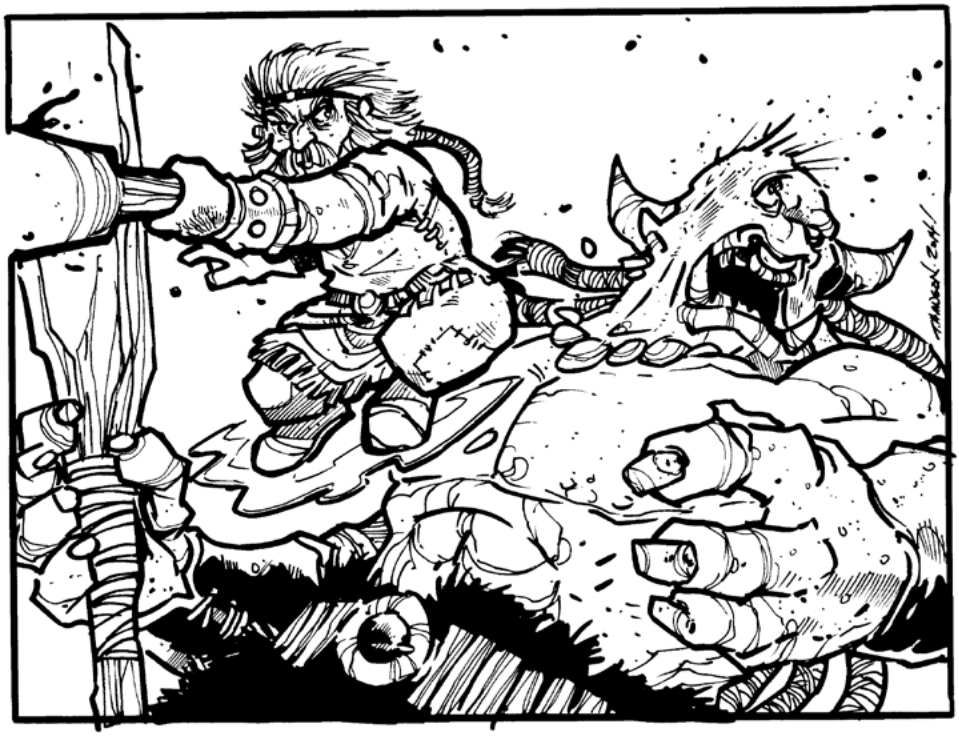
Talent Descriptions

Acrobatic Defense

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept flips, spins, somersaults, or performs similar acrobatic maneuvers, making him harder to hit. He must be able to move and have sufficient space to maneuver in. The adept makes an Acrobatic Defense test against the highest Physical Defense of any opponents in close combat range (2 yards). The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense for each success scored for the remainder of the round. If the adept is knocked down or otherwise finds his movement restricted, he loses this bonus.

Acrobatic Defense cannot be used in the same round as Anticipate Blow.



Air Dance

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Free
Strain: 2 **Skill Use:** No

The adept floats on a thin cushion of air, allowing him to perform quick, gliding movements and rapid attacks. Air Dance requires that the adept be able to move. Windlings may use this talent while flying, but it cannot be combined with other talents that use forms of magical flight, such as Gliding Stride.

The adept substitutes his Air Dance Step for his Dexterity Step when making his Initiative test (see Determine Initiative, p.XX), suffering Initiative penalties for armor as normal. If making a close combat attack that round, the adept compares his Initiative test result against his opponent's. If he scores three successes, the adept may make an additional close combat attack after his opponent's action.

This talent does not allow an adept to remain suspended in midair, or do anything to reduce falling damage.

Air Sailing

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept knows how to work the rigging, tiller, and oars of airships. The adept makes an Air Sailing (5) test to help propel an airship. If successful, he counts as one crew member for each success scored.

An adept who wishes to join an airship crew must know Air Sailing at Rank 1 or higher. Positions of command require greater ability: the higher an adept's Air Sailing Rank, the bigger the ship he can command or the higher the position he can fill within a ship's crew.

For an airship to stay airborne, at least 25 percent of the required crew must make successful Air Sailing tests each hour. For example, an airship with a crew of twenty needs at least five rowers to succeed to stay afloat. This might be an equivalent number, such as two rowers, one of whom achieved four successes on his test. If at least 50 percent of the crew make successful tests, the airship can maneuver at its current altitude, dive, or climb slowly in a straight line. If 75 percent of the crew are successful, the airship can speed up, maneuver while climbing, or perform aerobatics.

Air Speaking

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept communicates without vocalizing, moving his lips and mouthing the words he wants to speak, and makes an Air Speaking test. The desired targets hear the adept speaking as if he were conversing normally, regardless of other noise in the area. There is no limit to the number of targets that can be affected, but all targets must be within Rank x10 yards. The adept speaks in a language he knows; if those listening do not know that language, they cannot understand what is being said. This talent is frequently used to lecture at large gatherings.

Animal Bond

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept develops a bond of trust with an animal, making an Animal Bond test against the animal's Social Defense. If successful, the animal takes a Neutral attitude toward him (the Gamemaster's Guide has more information on attitudes). The adept may make additional tests to further improve the animal's attitude, but must spend at least one day with the animal between tests, treating it well during that time. Each

subsequent improvement requires an additional success on the Animal Bond test (so it requires two successes to improve from Neutral to Friendly).

Once the animal's attitude increases to Loyal, it willingly takes risks for the adept and expects appropriate rewards for doing so. (This is more easily accomplished for an animal than for a Namegiver friend. For example, all a dog really wants is lots of affection and enough food.) A Loyal animal will accompany the adept on adventures if he so desires, and is referred to as an animal companion. An adept can maintain a number of animal companions equal to his rank in Animal Bond.

An animal will not maintain a better attitude towards an adept than the adept shows to it. As a result, mistreatment, neglect, or abandonment can offset the talent's effects, worsening the animal's attitude towards the character. If an animal companion's attitude drops below Neutral, talents or abilities that target animal companions will no longer work.

This talent can only be used on non-sentient, natural creatures. It cannot be used to improve the attitudes of Horrors, Horror constructs, or sentient beings of any kind.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this talent requires one week of time to pass between tests to improve the animal's attitude beyond Neutral.

Animal Companion Durability

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

An animal companion's ability to take damage is improved in a similar manner to the Durability ability (p. XX), with each rank increasing the companion's Health Ratings by +5. The maximum number of animal companions that can benefit from this talent is equal to the adept's Animal Companion Durability rank. An animal companion may only benefit from a single Durability-type talent at a time.

Animal Possession

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 2 **Skill Use:** No

The adept places his spirit into the body of an animal by touching it and making an Animal Possession test against the animal's Mystic Defense. If successful, his spirit takes possession of the animal's body. The adept controls the animal's body for a number of hours equal to his Animal Possession rank or until animal and adept touch again. While using this talent, the adept's physical form slumps into a coma-like state. He retains his own intellect while in the animal's body, but cannot perform any actions that the animal is normally incapable of, such as speaking.

An unwilling animal may attempt to resist the talent at the time of possession by making a Willpower test against the adept's Animal Possession Step. If successful, the animal prevents the possession occurring, although the adept can try again. Otherwise the talent functions normally and the animal may take no further independent actions until the possession ends.

When the talent ends the adept's spirit returns to his proper body. If the animal body is killed while this talent is in effect, the possession ends immediately, and the adept suffers any damage dealt to the host animal (no armor protects from this dam-

age).

Animal Talk

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept can understand animals and creatures, talking with them by imitating their own forms of communication and making an Animal Talk test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the adept can talk to and understand the target for a number of minutes equal to his Animal Talk rank. This talent does not compel the animal or creature to communicate with the adept, it merely makes communication possible.

The gamemaster is advised to treat animals as if they were gamemaster characters, using the rules for Social Interactions (see the Gamemaster's Guide), but he should keep in mind that animals aren't as intelligent as Namegivers and perceive the world differently.

Animal Training

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept trains an animal to obey simple commands such as "scout ahead," "smell that," and "go home," as well as the more usual "stop," "heel," "fetch," and "kill." An animal can be taught a maximum number of commands equal to the adept's Animal Training rank.

Each command requires a separate successful use of Animal Training and the animal must hold a Friendly attitude towards the trainer. The adept spends a day with the animal, focusing on teaching it the new command, and reviewing any commands it already knows, then makes an Animal Training test against the creature's Social Defense. If successful, the animal understands and obeys the command. Trained animals only respond to commands given by characters they are Friendly with, including their trainer.

The animal remembers all of the commands it has learned for a number of months equal to the adept's Animal Training rank. If an adept tries to maintain too large a collection of trained animals, he will find their training slipping unless he constantly works with them. If the adept neglects an animal's training, it will forget all of its training when the talent's duration ends. The adept may renew the duration while the talent is in effect by spending a day with the animal and making a new Animal Training test.

In addition to teaching the animal commands, the adept can grant the animal a +1 bonus to a skill or talent the animal knows, including their natural Attack Step. At the gamemaster's discretion, the adept can use this ability to teach the animal companion skills the animal doesn't know, but would conceivably be able to perform. These enhancements must be maintained the same way as other commands.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this skill only allows the character to teach commands, it does not allow the trainer to increase the animal's natural skills or talents.

Anticipate Blow

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept anticipates attacks made against him, making him harder to hit. The adept must have a higher Initiative result than his target, and makes an Anticipate Blow test against the target's Mystic Defense. Each success adds +2 to his Physical Defense against the target's attacks until the end of the round. The adept can use this talent a number of times equal to his Anticipate Blow rank each round, taking the strain for each new target.

After a successful Anticipate Blow test, the adept also adds +2 per success as a bonus to the first Attack test they make against that target. Anticipate Blow does not convey any additional attacks—the adept must use other talents or skills to attack as normal.

Mica has Anticipate Blow at Rank 5, and rolls two successes on his test. He gains a +4 bonus to his Physical Defense against attacks from that opponent this round. When he attacks that target with his Melee Weapons talent, he adds +4 Steps. He also uses his Second Weapon talent, but does not receive a bonus to that test, since Anticipate Blow only adds a bonus to the first Attack test.

Arcane Mutterings

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept confuses others by muttering dire, largely incomprehensible, warnings and making an Arcane Mutterings test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, the target characters become confused and are considered Harried for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Arcane Mutterings rank. Due to the disconcerting nature of the talent, this penalty also applies to the target's Social Defense. During this time, the adept must continually "mutter" or the effect ends; this requires his concentration. If the adept achieves extra successes, those affected by the talent will take no hostile actions against the adept or his obvious companions—so long as no one takes any hostile action against them. Arcane Mutterings is ineffective against targets already engaged in combat.

Armor Mount

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept wills an increase to his mount's natural armor, making an Armor Mount test against the animal's Mystic Defense. If successful, the adept adds his Armor Mount rank to the animal's Physical Armor for a number of minutes equal to his

Armor Mount rank.

Astral Interference

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept increases the local astral background interference to make spellcasting more difficult. He makes an Astral Interference test against the highest Mystic Defense within Rank x4 yards. If successful, a shimmering wave emanates from the adept to cover the area. All Spellcasting tests made inside the area, or that target someone in the area, suffer a -2 penalty per success for Rank rounds. This penalty also affects astral sensing tests (p. XX).

Astral Sight

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept sees into the astral plane, and is able to view the astral patterns and imprints. He makes an Astral Sight test against a base Difficulty Number of 6, modified by the local conditions of astral space. If successful, he can see the astral imprints, magical auras, and patterns of any target with a Mystic Defense lower than the test result.

Each use of the talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the Astral Sight rank, and the adept can only see astral impressions that are within his Astral Sight rank x10 yards.

More information on perceiving astral space and the Difficulty Numbers associated with it are explained in the Workings of Magic chapter (see Using Astral Sensing, p.XX). Examining magical items using Astral Sight does not provide any information about the item's history or reveal any Key Knowledges (p.XX).

Avoid Blow

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept avoids injury by dodging or parrying blows directed against him. When attacked in close or ranged combat, the adept may make an Avoid Blow test against his opponent's Attack test result. If successful, the adept avoids the blow—he sees the attack coming and dodges or parries it at the last moment. The adept can avoid a maximum number of attacks equal to his Avoid Blow rank each round, but only one attempt per Attack test. An adept cannot use Avoid Blow if he is blindsided or surprised by his attacker.

Awareness

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept has trained to be more aware of his surroundings, noticing things that he might otherwise miss. When trying to spot someone or something—including hidden vaults, secret doors, or disguised or concealed characters—the adept makes an

Awareness test instead of a Perception test. If successful, he notices the target of his search if it is within short range of Visibility (see the Gamemaster's Guide, p. XX).

With three or more successes, he notices the target within medium range of Visibility. If the adept possess the Disarm Trap talent or skill, he may use this to find traps and wards.

Banish

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept forces a spirit back to its native astral environment. He makes a Banish test against the spirit's Mystic Defense. If the spirit was summoned through the use of a spell or talent, use the Dispel Difficulty for the spell or talent (see Dispelling Magic, p. XX). If successful, the spirit is banished, and any tasks it may still owe its summoner are lost. If attempting to banish a type of spirit the adept does not know how to summon, an extra success is required.

This talent cannot be used to affect Horrors or Horror constructs.

Bank Shot

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept ricochets projectiles or thrown weapons off objects, bypassing obstructions such as cover, to strike an obscured, but visible, target. The adept points out the objects off which he intends to ricochet his shot, to a number equal to his Bank Shot Rank, then makes a Bank Shot test against the target's Mystic Defense. (p.XX).

If successful, the adept may make a ranged Attack test that ignores cover penalties. Additional successes give the target a -2 penalty each to any active defenses (e.g. Avoid Blow) attempted against a successful Attack test. With a successful Attack test, projectile or thrown weapons ricochet off the designated objects and strike the target, doing damage as normal. Use of this talent destroys any arrows, bolts, or other projectiles used in the attack. Throwing weapons like daggers are nicked and scratched, but remain usable afterwards.

Battle Bellow

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept issues a great bellow, inspiring his allies and intimidating his enemies. The targets must be within the adept's Battle Bellow rank x10 yards. The adept makes a Battle Bellow test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target.

If successful, enemies affected by the talent suffer a -1 penalty to their tests per success scored until the end of the following round. Friendly targets gain the number of successes as a bonus to their close-combat Attack tests.

Targets which are immune to fear are immune to this talent's effects.

Battle Shout

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept issues a loud shout, intimidating a single foe. The target must be within the adept's Battle Shout rank x5 yards. The adept makes a Battle Shout test against his opponent's Social Defense. If successful, the target incurs a -2 penalty for each success to his tests until the end of the following round. Each use against the same opponent in a given encounter increases the Difficulty Number by 5.

Targets which are immune to fear are immune to this talent's effect.

Blade Juggle

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 (see text) **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept creates a whirling, flashing barrier of knives, daggers, or other weapons between himself and his opponents. He makes a Blade Juggle test against a Difficulty Number equal to the combined Size of the weapons being juggled, plus the highest Damage Step among the blades.

If successful, the adept begins juggling the blades and adds the combined Size of the weapons to his Physical Defense. If an attack fails to beat the higher Physical Defense, it is deflected and the adept may choose to counterattack, making a Blade Juggle test as a ranged attack test. The adept chooses which weapon is used in the counterattack, determining range and damage as normal. Once used to counterattack, a juggled weapon may not be used again and its size is subtracted from the Physical Defense bonus.

The adept may not juggle any weapon with a Size higher than his one-handed limit. The range increment of a weapon not designed for throwing is 6 yards. The adept may maintain the juggle, but must use his Standard action and take strain each round he wishes to continue.

Brighton attempts to juggle three broadswords—each a Size 3 weapon with Damage Step 5—so he makes a Blade Juggle (14) test (3 × 3 = 9, 9 + 5 = 14), and succeeds with a result of 18. He adds +9 to his Physical Defense (3 x 3 = 9), and takes 1 strain.

Later that round, Brighton is attacked by an ork. The ork does not hit, due to Brighton's increased Physical Defense. The ork is within range, so Brighton decides to counterattack, and rolls a 15 on his Blade Juggle test, high enough to hit his attacker.

Brighton determines damage as normal, using his Strength Step of 6. His Physical Defense bonus drops to +6 from the loss of the broadsword.

Blood Share

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept transfers damage between himself and a Loyal character or creature. He first cuts himself and the target, then touches the incisions together and makes a Blood Share test. The result is the maximum number of Damage Points that can be transferred between both parties. For example, an adept might transfer only 7 Damage from a test result of 10, or he might transfer the whole amount of 10. Transferring only 7 points to himself would reduce the target's Current Damage by 7, not the full 10 points.

Transferred damage never causes a Wound, but if the number of Damage Points transferred causes the adept's or the target's Current Damage total to equal or exceed one of his Health Ratings, the adept or target passes out or dies, respectively. Members of the Cavalryman Discipline coined the term "blood betrayer" for anyone who kills another character, mount, or animal companion through the use of this talent.

Book Memory

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept commits the content of a book or other written text to memory for use at a later time. He need not know the language that the text is written in. The adept makes a Book Memory test against the book's Mystic Defense—typically 5 for ordinary books, but higher for magical texts. The Mystic Defense of a grimoire is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the highest-Circle spell it contains (see Grimoires, p.XX, and Dispelling Magic, p.XX). If successful, the adept memorizes a number of pages per minute equal to his Book Memory rank. While the book remains memorized the content is readily accessible—the adept can read, transcribe, or look up information as though he had an actual copy of the book in front of him. An adept can have memorized a maximum number of texts at one time equal to his Book Memory rank. He may voluntarily discard currently memorized texts in order to memorize new ones.

Borrow Sense

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept temporarily takes one of an animal's five senses—touch, taste, hearing, smell, or sight—for use as his own. He does not literally "see through the animal's eyes," the adept's own sense becomes like that of the animal. The adept touches the animal and makes a Borrow Sense test against the animal's Mystic Defense.

If successful, he gains all the benefits (and limitations) of the borrowed sense for

a number of minutes equal to his Borrow Sense rank, during which time the animal temporarily loses use of the sense.

Because the loss of a sense is a distressing, disorienting experience, only animals Loyal toward the adept—or those under the effect of a controlling spell or talent,such as Dominate Beast—willingly submits to this talent. If the adept attempts to take a sense from an unwilling animal, he must achieve an extra success with his Borrow Sense test.

The gamemaster has the final word on the specific effects of borrowing a given animal's sense. Some senses give the adept new sensory abilities—a bat's sonar, a snake's ability to smell by "tasting" the air, and a cat's night vision are a few such examples. In other situations, borrowed senses improve the adept's existing senses—the sharp vision of an eagle, and the keen hearing or smell of a dog are a few such animal senses. In these cases, the bonus provided by an animal's Enhanced Senses ability (see the Gamemaster's Guide) should serve as a guideline, typically adding to the adept's relevant Perception tests.

Call Animal Companion

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept magically calls an animal companion by making a Call Animal Companion test against the animal's Mystic Defense. If successful, the animal senses the adept's call and attempts to make its way to him as fast as possible. The animal companion must be within the adept's Call Animal Companion rank ×100 yards to hear the call.

Call Missile

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept causes unbroken ammunition or weapons that he has fired or thrown to return to him by making a Call Missile test. The result determines how many projectiles or thrown weapons fly back to him, tumbling and rotating into proper position, before dropping into their quiver, other container, or stopping in the adept's hand. Call Missile affects all missiles and thrown weapons used by the adept within Call Missile rank ×20 yards, provided there is a relatively straight, unblocked path to the object. The talent will extract missiles or thrown weapons from targets' bodies, but objects that are secured or "locked away" (secured by a rope or behind a closed door) cannot be retrieved.

Charge

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Free
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept increases the effectiveness of a successful Charging Attack, using his Charge Step in place of his Strength Step for the Damage test. The adept must be mounted, and the normal rules for Charging Attacks otherwise apply (see Mounted Combat, p.XX). The adept may make a Charge test in place of a Strength test to avoid

losing his weapon or being dismounted by lance or spear attacks. The adept's mount does not benefit from this talent.

Claw Frenzy

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 (see text) **Skill Use:** No

The adept makes multiple frenzied attacks in close combat in the same round. The adept must be using the Claw Shape talent. He declares how many attacks he wants to attempt before making any Attack tests, up to a number equal to his Claw Frenzy Rank, taking 1 Strain per attack declared. The adept then makes Claw Frenzy tests as Attack tests until he has made the declared number of attacks. The Claw Frenzy continues only as long as the adept successfully hits with his attacks—if any attacks miss, the series ends, though the adept still takes the full amount of Strain based the number of attacks he was attempting. Claw Frenzy cannot be combined with any talents that allow additional attacks in close or ranged combat, such as Second Attack, Swift Kick, or Momentum Attack.

Claw Shape

Step: Rank+STR+3
Action: Simple
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept transforms his hands into fearsome claws, using his Claw Shape Step for Damage tests in unarmed combat. These are considered weapons for the purposes of targeting, though may not be removed by Disarm. Claw Shape may be enhanced with other talents that increase damage, such as Down Strike.

Climbing

Step: Rank+DEX
Action: Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept clambers up or down vertical surfaces and objects by making a Climbing test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, usually based on the surface being scaled. If successful, the adept can move up or down 2 yards per round, +1 yard for each additional success. If the test fails, the adept makes no progress, and may fall, suffering damage. Climbing uses a Standard Action in every round spent climbing.

At the gamemaster's discretion, Climbing may be used on Knockdown tests while climbing. For more information on climbing, see the Gamemaster's Guide.

Cobra Strike

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Free
Strain: 2 **Skill Use:** No

The adept attacks suddenly and unexpectedly. The adept may substitute his Cobra Strike Step for his Initiative Step. If the adept's Initiative test result is higher than his opponent's, he catches his opponent off-guard and adds +2 for each success to the first Attack test made against the opponent that round.

Cold Purify

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept conjures pure, cold water and uses it to soak an improvised poultice to magically draw out a poison or other illness. If the character has no external injuries, then a Wound must be caused to allow the poultice to affect the target. The adept takes one minute to prepare and apply the poultice, making a Cold Purify test against the poison or disease's Mystic Defense, or the target character's Wound Threshold if the adept is treating a Wound.

If successful, the effects of the poison or disease are stopped and the victim recovers a number of Damage Points equal to the difference between the test result and the Difficulty Number. If used on a Wound, the Wound will no longer reduce the result of the character's Recovery tests, but the Wound must still be healed normally.

Cold Purify may only be used once on a given injury.

Command Nightflyer

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept can converse with and command nocturnal, flying creatures, such as owls, bats, and krilworms. A successful Command Nightflyer test against the target's Mystic Defense allows the adept to converse with the creature in their "tongue" for Rank minutes. He may also give it simple commands equal to the number of successes that will be obeyed during this time. The commands will still be followed even if the talent has ended, but the adept needs to use the talent again if the result of the action will require another conversation. The creature's survival instincts cannot be overridden, nor can it be ordered to behave against its basic nature. For example, a bat could not be forced to scout around during daylight hours when it would normally be resting.

Conceal Object

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

Illusion. The adept hides one or more objects on his body, using illusion magic to help mask them. He must make a reasonable attempt to conceal the object, but any obvious shortcomings (a hilt sticking out of a pocket, a bump in his coat) are hidden by illusion.

This talent is often used to conceal weapons, so its effects are measured by weapon Size (p.XX), but other objects can be hidden just as easily, with the gamemaster assigning an appropriate Size to them. No object to be concealed can be greater in Size than the adept's one-handed Size limit. He can conceal objects up to a combined Size equal to his Conceal Object rank.

The adept makes a Conceal Object test, the result being the Detection Difficulty for attempts made to find the item. Items of Size 1 (Size 2 for trolls and obsidiman, or items equivalent to Size 1 for windlings) are hidden from all kinds of searches; larger items are only hidden from visual inspections.

As long as an item is concealed, the adept gains the benefit of Surprise when producing it for a fitting purpose, such as drawing a weapon to attack. Adepts may use this talent to regain Surprise when using the Surprise Strike talent. The target of a concealed weapon attack is entitled to a Perception test to avoid being Surprised (p.XX), with a +2 bonus for each additional attempt made to conceal a weapon for this purpose in the same encounter.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this skill does not enhance the concealment with illusion magic, and therefore is limited to items that can be reasonably concealed without that enhancement. Reduce the size limit of items that can be concealed by one.

Conversation

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept is able to make a favorable impression in social situations through tone and word choice appropriate to the situation. The adept makes a Conversation test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, the Attitude of the target characters rises favorably toward the adept by one degree (for example, from Neutral to Friendly) for the duration of the conversation and for a number of days afterwards equal to the adept's Conversation rank. The target's Attitude cannot be improved further while the talent is in effect. The adept can use this talent on a maximum number of characters equal to his Conversation rank at one time.

Creature Analysis

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept uses a type of divination magic to gain information about a creature he is observing. He makes a Creature Analysis test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the adept's player can ask a specific question that would reveal one of the creature's game statistics or abilities for each success scored, such as, "What is its Physical Defense?" or "What is its Unconsciousness Rating?" The question must be about a specific trait—general questions such as "How tough is it?" should warrant equally vague answers ("Pretty tough").

The gamemaster should disallow questions comparing more than one statistic, such as "Is this beast tougher than I am?" or "Which is higher, its Physical or Mystic Defense?" Adepts often use this talent to size up an unknown creature's Mystic or Social Defense to determine how well other talents, such as Dominate Beast, will work on it. At the gamemaster's discretion, using this talent yields insights about a creature's vulnerabilities that can prove useful to an adventuring group about to tangle with an unknown beast.

Crushing Blow

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept inflicts fearsome damage on an opponent on a successful attack. He may substitute his Crushing Blow Step for his Strength Step on a Damage test after a successful close combat attack.

Danger Sense

Step: Rank+Dex **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept develops a supernatural awareness of danger, allowing him to react more quickly in hazardous situations. This talent may be used when the adept might be Surprised, or when he is trying to avoid a trap or other danger. He makes a Danger Sense test against the Initiative test result of the trap or hazard. If successful, he may act normally, possibly avoiding harm. If being ambushed or otherwise surprised by an attack, the adept avoids the penalty for being surprised if the result of his Danger Sense test is higher than the Initiative result of the attacker. This talent only detects hazards or threats within Danger Sense rank x10 yards.

Dead Fall

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

Illusion. The adept creates the illusion of a Wound or the symptoms of poison or disease, and masks his breathing to support the appearance of his "death". As he collapses to the ground, the adept makes a Dead Fall test to determine the Difficulty Number to see through the illusion.

A character observing the effect is entitled to a Sensing test (see Illusions, p. XX) to determine if the adept is dead. If this test fails, they believe he is really dead, and are affected by a minor compulsion that prompts them to leave the body alone. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Dead Fall rank.

Diplomacy

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept mitigates disputes and influences the development of mutual interests by making a Diplomacy test against the negotiating target's Social Defense. If successful, the negotiator's Attitude towards his opponents improves by one degree for a number of hours equal to the adept's Diplomacy rank.

While this might not necessarily settle a dispute or prompt the target to sign a contract, the use of Diplomacy usually helps to get the parties working together to approach the matter from a mutual perspective.

Direction Arrow

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 2 **Skill Use:** No

The adept senses the location of a character or object relative to his position by closing his eyes and focusing his thoughts on an item in his possession directly associated with the target, such as a strand of hair, a bit of masonry, or even a Pattern Item. The adept makes a Direction Arrow test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, he can sense the direction of the target. If the test fails, or the target is further than Direction Arrow rank in miles away from the adept, he doesn't sense the target.

Different Disciplines express this talent in different ways. An Archer shoots an arrow or other projectile into the air, which bursts into a shower of sparks pointing the way toward the target. A Wizard describes the sense as a 'thread' connecting the item to the target's aura, and a faint, glowing line appears to point the way, fading within a few feet.

Disarm

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept uses a combination of clever feints and flashy weapon play to knock an opponent's weapon from his hand. He makes a Disarm test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the opponent's weapon is sent spinning from the wielder's hand in a direction of the adept's choice for a number of feet equal to the Damage test result. If the target is wielding a two-handed weapon, the adept must score an extra success on the Disarm test. Each additional success adds a +2 bonus to the Damage test. The target otherwise takes no damage from being disarmed.

The talent cannot be used against shields or weapons that are part of the defender's body, such as claws. The target may use defensive talents and abilities (like Avoid Blow) to resist the attempt to disarm them.

Disarm Trap

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept uses deduction, divination magic, and a deft touch to render traps inoperative. He makes a Disarm Trap test against the trap's Disarm Difficulty, determined by the gamemaster (see the Gamemaster's Guide, p. XX). If successful, the trap's trigger mechanism is disabled, preventing it from activating. On a Rule of One, the trigger is "tripped" and the trap immediately goes off. The adept may attempt to disarm the same trap a number of times equal to his Disarm Trap rank. Should he fail all of his attempts, he cannot try again until he increases his Disarm Trap rank. Adepts with this talent may detect traps and wards with the Awareness talent and skill.

Skill Use: The non-magical version can only be used against mechanical traps. It cannot be used to affect or deactivate magical traps or wards.

Disguise Self

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

Illusion. The adept uses illusion magic to disguise himself as another Namegiver. He makes a Disguise Self test, the result determines the Difficulty Number for attempts to see through the disguise. The disguise cannot make the adept look like he weighs more than twice, or less than half, of his normal body weight, nor can the height, width, or length of the adept's body parts be adjusted by more than 50 percent. For example, a human trying to disguise himself as a t'skrang would have an almost vestigial tail.

Each use of this talent lasts until the disguise is discarded, to a maximum number of hours equal to the adept's Disguise Self rank. The talent only alters appearance—if impersonating a specific character, the adept will require other abilities, such as the Acting skill or Mimic Voice talent, to fully convince others of his false identity.

Dispel Magic

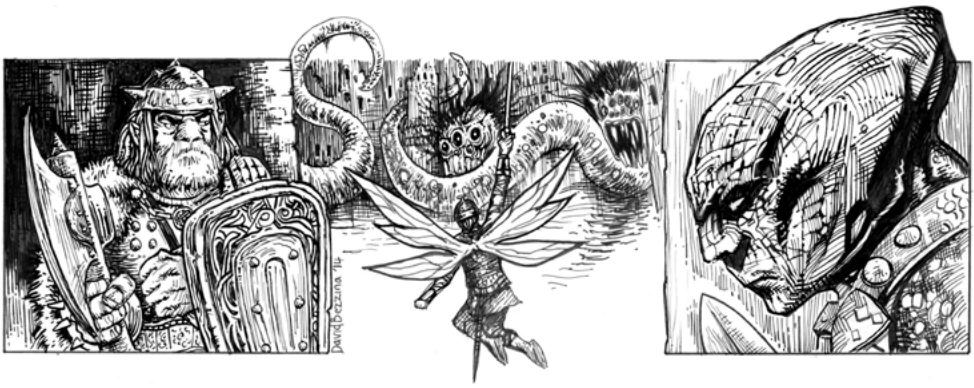
Step: Rank + WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept stops any ongoing magical effect that is the result of a spell or talent. The adept must be within Rank x2 yards of the target effect, and makes a Dispel Magic test against a Difficulty Number based on the power of the effect (see Dispelling Magic, p. XX). If successful, the spell or talent ends immediately. This talent has no effect on creature or Horror powers that are not spells.

Distract

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept diverts an opponent's attention by making himself a more tempting target. He makes a Distract test against the target's Social Defense. For each success, the adept suffers a -1 penalty to his Physical Defense against attacks by his target, but the target is distracted, suffering the same penalty to his Physical Defense against attacks from other characters. The target is considered Blindsided (see p. XX) for the rest of the round. The normal Physical Defense penalty for being Blindsided is replaced with the penalty from this talent, but restrictions still apply—such as being unable to use active defenses.



Dominate Beast

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept subdues and temporarily controls an animal by making a Dominate Beast test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, he establishes dominance over the animal for a number of minutes equal to his Dominate Beast rank, during which time the animal will not take any hostile action against the adept. The creature may be commanded to perform one simple task posing no more danger to the animal than to the adept and requiring less time to complete than the talent duration allows.

Should the adept attempt to use this talent on an animal already under the influence of a similar talent or spell, his test result must exceed the result of the ability affecting the target. If successful, he gains control. Dominate Beast can only be used on non-sentient, natural creatures. It cannot be used to control Horrors, Horror-constructs, or sentient beings of any kind.

Double Charge

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

A mounted adept makes two attacks during a Charging Attack, either attacking two targets or attacking the same target twice. He makes a normal Charging Attack (p.XX) for his first attack (the adept may use the Wheeling Attack talent), then makes

a Double Charge test to attack a second time.

If attacking a second target, the adept and his mount must move at least two yards between attacks. If attacking the same target twice, he must either use a one-handed weapon in his off-hand (if he made the first attack with a lance or spear) or use a one-handed weapon on both attacks. Damage for the second attack is determined as if it was a normal Charging Attack.

Down Strike

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept takes advantage of higher ground to deliver more devastating close combat attacks. He must be in a stable position at least one yard above his opponent (either mounted or standing on higher ground), or must jump down onto his opponent. If his attack is successful, the adept substitutes his Down Strike Step for his Strength Step on the Damage test.

Earth Skin

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept's skin becomes shot through with dark veins of elemental earth, increasing his resistance to magical attacks. He spends a Recovery test and makes an Earth Skin test against his Mystic Defense, adding +2 to his Mystic Defense per success for a number of hours equal to his Earth Skin rank.

Elemental Hold

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept boldly faces an elemental no more than 20 yards away and orders it to halt, making an Elemental Hold test against the elemental's Mystic Defense. If successful, the elemental is held in place, unable to move or take any actions other than communicating for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Elemental Hold rank. This talent requires the adept's concentration—other than communication, he cannot move, cast spells, or perform any other actions. If he does, the talent ends, freeing the elemental.

Each round, the elemental may attempt to break free by making a Willpower test against the adept's Elemental Hold Step. If successful, the elemental is freed and the talent's effect ends. If the talent's duration runs out, the adept may use it again to prolong the hold.

Elemental Tongues

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept learns to speak the languages of air, earth, fire, water, and wood—the five elemental tongues. To learn an elemental language, the adept listens to an elemental of the appropriate type for ten minutes and makes an Elemental Tongues (10)

test. If successful, he learns the language and notes it on his Character Record Sheet.

If he fails to learn the elemental's tongue, he cannot attempt to learn that same language again until he improves his Elemental Tongues rank, however, he can attempt to learn other unlearned elemental languages. Once an Elemental Tongues rank has been assigned to a language, it cannot be used to learn any other elemental language. Because there are only five elemental languages, it is possible for an adept to have learned them all by the time he has improved his Elemental Tongues to Rank 5.

Communicating with elementals is difficult and personal. The adept makes an Elemental Tongues test against the elemental's Mystic Defense. With one or two successes, the elemental understands the basics of what the adept is saying, and vice versa, but the adept is not able to ask complex questions or make specific requests. Three or more successes allow the elemental to completely understand the adept, who can discuss complex topics and ask detailed questions. Each use allows conversation with the elemental for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Elemental Tongues rank.

Emotion Song

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept sings songs that arouse an audience to a basic emotion, such as fear, love, hate, happiness, anger, or joy, directed at the subject of the song. For example, if the song is about love for a king, the audience feels the emotion expressed (love in this case) about the king named in the song. Each performance requires at least ten minutes to complete, after which the adept makes an Emotion Song test against the highest Social Defense among the audience. Each success scored affects 20 percent of the audience. The maximum number of people that can be affected by a performance is equal to the adept's Emotion Song Rank x10; if the audience is too big to be affected completely, the adept targets a localized part of it.

Consecutive uses of this talent are cumulative. Once the adept has affected the current audience, he can continue his performance, engaging a bigger audience with his song. The adept can perform for no more than his Emotion Song rank in hours, after which he cannot use the talent again for one day.

If the adept fails an Emotion Song test, the adept must stop performing—the crowd has grown weary of his performance, but the effects of his performance to that point, if any, are still felt by the audience. On a Rule of One for any Emotion Song test, the effect of the song changes, turning the emotion felt by affected members of the audience into the opposite emotion intended.

The song's effect lasts for a number of days equal to the adept's Emotion Song rank, during which time those affected are more open to suggestions related to the subject and emotion expressed by the song. Those making such suggestions gain a +2 Interaction test bonus; those making suggestions counter to the emotion suffer a –2 Interaction test penalty.

Empathic Sense

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard (see text)
Strain: 1 (see text) **Skill Use:** No

The adept gains information about the emotional state of a character within 10 yards by making an Empathic Sense test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, he senses the target's emotions and gains information appropriate to the number of successes achieved. A single success gives the adept an idea of the target's general emotional state; two successes allows him to read the target's surface emotions; with three or more successes, he knows exactly what the target is feeling. The adept gains a +2 bonus per success achieved to any Interaction tests he makes where knowledge of the target's emotional state would be helpful. Each use of this talent lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Empathic Sense rank.

An adept with Empathic Sense may choose to extend the talent's duration to a year and a day by "attuning" the talent to a voluntary target. This requires a half hour of quiet meditation with the target and causes the adept 1 Blood Magic Damage. The talent's range increases to a number of miles equal to the adept's Empathic Sense rank and provides the adept with a vague sense of the attuned character's location, within a 60-degree arc.

Unattuning the target before the talent's duration expires requires another half-hour-long ritual with that character. An adept may not be attuned to more than his Empathic Sense rank in characters at one time.

Engaging Banter

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept uses charm and a touch of suggestion to distract a character, who must be able to understand him for the banter to work. The adept makes an Engaging Banter test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, both parties engage in witty, idle chat for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Engaging Banter rank, during which time the target is distracted and considered harried. Additionally, for each success scored, the target suffers a –2 penalty to all Perception-based tests made to notice anything but the adept. Bantering requires the adept's concentration; if broken, or if the target is attacked, the talent ends.

Enhance Animal Companion

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept magically enhances one of his animal companions. He spends a day in meditation with the animal companion, then makes an Enhance Animal Companion test against the animal's natural Mystic Defense. For each success scored, the adept can grant a +1 bonus to any of the following characteristics: any Defense rating, Physical or Mystic Armor, or Damage Step. The maximum total bonus that an individual animal companion can have is equal to the adept's rank in Animal Bond—the more bonded an adept is to an animal companion, the more it can be enhanced.

When using this talent, the adept can also choose to move a point granted by a prior use of the talent to another characteristic. Moving a point in this way uses one of the adept's successes from the test.

If an animal companion's attitude drops below Loyal, they gradually lose the magical bonuses granted by this talent, losing one point per week from their bonus. If the adept restores their bond with the animal companion, they can use this talent to restore the bonus points, but the bonus points are otherwise lost.

Girr, a windling Beastmaster, has a troajin animal companion Named Purn. She has the Enhance Animal Companion talent at Rank 6, and wants to make Purn a bit hardier. She spends a day in meditation, and makes her test. She rolls a 17, three successes agaist Purn's Mystic Defense of 6.

Girr decides to add +2 to Purn's Physcial Defense, and one to her Damage Step. This increases the troajin's Physical Defense to 9, and her Damage Step to 11. Purn is a little harder to hit, and deals a little bit more damage with her claws.

Enhanced Matrix

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

An Enhanced Matrix is an improved type of spell matrix. An Enhanced Matrix holds the pattern of a spell and a single, pre-woven spell thread. The magician weaves the thread when he attunes the spell to the matrix, saving him time when casting the spell. The Enhanced Matrix rank determines the maximum spell circle it can hold. Each Enhanced Matrix represents a separate talent with its own Rank, and is improved independently. For more information on spell matrices and how they are used, see the Spell Magic chapter, p. XX.

Etiquette

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

Etiquette is the art of proper behavior in social situations and can be extremely important—improper behavior may be punished by responses ranging from the scorn of nobles to beheading at the hands of enraged ork scorchers. The adept observes the surrounding culture for a minute, then makes an Etiquette test against the Difficulty Number of knowing the proper behavior for a given social situation. The base Difficulty Number is 5, with the gamemaster modifying the target depending on how unfamiliar the adept is with that culture. The Difficulty Number is typically increased by +3 for each differing aspect. Typical sources for modification include different social standing, different race, a foreign land with different customs, and so on.

If successful, the number of successes alters the reaction of observers. A single success means observers believe the adept possesses the rudiments of proper behavior; two successes means those same people approve of the adept's manners; three or more successes so impresses observers with the adept's manners that their Attitude toward him improves by one degree (to a maximum of Friendly). The effect lasts for a number of days equal to the adept's Etiquette rank or until the social situation ends, whichever comes first.

Evidence Analysis

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

Using equal parts observation, logic, and divination magic, the adept examines physical evidence to determine the answers to questions relating to his investigation. For example, he might examine a bed to determine that its occupant had not slept well, or he might identify a weapon as being the object used to murder someone.

The adept makes an Evidence Analysis test against the Mystic Defense of the person responsible for leaving the evidence. If successful, he learns the answer to one question about the object or place for each success scored.

As a general rule, this talent only answers questions regarding "what" or "how" something happened to an object or place. In the previous example, the adept would make an Evidence Analysis test against the Mystic Defense of the person who had slept in the bed. With three successes, he could ask the gamemaster up to three "what" or "how" questions related to the bed.

If the activity occurred within a day of the test, the adept gains a general impression of when the event happened (morning, afternoon, or evening). When using this talent to evaluate evidence that is more than a day old, add +1 to the Difficulty Number for each day after the first. Other than the increased Difficulty Number, there is no limit to the age of the evidence being analyzed. The gamemaster answers the questions posed to him. Evidence Analysis cannot help the adept answer the questions of "who" or "why"—the focus of the examination is on facts, not motive or intent.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this talent does not include any divination magic, but the rules and effects are otherwise the same.

False Sight

Step: Rank + WIL **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept intensifies an illusion at the time of creation, making it more difficult for observers to penetrate. The adept makes a False Sight test against the Dispel Difficulty of the effect. For talents, the Dispel Difficulty is based on the talent rank rather than the spell circle. Each success adds +2 to the Difficulty Number for any attempts to sense or otherwise see through the illusion (see Illusions, p.XX). The bonus lasts for the duration of the illusion.

Fast Hand

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

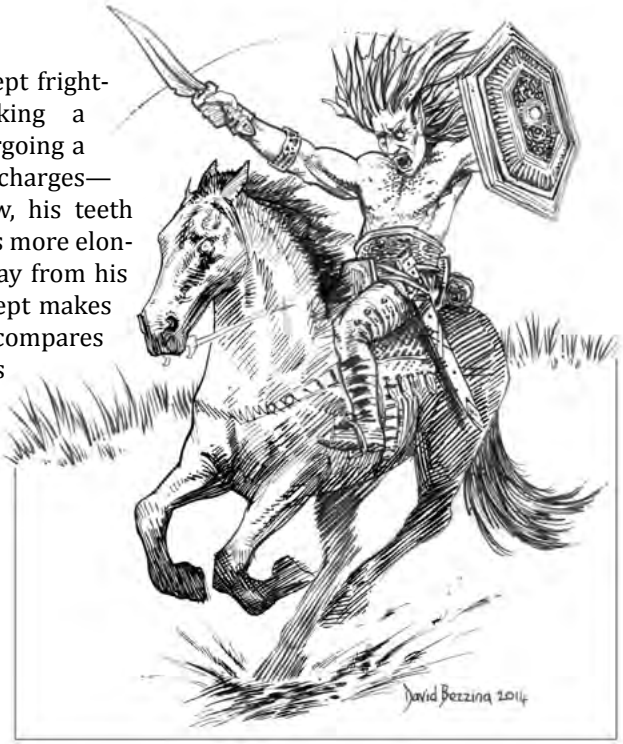
Illusion. The adept combines sleight-of-hand with minor illusion magic to move one or two small items—no bigger than 6 inches along any one dimension—from one place to another without being noticed. All items being switched must be within reach. The adept makes a Fast Hand test, the result being the Difficulty Number for attempts made to notice the move.

Anyone observing the adept may make a Perception test to notice the action immediately after the switch has occurred. This talent does not allow the adept to empty a purse or pocket of its contents (see Picking Pockets, p.XX), although it could be used to switch two purses around.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this talent does not include the illusion magic, but otherwise is used the same way.

Fearsome Charge

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Simple
Strain: 2
Skill Use: No



Illusion. The mounted adept frightens opponents when making a Charging Attack (p.XX), undergoing a radical transformation as he charges—his eyes grow larger or glow, his teeth become pointed or the canines more elongated, and his hair stands away from his head in a wild tangle. The adept makes a Fearsome Charge test and compares it to the Social Defense of his desired targets, up to a maximum equal to his rank in Fearsome Charge. For each success, affected targets suffer a –1 penalty to all tests made against the adept for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Fearsome Charge rank.

Each round, those affected by this talent can end the effect by making a successful Willpower test against the adept's Fearsome Charge Step. Targets which are immune to fear cannot be affected by this talent.

Fireblood

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The blood oozing from an adept's scratches, cuts, and injuries, bubbles and hisses, cleansing, cauterizing, and healing him. The adept must be engaged in combat, although he does not have to be directly facing an opponent—the heat of being in or near a battle provides the stimulus for the talent. The adept spends a Recovery test to immediately heal a number of Damage Points equal to the result of his Fireblood test. Using this talent supersedes the normal waiting time requirements for Recovery tests (see Effects of Injury, p.XX).

Fire Heal

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept performs a half-hour ritual to gain bonus Recovery tests, cleansing himself in healing flame. The adept starts by building an open fire large enough to completely engulf him. Before stepping into the fire, the adept declares how many extra Recovery tests he is attempting to gain.

The gamemaster makes a Step 5/D8 test, adding +5 for each Recovery test beyond the first the adept is attempting to gain. This test result sets the Difficulty Number for the adept's Fire Heal test.

If the Fire Heal test is successful, the adept gains the desired number of Recovery Tests. If the test fails, the adept gains no bonus Recovery Tests. Instead, he suffers a Wound and a number of Damage Points equal to the difference between the test results. No armor protects against this damage, and this damage can result in a second Wound.

Bonus Recovery Tests gained through use of this talent must be used before the adept gains his Recovery Tests the following day or they are lost. The ritual requires the adept to be in full contact with the elemental power of fire—if a spell or item protects the adept from the effects of fire, the talent has no effect. This talent can be risky for low-Circle adepts, who generally possess low Wound Thresholds and Health Ratings.

First Impression

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept favorably impresses a gamemaster character he has met by making a First Impression test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target's Attitude improves toward the adept by one degree (a Neutral character becomes Friendly; an Unfriendly character becomes Neutral; and so on). With three or more successes, it improves by two degrees. The new Attitude may be changed for better or worse through future interactions, but reverts back to the original level at a rate of one degree per day. Any hostile act the adept commits against the target immediately erases the impression.

The adept may not use this talent again on a given target until the effects of a prior use have faded. More information on Attitudes can be found in the Gamemaster's Guide.

Flame Arrow

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

This talent transforms a normal piece of ammunition into a fiery missile, increasing its damage. The adept makes a ranged Attack test against the target. If successful, the adept substitutes his Flame Arrow Step for his Strength Step on the Damage test. After the attack, the missile returns to normal.

Forge Armor

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept performs a ritual to magically improve the Armor Rating of armor. The work must be carried out at a properly equipped forge or workshop. The ritual requires eight hours of work a day for seven days, after which the adept makes a Forge Armor test against a Difficulty Number 6+ the number of forge enhancements the item currently has. Each success allows him to improve the item's Physical or Mystic Armor Rating by +1. The ritual can be used on mundane or magical armor, but not shields.

Instead of improving the existing bonuses, the adept can instead choose to reconfigure the existing enhancements, moving a bonus point from Physical to Mystic Armor or vice-versa.

The adept cannot forge a total bonus higher than his Forge Armor rank. For example, an adept with Forge Armor at Rank 4 can perform increases to a total of +4 (between Physical and Mystic Armor), regardless of whether he forged the previous increases himself.

Armor Rating enhancements last for a year and a day from the date of the last successful forging. Additional Forge Armor tests can be made at any time to extend the duration, but any bonuses beyond those allowed by the smith's rank in Forge Armor are lost. The smith chooses which bonuses remain.

Mica the Swordmaster has a suit of chain mail that has been forged with +4 Physical and +2 Mystic Armor (total bonus +6). The armor's enhancement is close to expiring, and Mica finds himself out in a small town in the hinterlands. The only Weaponsmith available is one who has Forge Armor at Rank 4. Mica hires him to maintain the enhancement on his armor, but the smith's rank only allows him a maximum of +4 total bonus. After the smith has completed his work, he returns the armor with +3 Physical and +1 Mystic Armor.

The services of armorers can be bought in larger cities, but the more skilled the armorer, the higher the cost. The typical cost is 50 silver times the armorer's rank in Forge Armor per attempt.

It is typical for half the fee to be paid up front, with the rest paid on delivery after successful use of the talent.

Forge Weapon

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept performs a ritual to magically improve the Damage Step of a weapon, including melee, missile, and thrown weapons, but not ammunition, like arrows or bolts. The work must be carried out at a properly equipped forge or workshop. The ritual requires eight hours a day for seven consecutive days, after which the adept makes a Forge Weapon test against a Difficulty Number 6+ the number of forge enhancements the item currently has. For each success the weapon's Damage Step is increased by +1. This talent can be used on mundane or magical weapons.

The adept cannot forge a weapon's bonus higher than his Forge Weapon rank. For example, an adept with Forge Weapon at Rank 4 can perform increases up to +4, regardless of whether he forged the previous increases himself.

Damage Step increases last for a year and a day from the date of the last successful forging. Additional Forge Weapon tests can be made at any time to extend the duration, but any bonuses beyond those allowed by the smith's rank in Forge Weapon are lost.

Relayn is a Novice Weaponsmith with Rank 3 in Forge Weapon. While her master has been called away on business, a Warrior comes into the shop looking to have the enhancement on his axe renewed. The axe has been forged with a +5 bonus. Relayn can renew the enhancement with her own Forge Weapon talent, but the axe will be reduced to only having a +3 bonus—Relayn's rank in Forge Weapon.

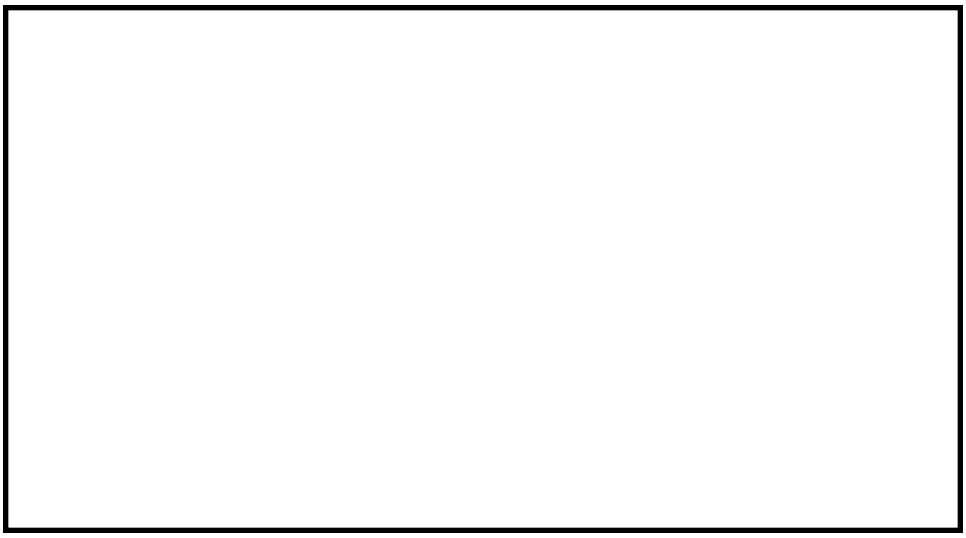
The services of smiths can be bought in larger cities, but the more skilled the smith, the higher the cost. The typical cost is 50 silver times the smith's rank in Forge Weapon per attempt. It is typical for half the fee to be paid up front, with the rest paid on delivery after successful use of the talent.

Frighten

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept scares a target by staring silently into the character's eyes and making a Frighten test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target becomes frightened and suffers a –2 penalty to all tests for each success generated by the adept. The target remains scared for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Frighten rank. Each round, the target may make a Willpower test against the adept's Frighten Step. If successful, he throws off the effect of his fear and the talent ends.

Targets that are immune to fear cannot be affected by this talent.



Gliding Stride

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept moves in a graceful fashion through the air, horizontally as well as vertically, using his movement to glide instead of walking or running. In place of his normal movement, the adept makes a Gliding Stride test, the result being the maximum distance in yards he can move horizontally. Gliding Stride cannot be combined with other talents that replace normal movement, such as Great Leap.

The talent also allows the adept to move vertically. For every two yards he can glide horizontally, the adept may move up or down one yard vertically without affecting his total Movement Rate. The adept cannot go higher than his Gliding Stride Rank x2 yards.

Maloren, a dwarf Elementalist, has a Movement Rate of 10 yards, a Gliding Stride Rank of 7, and has just rolled a 15 on his Gliding Stride test. He wants to go vertically, to glide over a 7-yard-high wall. To move up 7 yards, he has to move double that distance—14 yards—horizontally. This means he can just make it to the top of the wall. It costs him his Standard action to increase his movement rate to cover the 14 yards horizontal gliding, allowing him to move the 7 yards upwards for free. Maloren lands atop the wall and plans to move down next round.

If the adept somehow ends up in mid-air (by falling off a cliff, for example), he may instinctively activate his Gliding Stride talent to reduce the damage he takes from the fall. Subtract the adept's maximum allowed height from the distance fallen to determine the damage taken.

While waiting on top of the wall for his next action, Maloren is hit by a spell that causes a wound! He fails his Knockdown test, and the gamemaster states that Maloren falls off the wall as a result. The height of the wall is 7 yards, but Maloren can activate Gliding Stride to reduce that distance by 14 yards (Rank 7x2=14)—more than enough to avoid additional damage from the fall. Maloren has reached the other side of the wall, but flat on his back.

Graceful Exit

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept escapes from combat by distracting his opponents and making a Graceful Exit test against the highest Social Defense among the target group. If successful, he makes good his escape, immediately moving as far away from the combat as possible. He may not take any actions other than movement or the talent's effect ends.

The adept can extend the effect to cover additional characters, up to a maximum of his Graceful Exit rank. For each character he is attempting to affect, the Difficulty Number is increased by +1. The same restrictions apply—if any character takes an action that breaks the talent's effect, it is ended for everyone.

Those characters bedazzled by the adept's sudden departure may take no direct action against him or his affected companions for a number of rounds equal to the successes scored on the Graceful Exit test. If anyone affected by this talent returns to the combat after having made a Graceful Exit, the opponents become enraged. If possible, they will try to attack the offender in preference to others, and are immune to all Interaction tests made against their Social Defense to influence them otherwise. Their anger and outrage gives them a +2 bonus to any tests they make against the offender.

Great Leap

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept jumps large distances by making a Great Leap test, the result being how many yards the adept may jump, with the distance covered divided between horizontal and vertical, but not exceeding his Movement Rate in either direction.

Great Leap can be used to avoid environmental hazards, such as rock traps and falling rigging, but not to avoid normal combat attacks. If the adept is aware of the threat, he may make a Great Leap test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster to avoid being struck. If successful, he leaps clear at the last instant. Air Sailors and Sky Raiders often use this talent to board airships in combat or to leap clear of burning rigging and debris.

Hogarth is trying to leap over a wall. He makes a Great Leap test with a result of 13. Hogarth's Movement Rate is 12, so he can divide his result between the horizontal and vertical distance covered, but neither can exceed 12 yards. The wall is 6 yards tall, so he splits the test result, jumping 7 yards upward and 6 yards in length, easily clearing the wall.

Later, he is challenged to jump over a building 16 yards wide and 5 yards tall. He cannot jump this building, even if his test result is a 21, as the width of the jump is larger that his Movement Rate.

Skill Use: The result of the Great Leap test determines the number of feet the character may jump, rather than the number of yards.

Haggle

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept drives a "hard bargain" when buying or selling goods by making a Haggle test against the customer's or merchant's Social Defense. If successful, the price rises or falls by 5 percent of the goods' cost in favor of the adept. Merchants or customers can make Haggle tests to readjust the price in their favor. The adept may make a number of tests per transaction equal to his Haggle rank. However, as soon as either side fails a Haggle test, the bargaining stops.

Haggle can also be used to get a better price for stolen or illegal goods—shady merchants usually buy stolen or illegal goods for a base 10 percent of their value (see the Goods and Services chapter).

The adept can only use the Haggle talent on a number of transactions per day equal to his Haggle rank against a particular target . What constitutes a transaction may vary from a single ring to an entire chest of jewelry.

Heartening Laugh

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept bolsters morale by directing a booming, mocking laugh at his opponents and making a Heartening Laugh test against the highest Social Defense among all opponents within earshot. If successful, any characters Friendly to the adept and who hear the laugh add a +2 bonus per success to their Social Defense against effects based on fear or intimidation, as well as to any Willpower tests made to shake off those effects for a number of rounds equal to his Heartening Laugh rank.

Hold Thread

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 (see text) **Skill Use:** No

The magician weaves a thread to a spell and then holds it until he is ready to cast. This talent can only be used with spells that require a single spell thread to be woven. Normally, these are spells with a "Threads: 1" notation (see the Spells chapter, p.XX), but if the magician is casting the spell from an Enhanced Matrix, or using the option to weave additional threads, it can also include spells with a "Threads: 0" or "Threads: 2" notation.

The magician makes a Thread Weaving test, as normal. If successful, he then makes a Hold Thread test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty. If successful, the spell thread is held within its spell matrix for a number of rounds up to the magician's Hold Thread rank. The magician may make a Spellcasting test to cast the spell during any of these rounds, but takes 1 Strain for each round the thread is held.

If the spell has not been cast by the final round of the talent's effect, the magician may make another Hold Thread test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty. If successful, he continues to hold the spell for a number of rounds equal to his Hold Thread rank. The talent duration can be extended this way for as long as the magician continues to make successful Hold Thread tests. If a Hold Thread test fails, the magician must cast the spell in the following round, or he loses it. While using this talent to hold a spell, the magician cannot make any other Thread Weaving or Spellcasting tests, other than for the spell he is currently holding.

Hypnotize

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes
(Journeyman)

The adept magically mesmerizes another character, making him susceptible to persuasion. The target must be within 10 yards of the adept and in a state where he is not distracted—a target involved in combat cannot be hypnotized, for instance. The adept makes a Hypnotize test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target's Attitude improves toward the adept by one degree, to a maximum of Friendly. While hypnotized, the target remains placid, unless attacked.

Over a number of minutes equal to his Hypnotize rank, the adept can make post-hypnotic suggestions to the target. The adept makes as many Interaction tests as required against the target's Social Defense, with successful results persuading the target to perform actions suggested to him. The target will carry out any actions to which he agrees while under the talent's effects, as long as they can be completed within a number of hours equal to the adept's Hypnotize rank after the hypnosis session ends. A character can only be affected by a single Hypnotize effect at a time. This talent does not require the adept to be able to speak with the target, merely to hold his attention long enough to exercise the talent's magic on him.

Rensil the elf Illusionist hypnotizes an off-duty guard in a tavern. He improves the guard's Attitude and uses a little persuasion to get what he wants. While hypnotized, the guard agrees to let Rensil into the house he guards as long as the elf brings some ale to share. Rensil knows Hypnotize at Rank 3, so the effect lasts for three hours. At the end of that time, the guard comes to his senses—while he may not blame the elf for having tricked him, he is no longer bound by any promises made while under the talent's effects.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this talent requires the target to be able to understand the language the character is speaking.

Impressive Display

Step: Rank **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept impresses a character with a display of skill of his choice. The display can be of any kind, as long as the target character observes it. Most adepts will use a display that fits their style—an Archer, for example, will perform a called shot with his bow, while a Troubadour will play a stirring epic, and a Swordmaster might cut the buttons off an opponent's coat.

The adept activates this talent, and then uses the appropriate talent or skill for his chosen display. Instead of its normal use, the test result is compared to the target's Social Defense.

If successful, the target becomes favorably impressed and the adept adds +2 per success to any Interaction tests he makes against that character for a number of hours equal to his Impressive Display rank. Combat talents used in conjunction with this talent cannot deal damage.

The maximum number of successes that will count as a bonus is the adept's Impressive Display rank.

Inspire Others

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept inspires his companions, raising spirits and boosting morale. He speaks inspirational words, then makes an Inspire Others test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character, targeting friendly characters only. If successful, all affected characters add +1 to Social Defense and gain a +2 bonus to their tests for each success. The talent effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Inspire Others rank.

Iron Constitution

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Free
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept's resistance to poison and disease improves, allowing him to make an Iron Constitution test in place of a Toughness test when resisting the effects of poison or disease. The adept may also make a Iron Constitution test when making a Recovery test to heal damage inflicted by poison or disease.

Each test made, whether successful or not, reduces the poison or disease's effect on the adept. A few drops of blood seep through his skin, carrying away some of the sickness, reducing the Effect Step by –1 for each successive test made against that same dose of poison.

Item History

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept learns the history of an enchanted or mundane item. The adept studies the item for a week, carefully examining it for at least one hour each day, then makes an Item History test against the item's Mystic Defense.

If successful, each success reveals one new Key Knowledge from the item's history. When used on mundane items (which do not have True Patterns), each success provides the adept with a different piece of information instead of a Key Knowledge. Item History can be used multiple times on the same item, but each test requires another week of study. The adept can learn a maximum number of Key Knowledges from a given item equal to his Item History rank.

Ulm Curvehorn, a troll Weaponsmith, has devoted weeks of study to a weapon known as Kestrel. Previous studies have revealed three Key Knowledges from the weapon's history. On his latest Item History attempt, Ulm achieves three successes, learning three more Key Knowledges from the axe's past. However, Ulm's Item History is only Rank 5, so he can only learn a maximum of five Key Knowledges—the sixth remains out of his reach until he improves his Item History rank, allowing him to make another attempt to learn more of the axe's secrets.

See Workings of Magic, p.XX, for more information on Key Knowledges, and Thread Magic, p.XX, for more information on how Key Knowledges are used to weave threads to magic items.

Lasting Impression

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept impresses a group of characters when leaving the group. He strikes a dramatic pose or makes a short soliloquy, then makes a Lasting Impression test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, a powerful image of the adept is imprinted in the targets' minds. The adept adds +2 per success to Interaction tests he makes against the affected characters for a number of weeks equal to his Lasting Impression rank. If, after using this talent when leaving the group, the adept is seen by any of the target characters within one day of his departure, the effect ends for that character.

Leadership

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept leads a group of gamemaster characters no larger than his Leadership rank ×20 members by giving a short speech, then making a Leadership test against the highest Social Defense among the target group. If successful, characters with a Neutral attitude or better towards the adept follow his lead. The success level determines the talent's effect and duration.

A single success means the target group treats the adept as their leader for his Leadership rank x10 minutes; two successes means the target group follows the adept for a number of hours equal to his Leadership rank; three or more successes means the target group treats the adept as their leader for Leadership rank days.

While under the adept's leadership, the target characters will follow his lead and accept him as their commander.

This grants him an authority typical to being their designated commander in a military environment, but can be used in other situations, such as being a superior in an administration or a foreman in construction. If the adept causes any individual to change his Attitude to worse than Neutral, the effect of the talent ends for that individual.

Life Check

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Free
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept gains a last chance to save himself from dying. When the adept's Current Damage equals or exceeds his Death Rating, he spends a Recovery test, makes a Life Check test, and reduces his Current Damage by the result. If the adept's Current Damage is reduced below his Death Rating, he has avoided dying. This may be repeated for as long as the adept has Recovery tests available. Unsuccessful use of Life Check does not prevent the application of other means that prevent the adept from dying, such as applying a last chance salve.

Lifesight

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept can see the strength and composition of another being's life force. He makes a Lifesight test and compares the result against the Mystic Defense of each living being within Lifesight Rank x10 yards. If successful, the adept can see the target's life force—which appears as an interpretation of their astral imprint—for a number of rounds equal to his Lifesight rank, and gains qualitative information about it.

A vibrant, healthy life force appears as a strong but delicate latticework of light and opalescent force. Weaker life forces are dimmer, and parts of the latticework may appear warped or broken. The life force of a character near death shows almost no visible latticework, just a few disconnected bright spots, one or more of which is fading. An adept can use Lifesight to view a target's life force through solid, non-living objects. For example, a character could see the life forces of people hiding behind a brick wall, but not someone hiding inside the bole of a tree.

Lion Heart

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept's resolve improves, allowing him to use his Lion Heart Step in place of his Willpower Step when making tests to resist the effects of any talent, spell, or ability that allow a Willpower test to shake off the effect.

Lock Picking

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept conjures a set of pale blue telekinetic lock picks which he uses to open mundane and magical locks by making a Lock Picking test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster for mundane locks, or against the lock's Mystic Defense for magical locks. If successful, the lock opens. The adept may attempt to open the same lock a number of times equal to his Lock Picking rank. Should he fail all of his attempts, or on any Rule of One Result, he cannot open that lock until he increases his Lock Picking rank.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this talent requires the adept to have a set of lock picks (see the Goods and Services chapter), and can only be used to open mechanical locks; it cannot be used to open magical locks.

Long Shot

Step: Rank **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept imbues his ranged weapons with magical force, increasing their effective range and allowing him to hit targets beyond the normal distance allowed for his ranged weapon. When activated, the weapon or missile flares with a glowing aura that fades as it travels to the target. Each rank in Long Shot adds 5 yards to the ranges

of missile weapons, and 2 yards to the range of throwing weapons.

An adept with Rank 6 in Long Shot can activate the talent and extend the ranges of a shortbow to 60 yards for short range and 90 yards for long range (Rank 6 x 5 yards = +30 yards). A throwing axe would have its short range extended to 24 yards and its long range to 36 yards (Rank 6 x 2 yards = +12 yards).

Maneuver

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept uses fancy footwork and mobility to gain a superior position against a single opponent. He makes a Maneuver test against his target's Physical Defense, each success grants a +2 bonus to his Physical Defense from attacks by that target, and to the first close combat Attack test made against that target that round.

Melee Weapons

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept makes an attack in close combat with a hand-held weapon, like a sword, axe, or dagger. He makes a Melee Weapons test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the attack hits the target and the adept makes a Damage test for the weapon used. See Melee Attacks, p.XX, for more information.

Mimic Voice

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Simple
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

Illusion. The adept mimics a voice he hears by making a Mimic Voice test against the speaker's Social Defense. If successful, he learns and can mimic that voice for a number of hours equal to his Mimic Voice rank. When attempting to fool others, the adept makes a Mimic Voice test, the result sets the Difficulty Number for any tests made to detect the mimicry. If the adept does not understand the language of the person whose voice he is trying to mimic, the talent produces the equivalent of baby babble to those hearing it—the sounds are right, but the words don't mean anything.

Skill Use: The skill version of this talent does not use illusion magic to enhance the mimicry.

Missile Weapons

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept makes an attack in ranged combat against an opponent by using a bow, crossbow, or another weapon that fires projectiles. He makes a Missile Weapons test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the attack hits the target and the adept makes a Damage test for the weapon used. See Missile Attacks, p.XX, for more information.

Momentum Attack

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept makes an additional close combat attack while his opponent recovers from the first blow. If the adept achieves an extra success on a close combat Attack test against an opponent, he may make another attack against that opponent.

After resolving the damage from his first attack, the adept makes a Momentum Attack test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If successful, he makes a Damage test, as normal. Damage bonuses applied to the initial attack do not carry over. For example, if the adept uses Crushing Blow with his first attack, he does not add that damage bonus to his Momentum Attack, though he may use Crushing Blow again. This talent can only be used once per round.

Mount Attack

Step: Rank **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept increases the accuracy of his mount's attacks. The adept adds his Mount Attack rank to his mount's Dexterity Step for the mount's Attack test. This replaces the mount's normal Attack test. The adept must be riding the mount for it to benefit from this talent.

Mystic Aim

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept draws a steady aim with a missile or thrown weapon on a visible target within range, causing a small, visible mark to appear on the target The adept makes a Mystic Aim test against the target's Mystic Defense. Each success grants a +2 bonus to ranged attacks against that opponent until the end of the round. The mark created is unique to the adept—it might appear as two or three plain white dots, a symbol from his home town or village, or some other motif personal to the adept.

Navigation

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept can read maps, chart courses, and travel safely, minimizing environmental challenges and other hazards. To pinpoint their location, navigators must be able to see the sky and possess a set of navigator's charts. Navigation often relies on the movement of the sun, the constellations, and similar astronomical phenomena for direction. Consequently, navigation is most effective on clear nights when the stars

shine brightest.

The adept spends ten minutes determining his current position and makes a Navigation test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on the Navigation Table, and modified depending on the circumstances. Incomplete or inaccurate charts can increase the Difficulty Number by +1 to +5.

The test result determines the adept's accuracy. A single success gives a position accurate to within 10 miles; two successes within 5 miles; three successes, within 2 miles; four or more successes places the navigator within a mile of his target location.

If the test fails, the adept inadvertently plots a destination 20 to 25 miles wide of his intended destination. He only recognizes his mistake if a subsequent Navigation test yields a better result, or he arrives at the destination and realizes that it's not the place he intended to travel to.

A Rule of One Result positions the adept more than 25 miles away from the intended destination—he is completely lost, but will be adamant that he knows exactly where he is. Any further Navigation tests the adept makes add +2 to the Difficulty Number (assuming his friends can convince him to make another test).

Navigation Table

Difficulty Number	*Condition*
5	Clear night sky, few obstructions blocking the character's view (on an open plain, for instance)
7	Scattered clouds and/or minor obstructions, such as low buildings
9	Partly cloudy or significant obstructions (trees, nearby mountains, and so on)
12	Overcast, heavy foliage or other conditions blocking the character's view of the sky
18	Severe rainstorm or blizzard blocking the sky

Orbiting Spy

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept summons a spy spirit to serve as a lookout by making an Orbiting Spy (6) test. If successful, the spirit travels in a circular pattern around the adept, up to 20 yards distance, for one hour per success. Conjured spy spirits cannot affect or be affected by the physical world and are immune to most spells, except those which disrupt or dispel magic. An adept can only have one orbiting spy active at a time.

Whenever the adept wants to use the spirit to detect something, he makes an Orbiting Spy test instead of a Perception test. If successful, the spy spirit informs him of anything unusual it notices. The spirit can be given specific instructions on what to look for, to prevent unpleasant surprises; the maximum number of instructions is equal to his Orbiting Spy rank. The spirit will remain on alert for these creatures or objects and will notify the adept if they are detected—the gamemaster makes Orbiting Spy tests for the spirit and advises the adept of the results, if applicable.

Spy spirits can see into the astral plane as well as the physical world—though this follows the normal rules for astral sensing (p. XX)—so they can inform the adept of anything lurking around in astral space.

Patterncraft

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept gains a greater understanding of the mysteries and applications of magic. This includes the ability to read and write magical writing, such as that found in grimoires or magical glyphs. For each page that he is attempting to translate, the adept makes a Patterncraft test against the writing's Difficulty Number, determined by the gamemaster. If successful, the success level determines how well he understands the content.

A single success allows the adept to understand the basic gist of the text, but not any subtle or complex ideas it contains; two or three successes means he understands the subtleties of the text, though he might misinterpret obscure clues or riddles; four or more successes means the adept completely understands content, easily deciphering any hints, clues, or hidden meanings.

This talent also allows magicians to learn new spells. A magician can attempt to learn a spell by making a Patterncraft test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. If successful, he has learned the spell and can write it in his grimoire. The magician can learn only one spell per day. He may learn more spells by sacrificing Recovery tests—for each Recovery test sacrificed, the magician may make an additional Patterncraft test. See Learning New Spells, p.XX, for more information on learning and scribing spells.

Other functions of this talent include identifying spells (Difficulty equal to the Dispel Difficulty, with a +4 bonus if it is from the adept's discipline), designing new common magical items and thread items, and creating signature spells.

Picking Pockets

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept combines a deft touch with minor levitation magic to remove an item from the pocket or pouch of another character. The adept makes a Picking Pockets test, the result being the Difficulty Number for attempts made to notice the theft. Anyone able to observe the adept's action, including the target character, may make a Perception test to notice the action immediately after the act has occurred.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this skill does not include the levitation magic, but is otherwise identical.

Power Mask

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept disguises his true magical nature from mundane and magical detection. Each use of the talent lasts a number of hours equal to the adept's Power Mask rank. The adept is surrounded by a misleading astral aura, preventing others from identifying him as magical and hiding any obvious magical effects on him from mundane onlookers. He makes a Power Mask test, which sets the Difficulty Number for tests made to discern the adept's magical nature (for example, by Astral Sensing, p. XX)

Read and Write Language

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 1 (see text) **Skill Use:** No (see text)

The adept magically learns to read and write different languages. Using this talent he can learn a number of languages equal to his Read and Write Language rank.

If he has not reached this maximum, the adept can attempt to learn a new language by reading at least one page of text written in the language for at least one minute, then making a Read and Write Language test against the language's Learning Difficulty. If successful, he learns the language and notes it on his Character Record Sheet. If the test fails, the adept cannot attempt to learn that specific language again until he improves his Read and Write Language rank.

The Learning Difficulty for the different racial languages is shown in the Language Table. The numbers reflect the difficulty of learning the base "racial" versions of these languages. Dialects are considered different languages for the purposes of this talent (see below).

When reading a language learned through this talent, the adept makes a Read and Write Language test against the Learning Difficulty of the language. The success level determines how well he understands the content.

Simple sentences or ideas, such as "The mayor's house lies east of here," may only require a single success; histories or legends containing peculiar idioms or flowery phrases may require two; manuals or other books filled with jargon specific to a field of study require three successes; understanding philosophical treatises on the nature of magic, or other writings filled with specialized academic language and abstract ideas, may require four or more. Partial successes may convey more or less detail at the gamemaster's discretion. When writing, use the same process as for reading, depending on the complexity of the topic the adept is writing about.

The effect of each test lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Read and Write Language rank, allowing reading and writing at the level achieved by the test result. If the adept needs to read or write at a higher level, he must make another Read and Write Language test. The Strain cost reflects the concentration required. It takes about one minute to read a page of text; writing a page of text takes about ten minutes.

Language Table

Learning Difficulty	*Language*
5	Dwarf*
6	Sperethiel (Elf)
6	Human
7	Obsidiman
6	Or'zet (Ork)
7	T'skrang
6	Troll
7	Windling

*All characters beginning play with the Dwarf language know the Throalic dialect.

Dialects

Languages are often complex and most possess many different variations, called dialects. These dialects are sometimes regional, others by city, or even by kaer. The Learning Difficulty of a dialect is based on the original language, usually the base DN +2, but higher difficulties are possible. The adept must know how to read and write the base language before he can attempt to learn a dialect of that language. If the adept knows the base language of a dialect, he can communicate, but his ability to do so may be limited at the gamemaster's discretion.

There is a non-magical version of this talent, but it is different enough that it is covered in more depth in the Skills chapter, p. XX.

Research

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept finds information through study and investigation, including library research and following up on rumors and legends. He makes a Research test against a Difficulty Number determined by the type of information sought. The gamemaster may use the numbers suggested in the Research Table, or the guidelines for creating Difficulty Numbers in the Gamemaster's Guide. The success level determines how much information is obtained. More successes often turns up more detailed information than the adept initially sought.

Research Table

Difficulty Number	*Type of Information*
5	General
7	Detailed
9	Intricate
11	Obscure

At the Great Library of Throal, Tomas is looking for information on Cardael, a ruined tower now rumored to be the base of a cult his group is pursuing. Based on the nature of the information being sought, the gamemaster decides the Difficulty Number for the Research test is 7.

Tomas rolls a 19—three successes! Tomas had been searching for the tower's general location, but the gamemaster decides that the high result earns a bonus—Tomas learns not only the tower's general location, but also that the tower was built and used as a retreat for a Nethermancer, who had some experience with the Horror the cult worships.

Resist Taunt

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept resists the effects of attacks directed against his Social Defense by making a Resist Taunt test against the attack's test result. If successful, the adept steels himself and reconsiders his response at the last instant, negating the effect. Resist Taunt is effective against Persuasion, Taunt, Intimidation, and other similar talents or Interaction tests (see the Gamemaster's Guide). The adept can use this talent a number of times each round equal to his Resist Taunt rank, but only once per social attack.

Brighton, a human Troubadour, has a Social Defense of 9. Mica, a dwarf Swordmaster, Taunts him—some comment about Brighton being unable to hold his ale—with a test result of 14. Brighton chooses to ignore the Taunt, so he uses his Resist Taunt talent, rolling a 15 on his Resist Taunt test—success! Brighton gives the ork a wry smile. Mica, realizing the Taunt has failed, narrows his eyes and tries to come up with another way to get under Brighton's skin.

Riposte

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Free
Strain: 2 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept uses his melee weapon to block an opponent's melee attack, possibly turning it back on his attacker. He makes a Riposte test against his opponent's Attack test result. If successful, the adept parries or blocks the attack and avoids any damage.

If the Riposte test scores any extra successes, the adept counterattacks using the Riposte test as an Attack test. The Riposte test result is compared to the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the adept makes a Damage test, but reduces the number of successes by one for the purposes of bonus damage.

Riposting Longer Weapons

Optional Rule: When using Riposte against longer melee weapons, the adept may not be able to reach his opponent to make an effective counterattack. He must have a higher Initiative than his opponent or be wielding a weapon with a Size no smaller than his opponent's weapon Size–2, to be able to inflict a return attack and therefore damage him. For example, a counterattack to an attack from a lance (Size 6) may be made with a successful two-handed sword (Size 5), but not with a broadsword (Size 3). The Riposte test is made as normal against long weapons and can deflect such attacks, thus avoiding harm, but the adept cannot inflict a return blow if his weapon is not large enough.

Mica, a dwarf Swordmaster, is in melee combat with an ork scorcher. The ork attacks and scores a 13 on his Attack test. Mica uses Riposte, and rolls a 21 on his Riposte test—two successes. He successfully parries the ork's attack and counterattacks.

The ork's Physical Defense is 9. Mica's attack hits, scoring two extra successes. But only one counts for the purposes of bonus damage.

The adept can only riposte attacks that he is aware of. If he is blindsided or surprised, he cannot use this talent. The adept can use this talent a number of times each round equal to his Riposte rank, but may only make a single counterattack per round. Riposte tests can only be made against melee attacks directed against the adept. An adept may not use Riposte and another talent that negates being hit, such as Avoid Blow, against the same attack.

Safe Path

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept contacts a local elemental spirit to find the safest path through unfamiliar territory. The adept does not conjure the elemental, he only establishes contact. Unless the adept knows the elemental's language (see Elemental Tongues), the spirit communicates by using "sign language," utilizing its native element to produce simple, but effective, signals for the adept to translate. Sometimes the elemental animates a part of the nearby landscape, making its conversation "audible" to other characters.

The adept makes a Safe Path test, the result being the number of miles of safe passage the elemental can predict. The elemental communicates the safest path to take and indicates possible elemental dangers or natural beasts along the way. Keep in mind that what an elemental considers "dangerous" can be vastly different to what poses danger to a Namegiver. The elemental's knowledge of an area is also limited by its type. For example, earth elementals know very little about flying or waterborne dangers, but may be able to describe the arms and armor carried by other adventuring groups within the talent's effective distance.

The information relayed by the elemental does not indicate the intentions of other characters or creatures, merely their presence and whether the elemental considers them dangerous.

Second Attack

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 2 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept makes an additional close combat attack, using the same weapon he used for his first Attack test that round. He makes a Second Attack test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If successful, the adept makes a Damage test as normal.

Second Shot

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 2 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept makes an additional ranged combat attack. For missile attacks he must use the same weapon as his first Attack test that round. For thrown attacks, he must use the same type of weapon. He makes a Second Shot test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If successful, the adept makes a Damage test as normal.

Second Weapon

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept wields a one-handed melee weapon in his off-hand to attack an opponent in the same round as his primary melee weapon. He makes a Second Weapon test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If successful, he makes a Damage test for the weapon, as normal.

Shield Bash

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept bashes an opponent by making an attack in melee combat using his shield as a weapon. If the adept makes a successful close combat Attack test, he may make a Shield Bash test as a Damage test, with Physical Armor reducing the result. The target of the attack makes a Knockdown test (see p. XX) using the damage dealt as the Difficulty Number.

Slough Blame

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept temporarily diverts suspicion and blame from one character to another by concocting a plausible explanation, then making a Slough Blame test against the higher of the accuser's or scapegoat's Social Defense, +1 for each additional character involved. If successful, the blame is passed on, per the adept's explanation for a number of minutes equal to his Slough Blame rank—hopefully sufficient time for the adept to make himself scarce.

Speak Language

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 (see text) **Skill Use:** No (see text)

The adept magically learns to communicate with others in different languages. Using this talent he can learn a number of languages equal to his Speak Language rank. If he has not reached this maximum, the adept can attempt to learn a new language by listening to a fluent speaker for at least one minute, then making a Speak Language test against the language's Learning Difficulty. If successful, he learns the language and notes it on his Character Record Sheet. If the test fails, the adept cannot attempt to learn that specific language again until he improves his Speak Language rank.

Language Table

Learning Difficulty	*Language*
5	Dwarf*
6	Sperethiel (Elf)
6	Human
7	Obsidiman
6	Or'zet (Ork)
7	T'skrang
6	Troll
7	Windling

*All characters beginning play with the Dwarf language know the Throalic dialect.

The Learning Difficulty for the different racial languages is shown in the Language Table. The numbers reflect the difficulty of learning the base "racial" versions of these languages. Dialects are considered different languages for the purposes of this talent (see below).

When speaking a language learned through this talent, the adept makes a Speak Language test against the Learning Difficulty of the language. The success level determines how well they communicate.

Simple sentences or ideas, such as "Which way to the sheriff?" may only require a single success; normal conversation that includes idioms or jargon require two; technical conversations or other discussions filled with specialized jargon require three successes; conversations about philosophy, or other abstract ideas, may require four or more. Partial successes may convey more or less detail at the gamemaster's discretion.

The effect of each test lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Speak Language rank, allowing communication at the level achieved by the test result.

If the adept requires more complex conversation, he must make another Speak Language test. The Strain cost reflects the concentration required to establish and maintain communication.

Dialects

Languages are often complex and most possess many different variations, called dialects. These dialects are sometimes regional, others by city, or even by kaer. The Learning Difficulty of a dialect is based on the original language, usually the base DN +2, but higher difficulties are possible. The adept must know how to speak the base language before he can attempt to learn a dialect of that language. If the adept knows the base language of a dialect, he can communicate, but his ability to do so may be limited at the gamemaster's discretion.

There is a non-magical version of this talent, but it is different enough that it is covered in more depth in the Skills chapter, p. XX.

Spellcasting

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The magician casts spells by making a Spellcasting test against the Casting Difficulty given in the spell's description. If successful, the spell is successfully cast and the effect determined. See the Spell Magic chapter, p.XX for more information on casting spells and spell descriptions.

Spirit Hold

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept boldly faces an ally spirit within 20 yards and orders it to halt, making a Spirit Hold test against the spirit's Mystic Defense. If successful, the spirit is held in place, unable to move or take any actions other than communicating for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Spirit Hold rank.

This talent requires the adept's concentration—other than communication, he cannot move, cast spells, or perform any other actions. If he does, the talent ends, freeing the spirit.

Each round, the spirit may attempt to break free by making a Willpower test against the adept's Spirit Hold Step. If successful, the spirit is freed and the talent's effect ends. If the talent's duration runs out, the adept may use it again to prolong the hold.

Spirit Mount

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept conjures a riding mount by making a Spirit Mount (6) test. If successful, a spirit mount "whose eyes are afire and skin all summer lightning and fog" appears for one hour per success, after which it melts into mist. This talent may be extended in the final hour by spending Strain and making another Spirit Mount test. If successful, the duration is extended by the appropriate amount and the spirit mount does not melt into mist. Spirit mounts usually take the form of horses, but sages have recorded other shapes.

Spirit Mount
DEX: 6, **STR:** 7, **TOU:** 8, **PER:** 4, **WIL:** 4, **CHA:** 5
Defenses (Armor): Physical 8 (0), Mystic 6 (0), Social 7
Initiative: 7, **Actions** 1, **Attack (Trample)** 7, **Damage** 9
Unc/Death Rating: NA/44, **Wound** 13, **Knockdown:** 8
Powers: Great Leap 8

Only the summoner may ride the spirit mount—it dissolves rather than obey the commands of another. A spirit mount can walk or gallop on air or water when unburdened, but cannot carry a rider into or over these mediums. They can sink up to two feet into the ground, usually sufficient to allow mount and rider to pass along corridors too low for a normal horse and rider to travel along.

Regardless of its summoned form, a spirit mount always has the following statistics:

Spirit Talk

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept is able to talk to spirits and entities, including those who do not speak a language known to him and those who do not communicate verbally, by making a Spirit Talk test against the spirit's Mystic Defense. If successful, the adept may talk to the spirit for a number of minutes equal to his Spirit Talk rank. This talent does not compel the spirit to talk to the adept, it merely makes communication possible.

Spot Armor Flaw

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept detects weaknesses in a character's armor by making a Spot Armor Flaw test against the higher of the target's or his armor's Mystic Defense. If successful, the adept sees any flaws in the armor and gains a +2 bonus to his Damage tests against the target for each success scored on the Spot Armor Flaw test. This bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Spot Armor Flaw rank.

Sprint

Step: Rank **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept temporarily infuses himself with magical speed, adding his Sprint rank to his Movement Rate that round.

Standard Matrix

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

A Standard Matrix is the most basic spell matrix, an astral construct that that allows magicians to cast spells without interference from the residents of astral space. A magician may only safely cast a spell after he has first placed it in a spell matrix. The rank determines the maximum spell circle that the matrix can hold. For example, a Rank 2 Standard Matrix can hold a single First or Second Circle spell. Each matrix represents a separate talent with its own Rank, and is improved independently. For more information on Spell Matrices and how they are used, see the Spell Magic chapter, p. XX.

Stealthy Stride

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

Illusion. The adept combines fluid movement with magical effects that dampen sound and mask his presence, including deepening shadows and using illusion to remain unobserved. The adept makes a Stealthy Stride test, the result being the Difficulty Number for any Perception tests made to notice the adept.

This talent does not allow the adept to vanish while being observed—once a character is aware of the adept's presence and watching him the talent will not work. Using Stealthy Stride halves the adept's Movement Rate and the effect of any abilities used to increase movement speed.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this talent does not include the magical effects, but otherwise works the same way as the talent.

Steel Thought

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept resists magical abilities that target his Mystic Defense. Any time he is targeted by such an ability, the adept may make a Steel Thought test against his opponent's test result. If successful, he reinforces his will, preventing the ability from affecting him. The adept can use this talent a number of times equal to his Steel Thought rank each round, but only once against each such effect directed at him.

Ryka the Wizard successfully casts a spell at Ulm the Weaponsmith, with a Spellcasting test result of 16. Ulm makes a Steel Thought test to protect himself against the magical assault, rolling an 18—success! Ryka's spell has no effect, leaving him face-to-face with the angry Weaponsmith.

Steely Stare

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept intimidates a character with his piercing gaze, staring intently at him and making a Steely Stare test against the target's Social Defense.

If successful, the target feels a chill travel up his spine and becomes wary of the adept for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Steely Stare rank. While affected, the target will not take any actions against the adept, including Interaction tests—such as Persuasion, Intimidation, Taunt, and so on—unless attacked. The target can shake off the effect by making a successful Willpower test against the adept's Steely Stare Step.

Stopping Aim

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept stops a character within line of sight and weapon range from moving by aiming a ranged weapon at the target and making a Stopping Aim test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, a small but obvious mark appears on the target and he immediately stops dead in his tracks for fear of being struck.

The target remains transfixed for a number of rounds equal to the test result, until he is attacked, or he makes a successful Willpower test against the adept's Stopping Aim Step. Keeping aim on the target requires the adept's concentration, during which time he can perform no other Standard Actions. If he does so, the talent ends.

Summon

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept summons an elemental or other extra-planar being to his current location by making a Summon test against the entity's Mystic Defense. The summoning ritual takes 30 minutes. If successful, the entity appears, at which point the adept will likely need other magic or talents to successfully negotiate with or control it.

The Summon talent is unique to certain Disciplines, restricting use to summoning only a specific type of spirit, for example, elemental or ally spirits. The type of spirit summoned is indicated in parentheses next to the talent name in the individual Discipline descriptions. See Summoning, p.XX, for more information.

Suppress Curse

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept temporarily nullifies any curses or negative magical effects affecting a target. The adept makes a Suppress Curse test against the highest Step Number or Dispel Difficulty (p.XX) of any negative effects on the target, +1 for each additional effect. If successful, all of the effects are neutralized for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Suppress Curse rank. The duration of any negative effects continue as normal; if their duration ends while Suppress Curse is in effect, they do not resume when the

talent expires. The adept must remain within his Suppress Curse rank in yards of the target throughout the talent's duration, or the effect ends.

Sure Mount

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Free
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The mounted adept avoids being dismounted or prevents his mount from being knocked down. The adept makes a Sure Mount test in place of any Knockdown test he or his mount is required to make while mounted.

Surprise Strike

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept takes advantage of an unaware or distracted opponent to inflict a telling blow. This talent may be used against targets that are Surprised, Blindsided, or Knocked Down. If the adept's Attack test against such an opponent is successful, he substitutes his Surprise Strike Step for his Strength Step in the Damage test.

Swift Kick

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

If the adept has free use of a leg he may kick an opponent as an additional attack in close combat. The adept must have a higher Initiative, then makes a Swift Kick test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the adept makes an unarmed Damage test as normal.

Tactics

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The adept directs combat to the advantage of his soldiers. For the "commanding" character to effectively use the Tactics talent, his troops must be at least Friendly to him. The commander comes up with a plan, and decides whether his troops are taking the offensive or the defensive. He then makes a Tactics test against the opposing commander's Social Defense.

If his troops were on the offensive, they gain a +1 bonus to their Attack or Damage tests (commander's choice) for each success achieved. If on the defensive, they add +1 to their Physical, Mystic, or Social Defense (commander's choice) for each success achieved. A Rule of One Result works to the enemy's advantage; the adept completely fails to read the situation and his own troops suffer a –1 penalty to their Tests or Defense Ratings, as appropriate.

The adept may command a maximum of Tactics rank ×20 troops at a time for a number of minutes equal to his Tactics rank. If several characters attempt to command the same group of soldiers, the highest success level determines the bonus—and who is in command.

This talent is typically used by an adept to command gamemaster characters. It

may be used on player characters, but the bonuses provided by this talent are only effective as long as the commander's plan is being followed.

Taunt

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept distracts a character (who must be able to understand him) by insulting and humiliating him. He makes a Taunt test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target incurs a –1 test penalty and subtracts –1 from his Social Defense for each success achieved, for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Taunt rank.

Temper Flesh

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Sustained
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept performs a ritual to toughen himself, making him more resistant to harm. The adept must be rested and in good health (not suffering from any Current Damage or Wounds, except Blood Magic Damage or Blood Wounds) or the ritual automatically fails.

The adept draws icy ether from astral space, rolling the chilling substance over his own body during a half hour of intense meditation, after which he makes a Temper Flesh test against his Toughness Step or a Difficulty Number of 6, whichever is higher. If successful, the adept adds his Temper Flesh rank to his Health Ratings and Wound Threshold for one day.

If the test fails, the target takes Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold, resulting in a Wound (armor does not protect from this damage).

A character can benefit from only one successful Temper Flesh ritual at a time.

Tenacious Weave

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept strengthens the pattern of his spells, making them more difficult to disrupt. He makes a Tenacious Weave test against the Dispel Difficulty (see Dispelling Magic, p. XX). Each success increases the subsequent Dispel Difficulty of the spell by 2. This talent can only be used to increase the difficulty of a spell at the time it is cast, and has no effect on talents.

Thought Link

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept establishes a telepathic link with a character or animal companion within line of sight by making a Thought Link Test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, he may talk telepathically with the target, as long as he is within Thought Link Rank x100 yards, for a number of minutes equal to the Test Result.

Telepathic communication is silent and requires no more effort than forming

the words in one's mind. Thoughts come across as words, accompanied by a buzzing, ticklish pressure—the recipient of the thought hears and feels the words.

Though not painful, the effect is known to cause peculiar expressions on the faces of those not expecting it.

Thread Weaving

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard

Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept creates and manipulates magical threads. He can have a maximum number of permanent threads active equal to his Thread Weaving rank. Each individual thread can be woven to a maximum Thread Rank equal to the adept's Thread Weaving rank.

Silar knows the Thread Weaving talent at Rank 3, allowing him to have up to three threads active at any time, with each thread woven to a maximum Thread Rank 3.

Thread Weaving Talent Table

Discipline	*Thread Weaving*
Air Sailor	Air Weaving
Archer	Arrow Weaving
Beastmaster	Beast Weaving
Cavalryman	Rider Weaving
Elementalist	Elementalism
Illusionist	Illusionism
Nethermancer	Nethermancy
Scout	Scout Weaving
Sky Raider	Sky Weaving
Swordmaster	Weapon Weaving
Thief	Thief Weaving
Troubadour	Story Weaving
Warrior	War Weaving
Weaponsmith	Thread Smithing
Wizard	Wizardry

This limit does not apply to threads woven for spell patterns; such threads are temporary, lasting only long enough for the spell to be cast. See the Workings of Magic (p.XX) and Spell Magic (p.XX) chapters for more information about threads and spell patterns.

Each Discipline has its own unique variant of the Thread Weaving talent, shown in parentheses in the Discipline's talent progression. If a rule calls for this specific name, the Thread Weaving talent from that specific Discipline must be used, not just any Thread Weaving talent. Adepts with more than one Discipline learn and improve each of their Discipline's Thread Weaving talents independently. See Learning New Disciplines, p.XX, for more information on multi-Disciplining and the Thread Weaving talent.

Throwing Weapons

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept makes an attack in ranged combat against an opponent by hurling a rock, dagger, spear, or other object. He makes a Throwing Weapons test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the object hits and the adept makes a Damage test for the weapon used. See Thrown Attacks, p.XX, for more information.

Tiger Spring

Step: Rank **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept reacts more quickly than normal in combat, adding his Tiger Spring rank as a bonus to his Initiative Step that round. For example, an adept with Tiger Spring at Rank 3 gains a +3 bonus to his Initiative Step. Tiger Spring can be used with other talents that improve Initiative, such as Air Dance.

Tracking

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept follows the trails left by people or animals across great distances, using a combination of divination magic and senses—in particular, sight and smell—to find traces of their passage. After locating some visible tracks, either by searching for them or spotting them with a Perception test, the adept makes a Tracking test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster.

The base Difficulty Number of a trail is equal to the lowest Dexterity Step among the target group. If the trail is over a day old, add +2 to the Difficulty; if the trail is a week or more old, add +3 to the Detection Difficulty for every week that has passed. If the tracks have been obscured by weather, such as rain or snow, the adept requires an extra success on his Tracking test to be able to follow them.

If successful, the adept will see the faint, luminous image of the tracks on the ground, allowing him to unerringly follow the tracks, even if they have been obliterated by weather or other causes, for a number of hours equal to his Tracking rank before requiring another Tracking test.

The adept may also use this talent to obscure his own tracks, as long as he travels no faster than his Movement Rate. If disguising a group's tracks, travel is limited to a maximum speed equal to half the adept's Movement Rate. He must keep to the rear of the group and spend time masking signs of their passage. The adept makes a Tracking test once for each day of travel, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for attempts to follow him.

Skill Use: The non-magical version of this talent does not cause the tracker to magically see the tracks, but otherwise the talent works as described.

Trick Riding

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The mounted adept performs acrobatics while riding, making Trick Riding tests in place of Avoid Blow tests to dodge close or ranged combat attacks directed against himself or his mount. He may also goad his mount into jumping fences, chasms, flames, or other obstacles by making a Trick Riding test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster. Jumping a short one-yard-high fence could have a Difficulty Number of 4; jumping over a three-yard-wide chasm could have a Difficulty Number of 12.

If the adept or his mount is required to make a Dexterity test for a maneuver, the adept may make a Trick Riding test instead. Some maneuvers in Mounted Combat (see p.XX) require a Trick Riding test if the mount is not sufficiently combat-trained or the rider is unfamiliar with his mount.

True Shot

Step: Rank **Action:** Free
Strain: 2 **Skill Use:** No

The adept enhances ranged attacks with raw magical energy, greatly increasing his accuracy. The adept may spend additional Karma on Missile Weapons or Throwing Weapons tests. He takes 2 Strain, and declares how many additional points of Karma he is adding to the test, up to a maximum equal to his True Shot rank.

If the test succeeds, the adept hits and determines damage normally. If the test fails, and the adept has not spent the maximum Karma allowed under this talent, he may spend additional points of Karma and add the result of those dice to the test result. Once the attack test is successful, no more Karma can be spent to increase the result.

Use of this talent must be declared before the initial Missile Weapons or Throwing Weapons test is made. The target can still use defensive abilities (like Avoid Blow) against the attack.

True Sight

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept sees through illusions more easily, adding his True Sight rank to the result of any tests he makes to sense or otherwise see through an illusion. This bonus does not increase the efficacy of the original test for any purposes other than detecting illusions. For example, if the adept had made a Damage test which also counted as a Sensing test to detect an illusion, adding his True Sight rank to the test result would not inflict further damage—it simply improves the chance of success on the Sensing test. See Illusions, p.XX, for more information on illusions and how they work.

Unarmed Combat

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept makes an attack in close combat using his hands, feet, or another body part against an opponent. The adept makes an Unarmed Combat test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the attack hits the target. Unless noted otherwise, the adept uses his Strength Step only for the Damage test. See Unarmed Attacks, p.XX, for more information.

Versatility

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

Versatility is a racial talent, available only to human adepts (see Versatility, p.XX). A human adept with Versatility ranks may learn talents from other Disciplines. The adept must be trained by a member of the appropriate Discipline for each talent that he learns, something that many adepts are reluctant to do. Training time and cost are determined by the gamemaster when learning from a gamemaster character. The Legend Point cost for talents learned under Versatility is one tier higher than their normal cost (so a Novice level talent would be purchased as a Journeyman level talent).

An adept may learn a number of talents from other Disciplines equal to his Versatility rank. An adept cannot learn a talent from a Circle greater than his highest Discipline Circle. For example, if the adept's highest Discipline Circle is Third Circle, he can learn talents from other Disciplines available to them at Third Circle or lower. As Talent Options can be learned at a range of Circles, they use the Circle the tutoring adept knows them at to determine if a human could learn them via Versatility. For example, a Novice Talent Option learned at Seventh Circle only can be learned by a Seventh Circle human adept, even if the tutor could have learned it at Second Circle.

Talents learned through the use of Versatility can never have Karma spent on them. Also, the Versatility talent itself, and any talents learned through use of the Versatility talent, do not count toward the requirements for advancing to a higher Circle (see Advancing Discipline Circles, p.XX). This means that adepts who use Versatility to learn and improve talents from other Disciplines will generally take longer to advance through their own Discipline Circles.

An adept cannot use Versatility to learn talents available to his own Discipline as Discipline Talents, but can learn talents available to his Discipline as Talent Options. For example, a Second Circle Archer cannot learn the Anticipate Blow talent from a Warrior, as Anticipate Blow is a Third Circle Discipline Talent for Archers, but could learn the Scout's Tracking talent, despite having access to Tracking from his Talent Options.

By using Versatility, human adepts may learn the Thread Weaving and Summon talents from other Disciplines, even if they are otherwise Discipline talents. For example, a human Wizard could learn and improve ranks in the Elementalism variant of Thread Weaving, and therefore learn how to cast Elementalism spells.

See Human Versatility and Spellcasting, p.XX, for more information on how the Versatility talent applies to magicians and magic.

Waterfall Slam

Step: Rank **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept powers his blows with the elemental power of water, overwhelming his target with the force of rushing waves. When the adept causes a Wound in close combat, the target must make a Knockdown test, even if the damage caused would not normally trigger the test. The adept's Waterfall Slam rank is added to the Difficulty Number for any attacks that cause the target to make a Knockdown test. In addition, any attack that causes a Wound requires the target make a Knockdown test, even if the damage dealt would not otherwise trigger it.

Wheeling Attack

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The mounted adept makes more effective Charging Attacks (see Mounted Combat, p.XX). He is not required to have his mount move more than its Movement Rate before the attack, but is instead required instead to have his mount move at double its Movement Rate during the round.

Wheeling Attack requires the adept to use the Splitting Movement combat option (p.XX), but he suffers no Harried modifier or Strain (which is covered by the talent). The adept makes a Wheeling Attack test as his Attack test in close combat.

Helena's mount has a Movement Rate of 15, but her target is only 10 yards away. Normally, Helena would have to be 16 yards from her target to make a Charging Attack (1 higher than the mount's Movement Rate). When using Wheeling Attack, however, Helena can make a Charging Attack against any target within reach (up to the mount's full Movement Rate of 30), but the mount must use all of its movement. Helena moves 10 yards to her target, attacks, then moves 20 yards away. This split movement is covered by the talent's effects, so Helena suffers no additional penalty.

Wheeling Defense

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Simple
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** Yes (Journeyman)

The mounted adept urges his mount into a whirling circle, confusing his attackers by presenting a constantly moving target. The adept makes a Wheeling Defense test against the Physical Defense of any opponents within the range of the mount's Movement Rate. If successful, adept and mount increase their Physical Defense by +2 per success against those opponents until the end of the next round.

Wilderness Survival

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Sustained
Strain: 0
Skill Use: Yes (Novice)

The adept knows how to survive in the wild. He is able to locate or build shelter, start a fire, find water, or forage for edible vegetation, such as berries, roots, fruits, mushrooms, and other plants. The adept makes a Wilderness Survival test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on those shown in the Survival Table, and taking circumstances such as season, weather, and environment into account. Each use of this talent takes two hours and the adept may make four such tests per day, meaning he will sometimes need to make difficult survival decisions—food or water? shelter or food?

Survival Table

Terrain	*Difficulty Number*
The Badlands	12
The Blood Wood	10
Hinterlands	7
Jungles	7
Mountains, highland	7
Mountains, lowland	6
Plains	6
The Poison Forest	12
The Wastes	12
Woodlands	5

Finding Food

Wilderness Survival allows the adept to forage or otherwise find food. Some barren areas may not support any plants or animals at all; the adept cannot successfully find food in such areas. For each success on a Wilderness Survival test, the adept finds enough food for one person for one day.

Finding Shelter

Unless the adept carries a tent or tarp, he will need to find or build shelter when traveling through the wild. Natural shelters include caves, rock formations, fallen trees, or anything else that can block the wind and/or offer some sort of protection from the elements. For each success on a Wilderness Survival test, the adept finds or builds a shelter providing adequate protection for one person from light rain, wind, or snow.

Finding Water

Generally, a Namegiver character requires a minimum of one quart of water each day to remain healthy. Unfortunately, not all the water found in the wilderness is safe to drink. Precautions should always be taken before drinking from any untested water source. In areas without obvious sources of water, alternative water sources must be found. For each success on a Wilderness Survival test, the adept finds enough safe water for one person for one day.

Willforce

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Free
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

The adept focuses his will, increasing the effectiveness of his spells. He substitutes his Willforce Step for his Willpower Step when making a spell Effect test. This substitution must be done for each Effect test. If a spell requires multiple Effect tests (by targeting a group, or having an extended duration, for example), the adept can choose which tests receive the benefit of this talent at the time he makes the test.

Wind Catcher

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Strain: 1 **Skill Use:** No

When falling from a height, the adept controls his descent by making a Wind Catcher (6) test. With one or two successes he lands safely and takes no falling damage. With three or more successes, he may direct his descent to land no further from the target landing site than the distance fallen. For example, an adept who falls from a height of 20 yards could land up to 20 yards away from where he would have landed.

If the test fails, the adept is unable to take control and plummets to the ground, possibly taking damage (see Falling Damage in the Gamemaster's Guide). The adept can safely fall from a maximum height equal to his Wind Catcher rank ×100 yards. Sky Raiders often use this talent to make precise aerial assaults on enemy positions.

Winning Smile

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept appears more attractive to another person. The adept makes a Winning Smile test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target finds his appearance very pleasing. The adept adds +2 per success to any Interaction tests he makes against the target for a number of hours equal to his Winning Smile rank. An adept may attempt a Winning Smile test only once against a given character each day.

While most effective against members of the same race, the adept can use this talent on characters of other races, though typically with greater difficulty. The gamemaster should determine whether such an attempt requires a higher success level to be effective and, if so, how much higher.

For example, a human trying to impress a dwarf may require two successes on his Winning Smile test. That same human attempting to impress a t'skrang might need three successes, while an attempt to win over a dragon would require four or more (if it is even possible). By contrast, if the target in question had a preference for humans, the test might require only a single success.

Wood Skin

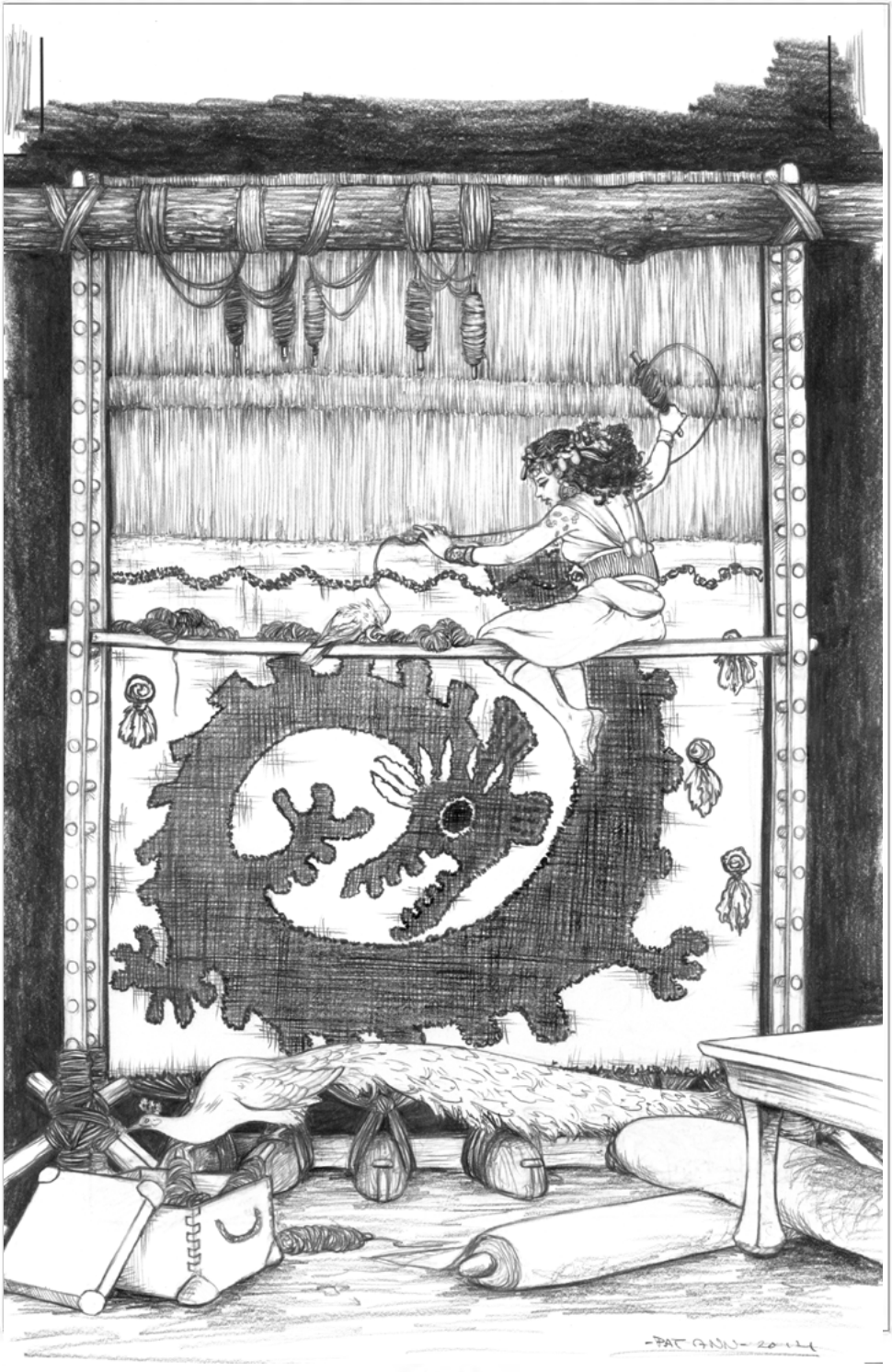
Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Standard
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** No

The adept toughens himself to better resist damage. He spends a Recovery test and makes a Wood Skin test, adding the result to his Health Ratings for his Wood Skin rank in hours. When the talent is active, the adept's muscles and ligaments toughen and his skin takes on the appearance of wood or bark. The talent remains in effect for the full duration, even if the adept falls unconscious.

Wound Balance

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Free
Strain: 0 **Skill Use:** Yes (Novice)

The adept firmly stands his ground, substituting his Wound Balance Step for his Strength Step when making any Knockdown tests while supporting and balancing his own weight (as opposed to being mounted or carried by another character).



SKILLS

Magic is useful, but nothing beats a strong arm and old fashioned know-how.
• Rona, Weaver •

Most people lack the magical talents of adepts, but can often accomplish the same tasks using non-magical abilities. In Earthdawn, these mundane abilities are called skills. Skills add a bonus to one of your character's Attribute Steps, giving him an advantage when taking actions, engaging in combat, and so on. Skills allow a character to perform certain actions and to make informed decisions about various courses of action during an adventure.

There are four types of skills: Artisan, General, Knowledge, and Language. Artisan skills represent the arts and crafts practiced by every Namegiver; General skills allow your character to perform everyday actions; Knowledge skills represent how much your character knows about the world of Earthdawn; Language skills determine the spoken or written languages your character is fluent in.

Skills are similar to talents, except they do not require magic to learn and use. Instead, a character must invest time, effort, and money to acquire them. In this age of magic, skills are largely the domain of ordinary folk, though all adepts begin the game with a few skills and, over time, most adepts like to learn more skills to supplement their magical talents.

Skills Versus Talents

Many skills have a magical talent equivalent. This chapter includes a list of such skills, but in most cases the difference between the magical and non-magical versions are small enough that the differences are described as part of the talent description.

Some adepts know both skilled and talented versions of the same ability; in such cases, the player must decide which type he is using before making any tests—most times an adept will use a talent over a skill, but there are powers and spells that can suppress magic, including talents. For this reason, many adepts like to have a mundane "backup" skill, just in case.

Learning & Improving Skills

Because it takes good old-fashioned physical and mental effort, skills take more effort to learn than talents. A character must take the time to train and practice to learn a new skill or to improve a skill he already knows. Sometimes they need to spend money to pay an instructor.

Skill ranks that the player assigns during character creation assume that the character picked up the skill during his adolescence. To add ranks later in life, the character must find and learn from a suitable tutor. If your character has the Legend Points needed to gain an additional rank in a skill and access to a tutor or other source of training, he can improve that skill. See Improving Skill Ranks, p.XX, for more information.

Using Skills

Skill ranks add a Step bonus to one of the character's Attribute Steps, as shown in the skill's description. For example, a character with the Melee Weapons skill adds his skill rank to his Dexterity Step to find that skill's Step Number. A character with a Dexterity Step 6 and Melee Weapons skill at Rank 5 would use Step 11 when wielding a melee weapon (6+5=11).

The Difficulty Number for the test is usually based on the target's Social, Mystic, or Physical Defense. Other Difficulty Numbers appear in the individual skill descriptions. References to "Step:", "Strain:" and "Action:" are as described for Using Talents, p.XX.

Default Skill Use

Certain skills represent abilities that every character knows. The Default Skill Table lists these skills, though other skills could be added at the gamemaster's discretion.

Despite the ability to default to an Attribute, the Difficulty Numbers for many skill tests make it difficult to reliably succeed when defaulting. In addition, any requirements based on rank, such as duration or range, are considered to be equivalent to the character possessing the skill at Rank 1.

Moran, a dwarf Air Sailor, is negotiating for a better price on an item he wants from a local merchant. After determining whether the item is available to be bought, and a base price for it, Moran attempts to bargain for the goods. He does not know Haggle, but it is a default skill, so he can attempt to use it. Moran gets one chance to make a successful Charisma test to negotiate a better price. Smiling, the merchant listens to the dwarf's stumbling attempt at explaining why he should pay less for the item.

Default Skill Table

Animal Handling
Avoid Blow
Awareness
Bribery
Climbing
Conversation
Distract
Etiquette
Flirting
Haggle
Melee Weapons
Missile Weapons
Research
Resist Taunt
Seduction
Slough Blame
Swimming
Throwing Weapons
Tracking
Unarmed Combat
Wilderness Survival

Skill Tests

To make a skill test (usually referred to by the name of the skill, for instance, an Etiquette test), the character rolls the dice indicated by the skill Step.

For the test to be successful, the result must be at least equal to the Difficulty Number. If the result exceeds the Difficulty Number by a suitable margin, the character may achieve extra successes, which may increase or otherwise beneficially change the effect of the character's skill use.

Some skills replace, or substitute, their Step for a Step used in another type of test or are used in place of another type of test. These follow the same rules as talents replacing other types of tests, see the Talents chapter, p. XX.

Talents Available as Skills

Novice Skills		
Acrobatic Defense	Distract	Picking Pockets
Air Sailing	Emotion Song	Research
Animal Bond	Engaging Banter	Shield Bash
Animal Training	Etiquette	Stealthy Stride
Anticipate Blow	First Impression	Sure Mount
Arcane Mutterings	Graceful Exit	Surprise Strike
Avoid Blow	Great Leap	Swift Kick
Awareness	Haggle	Taunt
Battle Shout	Heartening Laugh	Throwing Weapons
Charge	Lock Picking	Tracking
Climbing	Maneuver	Trick Riding
Conversation	Melee Weapons	Unarmed Combat
Danger Sense	Mimic Voice	Wilderness Survival
Diplomacy	Missile Weapons	Wound Balance
Disarm Trap	Navigation	

Journeyman Skills		
Battle Bellow	Hypnotize	Second Shot
Blade Juggle	Impressive Display	Second Weapon
Conceal Object	Leadership	Slough Blame
Disarm	Mount Attack	Tactics
Down Strike	Resist Taunt	Wheeling Attack
Evidence Analysis	Riposte	Wheeling Defense
Fast Hand	Second Attack	

ARTISAN SKILLS

Of the four types of skills available in Earthdawn, Artisan skills are the least commonly used. They serve primarily to help define a character and as a way to prove him untainted by the Horrors.

Using Artisan Skills

Ever since the time when people discovered that those touched by the Horrors could not maintain the discipline to practice an art or craft, adepts have learned one. Only by practicing his art or craft can an adept demonstrate that the Horrors have not corrupted his power.

Though they rarely do so, characters can use Artisan skills if the situation calls for it. For example, if the gamemaster decides that a character must create a sculpture or painting to advance the story, the character may use an appropriate Artisan skill to do so. See Artisan, p.XX, for examples of typical Artisan skills.

Greeting Rituals

In many isolated regions of Barsaive, locals remain wary of the dangers posed by lingering Horrors. In such areas, inhabitants commonly require that strangers use their artisan skills to prove that they do not carry Horror taint.

A character using an Artisan skill as part of a greeting ritual should make his Artisan test against a Difficulty Number of 5. If successful, the character shows himself free of Horror taint and the locals will likely accept him.

Making an Impression

Gamemasters can also treat the Artisan test as a way of making an impression (see the Gamemaster's Guide). The gamemaster compares the result of the character's Artisan test against the highest Social Defense among the gamemaster characters present. Success improves their attitudes by one degree. A Rule of One result worsens their attitude by one degree.

GENERAL SKILLS

General skills give your character abilities that allow him to perform certain actions. Your character might use the Acrobatic Defense skill to give him an edge in combat, or the Conversation skill to worm vital information from someone. Characters often end up in situations where they might wish to use a General skill—assuming, of course, they have the time and money necessary to acquire it.

Many General skills have magical equivalents, available to adept characters as talents. These skills and talents are similar in effect, though there are sometimes differences. Unless otherwise described in this chapter, or noted under the talent description, the magical and non-magical versions work the same way.

Practical Knowledge

Optional Rule: Gamemasters may want to incorporate practical knowledge into Artisan or General skills, allowing them to be used as Knowledge skills. For example, they may want to make basic knowledge of melee weapon design available to all characters who know the Melee Weapons skill, or may want to allow all characters with the Singing skill to know a little about music, without requiring separate Knowledge skills be learned.

To implement this, the character simply determines an impromptu Knowledge skill Step by adding the rank of the skill in question to his Perception Step (he uses his skill as if it were a Knowledge skill). The character then makes a test as normal.

The gamemaster should limit the applicability of these practical knowledge skills by only allowing them to cover knowledge that is at least related to the subject.

Krarg knows the Dancing skill at Rank 5 and has a Perception Step 6. He is an accomplished dancer and has practiced many dances, but is now in a situation where a Cathan tribe from the Servos Jungle has invited him to join in their fertility dance—one he hasn't done before.

The gamemaster allows him to make a Knowledge test with a Step 11, allowing Krarg to use his knowledge of dance to look for typical rhythmic patterns and steps performed by Namegivers. The gamemaster judges Krarg's skill to be closely related, but as the Cathans' tribal dances in general are unfamiliar, requires him to achieve at least two successes. Krarg needs to roll an 11 to succeed.

This procedure is only recommended for skills, not talents. Talents in Earthdawn do not represent a learned aptitude, but rather an instinctive and magical ability. For adepts, Half-magic (p. XX) covers most subjects of knowledge pertaining to their Discipline and its talents.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Your character has lived in the world of Earthdawn for his entire life, and so he will know more about it than you possibly can. Knowledge skills represent that experience. They serve two main purposes:

- They simulate your character's knowledge of the world. The gamemaster reveals or adds to this knowledge when it will advance the story.
- They allow you to further define your character, giving him unique quirks and interests.

In a game session, Knowledge skills can come into play when something your character might know would help you make an informed choice about what to do next. Your character may know a tremendous amount about the world of Earthdawn, but you, the player, will only learn that knowledge when the story dictates the need.

Using Knowledge Skills

Using Knowledge skills is the same as using other skills. The exact nature of each Knowledge skill can have a narrow focus or broad perspective, and knowledge of any area may cover huge amounts of information with different levels of insight. As a result, there are different ways for players and gamemasters to use Knowledge skills during the game, and different ways to interpret Knowledge skill test results.

A character typically uses a Knowledge skill in one of two ways:

- To determine if he knows a specified fact.
- To see how much about a given subject he knows.

Both ways require a Knowledge test to be made. Learning a specific fact involves beating a given Difficulty Number. Finding what body of knowledge a character has is an open roll, with higher results representing more knowledge.

The use of Knowledge skills does not reflect a character's only knowledge about any given situation. It is remembering the right thing at the right moment, or drawing conclusions between knowledge and situation. As such, a character may know something he failed to "remember" earlier.

Making Knowledge Tests

When making a Knowledge test, a character rolls the skill Step (Rank+PER) against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster. The gamemaster decides how well the character's skill covers the subject of the Knowledge test, and determines whether the desired information is a well-known fact in that area of expertise or information known only to a few insiders.

If the character is looking for a fact, the gamemaster's decision results in a Difficulty Number and a Success Level to be achieved. This can be re-interpreted into a new Difficulty Number, which will sometimes be the case in various Earthdawn products. For example, if a Botany (7) test requires three successes because the information is not well-known even among botanists, a Botany (17) test might be asked for instead (a 17 scores three successes against a Difficulty Number of 7).

If the character tries to learn as much as possible about a subject, the Difficulty Number is determined the same way, but no specific Success Level is required. Instead, every success gives the character additional information. Earthdawn products

will often suggest a number of Knowledge skills and associated Difficulty Numbers along with a table showing what a character achieving different successes learns.

For example, if a character tries to remember all sausages important to Throal cuisine, a Throal Cuisine (5) or a Barsaivian Cuisine (9) Test might be called for. One success with either skill would allow the character to learn the five most important Throalic sausages, while two successes would allow him to learn both the five most important, plus another four less important sausages, and so on.

Knowledge Test Table

Type of Information	*Difficulty Number*
To-the-point	5
Closely Related	7
Related	9
Hardly Related	12
Unrelated	NA

Although the skills and Difficulty Numbers differ, the knowledge gained would be the same if identical Success Levels were achieved.

Knowledge Relation

Before making a Knowledge test, the gamemaster determines how related the Knowledge skill and the subject at hand are. The relation of skill and knowledge determines the base Difficulty Number of the Knowledge test, as shown on the Knowledge Test Table. There are five broad categories for the relation a Knowledge skill has to a subject:

To-the-Point skills match the knowledge sought after exactly and are often very specialized Knowledge skills. For example, the Current Throal Politics Knowledge skill is the skill known to a character who keeps up-to-date on the day to day politics of Throal to the very detail, and the ideal source to learn about the change in Throalic politics brought about by King Neden's death.

Closely Related skills cover the knowledge sought very closely, either by covering a slightly larger focus or a strongly related field of expertise. For example, the Throal Politics Knowledge skill is still a good source of knowledge about the aftermath of Neden's death.

Related skills are the most common Knowledge skill found and cover a wider area of expertise, but the skill and knowledge sought are still quite related. For example, both the Barsaive Politics and Throal History skills would allow some access to knowledge about the Kingdom's succession and policies.

Hardly Related skills might contain bits of relevant information where the desired knowledge is concerned. For example, the Throal Military Knowledge skill might cover some of the knowledge connected to Neden's succession, as he served time in Throal's military.

Unrelated skills cannot be used to learn anything about a given subject. For example, the Theran Cuisine Knowledge skill does not allow one to learn any facts about King Neden at all, even if he liked Theran food. They do not allow any Knowledge Tests to be made.

Knowledge Obscurity

Once the relation of Knowledge skill and the field of expertise the knowledge is part of are determined, the gamemaster decides how successful the Knowledge test has to be to learn a specific fact or to what extent a character's Knowledge test result covers it. The more obscure a piece of knowledge, the higher Success Level it requires.

Knowledge Obscurity Table

Knowledge Obscurity	*Success Level Required*
General	1 Success
Detailed	2 Successes
Intricate	3 Successes
Obscure	4+ Successes

General information requires a single success. For example, the approximate date and rough circumstances of Kovar's ascension are General information within the subjects of Kovar's person, Throal politics, or Throal in general.

Detailed information requires two successes. For example, Kovar's accurate age and the day he ascended to the throne are Detailed information.

Intricate information requires three successes. The stances that Throal's noble houses took towards the succession and their immediate reactions and displays during the coronation ceremony are Intricate information.

Obscure information requires at least four successes. Obscure information is typically secret knowledge, available only to an insider. The details of how Dollas reacted to news of Neden's death is only known to members of the former royal family and close friends, and is obscure information.

Knowledge Skill Limits

Knowledge skills give your character facts, not abilities—they do not allow your character to perform a task. For example, knowledge of art does not make your character a painter; your character may know everything about every ship ever built and remain unable to sail one out of harbor. Knowledge skills let you determine what your character might want to do next; they do not necessarily enable your character to put a plan into action.

A character successfully using a Knowledge skill knows information that applies to his current situation. The gamemaster gives the information to the player, allowing the character to act knowledgeably. If the gamemaster considers the information the character is looking for unimportant to the adventure, using a Knowledge skill will likely provide little information. Quite simply, players cannot expect the gamemaster to know or create every possible fact about the world of Earthdawn, nor every bit of knowledge they have to help them out in each and every circumstance.

Language Skills

Language skills allow a character to speak, read, and write different languages. All characters begin the game with ranks in the Speak Language and Read/Write Language skills (see Language Skills in the Creating a Character chapter, p. XX). Each rank represents a language the character knows.

Learning new languages differs slightly from the process of learning other skills. To learn a new language, the character increases his rank in the appropriate skill (see Improving Skills, p.XX). He then spends at least one month studying the language with a teacher or native speaker. If learning to read and write the language, the teacher must be literate in the language. At the end of this time, he makes a skill test against the Learning Difficulty of the language. If successful, he learns the language. If the test fails, he may make an additional attempt after studying the language for another month.

Skill Descriptions

Acting

Step: Rank+CHA **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

The character acts or otherwise pretends that he is someone else. Actors can portray emotions they do not feel, persuading listeners and watchers that the emotions are genuine. Though the Acting skill does not allow a character to physically alter his appearance, the character can mimic voice and speech patterns, copy gestures and movements, and convey energy, attitudes, and mannerisms appropriate to his role.

The character makes an Acting test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target believes the character to be the type of person he is portraying. If the character pretends to be a specific person whom the target knows, the character needs at least three successes to convince the target of his authenticity.

When using this skill during a theatrical performance, the character makes an Acting test and compares the result against the Social Defense of each member of the audience; for large audiences, the gamemaster may choose to use the average Social Defense of the audience. The Success Level determines how much each audience member enjoys the performance.

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill.

Alchemy

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

This skill requires an alchemist's kit or access to an alchemist's shop. The Alchemy skill includes an understanding of the magical principles and formulas used to create magical concoctions, the knowledge needed to gather ingredients, and the ability to test and analyze different potions a character might discover in the course of adventuring.

Gathering Ingredients

Creating most alchemical concoctions requires natural herbs, roots, leaves, minerals and animal parts. Characters may purchase ingredients from herbalists or other alchemists, or may gather them himself. This usually requires a day of work. At the gamemaster's discretion, some concoctions may require exotic ingredients that characters must travel far and wide to find. Once a character has gathered the necessary ingredients, he may begin combining them.

Creating Potions and Salves

Creating an alchemical recipe takes a day's work. The character makes an Alchemy test against the appropriate Difficulty Number. If successful, the potion is finished and immediately usable, creating one dose per success. If the test fails, the potion is inert and useless. Gamemasters may allow player characters with the Alchemy skill to create new potions with unique effects. Base the difficulty for such creations on similar potions, with a +3 modifier to reflect the difficulty of creating new potions.

Creating Poisons

Alchemists can also use natural ingredients to brew various poisons (see the Gamemaster's Guide). The base difficulty for brewing a poison is equal to the poison's Mystic Defense or Step Number, whichever is higher. The process works the same way as creating potions. Most alchemists working in cities will not sell poisons openly. Many alchemists, however, will sell them under the counter to favored or known customers. This is especially true in cities like Kratas, where the skills of a capable poisoner are constantly in demand.

Analysis

A character who possesses a potion of unknown properties may attempt to analyze it. This analysis requires only a few drops of the substance and about an hour's time for analysis. The gamemaster makes a secret Alchemy test for the character against the Difficulty Number used to create the potion or other substance. One or two successes reveals the potion's general purpose, such as for healing, harm, or an antidote. Three or more successes reveals the exact effects of the potion or poison.

Animal Handling

Step: Rank+WIL **Strain:** 0
Action: Standard **Cost:** Novice

The character works with domesticated animals—he might be a rider commanding horses, a driver urging mules to move, or a handler getting dogs to attack. Making an animal perform any action beyond its normal activities requires the character to make an Animal Handling test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional animal.

If successful, the animals perform the requested action. The Animal Handling skill requires the character to have at least a Neutral attitude with all of the animals being commanded. Animals with a Neutral Attitude will not put themselves in dangerous situations, animals with a better attitude towards the character might.

Example Artisan Skills

Artist
Acting
Baking
Basket Weaving
Body Painting
Carving
Cooking
Craftsman
Craft Armor
Craft Weapon
Dancing
Embroidery
Entertainer
Juggling
Mapmaking
Musician
Poetry
Rune Carving
Sculpting
Singing
Storytelling
Tattooing
Wardrobe and Style

Artisan

Step: Rank+CHA **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

This skill serves as a template for most Artisan skills. Each Artisan skill represents an art or craft practiced by the character. Practicing an Artisan skill, however, does not necessarily make a character an artist or entertainer. For example, a character with the Artisan skill of Canvas Painting may paint pictures every other day, but may lack the impact of a true artist's work.

The Difficulty Number for most Artisan skill tests is 5, making it relatively easy for novice characters to succeed. This ease reflects the fact that most everyone in Earthdawn practices an Artisan skill. Listed below are common Artisan skills (some of which are also General skills, described separately).

As with Knowledge skills, players may invent any Artisan skill they please for their character, subject to gamemaster approval.

Artist

Step: Rank+CHA **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

Artists produce physical works of art that evoke an emotion in those who see it. The character makes an Artist test and records the test result.

When an observer looks at the work compare the recorded Artist test result to the observing character's Social Defense. The Success Level determines how well the character appreciates the work of art. Higher Success Levels create a more impressive experience for the observer.

Examples of the fine arts include painting, poetry (written), sculpture, and writing. A character may acquire the Artist skill multiple times to learn different types of art. This skill can be used as an Artisan skill.

Shem is a sculptor with the Artist skill at Rank 5. Shem makes what he personally judges to be one of his best works. After finishing the work, he makes an Artist test with a result of 21.

Some time later, Kira the Thief acquires the sculpture, looking at it to try to put a price on it. Comparing the Artist test result of 21 against her Social Defense of 5 results in four successes. Kira thinks the sculpture is one of the most impressive she has ever seen! She decides to stash it away in the hope of finding a wealthy patron to buy it—if she can ever bear to part with it.

Bribery

Step: Rank+CHA **Strain:** 0
Action: Standard **Cost:** Novice

Though most societies publicly disapprove of bribes, many people are more than willing to take them. Bribery is the skill of discreetly buying favors. The character makes a Bribery test against the target's Social Defense, +1 for each additional character. If successful, the target will do the favor asked.

Small favors require a small amount of cash, for example, 5 silver pieces or the equivalent of a couple hours' wages for the target. For larger favors, a bribe equal to at least a day's earnings for the target is required. At the gamemaster's discretion, a character willing to offer larger-than-necessary bribes may receive a bonus to his Bribery test.

Craft Armor

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

The character creates new armor and shields. He must carry out his work at a properly equipped forge. Outside of a forge, the character can only make minor repairs. At gamemaster's discretion, the forge's quality may affect the amount of time required to use this skill.

To make new armor the character makes a Craft Armor test against the armor's combined Physical + Mystic Armor ratings, +5. He must accumulate a total number of successes equal to the armor's Physical Armor rating. Each test takes one week to perform.

To craft shields, the Difficulty Number is the Physical + Mystic Defense bonus, +5, and requires a number of successes equal to the shield's Physical Defense bonus.

Crafting a set of hide armor (Physical 5; Mystic 1) requires five successes against a Difficulty Number of 11 (5+1+5=11). Crafting a set of plate mail armor (Physical 9; Mystic 0) requires nine successes against a Difficulty Number of 14 (9+0+5=14). Crafting a body shield (Physical Defense+3; Mystic Defense +0) requires three successes against a Difficulty Number of 8 (3+0+5=8).

The material cost of creating a set of armor or a shield is generally half of the price shown in the Goods and Services chapter, p. XX. If the character fails his test, he makes no progress, but he may continue to work; the only thing lost is time. A Rule of One result, however, ruins the armor or shield completely—both the materials and time invested are wasted.

Damaged armor and shields can be repaired using this skill, against a Difficulty Number equal to half that required to create the item. Each success on the test repairs one point of Physical or Mystic Armor (see Repairing Damaged Armor, p.XX).

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill.

Craftsman

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

Characters use Craftsman skills to make or repair items. The time required to make the item varies from a few hours for a simple item, to weeks or even months for large or intricate items. The character makes a Craftsman test against the Difficulty Number of making or repairing the item. Simple, everyday items have a Difficulty Number of 2; ordinary items have a Difficulty Number of 5; unusual or exotic items have a Difficulty Number of 8 or more. If the item is unusually complex, the character may need to accumulate multiple successes at the gamemaster's discretion.

The character can only make or repair an item if he has access to the proper tools and materials for the task. A successful test means the character has successfully made or repaired the item. If the test fails the character can try again; the only thing the character has lost in the first attempt is time. A Rule of One result means the attempt failed miserably, destroying the item beyond salvation.

Common crafts include Blacksmith, Cooper (barrel maker), Mason, Tailor and Woodworker. This skill can be used as an Artisan skill.

Craft Weapon

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

The character creates new weapons, including ammunition for missile weapons. He must carry out his work at a properly equipped forge. Outside of a forge, the character can only make minor repairs. At gamemaster's discretion, the forge's quality may affect the amount of time required to use this skill.

To make new weapons the character makes a Craft Weapon test against the weapon's Damage Step + 5. He must accumulate a total number of successes equal to the weapon's size. Each test takes one day to perform. Bolts, arrows and other missiles are considered to be the Size and Damage Step of the missile weapon. Success produces a number of missiles equivalent to that shown for purchase in the Goods and Services chapter, p.XX.

Crafting a dagger (Size 1; Damage 2) requires one success against a Difficulty Number of 7 (2+5=7). Crafting a pole-axe (Size 6; Damage 8) requires six successes against a Difficulty Number of 13 (8+5=13). Crafting medium crossbow bolts (Size 4; Damage 5) requires four successes against a Difficulty Number of 10 (5 + 5 = 10) and creates 15 bolts.

The material cost of creating a weapon is generally half of the price shown in the Goods and Services chapter, p. XX. If the character fails his test, he makes no progress, but he may continue to work; the only thing lost is time. A Rule of One result, however, ruins the weapon completely—both the materials and time invested are wasted.

Damaged weapons can be repaired using this skill, against a Difficulty Number equal to half that required to create the item. Each success on the test repairs one point of Damage Step repaired (see Repairing Damaged Weapons, p.XX).

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill.

Disguise

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

The character uses costumes and make-up to disguise himself or another as a Namegiver of his choice. It takes a minimum of 30 minutes to prepare the disguise, and the character needs access to a full make-up kit, clothing, jewelry, and the like.

The character makes a Disguise Test, the result becoming the Difficulty Number for any attempts made to see through the disguise. The disguise lasts for a number of hours equal to the character's Disguise rank, or until the disguised character discards the costume.

The disguise cannot make radical changes; while make-up could make a dwarf look like an ork, it is difficult to make them as tall. At the gamemaster's discretion, ambitious disguises can grant a bonus to tests made to see through the disguise.

This skill only alters appearance. If a disguised character is attempting to impersonate someone else, the character will likely need other abilities, such as Acting or Mimic Voice, to convince others of his false identity.

Entertainer

Step: Rank+CHA **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

Entertainer is the skill used for most performing arts. The character makes an Entertainer test against the highest Social Defense of any observer of his performance. The Success Level determines how much the observers enjoy the performance.

Each success scored means that 25 percent of the audience enjoys and remembers the performance.

A character may acquire the Entertainer skill multiple times to learn different types of performing arts. Examples include musician (one instrument), poet (spoken), singer, and storyteller.

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill.

Flirting

Step: Rank+CHA **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

The Flirting skill combines elements of flattery, intense attention, and clever word-play to affect another person. Flirtatious behavior accents conversations with hints of romance.

The character makes a Flirting test against the target's Social Defense. A single success intrigues the target; he or she wants to spend more time with the flirting character, trying to learn more about him or her.

With two successes the character gains the target's full attention; he or she wants to spend almost all available time with the character. Three successes leaves a lasting impression on the target. He or she will try to follow up on the relationship, seeking to continue and deepen it. Four or more successes means the target is completely smit-

ten; they cannot get enough of the flirting character. The skill's effect fades after one week, but another successful Flirting Test could start it all over again.

Forgery

Step: Rank+DEX **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

Forgers create false papers, legal documents, and correspondence. A character with the Forgery skill can forge artwork if he also has the appropriate Artist skill.

For example, a character with the Forgery and Artist (Painter) skills could fake the work of a famous master. Creating a forgery takes two to five times as long as creating the original. For example, a letter jotted hastily in a few minutes might take nearly an hour to forge. The character makes a Forgery Test, the result becoming the Difficulty Number for attempts to detect the forgery. Use of this skill requires materials appropriate to the item being forged.

Knowledge

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Standard **Cost:** Novice

The character is knowledgeable about a certain topic. The precise definition of a Knowledge skill is determined by the player, keeping in mind that all Knowledge skills are subject to the gamemaster's approval. A Knowledge skill may cover broad areas of knowledge, meaning that the character knows a little bit about a lot of things, or he may have more focused knowledge, giving him more detailed knowledge within a smaller area of expertise.

While the area of expertise is determined by the player, the gamemaster determines how applicable the knowledge is to the question at hand.

Examples of Knowledge skills that might be appropriate or useful for characters are listed below. See Knowledge Skills, p.XX, for more information on how they work.

Example Knowledge Skills

Alchemy and Potions
Ancient Weapons
Baking
Barsaive History
Botany
Court Dancing
Creature Lore
Discipline Lore
Farming
Horror Lore
Legends and Heroes
Military Organizations
Province History
Racial Lore
Scourge History
Trade Routes
Wild Animals

Mapmaking

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

To get where they want to go and avoid unsafe spots, characters traveling over land need a map. Barsaive covers a large area, and the Scourge altered Barsaive's geography by destroying many towns and cities, forcing others to relocate and altering landmarks and geographic features. In the time since the Scourge, no one has undertaken an expedition solely to map Barsaive, and so no reliable maps of post-Scourge Barsaive exist. Most current maps only indicate major landmarks such as larger rivers and mountain ranges, Death's Sea, major cities like Iopos, Travar, Jerris, and Kratas,

and the Kingdom of Throal. Some more expensive maps show the main trade routes across the province, but most of these are commissioned by traders and are not for sale.

Most mapmakers in Barsaive draw their maps to be used with a device called Shantaya's sextant. Shantaya was an elven Troubadour who traveled across the province and mapped it in the years before the Scourge. As a way to standardize her work, she developed a device to chart distance and bearings using the maps she drew. By aligning the sextant with certain landmarks on the map, a traveler can determine the bearing and distance to various places in Barsaive.

Mapmaking is a Craftsman skill. Characters can create maps in two ways—by copying an existing map or drawing an original map. To draw an original map, a character must have traveled over the area he is mapping. To draw an original map, the character makes a Mapmaking (7) test. This must be accompanied by successful Navigation Tests (p. XX) to keep track of position, unless the map is for a very small area.

Physician Table

Ailment	*Difficulty Number*
Common Cold	4
Injury and Wounds	5
Influenza	6
Mild Poison	6
Broken Bones	8
Strong Poison	11
Black Death	15

To copy an existing map, the character makes a Mapmaking (5) test. The Success Level of the test determines the quality of the map produced. A single success yields a functional map with a few basic details and landmarks; two or three successes yields a map that characters can use with Shantaya's sextant; four or more successes yields a highly accurate map that gives a +1 bonus to any Navigation Test made using it.

This skill may be used as an Artisan skill.

Physician

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

The character diagnoses and prescribes treatments for injuries and diseases by examining the injury for half an hour, then making a Physician test against the condition's Difficulty Number. If successful, he learns what the problem is and how to treat it.

The character's Physician rank is added to the next Recovery or resistance test his patient makes as applicable. The gamemaster determines the Difficulty Number for ailments, with suggested Difficulty Numbers for common ailments listed below. A physician can attempt to treat the same ailment a number of times per day equal to the patient's Number of Recovery tests.

Treating raw damage is treating an Injury, the effect of successful treatment is a Recovery test bonus, as noted above. The Physician skill can be used to treat Wounds, however. Wounds are treated individually, the physician has to take time to stitch or bandage each Wound. Successful treatment of a Wound does not heal it, but removes

its penalty to Recovery Tests (see Effects of Injury, p. XX), thereby allowing to heal it faster. Treating Wounds in that way also eliminates most risks of infection.

Pilot Boat

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

The Pilot Boat skill is used to operate the fire-engine powered riverboats of the t'skrang commonly seen on the Serpent River. It is used the same way as Air Sailing, but for fire-engine driven boats only. 25 percent of the crew making successful tests mean the ship can hold position and does not drift, 50 percent means the ship can maneuver against the current in straight lines, 75 percent mean the ship can navigate freely and make complex maneuvers.

Read/Write Language

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Standard **Cost:** Novice

The character learns to read and write different languages. See Language Skills, p.XX, for details on how the skill differs from the talent. It is otherwise used as described for the Read/Write Language talent, p.XX, but does not cause Strain.

Sailing

Step: Rank+DEX **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

The character sails watercraft, whether muscle-powered or wind-powered, but not fire-powered vessels, like the legendary t'skrang riverboats (see Pilot Boat, p.XX), or propelled by magic, like airships (see Air Sailing, p. XX). It is used the same way as Air Sailing, but for waterborne craft propelled by wind or muscle power. If 25 percent of the crew make successful tests the boat is kept from drifting, 50 percent allows the boat to sail with the wind, 75 percent allows the boat to sail against the wind and perform maneuvers.

Seduction

Step: Rank+CHA **Strain:** 0
Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

Characters use the Seduction skill to convince members of their preferred sex to become romantically involved with them. A seduction has four stages: First Impression, Intriguing Conversation, Move to Intimacy, and the Suggestion. Each stage requires at least 10 minutes of interaction before the test is made, the gamemaster may modify this for the target's Attitude or the player's roleplaying. After that time, the character makes a Seduction test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the seduction moves to the next stage. Failure means the stage has to be repeated, requiring more time.

Each stage can be repeated a number of times equal to the character's Seduction Rank per day. For each success above that required for moving to the next stage, the character gains a +1 bonus to all Seduction tests made during the next stage of the process.

First Impression can be a glance, a striking outfit, a dramatic entrance, an opening line—all the pieces that fit together to make a good impression.

To make a successful First Impression, a character needs only a single success.

Intriguing Conversation requires wit, flattery, a willingness to reveal hints about oneself, and the ability to pick up and respond to cues from the target.

The object of Intriguing Conversation is to make the target feel special, like the most important and attractive person in the room, at the same time presenting your character as an attractive partner. To be successful, Intriguing Conversation requires two successes.

With a *Move to Intimacy,* your character begins to get more personal with the target character, gradually altering tone of voice, body language and the subjects of conversation to reveal even more about himself, learn more about the target, and develop a deeper rapport. A successful Move to Intimacy requires two successes.

The *Suggestion* occurs when your character suggests to the target character just how your character would like this encounter to end. A successful Suggestion requires three successes. Your character gets only one chance to make the Suggestion.

A successful seduction creates other effects beyond satisfying the immediate suggestion. The seduced character's Attitude toward your character improves by two degrees for the next 24 hours, and permanently improves by one degree as long as your character does not behave badly toward or betray the seduced character.

Speak Language

Step: Rank+PER **Strain:** 0
Action: Standard **Cost:** Novice

The character learns to communicate with others in different languages. See Language Skills, p.XX, for details on how the skill differs from the talent. It is otherwise used as described for the Speak Language talent, p.XX, but does not cause Strain.

Streetwise

Step: Rank+CHA **Strain:** 0

Action: Sustained **Cost:** Novice

A character with the Streetwise skill knows the ins and outs of urban environments, particularly the seedier side of cities. Streetwise is used like Etiquette (p. XX) for scenarios where the character tries to fit into criminal or street subculture. Streetwise also allows a character to gain the trust of other characters living apart from society who would otherwise not speak to him. The character makes a Streetwise test against the highest Social Defense among a target group, +1 per additional character. If successful, the targets are convinced that the character is a local street element and not sent by the authorities or otherwise out to disrupt their trade. They will interact with the character, but are not necessarily friendly.

Streetwise can also act as a Knowledge skill when trying to find information typically available to local underground characters, such as the location of black markets. The character does not have any knowledge, but can emulate a Knowledge skill by asking around, dropping a few silvers into the right palms. This follows the rules for making Knowledge tests (p. XX).

Swimming

Step: Rank+STR **Strain:** 0

Action: Standard **Cost:** Novice

All t'skrang, and many other Namegiver races who live near water, learn to swim. Characters make a Swimming test against a Difficulty Number determined by the condition of the water around them. Recommended Difficulty Numbers are given below.

Swimming uses a Standard Action every round, but a test is only made when the water condition changes or at the gamemaster's discretion. While swimming, a character's Movement Rate is halved, though when swimming with or against a strong current, the gamemaster may grant a bonus (or penalty) to the Movement Rate. Characters who fail their Swimming test make no appreciable progress. On a Rule of One result, the character starts drowning (see the Gamemaster's Guide).

Races and Swimming

Obsidimen cannot swim. If an obsidiman falls in the water he sinks and must find another way to quickly climb out. Obsidimen never possess knowledge of the Swimming skill and cannot even use it as Default Skill.

Windlings only swim if they have no other option, as getting their wings wet cripples their flying ability. Windlings never use Swimming as a Default Skill, although intrepid members of this race can learn it. Windlings use half their ground Movement Rate when swimming.

T'skrang are at home in the water and use their normal Movement Rate when swimming.

Water Condition Table

Difficulty Number	*Water Condition*
4	Calm water
5	Small waves
7	Slow river current
9	Moderate river current
13	Major river current
15	Open ocean

WORKINGS OF MAGIC

All that we are today is owed to magic. I shudder to think what would become of our world in its absence.
•Arlax Soulbright, Illusionist •

Magic is at the heart of the Earthdawn game. It is the source of the characters' abilities and it is the Horrors' path to the world. Magic is a part of everyday life in Earthdawn. It is used to light villages and towns at night, as well as to battle the remnants of the Horrors. Heroes use magic to become legends, while the Horrors and those who serve them use it to spread their corruption and evil over the world. As the history of Barsaive and the rest of the world unfolds, magic will play a central role.

This chapter describes how magic came to the world, the theory behind how it works, and how characters can manipulate it to their advantage. It also describes astral space, the parallel realm from which adepts draw their magical power.

The next chapters are devoted to other types of magic: spell magic, which allows characters to shape and power spells by drawing magical energy from astral space to the physical plane, and summoning, which allows characters to summon and interact with spirits and elementals.

The Cycle of Magic

The level of ambient magic in the world rises and falls over time. Sometimes it imbues the denizens of the world with magical abilities, sometimes not.

The advantage of this magical cycle is that for periods of up to 5,000 years the world is magically active. Unfortunately, this high tide of magical energy enables the Horrors to cross into the physical world. At the peak of the magical cycle, the Horrors lay waste to the land in an orgy of destruction commonly known as the Scourge.

Sages believe that this cresting of the magic cycle occurred at least one other time in the past, bringing an earlier Scourge. According to the few documents remaining from that time, the level of magic dropped steadily after that Scourge ended, eventually disappearing altogether.

Scholars projected that the same thing would happen during the most recent Scourge; the world's magic level would fade, driving the Horrors back to their native astral domain. To their surprise, the Scourge ended earlier than predicted, and instead of steadily ebbing away, the magic level stopped dropping and has remained steady.

The magic level has remained stable and relatively high for nearly a century. Many scholars have devoted their lives to unraveling this mystery, while others believe that the workings of magic and the universe are beyond our ken, and we shouldn't even attempt to comprehend their deeper ways. While the debate rages on, one thing remains true: the magic level of the world has stabilized, and it is possible that this age of magic will endure for all time.

Astral Space

Any discussion of magic must include an exploration of astral space. Astral space is a limitless region that coexists with the physical world, but on a different plane. The astral and physical worlds are intricately connected and interdependent; neither could exist without the other. The biggest difference between the way our world looks to us and the way it appears astrally is that, when viewed from astral space, we perceive the glow emanating from all living beings—a glow that represents their life energy. Living beings include not only people and animals, but also plant life, elemental air, earth, fire, water, and wood, and the living stone of the earth itself.

While the dimension of astral space mirrors the physical world, the astral realm also functions as a world unto itself, subject to its own laws of reality. As a result of this dual nature, astral space remains a source of much conjecture and speculation among even the most knowledgeable scholars and magicians across Barsaive and the Theran Empire.

Astral space is the cosmic fabric that binds together all worlds, and the medium through which magical energy travels. Whether astral space is the source of magical energy or simply a conduit for it is one of the countless mysteries that the astral realm continues to hold.

The people and creatures who use magic do so by drawing energy from astral space into the physical world. In order to do this, they must be able to perceive astral space. Only through astral perception can magical energy be manipulated, as magical energy is only visible in astral space. All the magical talents available to characters in Earthdawn allow adepts to perceive the magical energy necessary to perform them.

The Nature of Astral Space

Astral space has no native landscape of its own. It has no ground or sky, and no source of illumination such as the sun. Without ties to the physical world, astral space appears as a limitless void of inky black. It contains nothing to see, nothing to hear, nothing to feel. Any being within this void would be lost in an ocean of darkness.

The connection between the astral and physical worlds, however, provides the astral realm with features that mirror the physical realm. Locations in astral space correspond with some physical location, because everything in the physical world possesses an astral imprint that reflects the physical object's pattern. In a sense, astral space is like a mirror held up to the physical world, reflecting its magical nature. Though astral space does contain some apparently featureless areas where the void—known as the deep astral or high astral—seem to exist, these areas are simply the astral imprints of extremely bleak physical locations.

During the time known as the Scourge, the Horrors roamed the physical world, leaving it ravaged and scarred, populated by twisted creatures, and a pale reflection of its former splendor. Because the astral world is a reflection of the physical world, the harm the Horrors did to the physical world is reflected in astral space. Indeed, the Horrors damaged the fabric of astral space itself.

While every living thing and inanimate object that exists possesses an astral counterpart, astral space contains objects and living things that only exist within astral space, with no physical counterpart. Indeed, some parts of astral space—specifically the various realms known collectively as the netherworlds—seem to exist outside the standard astral/physical continuum.

The Astral Landscape

On viewing or entering astral space, an explorer sees the astral imprints of all the people, physical objects, and creatures that lie within their sight. In addition, they see astral creatures, such as spirits and Horrors, and any other astral patterns. These astral imprints, creatures, and patterns comprise the astral landscape. The nature of the astral landscape precludes physical beings (including Namegivers) from using their senses of smell, taste, and touch.

Another feature of the astral landscape is the ever-present tufts and swirls of astral energy and the magical corruption left by the Horrors. Astral energy rarely impedes a person's movement or perception. It usually appears as lightly shimmering wisps eddying in and around everything. When a magician casts a spell, they gather some of this energy, form a pattern and unleash it to generate the spell's effect.

In contrast, the magical corruption left by the Horrors may seriously affect astral explorers. This pollution may obscure a person's vision and perception, cause him damage and impede his magical abilities.

Astral and Physical Forms

All living things and inanimate objects exist in either astral or physical form. A subject's place of origin (physical world or astral plane) usually determines whether it possesses a physical or astral form. Normally, physical beings cannot directly affect or interact with objects or beings in astral space, though some spells and magical powers may allow them to do so. Likewise, astral beings cannot normally interact with things in the physical world without the use of magic spells or powers. Because Namegivers rarely enter astral space, most everything and everyone characters are likely to encounter in Earthdawn possess physical forms.

The forms of creatures and objects can be changed from astral to physical or from physical to astral. When a character from the physical world enters astral space, his physical form merges with his astral imprint to create an astral form. When the character returns to the physical world, he reverts to his physical form. This means that physical objects can be taken into astral space, and creatures from astral space can enter the physical world. This also means that physical objects and beings can be left in astral space (perhaps the perfect hiding place), and astral objects or beings can be trapped in the physical world.

Subjects are usually identified by their current forms. The term physical being is used to denote both naturally physical beings such as Namegivers as well as astral creatures—like spirits—that have manifested physical forms. Likewise, the term astral beings is used to denote native denizens of astral space as well as Namegivers that have assumed astral forms.

The only exception are the dual-natured Horrors, which exist in both physical and astral forms simultaneously. In many cases the physical and astral bodies of a dual-natured Horror can work independently of one another, though most are connected in some way. This nature makes these entities extremely powerful and especially difficult to kill; most of them can create new physical bodies to replace ones that have been destroyed, or create new astral forms by simply entering astral space.

Astral Imprints

There are two general types of astral imprints: those of inanimate objects, and those of living beings and magical items. The magical energy of living beings and magical items provide their astral imprints with considerably more substance than those of inanimate objects. Inanimate astral imprints possess form but little substance. The astral imprint of a book can be seen, but the pages of the imprint cannot be turned. An adept may look through the astral imprint of a window, but not the imprints of opaque physical objects.

The astral imprints of walls, dead trees, or any non-magical objects created by Namegivers appear nearly identical to their physical counterparts. Though an astral imprint resembles the physical object that produces it, most astral imprints appear nearly colorless and tend to blend into a dull mass when viewed by a casual observer,

especially when they are far away.

Because the astral imprints of inanimate physical objects are insubstantial, astral beings (including Namegivers in astral space) can pass through them. The sensation of passing through the astral imprint of what the character recognizes as solid matter is disconcerting and confusing. Most Namegivers in astral space prefer to walk around imprints of obstacles rather than through them. To reflect this disorientation, any Namegiver who passes through an astral imprint of solid matter suffers a –2 penalty to all Action Tests he makes within two minutes of passing through the imprint. Spirits, Horrors, and other native astral entities do not suffer this penalty.

In contrast to the dull, insubstantial imprints of inanimate objects, the astral imprints of living things, such as plants, animals, and Namegivers, display a distinctive aura. These auras glow with an ethereal nature and give living imprints a vivid appearance. Namegivers display particularly strong auras because of the intricate detail of their True Patterns. The world is also a living entity, and produces an aura that gives most of astral space the appearance of twilight. This light is visible in almost all areas of astral space, except in areas completely enclosed by the astral imprints of inanimate matter.

The imprints of living things also possess substance. Since they are "solid," astral beings cannot pass through them. Because the earth has a living imprint, astral beings cannot penetrate through ground level in astral space.

They may pass through the imprints of freestanding rocks or cobblestone roads, and may even venture below ground through caves, tunnels, or mine shafts where the living earth has been removed, but the imprint of the earth itself blocks their passage. This was one of the main reasons that so many kaers were built below ground; the surrounding earth created a solid imprint that served as a barrier in astral space. These astral barriers saved hundreds of thousands of Namegivers from the Horrors even during the worst of the Scourge.

Magical items and spells also produce vibrant, "living" astral imprints. All magical items are created by directly investing them with magical energy, and so they create astral imprints with auras and substance. Spells reflect living astral imprints because they are created from magical energy. Most spell imprints take on shapes that reflect their function. Pattern items likewise possess living imprints, because they contain aspects of their related True Pattern and are invested with magical energy.

Astral imprints make it relatively easy to determine whether an item is "magical"—if it displays a living aura, it is magical. The aura does not usually give any clue as to the nature of that magic, only that magic is present in some form. To learn about the nature of the magic, one must study its pattern, and that requires specialized magic.

True to Form

A living thing's astral imprint reflects its pattern, and so the astral imprint resembles the thing's truest form. While they have no effect on a living being's pattern, illusory spells or abilities mask both the being's physical form and astral imprint until Sensed or Disbelieved (see Illusions in the Spell Magic chapter, p.XX) or their effect

expires.

Generally, only two situations produce discrepancies between the physical appearance and the astral imprint of a living being. The first is a radical change in the being's physical form, such as the loss of a limb. In such cases, the astral imprint will simultaneously reflect the change and the being's original appearance. For example, the imprint might retain an ethereal, ghostlike vestige of the amputated limb.

The second situation occurs when a thing or being's pattern is directly altered. In this case, the subject's astral imprint and its physical appearance would reflect the change in its pattern.

In such a scenario, the being's astral imprint would become a blurred combination of the altered and original imprint, forcing any viewer to focus on one or the other. Altering the pattern of a living thing in this way requires extremely powerful magic.

The astral imprint of a living being's pattern often offers clues to the nature of the person. The more magic a person uses, the more complex his pattern, and the more significant his astral imprint will be. The astral imprint of a farmer who uses magic to increase his yields and care for his land will be more complex than the pattern of a merchant who uses no magic at all. The pattern of a multiple-Discipline adept will show greater interweaving and denser latticework than the astral imprint of a single-Discipline adept's pattern.

Astral Regions

The corruption of astral space can handicap magicians and astral travelers. Magicians who cast raw magic in corrupted regions of astral space risk injury or even death, fates that also threaten astral travelers and beings who move through such areas.

The sight of corrupted areas proves unsettling. Looking at these Horror-tainted regions is like gazing into madness. The astral landscape appears physically warped, stretched and smeared as if reality were no more than a delicate painting that a Horror could transform with the wipe of a bloody hand.

In game terms, astral regions fall into four classifications: Safe, Open, Tainted, and Corrupt.

Safe regions are areas of astral space untouched by Horrors. Typically only areas in unbreached kaers are considered Safe. Astral beings who pass through Safe areas suffer no ill effects. Additionally, Horrors tend to avoid Safe regions; a phenomenon that suggests the powers of Horrors may be weaker in these areas.

Open regions correspond to areas in the physical world where Horrors simply passed through or performed only minor magic. The scant attention the Horrors paid to the area or the small amount of torment they caused only slightly warped the astral landscape in these regions. Typically, the astral landscape of an open region appears creased and wrinkled, like a sketch crumpled and mostly smoothed out. Most of astral space is comprised of open regions.

Tainted regions correspond to places where the Horrors caused great suffering and torment. Large clouds of polluted astral energy drift through these regions, and

the landscape is twisted and warped almost beyond recognition.

Corrupt regions are the most dangerous regions of astral space. These areas correspond to the places where Horrors committed terrible atrocities, possibly scarring the astral landscape forever. Dark and violent emotions emanate from these areas in overwhelming surges.

Effects of Astral Corruption on Astral Sensing

Astral corruption obscures astral sensing. When a character uses any form of Astral Sensing (as described below), the Difficulty Number is modified based on the level of astral corruption present, as shown on the Astral Sensing Table.

Astral Sensing

Astral perception can be a dangerous activity. To fully perceive astral space, a character concentrates on forming an image of himself in astral space. This astral form can be noticed by creatures who inhabit astral space, as well as by others actively perceiving astral space, making the character vulnerable to astral attacks.

Astral Sensing Table

Region Type	*Difficulty Modifier*
Safe	NA
Open	+2
Tainted	+5
Corrupt	+12

In addition, the polluted nature of astral space is an unnerving sight for most viewers, and magicians perceiving astral space can become disoriented. Many tales tell of those who attempted to view astral space directly and ended up insane or dead at the hands of the Horrors. The presence of the Horrors alone discourages most characters from even attempting full astral perception.

Fortunately, the talents, spells, and abilities characters use provide a limited type of astral perception called astral sensing. Astral sensing allows a viewer to sense the magical energies and astral imprints of people, places, and things present in astral space, but does not require him to see astral space itself. Most adepts—especially those who follow the magician Disciplines—use astral sensing, and it often provides an adept with his first glances into astral space.

Astral sensing is usually performed with the Astral Sight talent. All adepts get access to Thread Sight, a limited form of astral sight granted by the Thread Weaving talent. These methods provide varying degrees of detail when viewing astral space. Specific rules for using each of these methods are provided below.

Using Astral Sensing

Astral sensing is used to detect the astral imprints of spell effects, wards, astral creatures, magical items, even people and animals. Astral sensing enables an adept to determine if a given object is magical, and may help the character discover information about the nature of a subject by studying its pattern.

Note that examining a magic item with astral sensing is different from studying it to learn key knowledges. For that, adepts must use the Item History talent (p. XX). For more information on learning Key Knowledges, see Thread Magic, p.XX.

The first step when astral sensing is to successfully perceive astral space and the imprints of nearby objects. The character makes an Astral Sensing (6) test—the Mystic Defense of astral space. This base difficulty is modified by the classification of astral space, as shown in the Astral Sensing Table. If the test succeeds, the character senses the astral imprint of everything within the range of the astral sensing ability being used. The character can tell whether the imprint is a magical or mundane object, and can also determine the classification of astral space. If the test fails to beat the modified target number, but still exceeds the base Difficulty Number of 6, the character knows that the failure was because of astral interference or corruption.

While searching the study of a merchant he suspects of being behind a Horror cult, the Wizard Tomas finds a lockbox under a false panel in the wall. Tomas decides to use astral sensing to check for any magical traps protecting the box. The gamemaster has decided that the building is in open astral space, so the Difficulty Number for astral sensing tests is 8 (6+2). The player makes an Astral Sight test with a result of 13—two successes against the modified Difficulty Number. Tomas successfully perceives astral space and the imprint of the lockbox. He also notices that there is not much corruption—astral space here is "open." There are no magical imprints on the box, so he is fairly certain there isn't a magical trap protecting it.

Unless specifically indicated by the particular ability, astral sensing does not enable an adept to detect the imprints or patterns of subjects hidden behind or within other objects.

Patterns in Astral Space

Adepts may encounter several types of magical patterns during their adventures. Living creatures such as Namegivers and Horrors, magical items, and spells and other magical abilities (including dragon or Horror powers) all possess different types of patterns. Each type of pattern appears slightly different from the others, just as each individual pattern differs from others of the same type.

When viewed astrally, the pattern of any living subject—adept, creature, or non-adept Namegiver—appears in the subject's astral imprint. The imprint is roughly the same size and shape as the subject. A subject's pattern, however is much more complex and provides much more information about the subject. For example, an adept's astral imprint is the same size and shape as the adept, has a glowing presence that swirls around the imprint, but provides no other information. On the other hand, the adept's pattern might show the adept's Discipline, threads woven to the adept's pattern, and signs of injury or blood magic use.

While the patterns of most Namegivers and creatures occupy the entire astral imprint of their subjects, the pattern of a magical item may occupy only a portion of its imprint. This usually results from the method used to enchant the item. For example. the astral imprint of a magical sword will be shaped like a sword, but its pattern may only occupy the hilt.

Spells and other magical abilities produce the most unusual type of patterns. (The term "magical abilities" includes talents, dragon and Horror powers, and unusual magical effects such as the corruption of the Blood Wood or the existence of life within the Poison Forest.) Patterns produced by these magical abilities typically resemble clouds of magical energy that represent the spell or ability's effect and cover its area of effect. For example, a Chilling Circle spell might appear as an icy cloud of astral energy radiating out from the magician who cast the spell. A Mind Dagger spell might appear as a dagger-shaped bolt of astral energy that flies from the caster to his target.

While astral sensing allows adepts to view the patterns of spells and magical effects used during combat, most adepts use it to detect and study the patterns of extended-duration spell effects, such as those produced by magical traps or wards. These patterns usually appear as small pockets of astral energy. Close examination of such a pattern may reveal its effect, the type of spell, its Circle, or even clues about the magician who cast the spell.

When using an astral sensing ability to study the pattern of a spell, the adept makes an Astral Sensing Test against the spell's Mystic Defense, which is the same as the spell's Dispel Difficulty.

The gamemaster determines the specific details of a subject's pattern, based on the subject's nature. He also determines what information a character can learn from studying a subject's pattern, based on the result of the Astral Sensing test.

Astral Sensing Methods

To illustrate the differences between the two main astral sensing methods— the Astral Sight talent and Thread Sight—the following sections include examples of an adept using the method to examine a magical item: a silver torc set with three large semi-precious stones. The stones are held in place with orichalcum wire, and the stones themselves are infused with True elements. It was crafted by an Elementalist, with elemental spirits helping with the enchantment process. The torc has a Mystic Defense of 15.

Astral Sight Talent

The Astral Sight talent allows characters to look into astral space and directly view astral imprints and patterns. This is perhaps the best overall method of astral sensing available in Earthdawn. Because Astral Sight is a talent, a character can improve the ability over time, allowing the adept to view the patterns of subjects with high Mystic Defense ratings and detect considerable detail in a pattern.

Of course, Astral Sight is not without drawbacks. The character takes 1 Strain each time he uses the talent, with the effect only lasting for a relatively short time. As such, extended examinations of magical patterns can be taxing. After detecting a pattern, an adept can make subsequent Astral Sight tests to see more detail. These tests do not cause the character additional Strain if they are performed during the talent's duration.

When the duration expires, or if any of the subsequent tests fail to equal or exceed the subject's Mystic Defense, the character loses sight of the pattern and must make a new Astral Sight Test to continue examining the pattern, taking 1 Strain.

When he first looks at the torc with Astral Sight, Maloren sees the orichalcum wire woven around the elemental stones and determines that they contain the item's pattern. Maloren makes another Astral Sight test to study the pattern. The test yields a result of 21, two successes against the torc's Mystic Defense. Maloren sees a chain of interlocking waves that flows from one end of the pattern to the other, looping around brighter spots that match up with the enchanted stones. The stones are different colors and patterns, based on the element infused into it. One shows dozens of birds swirling around a vortex of air, the second has a swirling mass of boulders, while the third has flaming sprites flitting back and forth through a bonfire in a complex dance.

Thread Sight

Adepts receive Thread Sight along with the Thread Weaving talent (p.XX). Characters use Thread Sight to see the pattern of an item in order to weave threads to it. Thread Sight gives the user a mental picture of the pattern, but with less precision. Thread Sight does not allow an adept to see detail or glean information from a pattern. It simply allows an adept to sense enough of the pattern to weave threads to it. Using Thread Sight in this manner does not require a separate test—it takes place as part of the adept's Thread Weaving test. Thread Sight cannot be used to sense the magical patterns of creatures, Namegivers, or other magical auras.

Maloren decides to weave a Rank 1 thread to the torc's pattern. He has already learned the required Key Knowledge, so he makes a Thread Weaving test against the thread's Weaving Difficulty. As he does so, an image of the torc's pattern forms in his mind. Using his Thread Sight, Maloren sees the pattern's simple blue knotwork, twisting around three glowing orbs of silver white, ruddy brown, and orange-red.

Magic In Our World

The following extract is from the writings of Jaron, one of the premier magical scholars of his day. Both the Eternal Library of Thera and the Great Library of Throal consider this work one of the definitive explanations of magic.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Our world is filled with magic, from the simplest flower to the mightiest hero. Magic infuses the bones of the earth itself. Magic is life, penetrating and affecting all that it touches. Magic is such a fundamental part of daily existence that it pervades our every thought and action.

The workings of magic are complex, and come in many forms, but in the end all are built on a framework that explains how magic interacts with the world. The key ideas in this framework are patterns, Names, pattern knowledge, pattern items, and threads.

Patterns

Everything has a pattern. A pattern is the magical representation of a person, place, or thing; much like a builder's plan for a house. This representation is not physical, but metaphysical—how something is formed by and interacts with the magical world. Magical energy is shaped into patterns that define and control what the energy will do. When a magician casts a spell, he is shaping magical energy into a pattern that defines and expresses the effect of the spell. Patterns define the use of magic in all its shapes and forms.

Patterns are not static. As a pattern interacts with the magical energy of the world, and with other patterns, it can change. These changes might be small and almost impossible to detect, or they could be dramatic—a random stone in a field is unlikely to have its pattern change significantly from day to day, or even over the course of months or years, but a magician enchanting a sword is causing a significant change to the pattern of the sword, giving it more power.

While everything has a pattern, not all patterns are equal. The more powerful the pattern, the more it can influence the magical world. Some patterns are so complex and significant that sages have coined the term True Patterns. A True Pattern identifies a person, place, or thing as a magically unique individual.

Like all patterns, a True Pattern defines a person's abilities, talents, knowledge, history, and experience. Most significantly, this includes the ways the individual uses, or is influenced by, magic. The same holds true for places and things—everything that defines that place's or object's relationship with magic from the moment of its creation to the present is part of its True Pattern.

Names

The difference between lesser patterns and True Patterns is largely a matter of degree, but scholars have found that one thing all True Patterns have that common patterns do not is a Name. A Name is what defines a person, place, or thing as unique, distinguishing it from others of its type. By definition, everything with a Name has a True Pattern.

You may have a stand of trees behind your home. Like all things it has a pattern, but without a Name there is nothing to distinguish this particular stand of trees from another, and their magical significance is minor. Giving something a Name—Naming it—gives the pattern a greater magical significance, shaping and establishing its True Pattern.

As you can imagine, this is a powerful force. It is usually done deliberately, with a ritual of some kind—like a child's coming of age ceremony. However, it can also happen spontaneously. Sages are not certain what magical process is involved in an unintentional Naming, but it almost always seems to arise through the use of powerful magic near a person, place, or thing.

For example, let's say that one night a pack of hell hounds chases the hero Samaran into the grove behind your house. There, despite all the courage, strength, and magic he can muster, Samaran is slain. The death of a great hero and the magic surrounding such an event is significant enough to spontaneously Name the grove of trees. It becomes Samaran's Demise. Now that it has a Name, it has a True Pattern, and has greater magical significance.

People

People are the most magically complex beings in the world, and all of them have a Name. It is this nature that makes them Namegivers; as intelligent, aware beings their True Pattern is powerful and significant enough to shape the magic of the world into other True Patterns.

In many cultures Naming occurs just after birth, usually as part of a spiritual ritual. Some cultures allow a child to choose a new Name when they reach adulthood, including this Naming as part of a coming-of-age ceremony. In others, a person can choose to be re-Named as a symbol of a new beginning or new stage of life.

Remember that Naming forms and defines a True Pattern—if a person is re-Named, his True Pattern changes. This change is more than symbolic. If the True Pattern changes, his interactions with magic can be redefined, and any magical abilities and knowledge he has could disappear. He could lose the teachings of his Discipline, along with any special abilities or protection it may have brought him. Who and what the person was is—magically speaking—gone.

Because re-Naming can change anything and everything about the person, very few people choose to truly be re-Named. More often, they will take on nicknames, titles, monikers, and the like. While these can shape and define a person's True Pattern, they do not redefine it the way re-Naming does. There are legends of spells and abilities that allow somebody to be re-Named without losing what they were, but no proof of such power is known to exist.

Places

A place is frequently Named, usually for its association with an important event or powerful magic, as in the example of the Named grove of trees. Many cultures will have Named places for birth and death (sometimes different places, sometimes not), in order to keep random Naming under control. The site of weddings is often Named for the same reason.

The site of a major battle might be Named, as might the place of a notable surrender or treaty signing. A magician will often Name their inner sanctum; the Naming of such a place contributes to its power, making magical workings there even stronger. Places where powerful magic was used can be spontaneously Named, though rarely. Typically only the most powerful of spells can create a Name, and magicians who use this type of magic are careful to not let it get out of hand.

A place is sometimes Named in honor of a powerful or notable individual. Such Naming is discouraged, as it can build an echo of the individual's True Pattern into the True Pattern of the place. Skilled magicians can use this association to their advantage.

Things

Important items and objects are frequently Named when created. Many magical items demand a Name, since Naming creates the True Pattern that will define the item's interaction with magic. Without a Name, Fireheart would be a simple broadsword, and Skull-Cleaver nothing more than a well made axe.

Non-magical items can be Named, frequently by a person who wants to link personal items more strongly to himself. A novice adept aspiring to be a mighty Warrior might Name his weapon. While the confidence inspired by such an act might spur the person to perform heroic deeds, this kind of Naming poses a disadvantage. As with places, the item becomes associated with the individual, and that association can be taken advantage of.

Pattern Knowledge

As mentioned above, a pattern defines everything about the history and magical interactions of a person, place, or thing. This information is known as the pattern knowledge, and it can be used to influence or tap into the magical power inherent in a pattern. Pattern knowledge includes, but is not limited to:

- A history of the pattern, its interactions with magic, significant events, and important behaviors.
- Rules or ways in which the pattern uses, or is affected by, magic.
- If a True Pattern, the pattern's Name, usually what we would refer to as a proper noun.

Most patterns are too complex for somebody to learn all of the pattern knowledge from a given pattern. Fortunately, when trying to study and interact with a given pattern, only a few pieces of information matter. Sages call these specific pieces of information key knowledges. By understanding them, an adept can gain power over the pattern, or give additional power to it.

The Name of a True Pattern is always one of its Key Knowledges, and usually the first one that must be learned. Otherwise, key knowledges can take many forms. For example, the key knowledges of a certain place might include the Name of the last person to die there, the date the place was built, or the winner of a battle fought there. The key knowledges of a person might include his place of birth, his strong hatred (or love) for another person, or the Name of his favorite weapon.

The most common use of pattern knowledge by adepts is to take advantage of the power inherent in magical items. By learning the key knowledges of a sword, the adept can bind their pattern to the weapon's, magically increasing their ability to attack, cause more damage, or cause the blade to burst into flame. A magician could use the magical power of a staff to make his spells more effective when wielding the staff.

In order to take advantage of the pattern knowledge, you must be interacting with the pattern. For most magical items, this is easily done—you use the item as it is intended. A magic sword must be used to attack, an amulet must be worn, or a magic saddle used on a mount. For other patterns, like those of other people or places, this interaction is achieved through the use of what sages call pattern items.

Pattern Items

People and places with True Patterns become associated with items that reflect their pattern knowledge. These items have a pattern, but that pattern has become a piece of the True Pattern they are connected to. They are called pattern items, and adepts and other magical practitioners can use them as a way of connecting to the desired True Pattern.

Troubadours sing many stories of unusual pattern items, items that seem to have little connection to the person or place they represent. These tales are told because they are the exception rather than the rule. Most pattern items are common, familiar objects that are somehow important to a person or place. Proximity to a True Pattern is what infuses something with the magic that makes it a pattern item. Because the ways of magic can be complex and subtle, it is difficult to control what can become a pattern item, even for those well versed in magical lore.

There are three classes of pattern items: Minor, Major, and Core. There are no guarantees that a True Pattern will have all three types, or even have any pattern items at all.

Minor Pattern Items

The weakest and most common type, minor pattern items are the most difficult to use because their connection to a True Pattern is so weak. There is nothing to distinguish a minor pattern item from another item of the same type. The proper magical inquiry will uncover its nature, but it has no special properties or increased resistance to damage.

Minor pattern items are almost always created spontaneously by the whims of magic. They gain power through physical proximity to the magic of a True Pattern. They are often personal possessions, minor features of a place, and so forth. A magician's walking stick might become a minor pattern item, as might a stone from a tavern where a Questor of Garlen regularly performs healing for travelers and townsfolk.

Major Pattern Items

Major pattern items have a stronger connection to their related True Pattern. This more direct magical link makes them easier to use and learn about, and easier to use to influence their parent True Pattern. Major pattern items are typically more resistant to damage—a book might singe but not burn, vials might only crack instead of shatter. While it might take more effort to damage them, major pattern items are not indestructible.

Major pattern items are almost always deliberately created. When they occur spontaneously, it is always in connection with significant events or magic. Because of this, and the strength of their bond with the related True Pattern, they are usually well protected, to prevent their power from falling into the wrong hands.

Major pattern items are usually items of significant psychological importance to a person or place; a favorite weapon, the wheel of a riverboat, and so on.

Core Pattern Items

Core pattern items are the strongest and rarest type of pattern item. They are almost never created spontaneously—their creation invariably marks a significant event or turning point in the life of a person or place. Their powerful magical potential means that they are generally well known, and equally well protected. A person or place will only ever have one core pattern item.

Core pattern items are even more durable than major pattern items, because of two additional advantages. First, an aura of luck seems to surround them. If events can conspire to protect the item, they will. Second, if a core pattern item is destroyed, the magical energies of the world work to recreate the item. This could take anywhere from a few days to more than a year, and the restored item could appear anywhere.

A core pattern item has an intrinsic spiritual significance to the person or place it is associated with, representing who or what they are in almost every respect. For example, a king's crown could be the core pattern item for the king to whom it belongs.

Magic Items

Named or not, magic items come in a variety of categories. Most items, while they have a pattern like everything in existence, do not have a True Pattern. Common magic items and Blood Charms are indeed able to create magical effects, but this is usually due to spells powering them or magical materials used in their construction. These simple enchanted items do not usually possess a True Pattern.

Pattern items are items that act as bridges or links to True Patterns to which they are associated. While a pattern item does not have a True Pattern of its own, it is magical due to its special connection with the True Pattern of a significant person or place.

Thread items are what most mean when they speak of magical items. These items have True Patterns that belong solely to themselves. An adept can bond with them to access their magic. Some thread items are designed and intentionally enchanted, distinguished from others by their Name, even if their magical abilities are identical. Other thread items are truly unique, and such legendary items are created by their partaking in significant deeds of powerful heroes.

Threads

Thread is the term used by magical scholars to describe bits of magical energy. A pattern is made up of threads, and additional threads can be woven to a pattern to strengthen it. The thread adds its magical energy to the pattern, and increases its magical power. Magicians use threads to create and power their spell patterns.

Adepts use threads to unlock and power the abilities of items with True Patterns, commonly referred to as Thread Items. They weave a little bit of their own magical energy into a thread and tie it to the pattern of the item. Without the added energy and the connection provided by their thread, the adept cannot otherwise take advantage of the item's magical power.

In order to attach a thread to any True Pattern, you must know something about it—you must know one or more of the True Pattern's key knowledges. Without this knowledge, you cannot attach a thread. For people and places, the thread is attached to a pattern item, which acts as a proxy for the True Pattern.

Thread Magic

One of the unique applications of the workings of magic in Earthdawn is the use of thread magic. Thread magic is the process by which a thread of magical energy is woven to a True Pattern, thereby strengthening and enhancing that pattern. These rules cover weaving threads to magical items, as well as the more complex process of weaving threads to Named people and places. They also address a special use of thread magic: Group Patterns.

Before delving into the information presented here, players and gamemasters may find it helpful to review Magic In Our World, p.XX.

Nature of Threads

Thread magic enables characters to manipulate strands of magical energy. Two types of threads exist: spell threads and pattern threads. Characters create both types using the Thread Weaving talent (p.XX), and both types are used to add power to a pattern.

Spell threads are used to power certain spells. Since many spell patterns are too complex to fit in a spell matrix, the magician must complete the spell's pattern before he can cast it. This is accomplished by weaving spell threads into the pattern of the spell. Spell threads are temporary, and do not last beyond the act of casting the spell. In contrast, pattern threads are permanent, and used to connect the magical patterns of two (or more) people, places or things.

The rules presented in this section discuss pattern threads, the type created when weaving threads to magical treasure or pattern items. Spell threads are described in the Spell Magic chapter (p. XX).

Using Thread Magic

To use thread magic, a character must learn Key Knowledges. This usually involved studying the True Pattern (or an associated pattern item) using the Item History talent, along with traditional research to find out specific details. With the Key Knowledge, a character can create a thread connecting his True Pattern to the target True Pattern. This thread carries magical energy between the patterns, increasing a character's power when interacting with the target, or bolstering the strength of the other True Pattern.

To use any kind of thread magic, a character must perform the following steps.

1. Obtain the Key Knowledge.
2. Spend Legend Points based on the Thread Rank being woven.
3. Make a successful Thread Weaving test.

Threads and Legend Points

Weaving permanent threads requires a character to spend Legend Points based on the item and the rank of the thread being woven. The expenditure of Legend Points creates the permanent thread.

Characters should take the cost required to weave permanent threads into consideration. Legend Points spent to weave threads reduces the number of points available to increase talent and skill ranks. In addition, Legend Points spent on a permanent thread cannot be recovered, even if the thread is unwoven, displaced, or otherwise destroyed. Weaving permanent threads offers significant advantages, but the character must consider that he may spend the Legend Points and ultimately have nothing to show for it.

Limits on Threads

At any time, a character can have a maximum number of active permanent threads equal to his highest Thread Weaving talent rank. The Thread Weaving talent rank also indicates the maximum rank for his permanent threads.

Tomas knows Thread Weaving at Rank 5. Until he increases his Thread Weaving Rank, Tomas can have a maximum of five active pattern threads, none of which may be higher than Rank 5.

Losing Threads

All of a character's active threads are usually lost when that character dies. Most magical effects that bring a character back to life (like the Life Check talent or Death Cheat blood charm) actually prevent the character from dying, so threads are not usually lost. When a character loses an item to which he has woven a thread, the thread remains until someone else weaves a thread that displaces the character's thread.

Weaving Threads to Magic Items

Many magic items in Earthdawn are unique, produced by a conjunction of magical energy and emotion that imbues the item with magical powers. These powers are not enchanted into the item; they simply come into being when the item is involved in some significant event. It is important to remember that in Earthdawn, magic is life and life itself is magic. This means that because of magic, all the world is alive in one way or another. The forces of magic and life interact with each other, sometimes in distinct and subtle ways.

The more significant events an item has been a part of, the greater its powers, and—usually—the greater its legend. The person using such an item rarely sees the full force of that power. A character who obtains the item can manifest its power by powering the item with a magical thread. Magic items powered in this way are commonly referred to as thread items, to distinguish them from items powered in other ways.

Pattern Knowledge

Thread items, by virtue of their creation (whether coincidence or design) all have True Patterns. An item's True Pattern is a tangled mystery of history, facts, and magic. Before an adept can use the item he must unravel some of that mystery. He does that by using mystical talents, and by old-fashioned, mundane research.

All thread items have a history integral to their power. Without knowing that history, a character is wasting his time attaching a thread to the item. He ends up pouring magical energy into the wrong place and the item's powers remain locked away. By studying the item's history, a character can learn its pattern knowledge, which allows the character to bring the item's magic alive and make it work for him.

The character does not need to learn all of the Pattern Knowledge—only some details which vary from item to item. For one magic sword he may need to learn the Name of the sword's creator, and for another he might need to know the place where it was forged.

An item's Pattern Knowledge is made up of several pieces, known as Key Knowledges. Most thread items have multiple Key Knowledges, and the character must learn the knowledge at a given rank before he can increase the thread to that rank.

For example, a magic ring may have three ranks; each rank provides a unique power and is tied to a Key Knowledge that the character must know to unlock that power. Key Knowledge must be learned and used in order; the Key Knowledge for first rank must be learned and the thread woven before the adept can use the second Key Knowledge, and both must be learned before the third Key Knowledge.

Key Knowledges

Characters can learn an item's Key Knowledges through talents such as Item History or by researching legends, libraries, tavern lore, and other sources to find the information they need.

Each of a magical item's Key Knowledges has two distinct elements: the general type of information the Key Knowledge represents, called the Test Knowledge, and the specific details of that information, called the Research Knowledge.

The Test Knowledge represents one or more general "questions" that can be determined by making a successful Item History test (p.XX). Each Test Knowledge tells the character what he needs to discover in order to use the item. For example:

- The character must learn the Name of the fire elemental that helped to forge Kegel's Sword.
- The character must learn the Name of the mountain that produced the ore used to forge Kegel's Sword.
- The character must learn the last battle in which Kegel's Sword was wielded.

The Research Knowledge represents the specific "answer" to the Test Knowledge "question" that can only be learned through research or adventuring. For example:

- The Name of the fire elemental that helped forge Kegel's Sword is Nogul.
- The ore used to forge Kegel's Sword came from Mount Frost, in the Thunder Peaks
- Kegel's Sword was last used in the Battle of Fornn during the last days of the Theran War, when Kegel used it to kill General Timyo, leader of the Theran forces.

First Key Knowledge

The first Key Knowledge of an item is always at Rank One. This Key Knowledge contains the information that will give the character a starting place to learn the rest of the item's Key Knowledges.

A successful Item History test reveals the number of Thread Ranks the item or weapon has, how many threads can be woven to the item (how many different people can weave threads to it), whether or not the character is required to perform any Deeds to attach a thread to the item or increase the rank of a thread, and that he has to learn the item's Name as the Research Knowledge.

Deeds

Some items require characters to perform Deeds in order to weave threads to them. A Deed usually relates to the history of an item; the character must perform a task similar to a task for which the item was once used, or complete a task left undone by a former owner of the item. Whether an item requires any Deeds is learned with the Rank One Test Knowledge, but the Test Knowledge of the Deed itself is learned at the Thread Rank with which the Deed is associated. Deeds must be researched in the same way as Research Knowledge.

Any Deeds associated with a magical item must be learned the same way as other Key Knowledges; a Deed listed at a Thread Rank is the Key Knowledge for that Rank. When a character makes the Item History test, he learns the Key Knowledge for that Thread Rank is a Deed, and the nature and objective of the Deed (the Test Knowledge). Performing the Deed provides the Research Knowledge.

As with other Key Knowledges, a character must learn the earlier Key Knowledges before they can perform the Deed. For example, if an item requires a Deed at Thread Rank Four, the character must have learned the Key Knowledges for that item from Thread Ranks One through Three before performing the Deed. Deeds are treated as Key Knowledges for the purpose of Test and Research Knowledge; usually the previous Key Knowledges are learned before learning the details of the Deed anyway.

Obtain the Key Knowledge

To learn an item's Key Knowledges, characters must first learn the Test Knowledges by making Item History tests.

Test Knowledge

A character using the Item History talent discovers the Test Knowledge for a particular Key Knowledge at a specific Rank. If the test result is high enough, the character may learn the Test Knowledge information for multiple Key Knowledges. This information does not give the character any advantage, however, until he learns the Research Knowledge of each rank.

The Test Knowledge is the general "question" required for the Key Knowledge, not the specific answer. The Test Knowledge might be that the character has to learn the Name of the item's creator. He does not learn the Name with his Item History test, only that he must learn this Name. The specific information required, in this case the Name itself, is the Research Knowledge, and must be discovered by more conventional means.

To learn the Test Knowledge, the character makes an Item History test against the item's Mystic Defense. If successful, the character learns one Key Knowledge for each success. A character can learn a maximum number of Test Knowledges from an item equal to his Item History rank.

Ulm Curvehorn is using his Rank 2 Item History talent to study a magic shield he found during his last adventure. After a week of study, he makes an Item History test against the shield's Mystic Defense of 16 and rolls a 28—three successes! This would normally allow him to learn the first three Test Knowledges, but because he knows the Item History talent at Rank 2, he can only learn a maximum of two Test Knowledges. To learn more, he will need to improve his Item History rank.

After a successful test, the character learns what he must research before he can weave the threads for those ranks. When a character learns the Test Knowledge of an item's Key Knowledge, he also learns the magical effect granted at that rank. The gamemaster is free to determine whether the character learns the exact details at this stage or if he learns the general type of effect only.

Research Knowledge

Once the character learns a Test Knowledge, he must discover the Research Knowledge—the specific information required that allows him to to weave the thread.

The Research Knowledge must be learned through mundane means; characters cannot use the Item History talent to learn this information. They must obtain it by researching legends, seeking lost kaers or citadels, finding historical tomes that contain the information they need, and so on.

Exactly how this takes place is up to the gamemaster. Learning this information can occur as part of an adventure and integrated into a story, or it can be something that takes place between other adventures.

In either case, the research required should not generally be resolved through a couple of Research tests, but should include some adventuring and roleplaying. The process can be simple and quick, or complex and arduous, depending on the nature of the item, the information to be learned, and the style of campaign the gamemaster is attempting to run.

In short, finding the Research Knowledge answer for a Test Knowledge question should require some effort on the part of those seeking the knowledge. For example, a character may have to travel some distance to find a tome that has the information he seeks. Arriving at his destination, he might have to persuade the caretaker of the collection to allow him to look through the tome. To accomplish that, he may have to perform some task or favor for the caretaker.

In the process of learning the Research Knowledge, the character should also learn how it fits into the item's history. For example, if a character must learn the Name of the jungle that produced the wood used to create a staff, it is not enough for him to guess the Name of the jungle (even if he manages to guess correctly). The character may need to research different kinds of wood to pinpoint the exact type used to make the staff, learn about where different types of trees grow, then discovering important stands or forests of those trees. Through this process, he will understand the significance of the wood used to make the staff—if the information wasn't significant, it would not be part of a Key Knowledge.

Finding the information required to learn a Key Knowledge should be a challenge, but not impossible. More information and guidelines for the gamemaster on how to handle research and research-based adventures are presented in the Gamemaster's Guide.

Spend Legend Points

Once he has learned the Key Knowledge for the next thread rank, the character prepares to weave a thread by spending Legend Points. This Legend Point investment represents the experience and effort the character puts into weaving the thread. The Legend Point cost of a thread item usually follows the progressions used to increase talent Ranks, but exactly which progression (Novice, Journeyman, Warden, or Master) depends on the item.

Mica, a dwarf Swordmaster, is looking to weave a thread to the magic shield Ulm has been studying. After successfully learning its first Key Knowledge, he must spend Legend Points to weave the thread. The shield's description indicates it uses the cost progression for Journeyman talents, which means that Mica must spend 200 Legend Points to weave the Rank One thread. When he wants to increase the thread to Rank Two, he must spend an additional 300 Legend Points.

Weaving the Thread

Once the character has spent the appropriate Legend Points, he can attempt to weave a thread. The maximum thread rank a character can weave to an item is limited by his Thread Weaving talent rank, or the rank of the Key Knowledge he knows, whichever is lower. Threads must be woven in order—an adept cannot weave a thread for Rank 3 before he has woven the threads for Ranks 1 and 2.

To weave the thread, the character makes a Thread Weaving test against a Difficulty Number based on the thread rank, as shown in the Thread Weaving Difficulty Table. If successful, the character attaches a thread to the item's True Pattern and the item's ability at that rank is activated. When increasing the rank of an existing thread, the new thread replaces the old.

If the test fails, the character cannot make another attempt at weaving a thread to that item for one day. The old thread—if one existed—remains in place. The Legend Points spent on weaving the new thread are gone; the character cannot use them for anything else. However, the adept does not need to spend Legend Points when trying again, as the points have already been spent to power the thread. As soon as a day has passed, the adept can attempt to weave the thread again.

Thread Weaving Difficulty Table

Thread Rank	*Weaving Difficulty*
1	8
2	9
3	10
4	11
5	12
6	13
7	14
8	15
9	16
10	17
11	18
12	19
13	20
14	21
15	22

Herekar makes a Thread Weaving test to increase the thread he has woven to the sword Tercel from Rank Three to Rank Four. The Difficulty Number for the Thread Weaving test is 11. Herekar spends the required Legend Points, and rolls an 8, failing the test. His Rank Three thread remains in place. The next day, he can try again by making another Thread Weaving test, but he does not need to spend the Legend Points again, as they were invested in the first attempt.

As a character learns more about an item, he weaves a new, stronger thread at each rank. This new thread replaces the old, but maintains the powers and abilities of the old thread. A new thread cannot be woven until the character learns the appropriate Key Knowledge for the new rank.

Weaving Threads to Pattern Items

While weaving threads to magic items is the most common use of thread magic in Earthdawn, it is not the only use of such magic. As described above, thread magic allows a character to connect his True Pattern to another True Pattern. A Pattern Item acts as a conduit to another True Pattern, allowing the connection to be made. Pattern items do not have True Patterns of their own; they are only related to a True Pattern, and act as a channel for magical energy. A character cannot weave threads to his own Pattern Items, as a character would be taking energy from his True Pattern and simply putting it back in.

The basic process for weaving threads to Named people and places is similar to the process used for weaving threads to magic items. The character wishing to weave a thread learns a Key Knowledge, and then weaves a thread to the True Pattern. There are some notable differences, however, and these are detailed in the following sections.

Obtain the Key Knowledge

Just as with magic items, using thread magic against a Named person or place requires Key Knowledges. Each Key Knowledge is a piece of information about the True Pattern, and through understanding the Key Knowledges, one can affect a True Pattern with magic.

This can be done in a few ways. The most common method of obtaining a True Pattern's Key Knowledges is to obtain and study one or more of its Pattern Items.

Obtaining a Pattern Item

Pattern items are obtained through adventuring, using reasoning and roleplaying to find them. Pattern items are important objects. They are not easily found, and obtaining them often involves overcoming opposition. In a world of magical thought, many people and creatures know the value of Pattern Items, and guard them accordingly. It is also known that to benefit from a Pattern Item you must keep the item in your possession.

A True Pattern typically has between zero and five Pattern Items. Only characters and places with a True Pattern can have Pattern Items. The more powerful a character or place, the more Pattern Items are likely to exist.

Scholars have long noted that Pattern Items are usually created in a flexible sequence.

- The first Pattern Item created for a character or place is always a Minor Pattern Item.
- A Major Pattern Item can only be created once a Minor Pattern Item exists.
- A Core Pattern Item can only be created after the creation of a Major Pattern Item.

The sequence is flexible because it never requires the creation of Major or Core Pattern Items. Nor does it require that Minor Pattern Items be "upgraded" to Major or Core Pattern Items. Death's Sea, for example, might have five Pattern Items, all of them Minor. While the Blood Wood, on the other hand, might have only one Pattern Item, a withered birch that is a Core Pattern Item.

Key Knowledge

Each Pattern Item holds one Key Knowledge about a True Pattern. Minor Pattern Items holds knowledge that is related, but not integral to the True Pattern. Major Pattern Items hold knowledge that is an important part of the True Pattern. Core Pattern Items hold knowledge that is an essential part of the True Pattern. In addition to learning the Key Knowledge held by a Pattern Item, it is necessary to know the truth behind the knowledge the Pattern Item represents.

Maloren enters the village of Cliffside, hunting a horror cult that has been plaguing the area. While there he hears about a young woman that drove away one of the corrupted cultists with a talisman dedicated to Astendar. Maloren learns that Astendar has some kind of connection to the cult, and suspects it is the kind of information associated with a Pattern Item. Maloren needs the talisman that drove off the cultist; it is most likely a Minor Pattern Item.

The knowledge in a Pattern Item always represents a portion of the target's pattern knowledge. When trying to discover the knowledge linked to a Pattern Item, a character should look for the types of Key Knowledges associated with a True Pattern:

- The Name associated with the True Pattern.
- Ways the person or place uses, is affected by, or interacts with magic.
- The person or place's history, behaviors, and interactions with magic.

As an example, knowing that a Troubadour visited the Lost Thundra Tavern last week is not the kind of information connected to a Pattern Item—that information would not help a character know where the Troubadour is now, where he might be in the future, or even his preference in taverns. However, if the character learns that the Troubadour performs at the Lost Thundra Tavern every Thursday, that is something useful. Repetition of this behavior may have some connection to the Troubadour's True Pattern. This piece of information could be strong enough to be connected to a Pattern Item.

Remember that knowledge alone is not enough. A character must also have a Pattern Item that exemplifies what he has learned about a True Pattern. Using the previous example, a character might discover that a particular mug from the Lost Thundra Tavern is the Pattern Item.

Studying a Pattern Item

Once obtained, a Pattern Item can be studied in order to use the Key Knowledge that it contains. Learning (or confirming) the Key Knowledge of a Pattern Item is the same as learning the Key Knowledge of a magic item. The character studies the item using the Item History talent. The item's Mystic Defense is determined by the gamemaster, based on the type of Pattern Item studied. The Pattern Item Mystic Defense Table shows the typical Mystic Defense range for each type of Pattern Item.

Pattern Item Mystic Defense Table

Pattern Item	*Mystic Defense Range*
Minor	7–12
Major	13–18
Core	19+

If the Item History test succeeds, the character learns the Test Knowledge held by the Pattern Item. This knowledge is related to the relationship between the Pattern Item and the True Pattern it represents.

Because of this, further research may not be necessary; the research has already been done to figure out what the Pattern Item might be. However, the Item History talent is used to confirm that the item is a Pattern Item and that the research done to identify the item as a Pattern Item is the correct Research Knowledge. If no research was done to identify a Pattern Item, Research Knowledge must be learned as with magical items.

Repeated Study Attempts

If the Item History Test fails, the character may try again after another period of study.

This period of additional study time comes with some risk; the more a character studies a Pattern Item, the more the item comes in contact with the character's own True Pattern, and the weaker its connection to the target True Pattern becomes. The character must be careful not to destroy the item's value as a Pattern Item. This caution slows the pace of study.

The more attempts the character makes, the longer he must wait between attempts to avoid contaminating the Pattern Item. The Study Time Table lists the waiting time required after failed attempts. The time required increases, as the Pattern Item has more contact with the studying character, and the effects of the cumulative contact take more time to fade. Each day of study requires that the character examine the Pattern Item for at least one hour each day (as per the description for the Item History talent, p.XX). Once the character succeeds at an Item History Test, the character has learned the Test Knowledge for that Pattern Item and no further tests are required.

Study Time Table

Attempt Number	*Required Waiting Time*
2	1 week
3	2 weeks
4	3 weeks
5	4 weeks
6	5 weeks
7	6 weeks
8	7 weeks
9	8 weeks
10+	3 months

Research

People, places and things important enough to have True Patterns tend to be remembered by those who interact with them. For example, the Name of the Archer who killed the Horror terrorizing a village is likely to be a part of the village's history. By researching the history and activities of a True Pattern, it is possible to obtain its Research Knowledges. This research may have time limits; legends tell of Wizards spending years researching a True Pattern, only to discover that the pattern had changed so much before they could use the Key Knowledges obtained that their research was wasted.

To research a True Pattern the character may use the Research skill (p. XX). To obtain information, he makes a Research test against the Difficulty Number of the information sought. The gamemaster determines this number by estimating how hard the task should be (for more information on determining Difficuly Numbers, see the Gamemaster's Guide).

Spend Legend Points

Once a character knows one or more Key Knowledges of a True Pattern, he can weave a thread to the True Pattern. As with magic items, he must spend Legend Points to pay for the desired Thread Rank. The Legend Point cost of Thread Ranks woven to the True Patterns of people and places is the same as for improving Ranks of a Novice talent (see Spending Legend Points, p.XX). Thread Rank costs are determined just like Ranks for talents. The cost for increasing the Rank of a thread depends on the new Rank.

Tomas wants to weave a Rank 1 thread to connect to the True Pattern of a foe. Consulting the Talent Rank Cost Table, his player sees that this would cost Tomas 100 Legend Points.

Neska wants to increase the Rank of a thread she has attached to the True Pattern of Blood Wood. The thread is currently Rank 3. Consulting the Talent Rank Cost Table, her player finds the cost of increasing the Rank from 3 to 4 is 500 Legend Points.

Thread Rank Limits

The maximum Rank for a thread woven to the True Pattern of a person or place depends on the type of Pattern Item being used. Minor Pattern Items can have a maximum Rank 5 thread; Major Pattern Items can support threads up to Rank 9; Core Pattern Items can support up to Rank 15 threads. The maximum Thread Rank is still limited by the Thread Weaving Rank of the character weaving the thread; if the character's Thread Weaving Rank is lower, the lower limit applies.

Weave the Thread

After a character has spent Legend Points for the Thread Rank, he can weave the thread to the subject's True Pattern. The character must be in possession of the Pattern Item he studied in order to successfully weave the thread and benefit from it. The Pattern Item is a material link between the character and the True Pattern to which he is weaving the thread.

The character makes a Thread Weaving test against a Difficulty Number based on the Thread Rank, as shown in the Thread Weaving Difficulty Table (p. XX). If the Thread Weaving Test succeeds, the character has woven a thread to the True Pattern. Because Minor Pattern Items are only loosely connected to a subject's True Pattern, Thread Weaving tests made with them require an extra success.

A single Pattern Item can have only one thread tied to it. When increasing the Rank of a pre-existing thread, the new thread replaces the previous one.

As with Thread Weaving Tests for Thread Items, if the test fails the character can make no further attempts at weaving the thread for a day. The old thread (if one existed) is not lost, but the Legend Points spent remain invested and cannot be used for another purpose.

Using Woven Threads

When a character weaves a thread to a True Pattern, that act establishes a link between the character's True Pattern and the True Pattern of the target. The weaving character can use that link to boost one or more of his own abilities when interacting with the subject of the True Pattern. To do this, he attaches the thread to one of the following abilities:

- Any one Talent
- Physical Defense
- Mystic Defense
- Social Defense
- Wound Threshold
- Mystic Armor
- Durability Rating

When the character interacts with the True Pattern to which he has woven a thread, the Thread Rank increases the ability to which it is attached. In the case of talents, this increases the Rank and affects the Step and anything else based on the talent rank, such as the talent's duration. The increased Rank does not count when checking to see if the character qualifies to advance to the next Circle (see Advancing Discipline Circles, p.XX). For other abilities, each Thread Rank increases the value of the ability by one.

Kira weaves a Rank 2 thread from the True Pattern of Larren, a rival Thief, to her Melee Weapons talent. This thread increases her Melee Weapons talent by 2 Ranks when interacting with Larren, which usually involves attacking him with her sword.

Rensil weaves a Rank 3 thread from the True Pattern of the cultist known as Dreamstalker to his Mystic Defense, increasing the rating +3 whenever he is interacting with the enemy magician—such as when Dreamstalker uses an ability that targets Rensil's Mystic Defense.

The number of abilities that can be increased by a single thread is based on the type of Pattern Item used to attach the thread. A Minor Pattern Item can only increase one ability. A Major Pattern Item can increase up to three abilities. A thread woven to a Core Pattern Item can increase up to five abilities. When increasing multiple abilities, all attached abilities are increased by the thread's Rank.

After successfully studying a Major Pattern Item belonging to Larren, Kira weaves a Rank 3 thread to three abilities: her Melee Weapons talent, her Physical Defense, and her Social Defense. When interacting with the Thief, Kira's Melee Weapons talent is increased by +3 Ranks, while her Physical and Social Defense are increased by +3 each.

People

When a character weaves a thread to the True Pattern of another person, the weaver can use the link created in one of two ways. He can use it to boost his abilities when interacting with the subject—this generally means targeting or being targeted by the subject—or it can be used to boost the abilities of the subject at all times; the subject's True Pattern draws energy from the weaver's True Pattern through the thread, strengthening it. In either case, the weaving character must keep the pattern item for the benefit to apply.

When a character wants to boost the abilities of the subject, he can choose any of the same abilities listed above. Threads used in this way otherwise work as already described. A character must choose how he will use the thread when he first creates it. Once he has chosen, the thread cannot be changed to any other use.

Ulm Curvehorn has obtained a Minor Pattern Item for Mica. After studying the Pattern Item and learning its Key Knowledge, Ulm weaves a Rank 1 thread to Mica's True Pattern to boost his Physical Defense. Once the thread is in place, Mica's Physical Defense increases by one.

Places

Just like threads woven to people, a character can weave a thread to the True Pattern of a place in one of two ways. The choice is made at the time the thread is first woven and, once woven, cannot be changed.

First, a character can use the Thread Ranks to boost abilities, as described above. The thread strengthens the character as long as he remains in that place. For example, if a character has a thread woven to the True Pattern of Blood Wood, the Thread Rank would boost the character's abilities as long as he was in Blood Wood. If the character leaves Blood Wood the benefit of the thread is lost, but he regains it as soon as he re-enters the Wood.

Second, the character can increase various game ratings associated with a place. For example, a Wizard might increase the Armor Rating of the walls of his tower, the Difficulty Number to open the locks on his doors, or even simply enhance the appearance of his library. As noted above, the Thread Rank determines the rating increase.

Either way, the character must retain possession of the pattern item for the benefit to apply.

Unweaving Threads

Optional Rule: Adepts may wish to remove, or "unweave," threads they have previously woven for a variety of reasons. An adept who has unwittingly woven a thread to a cursed or Horror-marked item may want to unweave the thread to escape the effects of the curse or Horror mark. An adept may simply have reached his thread limit but still feel the need to weave a thread to a different pattern. Rather than increasing his Thread Weaving Rank or allowing one of his threads to be displaced, he may simply want to unweave a thread.

The optional Unweaving Threads rule provides adepts with a means to do so. To unweave a thread under this rule, an adept takes 5 Strain and must achieve 3 Successes on a Thread Weaving test against a Difficulty Number equal to his unmodified Mystic Defense plus the thread Rank. For example, if a Wizard with a Mysitc Defense of 10 wants to remove a Rank 5 thread he has attached to a thread item, he needs three successes on a Thread Weaving (15) test.

Adepts cannot unweave threads woven by others. When unweaving a thread, the character does not recover the Legend Points he spent weaving the thread.

Tomas weaves a Rank 5 thread to the True Pattern of his laboratory. He decides to use the thread to make opening locks in his lab a harder proposition for potential intruders. The Difficulty Number for Lock Picking tests in Tomas's lab increases by +5 with the help of the thread.

Group True Patterns

Thread magic can be used by groups of people in a special, unique way. By deliberately creating a True Pattern for the group, the members of that group can weave threads to the Group True Pattern and strengthen their abilities when interacting with the group by acting as a part of it. This use of thread magic is usually practiced by adventuring groups, but other groups are known to use it as well. It is believed, for example, that the Hand of Corruption has created its own True Pattern, enabling its members to enhance their abilities with thread magic when acting for the Hand's purposes.

This works because the Group True Pattern is a separate entity, independent from any of its members, so it can grant magical benefit to those interacting with it via thread magic.

Creating a Group True Pattern

Just as people, places, and things can have Names, so can groups of people. If all the members of a group can agree upon a Name for the group, that Name can form a True Pattern that represents all that the group is, just like other True Patterns. This process is not easy, and requires that the group fulfill the following conditions, in order:

1. The group chooses a Name for itself which represents the group's past, present, and future.
2. The group's members create a symbol which represents the group and its history.
3. Each member of the group creates an item representing the group and that character's role in it; this item becomes a Minor Pattern Item for the group.
4. The group is Named during a specific Naming ritual, beginning the formation of the group's True Pattern.
5. The group's members perform a Group Oath of Blood Peace, concluding the formation of the Group True Pattern.

Choose a Group Name

The group must choose a Name. All the members must agree to the chosen Name. The Name can be anything, but will always represent a part of the group's past, present, or future. Many groups are Named for the character who first gathered the group together.

Tomas and his companions wish to create a group True Pattern. They decide they will be Named "The Storm Riders" because of a cryptic prophecy they were given by the Shivalahala Syrtis.

Choose a Group Symbol

A group symbol is a small picture or diagram that is a visual representation of the group. Like a group Name, the symbol must represent the group in some way.

The Storm Riders decide that their group symbol is going to be the silhouette of an airship against a dark cloud with a lightning bolt coming out of the bottom.

Ceate Symbolic Items

Once the group chooses a Name and symbol for itself, each member must create an item that represents the group and his role in it. Carving the group symbol into the item is one way to ensure that the item represents the group.

Ulm is a troll Weaponsmith and a member of the Storm Riders. Ulm must create an item that represents the group and his role in it. He chooses the hammer from his traveling tools as his symbolic item. The hammer is one that Ulm uses to do minor repairs on the group's weapons and armor while they travel. The hammer represents Ulm's role in the group, and the group itself, because the hammer is used during Ulm's adventures with the group.

The example above is just one possibility of a symbolic character or group item. Players are encouraged to use their imagination when creating these items. Though almost any item is viable, the gamemaster is the final arbiter of whether it is an acceptable item, as it will become a Pattern Item for the Group True Pattern.

Perform the Naming Ritual

Once the group Name and symbol are chosen and each member has created his symbolic item, the group performs the Naming ritual. The ritual involves one member acting as the leader, who states the Name of the group and that its symbol will represent the group. Then each member, starting with the leader, presents himself and the item he has chosen to the group. The ritual can vary, but a commonly used ritual goes as follows:

"This assembly shall be Named [Group Name]. This symbol represents our present, past, and future, and will be known across all of Barsaive as that of [Group Name]. I am Named [character Name]. This [character's item] represents my loyalty to this assembly. I am forever a part of [Group Name]."

Each member in turn recites his Name, symbolic item, and his loyalty to the group. After the last member has done so, the leader then invites the members to swear an oath of Blood Peace.

Group Oath of Blood Peace

The last Step in creating a Group True Pattern involves Blood Magic. Each of the members must swear a special oath of Blood Peace to the group. The section on Blood Magic, p.XX, provides information about the Blood Peace oath, but a few important distinctions need to be made here. The oath is made to the group as a whole, not to each individual member of the group. This means that each member only takes 2 points of damage from the oath of Blood Peace, not 2 points for each member of the group.

When the members of the group complete the oath of Blood Peace, the group's True Pattern forms, and the individual characters' symbolic items become Minor Pattern Items for the Group True Pattern. From then on it behaves the same way as any other True Pattern; it represents everything about the group, it can be accessed via one of its Pattern Items, and threads can be woven to it.

Group Continuation

To benefit from the Group True Pattern, characters must keep true to their oath of Blood Peace and renew their oath at the end of its duration. If a member fails to renew the oath, he has to re-join the group (see Adding New Members below). If none of the members renew their Oath, the Group True Pattern dissolves, and all benefits associated with it are lost.

While the group oath of Blood Peace has to be renewed like a regular Blood Peace oath, characters never gain a bonus to Death Rating as they gain from normal Blood Peace oaths.

If a character dies and is not brought back to life, the surviving members of the group can still benefit from the Group True Pattern. If the dead character is brought back to life in the future, he must re-join the group and re-weave threads to the Pattern Item to benefit from it (see Losing Threads, p. XX). The Group True Pattern is a separate magical entity, so the death of a single member does not destroy it.

The dead character's group pattern item keeps its status; it is associated with the group, and could be used against the group like any other pattern item—indeed, it is likely that the death of a member could become important pattern knowledge for the group.

Adding New Members

If a group decides to add new members, its members perform the Naming ritual again, this time including the new members in the rite. New members must create a symbolic item and take the Group Oath of Blood Peace. After the Naming ritual, the Group True Pattern is changed to reflect the new members.

Just the same, members who missed a renewal ceremony or died and lost their threads to the Group True Pattern can re-join the group as if they were new members, but need not create a new Pattern Item (as the pattern item they created still exists).

Current members of the group do not take additional Blood Magic Damage from performing the ritual again, since they are already a part of the group, although any new members joining the group do (see Group Oath of Blood Peace, p. XX).

Key Knowledges of Group Pattern Items

Because the members of a group create Pattern Items for the group, those Pattern Items hold Key Knowledges about the Group True Pattern. This has two important consequences. First, members of the group already know the Key Knowledges required to weave threads to the Group True Pattern.

Second, non-group characters can use these Pattern Items against the group, just as with Pattern Items of people and places. If another character obtains a Group Pattern Item, that individual can learn the Key Knowledges held by the item, which always contain the following information:

- The Name of the group.
- The Names of each of the group's members.
- The Name of the character who created the Pattern Item.

If a character loses his Group Pattern Item, he cannot weave more threads to the Group True Pattern, and any threads already woven will lose their benefit until he recovers the item.

Weaving Threads to Group True Patterns

Members of a group that have created a Group True Pattern can weave threads from their individual True Patterns to the Group True Pattern. These threads can be used to enhance a character's talents or characteristics while they are interacting with the group.

This is possible because the magical energy of the Group True Pattern is empowering those who weave threads to it through its Pattern Items. However, when the character is acting on his own, such as for personal gain unrelated to any intentions of the rest of his group, he gains no benefit from threads he has woven to the Group True Pattern.

Weaving threads to the Group True Pattern is the same as weaving threads to other True Patterns, except that a character already has the necessary Key Knowledge. This leaves only two steps for weaving threads: Spending Legend Points and Weaving the Thread.

Group True Pattern Legend Point Cost Table

Thread Rank	*Legend Point Cost*
1	300
2	500
3	800
4	1,300
5	2,100

Spending Legend Points

When a character wants to weave a thread to a Group True Pattern, he must prepare the thread by spending Legend Points. The Legend Point cost for Thread Ranks woven to a Group True Pattern is the same as for a Warden talent, as shown in the Group True Pattern Legend Point Cost Table. Once a character spends the required Legend Points, he can attempt to weave the thread to the Group True Pattern.

Weaving the Thread

As with other thread magic, the character makes a Thread Weaving test against a Difficulty Number based on the Rank of the thread being woven (p. XX).

If the test succeeds, the thread is attached; if the test fails, the character must wait for a day before he can try again. Because the Pattern Items for a Group True Pattern are Minor Pattern Items, an extra success is needed on the Thread Weaving test to weave the thread, just like Minor Pattern Items for other people and places.

Group True Pattern Thread Limits

Though thread magic usually has a limit of one thread per Pattern Item, this limit does not apply when weaving threads to a Group True Pattern. Because a character is integral to the pattern of his group, he can have a maximum of five threads woven to his own Group True Pattern, though each thread is still limited to Rank 5. Each thread can be attached to a different talent or characteristic, and otherwise works the same way as other threads woven to pattern items.

Someone acquiring a pattern item for a group he is not a member of is still restricted to a single thread.

In Friendly Or In Enemy Hands

Unlike other Pattern Items, Pattern Items for Group True Patterns work differently for different characters.

Characters that are members of the group gain their bonuses while interacting with the group (acting as a part of it or on its behalf), but cannot boost the effectiveness of the group as a whole. For normal Pattern Items used to boost someone else's abilities, there is a specific target for the thread. For example, an Archer weaving a thread to the Pattern Item of his Warrior friend can specify that Warrior's Physical Defense as a target to boost it. In case of a group, though, there is no specific ability that can be a target for the thread; the Group True Pattern is not a Physical being, but an immaterial and intangible entity. While its members boast viable targets for such a thread (they all have a Physical Defense, for example), a single thread could not be attached to multiple targets. In other words, a Group True Pattern is something a member can draw power from and channel it toward his own ends, but power cannot be channeled into a Group True Pattern.

Characters that are not members of the group can use its Pattern Items in the same way as other Pattern Items, but with greater efficiency. If an enemy or outside ally of the group obtains the Group Pattern Item of just one of its members, and then weaves a thread to it and ties it to one of his abilities, that ability is boosted when interacting with any member of the group. For example, a Nethermancer tying the thread to his Spellcasting talent gains a bonus to his Spellcasting talent whenever he casts a spell against a member of the group. Whether this is a good or bad thing depends on the Nethermancer's attitude towards the group. An enemy Nethermancer can use the bonus to better attack the group, but a friendly Nethermancer would use it to increase the effectiveness of beneficial spells on the group's members.

Members of a group are well advised to keep a close watch on Group Pattern Items of previous members. If a member dies, his Pattern Item is still a Pattern Item for the whole group. It can be given to allies, but must be kept away from enemies.

Blood Magic

Blood magic draws its power from small sacrifices, usually a small amount of blood. The sacrifice is represented by the character taking a few Damage Points to strengthen the magic of a talent, ability, or promise.

Blood magic offers a vivid reminder of the torments people inflicted on themselves in the days before and during the Scourge. As a result, ordinary citizens often feel suspicious of adepts who use blood magic. Most Barsaivians work hard at putting the devastation of the Horrors out of their minds, and choose to reject everything that blood magic represents—even its potential for helping those still battling the remnants of the Horrors.

Those who accept blood magic as a necessary means to achieve the greater good of destroying the Horrors often refer to this practice as "life magic" to stress the positive aspect of this magic and cultivate tolerance among the mainstream for those who use it.

Some point out that blood magic can be used for both good and evil. While places like the Blood Wood offer an example of blood magic gone horribly wrong, others have benefited from life magic and suffered no ill effects. These individuals agree that blood magic offers great power, but also stress that such power demands great responsibility of those who would use it.

Characters in Earthdawn may use blood magic in a variety of ways. Characters most commonly use blood magic to power certain talents, spells, blood charms and living armor. Characters may also use blood magic to enhance their talents or abilities, swear oaths or perform rituals. Characters may even use a special form of blood magic, known as sacrifice magic, to perform heroic feats, lay curses, or create True Patterns.

Every use of blood magic requires a character to make a sacrifice, which may take the form of Strain, Blood Magic damage, one or more Wounds, or even his life. Unless otherwise noted, a character taking a Wound required by certain uses of blood magic need not make a Knockdown Test for that Wound.

Strain damage suffered as a result of blood magic is recorded and healed in the same manner as other damage (see Effects of Injury, p.XX). Blood Magic Damage, however, is recorded separately, in the Blood Magic space on the Character Sheet. Blood Magic Damage is not healed by standard Recovery tests, and is not counted as damage for the purposes of healing Wounds, increasing talent Ranks, or other situations where the character must be uninjured. After its duration has elapsed, specified by the type of blood magic, Blood Magic Damage reverts to regular damage and may be healed normally. The duration of Blood Magic Damage is typically a year and a day, but for minor things, such as blood charms, the period may only be a day or until the charm is used. In some cases Blood Magic Damage is permanent, and should be recorded as a reduction in the character's Death and Unconsciousness Ratings that is never recovered.

Blood Wounds

Some types of blood magic cause damage that may only be healed under certain conditions. In addition to this damage, some blood magic can cause a Blood Wound that can only be healed after a certain length of time, or by the use of a magical healing potion. Unless specifically noted, any Wound caused by the use of any form of blood magic is considered to be a Blood Wound, and can be healed after a year and a day. Some legends say that questors can heal Blood Wounds, but no evidence has yet been found to substantiate these tales.

Blood Wounds, like other long-term Blood Magic Damage, do not prevent the character from increasing his talent Ranks or advancing to new Circles. Blood Wounds are otherwise treated as normal Wounds, affecting the character's Action Tests and ability to heal damage (see Wounds in the Combat chapter, p.XX).

Use of a healing potion (or similar healing aids) to heal a Blood Wound may only be attempted after all other normal Wounds have been healed, and is not automatic. The character drinks the potion, and makes a Recovery (24) test—the Mystic Defense of a Blood Wound; the potion's bonus is applied to this Recovery test, as normal. If the test succeeds, the Wound heals, leaving a runic scar. The potion does not heal any other damage the character may have; the magic is entirely consumed in the attempt to heal the Blood Wound.

If the test fails, the Blood Wound remains, but the potion works normally, healing a number of Damage Points equal to the test result, minus the number of Wounds (including Blood Wounds) the character has.

The runic scar from a healed Blood Wound is permanent, though it may be concealed with clothing, make-up, or illusion magic. Reading a runic scar using the Patterncraft talent reveals the reason for the Blood Wound scar.

Common Blood Magic

The following are all examples of "common" blood magic, practiced by adepts across Barsaive. Because the details vary from use to use, only a general overview is provided here.

Powering Talents and Spells

Many Earthdawn talents, spells, and Discipline abilities require blood magic in their use. The specific requirements are noted in the talent, spell, or ability description. Most blood magic in this category only causes Strain, but some abilities cause Blood Magic Damage, or even Permanent damage.

Powering Blood Charms and Living Armor

Blood magic is also used to power blood charms and certain types of living armor. These applications of blood magic usually cause the user Blood Magic Damage that cannot be healed until the item is used or removed.

Ritual Blood Magic

In ritual blood magic, a character draws magical power from a donor's blood. In this rarely used form of blood magic, the power derived from the donor's blood is used to create specific effects rather than enhancing other uses of magic. Examples of ritual blood magic include the high-Circle Nethermancer spells Create Life and Alter Life.

Blood Oaths

Blood oaths are one of the most significant uses of blood magic in Earthdawn. When swearing a blood oath, characters use blood magic to seal a promise. A character may swear a blood oath with any other character who holds at least an Unfriendly attitude towards him, though some blood oaths require a more favorable attitude. With the gamemaster's permission, two player characters may swear a blood oath between themselves.

Blood oaths can only be sworn between two characters at a time. There is one exception to this rule: a group of adepts can swear an oath of blood peace to their group as a whole as part of the ceremony to create a Group True Pattern (see Group True Patterns, p.XX). If two characters wish to swear a blood oath with three dwarfs, for example, each character would have to complete the oath three times, once with each dwarf.

Blood oaths must be sworn voluntarily, but if a character swears a blood oath while under the influence of magical charms, spells, or drugs (including strong drink) he is considered to have done so voluntarily. Blood oaths possess great power—regardless of circumstance, magic binds those who swear such pledges. There are tales of adepts who have sworn a blood oath while drunk, and regretted their carelessness.

While blood oaths typically involve an even exchange of abilities or deeds, equally binding vows, or unceasing and active loyalty to one another, they may also be used to strike other important bargains.

In general, blood oaths enforce the spirit of the agreement, rather than the letter. Most scholars are not sure why this is so, but many legends speak of scoundrels who somehow deceived others into swearing unevenly advantageous blood oaths, but these bounders always fare badly as a result, the lesson being that blood magic punishes the unjust user.

Most blood oaths last for a year and a day. At the end of the oath's duration, it may be renewed. Details on the duration and renewal terms of the different types of blood oaths are included with the descriptions below.

Blood Peace

A blood peace oath seals a truce between two characters. Any two living characters may swear a blood peace oath. A character may swear separate blood peace oaths with as many characters as he wishes, limited only by the number of points of damage the character must take for each oath.

To swear blood peace, each character draws blood from their dominant weapon arm (t'skrang often draw blood from their tails), suffering 2 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed as long as the oath remains in effect.

Each character presses his weapon into the other character's blood, and swears the oath as the blood dries on the weapon. The exact wording of the oath can vary, but all versions should include the elements contained in the following example.

"As the sun shines upon the earth, so shall light illuminate my deeds. All people shall see that I mean no harm to [other character's name]. I shall take no action to bring harm to him or those of his blood, or knowingly allow harm to befall [other character's name] or those of his blood."

"As the moon shines upon the earth, so shall light illuminate my intent. All people shall see that I honor my promise."

By swearing a blood peace oath, two characters promise that they will never harm one another or allow harm to come to the other through inaction. A character who violates a blood peace oath releases the other from the vow. In addition, the violator's Blood Magic Damage can never be healed, and he suffers a Blood Wound on the part of his body he drew blood from. This Wound lasts for a year and a day from the time it appears, and may be healed as described under Blood Wounds, above.

If both characters keep their vow for a year and a day, the Damage Points taken for swearing the blood peace may be healed as normal damage. In addition, the scar on each character's body from which he drew the blood for the oath becomes the color of gold or silver. Each character adds +1 to his Death Rating as long as both characters maintain their vow of peace. The characters lose this Death Rating bonus if either breaks the vow, but neither suffers any additional penalty for breaking the blood peace after the duration ends.

If they choose, the characters may re-swear the blood peace oath after the first year and a day. If the oath is re-sworn, the 2 Blood Magic Damage may not be healed, and breaking the oath will cause the damage to become Permanent and a Blood Wound, as described above. While renewing the blood peace may not seem as advantageous, it represents a stronger commitment between the characters.

Blood Promise

Characters who swear a blood promise oath pledge to perform certain dangerous or heroic deeds. Any two living Namegiver characters with at least Unfriendly attitudes toward each other may swear a blood promise oath. Characters may only swear one blood promise at a time.

To swear a blood promise, each character cuts their forehead, and their chest over the heart, drawing blood. Each character takes 4 Blood Magic Damage, which cannot be healed until both parties fulfill their promise. The damage becomes Permanent for characters who do not fulfill their sworn promise within a year and a day.

Each character wipes the blood from his forehead with his left hand and the blood from his chest with his right hand. Facing each other, the characters press their hands together, mixing the blood. As the blood dries on their hands, the characters state their Names and recite their promises to each other.

The characters should state their promises as similarly as possible. Each character must describe his pledged deed, identifying a talent or skill he will use while accomplishing it. The characters must also state the time period, not exceeding a year and a day, within which they must perform their deeds and meet after fulfilling their promises.

Herekar, the human Warrior, is trying to work out an arrangement with Larren, a Thief of poor reputation. Herekar needs the Tome of Maxxar, a book that is part of the Lost Library of Dyon. Larren needs samples of dirt from the Poison Forest. Larren knows where the Lost Library is, but refuses to share this knowledge. He also doesn't want to go mucking about in the Poison Forest, so Larren and Herekar strike a deal. They agree to swear a blood promise and make the following oaths:

"I, Herekar, promise to travel to the Poison Forest. There I shall obtain one belt pouch of soil. I shall be diligent in my efforts. I shall slay the dangerous beasts that dwell there with my Crushing Blow. I shall not delay, nor will I accept any other tasks until I have secured the soil. I shall return to this tavern before winter and deliver the soil to Larren. With him I mix my blood in promise."

"I, Larren, dwarf Thief, promise to travel to the Lost Library. I shall use my Stealthy Stride to tread through the halls softer than snow falling on a quiet night, and there I shall obtain the Tome of Maxxar. I shall not delay, nor will I accept any other tasks until I have secured the Tome. I shall return to this tavern before winter and deliver the Tome of Maxxor to Herekar. With him I mix my blood in promise."

The blood magic of the oath supports the talent or skill named in the blood promise by granting a +2 bonus to it. In the example above, Herekar would gain a +2 bonus to his Crushing Blow talent, while Larren would gain a +2 bonus to his Stealthy Stride talent. The bonus lasts for the duration of the promise, or until the promise is broken. The character applies the bonus whenever he uses the talent for the duration of the oath, whether the character is using the talent to fulfill the promise or for some other purpose. The characters must fulfill the promise within the agreed time or the oath is violated.

If a character violates a blood promise oath he manifests two Blood Wounds, one on the forehead, the other on the chest. These Wounds last for a year and a day from the time the blood promise is broken, and will not heal naturally during this time. A character may attempt to heal the Blood Wound with a healing potion as described above.

If both characters keep their promise, the skin (or scales or rock) on the characters' chests from which they drew blood becomes the color of rubies or emeralds. When they meet after fulfilling the promise, the characters may immediately heal the 4 Damage Points that making the promise cost them. If they choose to heal this damage, they lose the bonus to the talents used to fulfill the blood promise. The characters may instead agree to heal only 2 Damage Points and make the increase to the talents used in their blood promise permanent. The remaining 2 Damage Points become permanent damage and can never be healed; subtract –2 from each character's Death and Unconsciousness Ratings.

Blood Sworn

The most potent blood magic oath is the blood sworn oath. Only characters with Loyal attitudes toward each other may be blood sworn. Each character must have demonstrated the depth of his loyalty to the other at least three times by taking considerable risks for the benefit of the other character or otherwise behaving in a manner generally recognized as loyal. At least three years of loyal behavior must pass between the first loyal action and when the characters become blood sworn. A character may be blood sworn to only one other character.

The characters begin the blood sworn ritual by cutting their forehead, and their chests over the heart, drawing blood. This causes 4 permanent damage that can never be healed—each character subtracts 4 from his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings.

One character wipes the blood from his forehead with his left hand and presses his blood-smeared hand to the other character' forehead and recites the first part of the oath. The other character repeats this gesture and the oath. The first character then wipes the blood from his chest with his right hand and presses that hand against the other character's chest and recites the second part of the oath. The second character repeats the gesture and the oath.

The exact wording of the oath can vary, but should include the same elements as the following example:

First Oath: "As the sun rises each day, I shall think of you. As the stars shine each night, so shall you be constantly in my thoughts. As night follows day, so closely shall we share our separate lives. I shall know you as completely as you shall know me. This I swear to you."

Second Oath: "As the blood of my heart touches yours, so shall I touch your feelings. As your heart beats against my hand, so shall your feelings touch mine. My loyalty shall be yours. My courage shall be yours. The strength of my heart shall flow through your veins. When there is need, I shall be strong for both of us. This I swear to you. We are blood sworn."

The blood sworn oath lasts for a lifetime. Blood sworn characters must remain loyal to each other, protect each other and serve each other for the rest of their lives. A blood sworn character who violates his oath receives seven Blood Wounds that last for three years and three days after the oath is broken. After this time, six of the Wounds can be healed normally. One of the Blood Wounds, usually over the heart, remains unhealed, and no known magic can heal this final Wound. The character may attempt to heal the other six Blood Wounds with healing potions as described under Blood Wounds, above.

Blood sworn characters gain several advantages from their oath. First, each character adds +2 to one Attribute value and +1 to a second Attribute value. These increases do not count toward the limits for Attribute improvement (see the Building Your Legend chapter, p.XX). Second, each character gains +1 Rank in a talent called Blood Sworn, even if the character is not an adept. The Blood Sworn talent works like the Blood Share talent (see p. XX), but it can only be used to transfer damage between the sworn characters. Characters can purchase ranks for this talent as a Journeyman level talent, but these ranks do not count toward the requirements for Circle advancement.

The Blood Sworn talent provides one more power—it can be used to try and raise a sworn friend from the dead. The character's rank in the Blood Sworn talent must equal or exceed the number of days his friend has been dead. One use of the talent must reduce the damage to the deceased to less than his Death Rating. The character gets one chance to do this; if it fails, he cannot try again. Using this talent to raise a dead friend permanently reduces both characters' Death Ratings by one.

Finally, blood sworn characters add +1 Rank to their Thought Link and Empathic Sense talents when using them to communicate with each other. If the characters do not possess these talents, they gain them at Rank 1, but cannot increase the rank of these talents and may only use them to communicate with their sworn friend.

If one of the blood sworn characters dies and is not revived within a year and a day, any talents, or bonus talent ranks, gained from being blood sworn are lost. After this time, the surviving character may enter into another blood sworn oath, provided the displays of loyal behavior have happened since his former blood sworn friend died.

J. MIRACOLA

Spell Magic

Spells may be more dangerous than talents, but they are so much more versatile.
Given time, we can craft the precise tool needed for the job,
woven from the fabric of magic itself.
•Dahn Baelric, Wizard •

All adepts use magic to power their talents. A few specialize in the use of arcane powers called spell magic, and are known as magicians. These characters learn to create the patterns of spells and channel pure magical energy through those patterns to affect the physical world. This chapter describes the basic elements of spellcasting, gives the procedure for casting spells of all types, and warns characters of the dangers of certain ways of casting spells.

About Spellcasting

Characters can cast spells using one of three different methods. The three share similar elements, but each differs slightly from the others. The first, and most common method is referred to simply as spellcasting. The safest way to cast spells, this method requires the use of spell matrices, and is sometimes called matrix casting.

The second method of spellcasting, raw magic casting, is the most dangerous. Using this method, a magician draws energy directly from astral space and channels it through his body. Raw magic casting usually serves as a last resort method of casting spells. For example, a magician has spell matrices available, but the spells attuned to the matrices are not the ones he needs. If he has no time to realign his spells, even by Reattuning on the Fly, he might risk casting raw magic simply to survive.

Without the protection provided by a spell matrix, casting raw magic draws polluted energy from the astral plane. This frequently inflicts physical damage on the magician, and allows Horrors to locate magicians casting such spells and mark them.

The last method is called grimoire casting. As its name implies, this method enables a magician to cast spells directly from a grimoire, rather than using a spell matrix. It is a slower and more difficult method than either matrix casting or raw magic. It is safer than raw magic, but still carries its share of risk. The various methods of spellcasting are detailed later in this chapter.

Talents for Casting Spells

A magician uses the Spellcasting and Thread Weaving talents to power a spell by shaping its pattern and casting it. The magician also needs a spell matrix talent, or one of the variants, to provide a safe conduit for transferring magical energy from astral space to the physical world. As a magician gains experience, he learns to channel more magical energy into his spells and can use the Willforce talent to increase their power. The information below summarizes these basic spellcasting talents. Full descriptions can be found in the Talents chapter, p.XX.

Spellcasting Talent

Each of the four magician Disciplines—Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, and Wizard—have the Spellcasting talent available to them. This talent allows them to channel magical energies to create a spell. Spellcasting ranks are added to a character's Perception Step to make Spellcasting tests, so a character created with a high Perception value begins with an advantage as a magician.

When casting a spell, the magician makes a Spellcasting test against a Difficulty Number, usually called the Casting Difficulty. Often this is the target's Mystic Defense, though in some cases another value is used. Each spell description lists the Casting Difficulty for that spell. If the result of the Spellcasting test is at least equal to the Difficulty Number, the spell succeeds. If the spellcaster achieves extra successes, the spell will have additional effects depending on the spell.

Thread Weaving Talent

Each magician Discipline has its own Thread Weaving talent: Elementalism, Illusionism, Nethermancy, and Wizardry. The Thread Weaving talent allows a magician to weave spell threads into a spell's pattern. A magician also uses Thread Weaving to place spell patterns into a spell matrix. A magician may only cast or learn spells if he knows the Thread Weaving talent for that Discipline.

Each Thread Weaving talent is unique, and can only be used with spells from that Discipline. If a magician purchases the Thread Weaving talent from another Discipline, he can cast and learn spells from that Discipline.

Spell Matrices

In the early days of this magical age, magicians worked their spells with raw magic, channeling astral energy directly through their own patterns and shaping that energy into spells. In the years leading up to the Scourge, however, magicians discovered that these spellcasting techniques created flares in astral space that could attract the attention of nearby Horrors. As a result, the very spells magicians used could bring about their destruction. Many magicians died terrible deaths before the phenomenon was understood and a countermeasure devised.

Magicians needed a means to conceal the flares caused by forming spells from raw magic. They also needed a way to filter the increasingly corrupted astral energy and ensure that their spells would function properly. Magicians reasoned that this filter would need to be a magical pattern that came between the magician and astral space, providing concealment and protection.

Several magicians discovered they could produce such filters by using their Thread Weaving talents to alter the patterns of physical objects. Magicians most commonly used items they carried with them, such as staves, rings, wands and their ever present robes. By "reweaving" these items with magical spell patterns, these items could be used to hold the essential matrix of one or more spells. The magician could then use the item to cast the spell without fearing the attention of the Horrors or risking harm from polluted astral energy. This system worked well enough, but if these matrix objects were lost or destroyed, a magician could be left with no safe means of casting spells.

Not long after the end of the Scourge, Nethermancer adepts discovered a way to create a filter purely from magical threads woven to the magician's True Pattern. The magician could then use his Thread Weaving talent to "attune" the filter to mimic the pattern of any spell he wished to store. This technique quickly developed into the spell matrix talents now used by magicians all over Barsaive and the Theran Empire. With these portable, personal and flexible matrices, the use of "magician's robes" and other matrix items fell into disuse.

Once a spell has been placed in a spell matrix, the magician can repeatedly cast the spell by drawing magical energy through the matrix. If the magician wishes to cast a different spell using the same matrix, it must be attuned to reflect the new spell. Magicians can have multiple spell matrices, attuned as they wish, depending on their personal abilities.

Some spells are too complex for a simple spell matrix. When a spell matrix is attuned to reflect more complex spells, the mimic-pattern of the matrix is compressed into a kind of shorthand. This compression allows the matrix to reflect most of the complex spell's pattern, but the magician must weave additional threads of power into the matrix, based on the complexity of the spell. These threads power the matrix and temporarily expand its capabilities so the spell can be properly cast. Once the spell is cast, the matrix returns to its compressed state. Each time the magician casts that spell, he must weave the required threads again to provide the power for the spell.

In the world of Earthdawn, magicians rarely cast spells without first placing them in a spell matrix. The other methods of casting a spell, casting from a grimoire, or casting raw magic, are either slower and more difficult, or dangerous and unreliable.

The use of spell matrices comes with a few drawbacks. The matrix rank represents the maximum Spell Circle the individual matrix can hold. The magician must also have a strong enough pattern to attune the matrix, represented by the highest Discipline Circle he has achieved. Even though learned spells become part of the magician's pattern, he may not be able to attune these more powerful spells into the matrix, regardless of the rank of the matrix. For example, a Rank 3 Spell Matrix can hold a single First, Second, or Third Circle spell. However, a Second Circle magician is not able to attune a Third Circle spell—he must resort to using raw magic or a grimoire to cast it.

More details about the different types of spell matrices and how they are used in the game is provided later in this chapter.

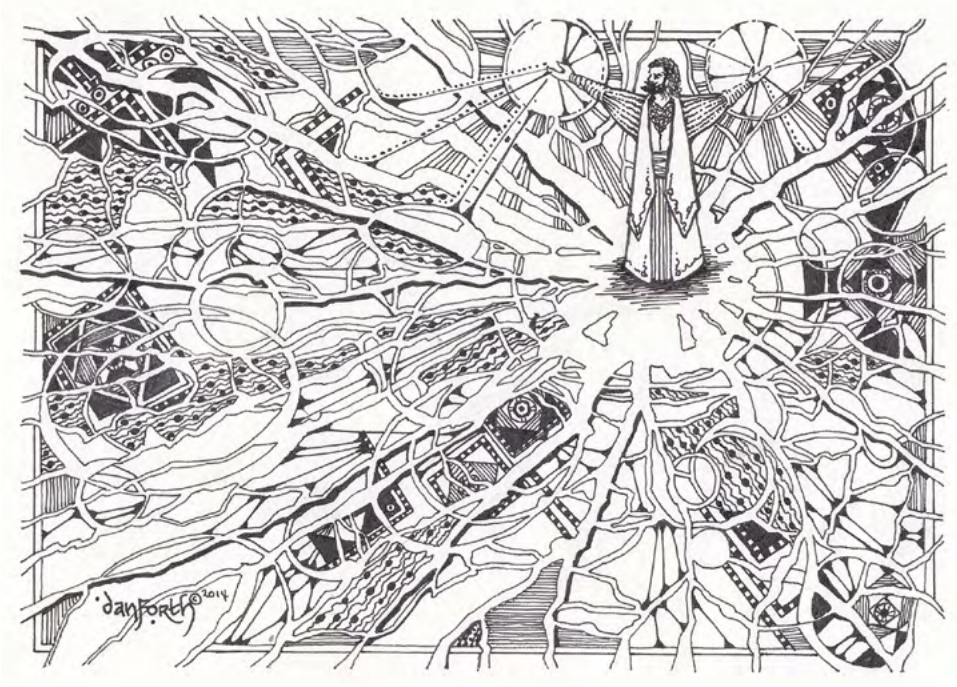
Willforce Talent

The Willforce talent provides additional energy to increase a spell's effect. Magicians do not normally have access to the Willforce talent until they reach higher Circles in their Discipline. Until a magician learns the Willforce talent his spell effects are based solely on his Willpower Step.

Spell Threads

Some spells are simple enough that a magician can put the entire spell pattern into a spell matrix. Other spells are too complex or require too much power to fit completely into a spell matrix. Before such a spell can be cast, the magician must add magical energy in the form of threads. Threads used to power spells are usually referred to as spell threads, to distinguish them from the permanent threads used to power magical items. A magician creates these spell threads from energy in astral space and weaves them into the spell pattern. The spell threads expand, strengthen, and define the spell, fully empowering it. A spell that requires threads is incomplete and cannot be cast without all of its threads.

A magician weaves threads with his Thread Weaving talent. If a magician fails a Thread Weaving test, the only harm is wasted time; any spell threads already woven into the spell remain intact. Once a magician starts to weave a spell's threads, he must finish the spell or abandon it entirely. Once the weaving is complete, he must cast the spell during the next round. If a magician begins to weave a spell and breaks off for a round or longer, or finishes weaving the spell threads and does not cast the spell in the next round, the spell threads already woven are lost.



Learning Spells

A magician must learn new spells from another magician or from a grimoire other than his own. If a magician knows the appropriate Thread Weaving talent, he can learn spells of any Circle, even those higher than his own, though he may not be able to cast those spells using his spell matrices.

The magician must be rested and in good health before he makes any Patterncraft tests; a character suffering from any damage or Wounds may not learn new spells.

A magician uses the Patterncraft talent to learn spells from a grimoire, studying the spell and copying it into his own. The magician makes a Patterncraft test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. The Learning Difficulty is based on the spell Circle, shown in the Spell Learning Difficulty Table. If the test succeeds, the magician correctly interprets the spell, and writes it into his grimoire.

Spell Learning Difficulty Table

Spell Circle	*Learning Difficulty*
1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10
6	11
7	12
8	13
9	14
10	15
11	16
12	17
13	18
14	19
15	20

Once a magician has successfully placed a spell in his grimoire, he has learned the spell. Though a magician may cast a spell from a grimoire without first learning it (see Casting From a Grimoire, p.XX), he must write the spell's symbols and patterns into his own grimoire in order to properly learn the spell. The magical act of manipulating spell symbols on paper (or on wood, metal, or stone) is necessary for the magician to lock the spell in his memory, incorporating the spell's pattern into his own.

The magician may only use the Patterncraft talent to learn spells once each day, though he may sacrifice Recovery tests to earn additional tests. For each Recovery test sacrificed he may make an additional Patterncraft test to attempt to learn a spell.

A magician can more easily learn a spell with the assistance of a teacher who knows the spell. Before attempting to learn the spell, the magician makes a Spellcasting test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. If successful, he adds his teacher's Thread Weaving rank to his Patterncraft test. For example, a magician learning an Illusionism spell from a teacher with Illusionism at Rank 4 adds +4 to his Patterncraft test, increasing the likelihood of successfully learning the spell.

Spell Learning Cost

Some magicians allow others to copy a spell from their grimoires by charging for it. Some magicians' guilds even sell written copies, or allow their members to copy them as a benefit of membership. The typical price for learning a spell is equal to the spell's Circle x100 silver pieces. This cost may double, or even triple, if the character is seeking personal tuition to learn a spell.

Some magicians will seek other forms of payment—typically favors, though ultimately the terms will depend on the gamemaster.

High Circle spells—Eleventh Circle or greater—cannot normally be purchased this way. These spells are usually powerful ritual spells, and some even possess Names (see the Earthdawn Companion). The gamemaster determines the silver piece cost associated with learning these spells, if they are available to be learned at all.

Spell Legend Point Cost

In order to complete the process of learning a new spell and incorporate it into his pattern, a magician must spend Legend Points based on the Spell Circle. The cost of a spell is equivalent to the cost of purchasing a Novice talent at a Rank equal to the Spell Circle. The magician must have sufficient Current Legend Points available to him when he makes his Patterncraft test.

Tomas is attempting to learn a new Fifth Circle spell from a grimoire he found in a ruined kaer. He succeeds at the Patterncraft test, and must spend 800 Legend Points to learn the spell.

GRIMOIRES

Once a magician has learned a spell, he can cast the spell from memory, simply by channeling magical energy through a properly attuned spell matrix. So why should a magician keep a grimoire? There are several reasons for doing so, most of which relate to training and teaching. A grimoire is more than a collection of the spells a magician has learned. It is a record of a magician's growth in his Discipline, through Novice and Journeyman, to Warden and Master.

Though a grimoire is often defined as a book of spells, implying a bundle of paper, grimoires come in many shapes and sizes and can be written on almost any type of material. Some are thick tomes with spells inscribed on the pages. Another might be a bag of coins with runes finely etched on the silver. Others might be sticks of bone. Some might be written on gems, the spells appearing only under moonlight. The shape of a grimoire is limited only by the knowledge and idiosyncrasies of its owner.

Magicians also use their grimoires to record other information, such as spell research and runic carvings for later study. As magicians advance to higher Circles, they learn methods for incorporating various effects into new spells they design. All of this information is recorded in their grimoire.

When considering new students, many magicians want to review a candidate's grimoire. This enables the teacher to examine the student's past experiences and gauge his knowledge of the Discipline's spells. Some magicians refuse to instruct adepts who do not maintain grimoires or treat their grimoires poorly, because they believe such students lack respect for the traditions of their Discipline and the craft of spellcasting.

Grimoires also enable magicians to share spells with other adepts of their Discipline. An adept learning a spell must be able to copy the spell from a written document, so any magician who wishes to share spells or take on students must keep a grimoire.

Although it is an uncommon practice, magicians are known to write down single spells onto paper or other materials. Spells written down in this manner can be sold or stored as backup copies in case the magician's grimoire is lost or destroyed.

Additionally, a magician's grimoire frequently becomes one of his pattern items. Though grimoires typically begin as a Minor pattern item, they may eventually become a Major or even Core pattern item. By keeping his grimoire with him, a magician can keep that connection from being used against him.

Although it is often a pattern item, the Mystic Defense of a grimoire is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the highest-Circle spell it contains (see Dispelling Magic, p.XX).

Casting Spells

Magician characters who have learned spells by creating and using a grimoire, and who know the appropriate talents, can weave spell threads and cast spells. The process of spellcasting is straightforward, as shown below, but has the following limitations:

Your character cannot cast every spell in this rule book. To cast a spell your character must first have learned the spell or else must cast it from a grimoire. Your character must also have the appropriate Thread Weaving talent for the Discipline of the spell.

In most cases, the spell should be in a spell matrix. The other ways to cast spells—using raw magic or casting from a grimoire—are more difficult or carry higher risk to the caster and are not generally recommended except in extreme circumstances.

To cast a spell from a matrix, your character must have achieved a Circle at least equal to the Circle of the spell being cast. Spells being cast from a grimoire or with raw magic can be of any Circle, including a Circle higher than your character's current Discipline Circle.

Concentration

Once a spell has been successfully cast, the magician cannot usually end its effect until the spell expires. He must resort to other means (such as the Dispel Magic talent) to end the effect prematurely. Some spells, however, require that the magician (or spell target) concentrate in order to control the spell—either to direct the spell's effect, or to maintain the spell and prevent it from expiring. Magicians must use their Standard action each round to maintain concentration. If at any time he stops concentrating on the spell, the effect ends.

Injury to the magician may also break concentration. If a magician suffers damage while concentrating on a spell, he must make a Willpower test against the number of Damage Points taken. The magician may use his Willforce talent to add a bonus to this test, just as he can with spell effects.

If the test succeeds, the magician keeps control of the spell. If the test fails, or the magician is knocked unconscious or killed, his concentration is automatically broken.

A spell that expires through a loss of concentration may be cast again, but the magician must reweave any required spell threads, as normal.

Human Versatility and Spellcasting

The human racial Versatility talent, p.XX, enables human magicians to learn the Thread Weaving talents of other magician Disciplines. This allows human magicians to cast spells of several Disciplines, though the range of spells a magician may cast in this manner is limited.

When casting spells using a spell matrix, a magician who has learned another type of Thread Weaving through Versatility may only cast spells of Circles equal to his current Circle or his rank in the appropriate Thread Weaving talent, whichever is lower. For example, a Fifth Circle human Nethermancer uses his Versatility talent to learn Elementalism at Rank 4. The magician may cast Nethermancy spells of Fifth Circle and lower, but his Elementalism spells are limited to Fourth Circle.

This restriction does not apply to magicians casting from a grimoire or using raw magic, as those methods do not have Circle restrictions under normal circumstances.

Human magicians attempting to learn spells of other magician Disciplines usually have problems finding willing teachers. Most magicians are reluctant to teach the spells of their Discipline to adepts of other Disciplines. Indeed, many magicians feel it is a betrayal of the traditions and customs of their Discipline to do so. Such teachers may demand a higher payment in silver, require the potential pupil to perform some sort of task or deed for the teacher, or even require the student to swear a blood oath of some sort.

Targeting Spells

Spells aren't like rocks thrown blindly in the dark, hoping for a hit; spells travel in an astral arc between the caster and the target. The caster can only create that arc if he can see (or otherwise sense) the target. Without the proper astral arc, the spell veers harmlessly into astral space.

Sight is not the only way of targeting a spell, though it is the most common. Creatures whose primary sense is not sight may create the proper astral arc using that sense. Any method that makes the magician certain of the target's location allows the creation of the proper astral arc. For example, a magician who is touching a target when casting a spell is certain of the target's location, even if he can't see the target. In the same manner, a magician can place an area effect spell at the end of his outstretched fingertips. Material objects between the caster and the target will not prevent a spell from reaching the target unless they block the magician's line of sight. Targets receive a bonus to their Mystic Defense for Cover (p.XX), to reflect the increased difficulty of targeting them successfully. If the Spellcasting test succeeds any physical manifestation that accompanies the spell avoids physical obstacles to strike the spell's target.

Since most spells can only be directed at targets the magician can see, magicians must possess some sort of astral sight ability to cast spells at targets in astral space. If a magician successfully uses Astral Sight, he may target astral beings with any spell that can affect them. As a general rule, spells resisted with Mystic Armor affect astral beings. Spells resisted by Physical Armor cannot be used by a caster in the physical world against targets in astral space. For example, a Wizard using Astral Sight could cast a Mind Dagger spell at a spirit in astral space, but he could not cast a Flame Flash spell on the spirit. The effect of Flame Flash is physical—it will not affect the immaterial spirit.

Magicians in astral space may cast spells against astral targets as if both the caster and the target were in the physical world. Magicians in astral space, however, cannot cast spells at targets in the physical world. See Astral Space, p.XX, for more information on astral sensing and the interactions between the astral and physical realms.

Observing Spellcasting

When a magician casts a spell, he uses his strength of will and awareness granted by his talents to gather astral energy and weave it into a predetermined form—a pattern—for a particular spell. The spell takes form on the astral plane, so an observer in the material world simply sees the magician concentrate, speak a few words and make some gestures to cast a spell.

An observer with the Astral Sight ability, or an observer in astral space can see the spell form around the magician as he gathers magical energy and weaves it into the spell's pattern. The patterns of simple spells form and execute their effects almost instantly. More complex spells take time to form, and astral observers can see the magical energy building as the spell is prepared.

If astrally observing a spell as it is being cast, a character may recognize the spell by making a successful Patterncraft test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty (magicians gain a +4 bonus to recognize spells of their Discipline). This knowledge may warn of a magician's intentions, but generally do not give an observer enough time to prevent a spell from being cast.

When a spell leaps through astral space toward its target, it moves very rapidly—too rapidly for characters to interfere with it. However, some Horrors and dragons have abilities that can counter spells.

SPELLCASTING SEQUENCE

The following summary outlines the steps necessary to cast a spell. More details on each step follow the summary. When using matrix casting, remember that the caster must have a spell in one of his spell matrices before he can cast it.

1. Weave Threads into Spell
2. Make Spellcasting Test
3. Check Success
4. Determine Spell Effect
5. Determine Duration

1. Weave Threads into Spell

If a spell requires spell threads, the magician weaves them using the appropriate Thread Weaving talent (Elementalism, Illusionism, Nethermancy, or Wizardry). To weave a spell thread, the magician makes a Thread Weaving test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty. One thread is woven for each success on the test.

A magician cannot normally weave spell threads and cast a spell during the same round. Having woven the required threads, the magician must cast the spell during the next round. Some high circle talents may allow a magician to weave threads and cast a spell in the same round.

Maloren's companions are in trouble, and he knows the perfect spell to get them out. The spell requires three spell threads, each with a Weaving Difficulty of 8. Maloren is in a hurry and wants to weave all three spell threads in a single round. To successfully weave all three threads at once, Maloren's player must make a successful Thread Weaving test against a Difficulty Number of 18 (base 8 + 10 for 2 extra successes = 18). If he rolls a 15 on the test, he still weaves 2 threads, and can try to weave the third next round. Even after weaving all of the required spell threads, Maloren must still wait until the next round to cast the spell.

Additional Threads

While not an optional rule, it is recommended that players not use this rule until they have become familiar with the basic requirements of weaving threads for a spell. Spells allow a magician to weave additional threads to increase the effect, duration, or other aspects. The maximum number of additional threads a magician can add to a spell is based on his Circle in the Discipline, as indicated on the Additional Thread Limit Table. The magician must decide whether to weave additional threads, and what they will do before he makes any Thread Weaving tests.

Additional Thread Limit Table

Circle	*Additional Threads*
1-4	1
5-8	2
9-12	3
13-15	4

Note that a human who has learned Thread Weaving through Versatility does not have a Circle in that Discipline, and therefore cannot weave additional threads.

2. Make Spellcasting Test

The Spellcasting talent is used to cast spells. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the spell's Casting Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the magician has successfully cast the spell. The Difficulty Number is usually the target's Mystic Defense, but may sometimes be another value. Most living creatures base their Mystic Defense on their Perception value. Some creatures are more resistant than others to magic and, as a result, have a higher Mystic Defense.

Dull-witted creatures and most inanimate non-magical objects have a Mystic Defense of 2. Magical items generally have a Mystic Defense based on the potency of the object.

3. Check Success

If the Spellcasting test result is at least equal to the Difficulty Number, the spell succeeds. If the Spellcasting test is less than the Difficulty Number, the spell fails. If the test result scores additional successes, there may be additional effects based on the spell.

4. Determine Spell Effect

Each spell's effect is given in its description. Some spells have a predetermined effect that occurs on a successful Spellcasting test. Other spells have random effects described in a form such as "WIL+5". If one of these spells is successfully cast, the magician makes an Effect test. The Effect test of a spell is usually equal to the magician's Willpower Step plus the bonus given (+5 Steps in the example above).

Some spells use the target's Willpower Step instead of the magician's, or some other random determinant. This is noted in the spell description. Magicians with the Willforce talent, p.XX, may use it for spell Effect Tests. Spells that cause damage to targets often use their Effect Step as the Damage Step.

5. Determine Duration

After determining the spell's effect, the caster determines its duration. Most combat spells last less than a single combat round; once the spell has affected the target, its duration ends. Non-combat spells list the spell duration in rounds, minutes, hours, or some other time period. In the spell descriptions, "Rank" refers to the magician's Spellcasting Rank.

If a spell has a variable duration, the magician rolls the Action Dice indicated in the description to determine the spell's duration.

SPELLCASTING METHODS

The general Steps above apply to all methods of spellcasting—matrix casting, casting raw magic, and casting from a grimoire. Matrix casting, usually just referred to as spellcasting, employs spell matrices and is the safest and most common method. Because of the inherent danger in casting raw magic, magicians generally resort to this method only in dire emergencies. Magicians generally use a grimoire only when casting an unfamiliar spell. Directions for using each method appear below.

Matrix Casting

The various spell matrix talents represent the spell matrices that a magician has created. Each spell matrix talent represents one spell matrix. Spell matrices have Ranks, just like any other talent. Magicians get two free Standard Matrices whose Rank increases with the magician's Circle. Other spell matrix talents are purchased with Legend Points, at the same cost as for other talents of the same Circle.

To cast a spell from a spell matrix, the magician must first place the pattern of the spell into the matrix. This is called attuning a matrix. Simple spells, those that do not require threads, fit entirely into a spell matrix. Most spell matrices can only hold one spell.

Spell Matrix Types

There are four types of spell matrices available to magicians: Standard Matrix, Enhanced Matrix, Armored Matrix, and Shared Matrix. Unless specifically noted, references to a "spell matrix" in these rules refer to any of these matrix types.

Spell Matrix Table

Matrix Type	*Death Rating*	*Holds-Threads?*
Standard	10	No
Enhanced	15	Yes
Armored	25	Yes
Shared	20	No

The Standard Matrix is the most basic matrix used by magicians. An Enhanced Matrix can hold one of a spell's required threads in addition to the spell pattern. When a magician attunes a spell to an Enhanced Matrix, the magician also weaves one of the spell's threads into the matrix. This thread remains woven in the spell's pattern and reduces the number of threads required to cast the spell by one. An Armored Matrix holds the spell and one of the spell's threads, just like an Enhanced Matrix. It also has its own mystic armor, allowing it to better withstand attacks that can damage a matrix. The Shared Matrix does not hold a thread the way an Enhanced or Armored Matrix does, but it can hold more than one spell at the same time. The total Spell Circles in a Shared Matrix cannot exceed the Shared Matrix Rank.

The Spell Matrix Table summarizes important game information for the different types of spell matrices. For more information on each of the different matrix types, see their entries in the Talents chapter (p. XX) and the Earthdawn Companion.

Attuning and Reattuning Matrices

A magician uses his Thread Weaving talent to attune a spell to a matrix. Once attuned, a spell remains in the matrix until either:

- The owning spellcaster dies
- The owner reattunes the matrix to hold another spell
- A magical process (for example, a spell effect) dislodges the spell from its matrix.

Placing a spell in a matrix is a simple matter for trained magicians, but it takes time. All magicians learn simple meditative exercises that allow them to place spells in their matrices. The exercise takes roughly 10 minutes, allowing the magician to attune any or all of their matrices.

If the meditation is interrupted, the spells being attuned are not placed in the matrix. There is no effect other than wasted time.

Reattuning on the Fly

Sometimes a magician discovers he does not have a necessary spell in one of his matrices, and can't afford 10 minutes of peaceful meditation. In this case, the magician can hurry the process by reattuning on the fly.

The magician declares which spell matrix he is trying to attune, takes 1 Strain, and makes a Thread Weaving test against the Reattuning Difficulty of the spell he wants to put into a matrix. This process takes one round. If successful, the new spell replaces the old. If the test fails, the new spell is not placed in the matrix, though the magician may continue trying.

Working with spell matrices is a delicate business and requires concentration. Once a magician begins to reattune matrices on the fly, he should not take any other actions until successful. If the magician fails a Concentration test (p.XX), or if the magician takes an action other than reattuning, the new spell is not placed in the matrix, and all of his currently attuned spells are dislodged from their matrices. The magician can still cast spells using other methods (raw magic or grimoire casting), but matrix casting is unavailable until the matrices are reattuned using the 10 minute meditative exercise.

Magicians can attempt to reattune more than one spell at the same time. To do this, the magician adds up the Reattuning Difficulty of all the spells he is trying to reattune to get the final Difficulty Number.

Maloren, the dwarf Elementalist, needs to reattune two of his spell matrices in the same round. The two spells he is trying to reattune are Flameweapon and Shield Willow. Flameweapon has a Reattuning Difficulty of 10, and Shield Willow has a Reattuning Difficulty of 11. Maloren's player needs to roll a 21 in his Thread Weaving test to successfully reattune both spells.

Damaging a Spell Matrix

Some talents and spells allow an opponent to damage spell matrices. Magicians must keep track of damage to their spell matrices, just as they keep track of damage to themselves. As long as the Current Damage of the matrix is less than its Death Rating, the matrix functions normally. When the Current Damage equals or exceeds the Death Rating, the matrix stops working and any spell stored in it is lost.

To restore a damaged matrix, the magician spends a Recovery test, then makes a Willpower test. The result is subtracted from the current Damage Points of the matrix. Once the Damage Points are lower than the Death Rating of the matrix, it functions again, but needs to be re-attuned.

Spell Matrices and Multi Discipline Magicians

In Earthdawn, magicians may learn other magician Disciplines. A character learning multiple spellcasting Disciplines does not learn the free spell matrix talents available to the other Discipline, as they duplicate an ability they already have (see Learning New Disciplines, p. XX).

A magician may learn additional spell matrix talents by using talent option slots, as usual. As with spell matrices from their first Discipline, each spell matrix is its own talent that must be increased separately.

Spell Matrix Objects

Some magicians in Barsaive still use spell matrix objects—magical items that contain one or more spell matrices. These items allow magicians to have a greater variety of spells ready. Many traditional Wizards continue the practice of wearing robes that contain spell matrices, represented by various colorful and intricately embroidered designs.

Matrix objects are thread items. The thread Rank woven to the matrix object determines the maximum spell Circle it can hold, just as with spell matrix talents. For example, a matrix object with a Rank 3 thread attached can hold spells of Third Circle or less.

The magician must be touching or wearing the object to use the matrix within it. If the magician loses physical contact with the object while spellcasting (if it is snatched away or dropped, for example), the spell is disrupted unless the magician chooses to finish casting it using raw magic.

Like other matrices, the matrices contained in matrix objects may be attacked and damaged in astral space. If a matrix object is "killed" in astral combat, the item's enchantment is ruined. If a matrix object is physically destroyed, the spell matrices stored within it are lost. Minor physical damage to matrix objects can be repaired, and spell matrices damaged in astral combat can be restored through application of the magician's Willpower, just as with regular spell matrices.

Casting Raw Magic

The most infrequently used method of spellcasting is known as raw magic casting. The magician channels magical energy for the spell directly through his body. This frequently causes damage to the magician, and can have other harmful side effects. A magician can use raw magic to cast any spell he knows, that is, any spell he has successfully transferred to his grimoire, regardless of Circle.

When casting a spell with raw magic, the magician weaves spell threads and casts the spell as normal. Spells cast with raw magic have the same effect and duration as spells cast using spell matrices. The differences are the potential consequences to the magician: Warping, Damage, and Horror Mark tests. The likelihood and severity of these side effects depend on the local corruption of astral space.

Warping and Damage

The amount of Warping and Damage a magician suffers when casting raw magic is based on the Circle of the spell, and the local classification of astral space. For more information on the different astral regions, see Astral Space, p.XX.

When a magician casts a spell using raw magic, the gamemaster makes a Warping test against the magicians' natural Mystic Defense. The Step used for the Warping test is found on the Raw Magic Table. Because warping is an internal process, any items, spells, or other effects that increase the magician's Mystic Defense do not provide any bonuses. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster makes a Damage test using the Step shown in the Raw Magic Table. Because this damage is internal, only the character's natural Mystic Armor provides protection.

Raw Magic Table

Region Type	*Warping Step*	*Damage Step*	*Horror Mark Step***
Safe	Circle*	Circle + 4	NA
Open	Circle + 5	Circle + 8	Circle + 2
Tainted	Circle + 10	Circle + 12	Circle + 5
Corrupt	Circle + 15	Circle + 16	Circle + 10

* Circle refers to the Circle of the spell being cast.

** The Horror Mark Step cannot exceed the Horror's Spellcasting Step.

Rensil wants to cast a Second Circle spell using raw magic. He casts the spell in an uncharted forest, which he guesses is Open space. Unfortunately, he is wrong. He is close to a breached kaer, and the local astral space is Tainted. The Warping Step is equal to the Spell Circle+10, for Step 12. Rensil's natural Mystic Defense is 10. The gamemaster rolls a 12 on the Warping test. The damaged astral space warps Rensil's spell, and so the raw magic hurts him. The gamemaster makes a Step 14 Damage test and gets a result of 17. Rensil's natural Mystic Armor is 2, so he takes 15 Damage Points from the backlash.

Horror Mark

A spell cast using raw magic is like launching a flare on a dark night. The unmasked magic might attract unwanted attention from astral entities. Many magicians doomed themselves before the Scourge by casting raw magic against the first signs of the Horrors. These people were not foolish, but they had no way of knowing the consequences of their actions. Spell matrices were only developed after the survivors saw (or heard) what became of these unfortunate magicians.

When a character uses raw magic, the gamemaster makes a Horror Mark test against the caster's natural Mystic Defense. If successful, a Horror has noticed the caster and marked him. A Horror Mark is a Horror's personal gateway to a character; the Horror may use the gateway any time it wishes, though range may restrict some of its options. Horrors may use the mark to locate their victim at any time.

Many Horrors have ways of communicating with marked victims who are hundreds of miles away, and some can cast spells on their victims from a great distance.

A Horror Mark lasts for a year and a day, but the Horror may renew the Horror Mark for another year and a day if it wishes. There may be range restrictions, but aside from being out of range, there is no known way of preventing a live Horror from renewing its mark. Horrors have been known to quietly renew their Horror Marks for years, without the victim being aware of the mark. For more information on Horror Marks, see the Gamemaster's Guide.

Casting From a Grimoire

Sometimes a magician needs to cast a spell contained in a grimoire before he has a chance to learn the spell. Sometimes he needs to cast a spell and is unable (or unwilling) to use one of the other spellcasting methods. Sometimes he has the luxury of time and wants to cast one of his own spells more effectively. In these circumstances, the magician can use the spellcasting method called grimoire casting.

Casting from a grimoire is more cumbersome than matrix casting, and can expose the caster to the dangers of raw magic casting without preparation. Because of this, grimoire casting is uncommon in Barsaive. The difficulties don't prevent a magician from grimoire casting in a crisis. For example, if the only Stop Horror Dead in its Tracks spell he has ever encountered happens to be in the ancient grimoire he just picked up from an abandoned kaer, and he's facing the Horror to which it refers, the magician will likely attempt to cast the spell whatever the risk.

A grimoire is not just a book—it contains the pattern of every spell scribed in it. Spell matrix objects (and spell matrices) were modeled on the way grimoires store spell patterns. When a magician casts a spell with a grimoire, he can channel magical energy through the spell pattern in the grimoire in much the same way he channels it through a spell matrix.

To use this spellcasting method, the magician must have the grimoire in his possession and reference it in some way; a book must be open to the page with the desired spell, a rune-carved bone would need to be held in his hand so it can be read, and so on. If the magician has time to prepare the grimoire to filter the energy, he can cast the spell safely. If he is in a hurry, he exposes himself to the same dangers as raw magic casting.

As with casting with raw magic, a magician is not limited to casting spells of their Circle or less when casting from a grimoire. When working with a grimoire other than their own, all tests related to preparing and casting a spell suffer a -2 penalty. This casting method differs slightly from the normal sequence for casting spells:

1. (Optional) Attune the Grimoire
2. Weave any required Spell Threads
3. Make a Spellcasting test
4. Determine the spell's Effect and Duration
5. Resolve Raw Magic Effects, if applicable

1. Attune the Grimoire

If a magician wants to minimize the danger and has the time to prepare, he can attune the grimoire. This process takes ten minutes, and requires a Patterncraft test against the spell's reattunement difficulty. The attunement lasts for ten minutes per success. Essentially, the magician is using the spell pattern contained in the grimoire to act as a temporary spell matrix.

Rensil, an elf Illusionist, has been cut off from his companions by a wall that trapped him in a small closet with no apparent exit. Hoping to find a way to escape, the elf opens an old grimoire he found earlier. It contains the Walk Through spell, which might give him a chance.

The air in the closet is limited, but Rensil takes some time to attune the grimoire. He makes a Patterncraft test and rolls a 19, which beats the spell's reattunement difficulty of 16.

If the magician does not have the time to attune the grimoire, they can still cast the spell, but will suffer as a result (see Resolve Raw Magic Effects, below).

2. Weave Spell Threads

As with normal spellcasting, the magician weaves any threads the spell requires.

Rensil begins weaving the pattern of the Walk Through spell. He needs to weave one thread against a Weaving Difficulty of 11 with a –2 penalty to his Thread Weaving, since the grimoire is not his own. It takes a couple of tries, but he successfully weaves the thread.

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3. Make a Spellcasting Test

After weaving the necessary spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting test.

The air is starting to get stale as Rensil finishes weaving the thread. He makes a Spellcasting test with a -2 penalty, and successfully casts the Walk Through spell on the wall that dropped, scoring a single success.

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4. Determine Effect and Duration

The effect and duration of spells cast from a grimoire are determined normally.

A hole appears in the wall, and Rensil squeezes his way through as it grows and shrinks. After a minute or so of struggling, he manages to escape the trap and finds himself back in the main corridor. He gathers himself, stows the grimoire in his pack, and looks up in time to see his companions coming around the corner looking for him.

If a magician is casting from his own grimoire, he gains an extra success if the spell is cast successfully. Magicians who are working at home and have the luxury of time will often cast spells from their own grimoire when preparing items for enchantment or performing magical research.

5. Resolve Raw Magic Effects

If a magician attuned the spell, there are no negative effects from casting the spell. However, if the magician was not able to attune the grimoire, the caster suffers all the effects described under Casting Raw Magic, above. If a Horror is attracted to the casting, it will sometimes mark the grimoire, allowing it to potentially spread its influence to any who study the spells the grimoire contains.

Dispel Difficulty Table

Spell Circle	*Dispel Difficulty*
1	11
2	12
3	13
4	14
5	15
6	16
7	17
8	18
9	19
10	20
11	21
12	22
13	23
14	24
15	25

Dispelling Magic

Many spells have durations longer than a single round. It is possible to prematurely end these spells, disrupting their effect. This is called dispelling. The primary means of dispelling spells is through use of the Dispel Magic talent, though some spell effects may be countered with the Suppress Curse talent, or dispelled with a Willpower test (the spell's description indicates whether it can be dispelled this way). Unless otherwise noted, the Difficulty Number for dispelling a spell is based on its Circle, as shown on the Dispel Difficulty Table.

Dispel Magic can also be used to dispel magical effects produced by talents and Discipline abilities. Only magical effects with an extended duration—measured in rounds, minutes, hours, days, and so on—can be dispelled. Permanent effects cannot normally be dispelled. For example, the Wood Skin talent grants an adept an increase to his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings that lasts for one or more hours. At any point during this period, the Wood Skin effect may be dispelled by the Dispel Magic talent. The effects of Durability, on the other hand, are permanent and cannot be dispelled.

The Difficulty Number for talents or talent knacks is based on the Talent Rank, and the Dispel Difficulty for Discipline Abilities is based on the Circle at which the ability is first eligible to be gained. The Rank or Discipline Circle is equivalent to the Spell Circle listed on the Dispel Difficulty Table.

In most cases, Dispel Magic serves to either cancel the target spell, or to neutralize the magical effect. This does not prevent the ability from being used again, although any criteria for minimum periods between uses of the ability still apply.

ILLUSIONS

Illusions can be very effective, but it is possible for opponents to see through or otherwise sense the deception by way of Sensing Tests. There are two kinds of illusions: figments and true illusions.

Figments are the weakest sort of illusion magic. They can interact with any senses—images, sounds, sensations and more can all be created by figments. However, figments are obviously illusory, or easily detected as an illusion; any interaction with a figment reveals its nature. They are typically used to entertain or enhance other actions. No special tests or abilities are needed to sense their status as illusions.

True illusions are more powerful and effective. They do more than simply interact with a character's senses, they directly affect the perception of anyone that interacts with them. The illusion's pattern interacts with the affected target's pattern, reinforcing their belief in the reality of the illusion with a degree of mental manipulation and compulsion.

The more subtle the illusion, the less likely the target will suspect anything. The best illusions are ones that blend in with their surroundings, making minor modifications to the environment, or reinforcing the expectations of the target. Regardless, whenever somebody interacts with an illusion, there is a chance that they will notice the difference between their real experience and the illusory sensations enough to break the mental compulsion.

Sensing Difficulty Table

Spell Circle	*Sensing Difficulty*
1	16
2	17
3	18
4	19
5	20
6	21
7	22
8	23
9	24
10	25
11	26
12	27
13	28
14	29
15	30

Sensing Illusions

A character may sense an illusion whenever he acts against or reacts to it. Many tests made directly against an illusion give the character a chance to notice it. If the test succeeds against the Sensing Difficulty for the illusion (as listed on the Sensing Difficulty Table), then the character notices the spell is an illusion and it no longer has any effect on that character. The character can still sense the illusion, but it no longer has any real substance, effectively becoming a figment.

Herekar the Warrior is facing off against an illusory creature guarding the entrance to an ancient shrine. The illusion is equivalent to a Fifth Circle spell, and so has a Sensing Difficulty of 20. Herekar swings at the creature with his sword and rolls a 24—a successful Sensing test. He realizes that the guardian is just an illusion as his sword passes through the wavering image in the air.

A character who has detected an illusion can help others overcome its effects. He can use his understanding to convince others of the nature of the illusion, granting them a +5 bonus to their Sensing tests when actively working with them to demonstrate nature. This bonus is cumulative, the more people that see through an illusion, the less power it has on other observers.

Disbelieving Illusions

Illusions with short durations are less subtle in their effects, and allow for a target to disbelieve what is happening. These types of illusions are mainly damaging spells, and it will be noted in the spell description if the spell can be disbelieved. If a target chooses to disbelieve one of these spells, they will not suffer any effect from the spell. If the spell is not an illusion, however, the target's Mystic Defense is considered to be 2 for the purpose of determining the number of successes, as they have opened themselves up to the magic. In addition, the target cannot use any active defenses (such as Steel Thought) to resist the spell.

Illusionists have access to spells that are both real and illusory. The target must decide if they are going to disbelieve prior to the Spellcasting test being made. No test is required—if the spell is an illusion, it simply has no effect.

Illusions and Damage

If an illusion successfully causes damage, the damage is real. The mental compulsion that accompanies a true illusion is powerful enough to cause the target's mind to reinforce the sensations from the spell. This can manifest as burst blood vessels, muscle strain, even internal bleeding or other injuries. The only way to avoid injury from an illusion is to disbelieve the illusion at the time it is cast—a risky proposition at best.

Illusions require a conscious mind. Unless the spell description specifically states otherwise, a target that is unconscious or asleep cannot be affected by an illusion.

Illusions and the Physical World

Illusions only affect the physical world to the extent that they manipulate the viewer's perception of what is real. The best illusions restrict the opportunities for targets to sense it. Illusions are rarely tangible, and their presence reflects that. For example, an illusory bridge would hold no weight—a character trying to cross would simply fall, taking damage and wondering why he was so clumsy as to step off the bridge.

The number of ways a character can interact with an illusion are too numerous to list here. A good guideline is that a character's body will react as if the illusion is real if possible—for example, bumping into an illusory wall, or banging their shin on the illusion of a table. Depending on the circumstances, the gamemaster can allow interactions like this to prompt a Sensing test, but should make the test in secret if the player or character doesn't have reason to believe that things are not as they seem.

Spell Details

The following pages provide game information on the spells available to the different magician Disciplines. Each spell description includes the following information.

Threads

Threads indicates the number of spell threads that must be woven in order to cast the base version of the spell. Some spells are simple enough that a Standard Matrix can hold the full spell pattern, and do not require the caster to weave additional threads. These spells are indicated with a "0". A magician still has the option to weave additional threads as described on p. XX.

Weaving

Weaving provides the Difficulty Numbers for Thread Weaving tests. There are two values given. The first is the Difficulty Number for weaving threads prior to casting the spell. The second value is the Reattuning Difficulty, used when a magician is attempting to reattune a spell on the fly (see p. XX).

Even spells that do not require threads for the base version of the spell will have a weaving difficulty, to set the difficulty of weaving additional threads to enhance the spell.

Casting

Casting indicates how the Difficulty Number for the Spellcasting test is determined. For many spells, this is the target's Mystic Defense (abbreviated TMD). For some spells, it is a fixed value, or may be calculated in other ways.

Range

Range is usually given in yards, and indicates how far away the spell can be targeted. A range of "self" means the spell only works on the caster. "Touch" means the caster must be able to touch the target, which could be the caster. A magician trying to cast a touch spell on an unwilling target does not need to make an additional test (like a Dexterity test) to touch the target, a successful Spellcasting test means the caster has touched the target.

Area of Effect

Some spells affect multiple targets in a given area, or affect a space rather than an individual. These spells will have an area of effect, usually measured as a radius in yards. This is measured from the spell's origin point, as indicated based on the range. For example, a spell with a range of "Touch" and an area of effect of 10 yards, will cover a 10 yard radius area, centered on a point within the magician's reach. If the spell had a range of 100 yards, the center point of the effect could be anywhere within 100 yards of the caster, but would still only cover a 10 yard radius area at that spot.

A spell affects all targets within its area of effect, regardless of whether they are friend or foe; it is possible for a careless magician to damage allies with an area effect damaging spell. Many spells with an area of effect allow a caster to weave additional threads to designate characters in the spell's area of effect that will not be affected by the spell.

Duration

Duration is the amount of time a spell effect lasts. This could be measured in rounds, minutes, hours, or some other increment of time. Unless otherwise noted, "Rank" in a spell duration refers to the casting magician's Spellcasting rank. For example, a duration of "Rank+10 minutes" on a spell cast by a magician with Spellcasting rank 5 would last for 15 minutes.

Effect

A spell's effect depends on the spell. The most common effect is used to determine a value, like the amount of damage dealt. When a spell requires a magician to make an Effect test, the Step number used for the test will be given. For example, "WIL+5" indicates the caster uses his Willpower Step +5 for the Effect test.

If a spell causes damage, the Effect Step will be followed by the type of armor that resists the damage; Physical or Mystic. If the spell has a fixed effect, rather than a random one, the specifics of the effect will be listed here.

Description

The spell description will include any special rules or instructions that apply to the spell and its effect. This will include keywords that may relate to the spell. It will also include any gestures or materials required to cast the spell. If the magician is not able to perform the required actions, or does not have the necessary materials, he cannot cast the spell.

Some spells have slightly different versions that allow a caster to generate different effects. Each version is considered to be a different spell for the purposes of learning time and cost, and are sometimes listed separately. If a magician knows both versions of the spell, however, they can place them both in the same matrix, and can choose which version to cast at any time. These spells are indicated with a note in the description that it can be placed in the same matrix as another spell.

Rensil the Illusionist knows the Ephemeral Bolt and True Ephemeral Bolt spells. The spell descriptions indicate they may be held in the same matrix. If Rensil chooses to keep them in the same matrix, he can decide each time he casts the spell which version (either illusory or real) he is using.

If a spell or other effect targets a matrix that has multiple spells, whether to dislodge or otherwise affect the spell within, all spells are affected.

Some spells (typically binding spells) indicate that they can only have one active casting at a time, or have a restriction that might prevent them from being cast again within a certain timeframe. These limits are on the magician.

Keywords

As mentioned above, the spell description will include any relevant keywords. The most common keywords found in spells are:

Illusion, Figment: These keywords indicate whether a spell is considered a figment or is a "true illusion" subject to Sensing tests (see p. XX).

Air, Earth, Fire, Water, Wood: These keywords indicate the spell uses a particular element. This can interact with different resistances or vulnerabilities, or may interact with other effects. These keywords may also reference an elemental sub-type, such as cold or lightning.

Binding: Some spells bind a summoned spirit to a willing target. A character may only be affected by one binding at a time, which includes any form of involuntary possession. Binding spells grant bonuses to the target, but also require or prohibit certain behaviors. Failure to follow these rules ends the spell. While the spell is in effect, the target's appearance will alter to reflect the nature of the spirit that is bound to them for the duration. It may be subtle, but there is no hiding the otherworldly influence. Using spells in this way makes many Namegivers nervous, as they lack the proper understanding about the differences between Horrors and other spirits.

Success Levels

After the spell description is an indication of the effect of additional successes on the Spellcasting test. This is different for each spell, but could be additional Effect Steps, extended duration, ability to affect additional targets, or other options. The indicated bonus applies for each additional success. For example, a spell with "Increase Duration (+2 Rounds)" would extend the duration by 4 Rounds with two extra successes.

Extra Threads

More experienced casters can use their knowledge of spell patterns and thread weaving to make their spells more powerful. Extra Threads indicates what enhanced effects the caster can add to their spell by weaving additional threads into the spell pattern (see p. XX). Each additional thread can have a different effect, or the magician may choose to have the same effect for each extra thread woven.

The normal rules for thread weaving apply. The magician must weave all threads before they can cast the spell, and they must decide how many additional threads they are weaving before they begin. If a spell that normally requires no threads is placed in an Enhanced Matrix, the caster may use the thread to enhance the spell effect but the additional effect must be chosen at the time the spell is placed in the matrix.

The Earth Darts spell indicates that additional threads can extend the duration of the armor reducing effect by 2 rounds, increase the damage of the spell by 2 Steps, reduce the target's armor by an additional 2 points, increase the range by 10 yards, or strike an additional target.

If a magician weaves two additional threads, he could increase the range by 10 yards and increase the Damage Step by 2, increase the range by 20 yards, increase the Damage Step by 4, or any other combination of enhanced effects.

If an additional thread indicates "Rank" as a modifier, the magician can have each additional thread provide a bonus up to his Spellcasting rank.

Maloren, Kira, Herekar, Ulm, and Silar are getting ready to attack a bandit camp. Shortly before they charge, Maloren casts Air Armor, weaving an extra thread to affect multiple targets. His Spellcasting rank is 5, meaning he can affect up to five additional characters with the spell, for a total of six. This is more than enough to target the entire group with one casting.

Elementalism Spells

Elementalists use their magic to manipulate the magical elements. Elementalism spells most often affect one or more elements, but can also also affect the weather and nature. Through their spells, they are able to speak with the elemental spirits that inhabit the world.

First Circle

Air Armor
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: +3 Physical Armor

Air. This spell creates a protective cushion of air. The magician exhales slowly and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, air rushes in under the target's clothing, pushing outward to create a cushion and providing padding as well as ventilation. The target adds +3 Physical Armor and the effects of fatigue are reduced (GM's discretion). If the target is not wearing clothing or armor he receives no benefit—there is nothing to constrain the air cushion, so it disperses. This spell is popular with elemental fire mining crews working near Death's Sea.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+1 Physical Armor), Additional Target (+Rank)

Crunch Climb
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: +3 Climbing test bonus

Earth. This spell enhances climbing ability. The magician crouches down on all fours and then touches the target as he begins to climb and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target gains a +3 Climbing test bonus.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Additional Target (+Rank)

Earth Darts

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10

Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards

Duration: 2 rounds

Effect: WIL+3/Physical and -2 Physical Armor

Earth. This spell transforms earth into crystalline darts that fly toward a foe, temporarily rending their armor in the process. The magician flings a handful of dirt into the air and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, his Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted before Physical Armor is reduced. The damage is only dealt once; the duration refers to the armor reducing effect. The target's armor returns to normal at the end of the duration.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

E**xtra Threads:** Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (-2 Physical Armor), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Flameweapon picture

Flameweapon

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank+5 rounds

Effect: Adds Step 4/D6 fire damage to weapon/Physical

Fire. This spell enflames a weapon. The magician snaps his fingers and makes a Spellcasting test against the wielder's Mystic Defense. If successful, a flame leaps from his fingers and engulfs the weapon in fire, except for the part where it is held. The wielder adds a D6 Bonus Die to the fiery weapon's Damage test. The spell can be cast on weapons made from any material—wood, metal, bone, and so on. The flame inflicts no physical damage to the weapon.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Additional Target (+Rank)

Heat Food
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Heats and rejuvenates one meal
Fire. This spell heats food and infuses it with beneficial magic.

The magician breathes on his hands as if to warm them, causing them to glow a gentle red, then touches a meal and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the glow transfers to the food which, within a minute, becomes steaming hot. Eating the food increases the effectiveness of Recovery tests. Consumption of a heated meal adds a +4 bonus to his next Recovery test.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+1 meal)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Effect (+1 meal)

Purify Earth
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: 6+ (see text) **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: 1 round **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius
Effect: Purifies earth and soil
Earth. This spell removes any impurities or foreign materials preventing soil from supporting plant life. The magician points at the center of the spell's area of effect and then makes a Spellcasting test against the earth's Mystic Defense. Soil that is largely untainted has a Mystic Defense of 6; disease-ridden or poisoned earth resists with the Mystic Defense of the disease or poison; earth that is Horror-tainted has a Mystic Defense equal to that of the Horror. If successful, an area of soil is cleansed of impurities and is again able to sustain plant life.

This spell can be placed in the same spell matrix as Purify Water.

Success Levels: Increase Area (+2 yards).
Extra Threads: Increase Area (+2 yards).

Purify Water
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: 6+ (see text) **Range:** Touch
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+8
Water. This spell removes impurities from water. The magician smears a drop of water on his lips and then makes a Spellcasting test against the water's Mystic Defense. Water that is simply muddy has a Mystic Defense of 6; disease-ridden or poisoned water resists with the Mystic Defense of the disease or poison; water that is Horror-tainted has a Mystic Defense equal to that of the Horror. Beverages with high water content, such as wine, juice, beer, or milk, can be purified by the spell, with all of the flavorful "impurities" removed, leaving behind pure water.

The magician's Effect test determines how many quarts of water or beverage are purified.

This spell can be held in the same spell matrix as Purify Earth.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Resist Element

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank minutes

Effect: +3 Physical and Mystic Armor vs. element

Element [Air, Earth, Fire, Water and Wood]. This spell is five different spells that must each be learned individually. Each allows a character to better handle sudden and prolonged exposure to the specified element. The magician conjures the element upon the palm of his hand and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the element melts away as he touches the target. The target adds +3 to his Physical and Mystic Armor against element-based damage.

The different elemental versions of this spell can be held in the same spell matrix.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 bonus), Additional Target (+Rank)

Shelter

Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 5/10

Casting: 6 **Range:** 20 yards

Duration: 10 hours

Effect: Creates a suitable shelter for one person

Wood. This spell bends and weaves trees to form a suitable place to sleep for the night. The magician stands near the desired location of his shelter, visualizes the form it will take, pantomiming shaping the local flora into the necessary shapes with his hands, and then makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the magician creates the desired shelter suitable for one person per success. The default shelter is rather crude, but effective. Extra threads may be woven to make the shelter more inaccessible, such as hidden at the base of a tree, or in the boughs of trees, increasing the difficulty of any Detection tests by +2 per thread.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+1 Person)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 Person), Increase Effect (+2 Detection), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Snuff

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: 1 round **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius

Effect: WIL+5

Fire. This spell extinguishes a fire. The magician exhales sharply through his nose, then waves his hand over the fire and makes a Spellcasting test against the fire's Mystic Defense (typically 6, if created by a spell, use the Dispel Difficulty). If successful, the magician makes an Effect test against the fire's Damage Step. If successful, the Damage Step is reduced by –2 per Success. If not completely extinguished, the fire's Damage Step increases by +1 per minute to its original intensity.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Waterproof

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Repels water

Water. This spell seals an inanimate object against water. The magician touches a finger to oil, runs it along an edge on the target and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the target (which must be an inanimate object) cannot get wet. If cast on an article of clothing, this means water will bead off of it, while if the spell is cast on a container, it will be sealed until it is next opened when the spell will immediately end. The target may not be larger than 1 cubic yard.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+1 cubic yard), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Second Circle

Air Mattress

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: 10 hours
Effect: +2 Recovery test bonus

Air. This spell creates an air bed to promote healing. The magician anchors the corners of a blanket with something from any one of the four non-air elements—tree branches, rocks or dirt clods, and the like—then blows into his clenched fist as if inflating a balloon and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, a cushion of air forms under the blanket, turning it into a comfortable one-foot-thick mattress. Those who sleep on the mattress for six hours gain a +2 bonus to the first Recovery test they make within an hour of waking and are considered to have had sufficient sleep. The mattress remains inflated for the spell's duration or until the blanket is moved or damaged.

Success Levels: Additional Target (+1)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Effect (-1 hour sleep required, minimum 4 hours), Additional Target (+Rank)

Fingers of Wind
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: 6 **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL

Air. This spell creates a pair of invisible hands which can lift and manipulate objects. To observers, a faint breeze seems to move the target item. The magician wiggles his fingers and makes a Spellcasting (6) test.

If successful, the Dexterity Step is equal to the Effect Step and the hands can lift up to 10 pounds. The hands can reach anywhere visible to the magician within the spell's range. While they have a tangible effect when carrying or moving objects, they cannot be used to attack, nor can they be attacked.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (+10 pounds), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Icy Surface
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds **Area of Effect:** 60-square-yard area, no greater than 20 yards in any dimension
Effect: WIL

Water–Cold. This spell creates a slippery, icy surface that is treacherous to cross. The magician blows on the surface he wishes to affect and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the target area is immediately covered with ice. The spot the magician blows on is one edge of the area—the ice extends from this point, to a maximum size equal to the area of effect. The magician's Effect test determines the Difficulty Number for crossing the ice without slipping. Characters negotiating the slippery surface must make a Dexterity or suitable Talent or Skill test (creatures make a Dexterity or Knockdown test). If successful, they can move across the icy surface at half their Movement Rate. If failed, they are Knocked Down.

Success Level: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Area (+10 square yards)

Mantle of the Woodland Hunter
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Listen and travel swiftly through the forest to find something

Wood. Binding. This spell summons a wood elemental and temporarily binds it to a willing target. The magician places one hand on a tree, then his other hand on the target's forehead and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's veins and eyes turn green, and he can hear and understand the slow chatter of wood elementals and spirits within natural areas.

At any time for the duration of the spell, the bound character may declare they are seeking a living creature. Upon this declaration, the wood spirits will actively begin aiding the bound character in their search, granting a +5 bonus to any tests which may apply. Additionally, the character's Movement Rate increases by 4.

Once a bound character is on a hunt, any distraction from that hunt causes this spell to immediately end. If the spell ends prematurely for any reason, the target's senses are crippled, suffering a -3 to all Action tests, until he receives a full night's rest, and this spell may not be cast again for a full day. This spell may only have one active casting at a time.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 to search-related tests), Increase Effect (+2 Movement Rate)

Shield Willow

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: +2 to its Physical and Mystic Defense

Wood. This spell improves the resiliency of shields. The magician joins his fingers together, then touches the target shield and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the shield sprouts roots and leaves and gains the resiliency of a willow tree, adding +2 to its Physical and Mystic Defense for the spell's duration.

Success Level: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+1 bonus), Additional Target (+Rank)

Slow Weapon

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: –4 Damage test penalty

Air. This spell slows a weapon, reducing its ability to inflict damage. The magician mimes a slow-moving attack and then makes a Spellcasting test against the wielder's Mystic Defense. If successful, the air thickens around the target weapon and it slows each time it hits an opponent, causing the wielder to suffer a –4 penalty to his Damage tests. Nothing prevents the wielder from dropping the slowed weapon and swapping to another if he desires. Anyone picking up and using the weapon suffers the Damage test penalty until the spell ends.

Success Level: Increase Duration (+2 Rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (-2 Damage penalty), Additional Target (+1)

Third Circle

Ice Mace and Chain
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: WIL+2/Physical

Water–Cold. This spell creates an icy weapon that is thrown at an opponent. The magician hurls two pebbles, coins, or other objects at the target, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the objects transform into frozen spiked mace-heads joined by an icy chain, which wrap around the target. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. If he rolls any Bonus Dice on the Damage test, the mace and chain shatter. If the mace and chain survive the blow, the target is Harried until he frees himself at the end of the following round.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Lightning Bolt
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

Air–Electric. This spell strikes the target with bolts of electricity. The magician raises his hands toward the sky, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, crackling bolts of electricity fly from the magician's fingers, striking the target. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted.

The initial Spellcasting test is used against any additional targets that may result. Additional success levels on secondary targets will not cause additional bolts.

Success Levels: Additional Target (+1)

for Lightning Bolt

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Mantle of the Reflecting Pool
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank +10 minutes
Effect: Grant insight into a target through empathy

Water. Binding. This spell summons a water elemental and temporarily binds it to a willing target. The magician looks into the target's eyes (or a mirror), touches them comfortingly, and makes a Spellcasting against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's eyes become placid and enticing as strong emotions leave them temporarily.

The bound character may engage others in conversation and adopt their attitude and mannerisms in a flattering way, giving him a +4 bonus to Conversation tests. For every success, they may ask a general question regarding the target's attitude and feelings. The character may make multiple Conversation tests in this way, but for each subsequent test the Difficulty increases by +5. Subsequent tests may gather more specific information, though it must be directly relevant to the conversation (GM's discretion) and if the character fails a Conversation test, the spell ends immediately.

If the bound character expresses any strong opinions or emotions not expressed by the target first, forcefully manipulates the interaction, or pressures the target, the spell immediately ends. If the spell ends prematurely for any reason, the bound character receives a -5 penalty to all Charisma-based tests until he receives a full night's rest, and this spell may not be cast again for a full day. This spell may only have one active casting at a time.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 to Conversation tests)

Plant Feast
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: 6 **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: WIL+2

Wood. This spell converts any kind of plant material into a tasty feast. The spell requires three intact plants, no matter how scrawny.

The magician cuts or tears the plants into small pieces, then makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, his Effect test determines the number of meals produced. Each meal has the following parts: appetizer, soup, salad, bread, entree, vegetable, and dessert. All of the meals are identical. Although they can appear to contain meat, none actually do. The meals are as nutritious and tasty as their real counterparts.

The spell only creates types of food that the magician has tasted within the last year and a day—a good reason for him to occasionally eat fine food to excess. Uneaten meals vanish when the spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step),

Thrive
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: 8 **Range:** Touch
Duration: 1 round
Area of Effect: 2-yard radius
Effect: Accelerates plant growth
Wood. This spell accelerates plant growth. The magician sprinkles water on the ground and makes a Spellcasting (8) test. If successful, plants in the area of effect experience the equivalent of one week's growth over the remainder of the round. After the spell ends, their growth rate returns to normal, but the plants do not revert to their normal size—the effect is permanent. This spell may only be cast a number of times equal to Spellcasting Rank per day and only once per affected area per week.
Success Levels: Increase Area (+2 yards)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 day of growth), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Winds of Deflection
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Improves Avoid Blow tests
Air. This spell creates a wall of swirling wind strong enough to deflect physical attacks. The magician makes whooshing noises and makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, a wave of roiling and surging air surrounds him. The adept gains a +3 bonus to any Avoid Blow test. This spells allows Avoid Blow to be used against Blindside and Surprise attacks.
Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Fourth Circle

Air Blast
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round **Area of Effect:** 6 yards wide
Effect: WIL+5
Air. This spell creates a howling blast of wind. The magician places both hands to his lips and blows hard, then flings his arms wide and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among anyone within range. If successful, a powerful blast of air surges away from the magician in a 6-yard wide line in the direction he is facing. Those caught in the wind's path must make a successful Knockdown test against the magician's Effect test to avoid being Knocked Down.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Blizzard Sphere

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 30 yards
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: WIL+2/Physical

Water–Cold. This spell conjures a small blizzard against foes. The magician shivers and rubs his shoulders, then cups his hands together as if holding a snowball and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among all targets in the area of effect. If successful, freezing ice, sleet, and snow fills the sphere, which remains stationary for the spell's duration.

Movement is halved through the area of effect due to the conditions. Each round, the magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted on any targets within the area of effect.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Elemental Spear

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Varies (see text) **Area of Effect:** Varies (see text)
Effect: WIL+4/Physical

Element [Air, Earth, Fire, Water, or Wood]. This spell forms a spear from one of the elements. There is an Elemental Spear for each element: air, earth, fire, water, and wood. Each version of the Elemental Spear spell is learned separately, but can be held in the same spell matrix.

The magician touches some of the desired element and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a spear is formed from the element, which hurtles toward the target, striking him. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. Regardless of the result, the spear dissipates after the attack.

Each spear provides a different secondary effect.

- Air spears cause a clap of thunder when they impact the target. The Effect test is compared to the Mystic Defense of each character within 2 yards of the target. If successful, all affected characters suffer a -2 penalty to Action tests until the end of the next round.
- Earth spears force the target to resist Knockdown against a Difficulty Number equal to the total damage received after armor.
- Fire spears deal an additional Step 4/D6 damage die.
- Water spears heal instead of harm; the target may immediately spend a Recovery test with a +2 bonus (this may not be affected by other healing aids).

- Wood spears sprout entangling vines which cause the target to be Harried until the end of the next round.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds, if applicable), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Grove Renewal

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank +5 rounds
Effect: Grants the target continual healing

Wood. This spell heals the target a small amount each round it is in effect.

The magician holds some dried plant matter in his fingers, blows it away, and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the plant matter is returned to vibrancy and floats around the target briefly, surrounding them with a momentary green glow. Either the target or the magician must spend a Recovery test and the target heals 4 damage each round on their Initiative.

Outside of combat, healing is reduced to 1 damage per round and is not affected by additional threads.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 damage healed), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Lightning Step

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: +2 to Initiative, Movement Rate and Physical Defense

Air–Electric. This spell electrically charges the target, enhancing his movement. The magician must be standing under the open sky with wet feet. He rubs his feet back and forth on the ground, and then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, coruscating green lightning surrounds the magician's feet. The target moves around on a sizzling, one-foot-wide lightning bolt that pops with every step, jumping him around from place to place, and adds +2 to his Initiative, Movement Rate and Physical Defense for the spell's duration.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 to all effects)

Uneven Ground

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 10-yard radius
Effect: Penalties to character actions

Earth. This spell makes the ground around the magician shake and move violently. The magician places his hands on the ground and makes a Spellcasting test that

is compared against each Mystic Defense among any characters in the area of effect.

If successful, the ground lurches suddenly and violently, causing affected targets to become Harried and their Movement Rate is halved (round down) until they move out of the area of effect or the spell ends. The magician is not affected by the shaking.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Area (+2 yards), Remove Targets (-Rank)

Fifth Circle

Earth Staff

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: Increase successes on Elementalism spells

Earth. This spell creates a quarterstaff from a handful of earth or a piece of stone, or emerging directly from the earth. The magician touches the material and then makes a Spellcasting test. If successful, a five-foot-long quarterstaff (with all equivalent attributes) is formed that can be used as a melee weapon in combat. The appearance of each earth staff is unique to the Elementalist and will change as he increases in Circle (generally becoming more distinctive and ornate). While the Earth Staff is in hand, all successfully cast Elementalism spells are treated as though they have an additional success. Only those with knowledge of Elementalism may wield the earth staff. If a character without Elementalism wields an earth staff in combat, the spell ends as soon as the staff is used, causing no effects, and reverting back to its original components.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Weapon Damage (+2 Steps)

Fireball

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 30 yards
Duration: 2 rounds **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: WIL+4/Physical and Partial Blindness

Fire. This spell creates an explosive ball of flame.

The magician conjures a small flame and places one of his hands to the side of the fire, waving it in a circular motion over the top of the flame, then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among all targets within a 4-yard radius of the point of impact. If successful, a small globe of fire erupts from his hand, which quickly expands to the size of a beach ball, before exploding in an intense gout of flame at the point of impact. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted on those affected. Those affected are also Partially Blind (-2 penalty to Actions) until the end of the next round.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards), Remove Targets (-Rank)

Heat Armor
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL/Physical (Armor does not protect)
Fire. This spell rapidly heats up armor or shields. The magician rubs his hands together and makes a Spellcasting test against the wearer's Mystic Defense. If successful, the armor quickly heats to an extreme temperature. Each round, the magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted on those wearing or touching the armor (the wearer receives no protection from the armor affected by this spell).
Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Nutritious Earth
Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: A year and a day **Area of Effect:** 100-yard radius
Effect: Makes land fertile
Earth. This spell uses Blood Magic to enhance the rate at which land grows food. The magician pricks his hand with a sharp object and lets a drop of blood fall on the earth, taking 1 Blood Magic Damage (this damage can be healed after the spell ends), then makes a Spellcasting test against the ground's Mystic Defense (usually 6). If successful, an area of soil up to 100 yards in radius is enriched by magic, making the land especially fertile for a year and a day. Plants grow in this soil at roughly double their normal rate—the gamemaster determines the exact effects of this growth.
Many kaers survived the Scourge by using this spell and it enabled many towns rebuilt in areas prone to bad weather to thrive on the surface. Rumor has it that questors of Jaspree from the town of Trosk are attempting to heal the Badlands through liberal use of the Nutritious Earth spell.
Success Levels: Increase Area (+10 yards)
Extra Threads: Increase Area (+10 yards)

Ride the Lightning
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self; 4 miles
Duration: One round
Effect: Travel by lightning
Air – Electric. This spell transports the magician to any location he can see within

range. The magician's current location and destination both must be open to the sky.

The magician points to his destination with one hand, then points to the sky with his other and makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, lighting strikes him and the destination simultaneously, leaving a mark on the ground unique to the magician in each location. The magician is immediately transported to the destination. If the magician gets one success, he is disoriented and cannot act during the next round. On two successes, he may act normally on the following round. With three successes, he may immediately act as though he has not taken any actions yet this round. If the Spellcasting test fails, the magician is struck by lightning for WIL+6/Physical damage. Each additional use of this spell on the same day has a cumulative +5 modifier to the Casting Difficulty.

Success Levels: See text.

Extra Threads: Increase Range (+2 miles)

Shattering Stone

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: WIL+5/Physical

Earth. This spell turns an ordinary stone into an explosive missile. The magician picks up a fist-sized stone, then throws it at the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense of any character within the area of effect. If successful, the stone explodes into sharp fragments that scatter in all directions. The magician compares his Spellcasting test against the Mystic Defense of all characters within the area of effect. If successful, his Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted on each target. All affected targets must make a Knockdown test against the damage taken.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

for Shattering Stone spell

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Sixth Circle

Drastic Temperature
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: 6 **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: Rank minutes **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius
Effect: WIL+2/NA

Fire or Water–Cold. This spell causes a radical change in ambient temperature. The magician wraps his arms about himself and shivers as if cold, then points toward the spot where the effect will be centered and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the temperature inside the area of effect rises to extreme hot or cold, causing water to either boil or freeze (as appropriate), at the magician's discretion. The temperature change takes thirty seconds to reach the final temperature, after which each round that a character is caught in or passes through the sphere of effect, the magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. Once the spell has been cast, the sphere of effect cannot be moved. This spell is commonly used to create a barrier to discourage others from passing a given point.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Fireweave
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+2/Physical

Fire. This spell creates a protective cloak of flames. The magician makes stitching motions, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a cloak of fire wraps around the target. Anyone attacking the wearer in close combat suffers damage each round from the intense heat thrown off by the cloak. The wearer makes an Effect test to determine how much damage is inflicted. The cloak's heat does not affect the wearer.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Additional Target (+1)

Mantle of the Fire Marauder
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Elementalist Circle+2

Fire. Binding. This spell summons a fire elemental and temporarily binds it to a willing target. The magician showers the target in sparks, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the tar-

get will bellow in rage and be engulfed in flame. Anyone engaging the target in close combat automatically takes Effect test damage (Physical Armor protects). The target's Damage tests add a bonus dice of fire damage equal to the Effect Step.

Each round, the target must use the Aggressive Attack option (even if not normally allowed, such as when using ranged weapons), though this does not cost Strain. The target must either attack, or move their full movement toward their next opponent with every intention of attacking that opponent. Failure to do either of these causes the fire elemental to forcefully leave the target, dealing Effect Step +2 damage to the target (no armor protects).

Any attempt to fool the elemental by not engaging an opponent in combat will cause the spell to immediately end as previously described. This spell may only have one active casting at a time and is incompatible with the Flameweapon and Fireweave spells. The magician may choose to reduce the Effect Step of the spell at the time of casting.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Metal Wings

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank+10 minutes

Effect: Flight; +6 bonus to Strength for lifting

Earth—Metal. This spell creates shiny metal wings, which sprout forth from a character's shoulders, allowing him to fly. The magician touches the shoulder of the target, then spreads his arms wide and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, gleaming silver metal wings appear on the target's back. The wings allow him to fly at a Movement Rate of 12.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Strength bo-

nus), Increase Effect (+2 Movement Rate), Additional Target (+Rank)

Stone Rain
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius
Effect: WIL+5/Physical

Earth. This spell showers fist-sized stones from the sky. The magician points at where the stones will fall and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among any characters within the area of effect. If successful, affected targets are struck by falling stones. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. Each round, more stones rain down on the targets, who continue to take damage as long as they remain within the area of effect. Anyone that takes damage from this spell must make a Knockdown test against the damage taken. Movement Rates in the area of effect are halved.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Tossing Earth
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: 6 **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: Rank hours **Area of Effect:** 10-yard radius
Effect: WIL

Earth. This spell tosses those standing on an area of earth or stone wildly into the air. The magician makes loud noises as he hurls pebbles, dirt, or small stones on the ground, then makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the area of effect becomes explosive when touched. The magician makes an Effect test. Each round, anyone moving through the area of effect makes a Willpower test against the test result. If successful, the character can move and act normally. If failed, the earth or stone beneath the character explodes, throwing him Step 5/D8 yards into the air, inflicting falling damage based on the height fallen (see the Gamemaster's Guide). The area remains volatile until the spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (+2 Step distance), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards),

Seventh Circle

Cloud Summon
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: 8+ (see text) **Range:** 1 mile (see text)

Duration: Rank hours
Effect: WIL+6

Air. This spell summons cloud cover as a precursor to casting another spell, such as Death Rain (p. XX), or simply to achieve impressive weather effects. The magician makes gestures mimicking the swirling pattern of rapidly-moving clouds, then tosses some water into the air and makes a Spellcasting test against a Difficulty Number determined by the cloud type. Summoning normal clouds carries a Casting Difficulty of 8; stormy weather carries a Casting Difficulty of 13; gale-force storms carry a Casting Difficulty of 20 (or more, at the gamemaster's discretion). If successful, the water billows into a wispy fragment of cloud, rising rapidly into the sky where it acts as a beacon drawing other clouds to it.

Under normal circumstances, the clouds summoned take one hour to arrive—storm clouds may take longer to gather. The magician makes an Effect test, subtracting the test Result in minutes from the clouds' arrival time. The spell may be cast multiple times to hasten the clouds' arrival. The effect centers on the magician's position at the time of his first casting—it does not move with the magician. The range also determines the radius of ground area covered by the clouds. The magician can summon any type of natural cloud formations he has witnessed or experienced. If he has not been outside during a storm, he cannot summon that type of weather.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Death Rain

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 20-yard radius
Effect: Step 8 (WIL+8; see text)/Physical

Water–Acid. This spell causes acid rain to fall from the sky. It requires cloud cover, either natural or produced by magic, such as the Cloud Summon spell, p.XX. The magician calls out the Names of those friendly to him, then compares his Spellcasting test against the Mystic Defense of each un-Named target within the area of effect. If successful, corrosive rain falls from the clouds onto the target.

Each round of exposure to the acid causes Step 8/2D6 damage to the target. The magician is unaffected, as are those whose Names were shouted when the spell was cast. If the magician chooses to concentrate, the acid's intensity increases and he adds his Willpower Step to the rain's Damage test that round. Once he breaks concentration, he cannot regain it again without recasting the spell. Even if the magician loses concentration, the spell continues until it ends. Should the magician move, the area of effect remains stationary.

Success Level: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+2-yard radius)

Earth Surfing

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: 6 **Range:** Self

Duration: 2 hours **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: Creates earth wave
Earth. This spell creates a wave of earth that hastens travel.

The magician must be standing on earth or rock, then kneels down and moves his hands over the ground and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the area of ground on which he is standing becomes a wave of soil he can ride with a Movement Rate of 16 through areas without significant obstacles (boulders, trees, houses, etc). Encountering an obstacle will immediately end the spell (GM's discretion).

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+1 hour)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+1 hour), Increase Effect (+2 Movement Rate), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Mantle of the Blood Elf
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Ignore Wound penalties and create temporary obstructions for a price paid in blood

Wood. Binding. This spell summons a wood elemental and temporarily binds it to a willing target. The magician stabs the target with a thorn and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, thorns erupt from the target's flesh and they immediately suffer a wound. However, the target is immune to Wound penalties for the duration of the spell. Consequently, many Horrors will ignore them for this time.

The target may spend up to their Willpower Step in Strain to grow a number of 2 yard by 2 yard sections of brambles within 10 yards equal to amount of Strain spent. The brambles are fed on the target's blood and quickly grow from the ground, hungry for more blood. Any character, except for the bound character, who comes in contact with the brambles takes Step 4 damage; no armor protects against this damage.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Damage Steps), Increase Range (from touch to 10 yards)

Thunderclap
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: 2 rounds **Area of Effect:** 6-yard radius
Effect: –6 penalty to Action tests; causes deafness
Air. This spell creates a loud clap of thunder that stuns and deafens those hearing it. The magician claps his hands and compares his Spellcasting test against the Mystic Defense of each character, friend or foe, within the area of effect.

If successful, the target suffers a –6 penalty to his Action tests until the end of the following round and is deafened for a further Step 6 rounds, during which he suffers

a –6 penalty to his hearing-based Perception tests. Most unintelligent creatures flee in fear of the sound.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (-2 penalty), Increase Range (+2 yards), Remove Targets (-Rank)

Whirlwind

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: 6; TMD (see text) **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: WIL+2/Physical

Air. This spell creates a spinning turbulent column of air. The magician makes whirling motions with his fingers and then makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, he forms a swirling pillar of wind, 4 yards high, which spins wildly around him. Each round, the magician may concentrate to direct the whirlwind against one character in range. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among all characters in the area of effect. If successful, his Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. All targets in the area of effect are Harried. If the magician ceases to concentrate, the wind dissipates and the spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards), Remove Targets (-Rank)

Eighth Circle

Crushing Hand of Earth

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+2/Physical

Earth. This spell causes a massive hand to rise out of the ground and seize a character standing on earth or stone, exerting injurious crushing force on him. The magician shakes a fist at the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted each round—this requires his concentration or the spell ends. Each round, the target may make a Strength test against the Effect Step to break free, otherwise, he may perform no other actions while held in the spell's grip.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Earth Wall

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: 10 **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank hours **Area of Effect:** 4 yards tall, 2 yards thick, 2 yards

wide wall section

Effect: Create a contiguous wall of earth

Earth. This spell summons an earthen wall. The magician must be standing on earth or stone making shoveling actions, as if digging a dirt palisade, and then makes a Spellcasting (10) test. If successful, he summons up to Spellcasting Rank contiguous wall sections, each an area of effect in size. Summoning and positioning a section takes the magician one round and requires his concentration. The wall may not be placed on a living being—doing so immediately destroys that section, which still counts toward the maximum number of wall sections summoned. The wall can be physically or magically attacked. Treat each section of wall as a barrier with Physical and Mystic Armor of 12 and a Death Rating 40.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Additional Sections (+2), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Ironskin

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12/17

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank rounds

Effect: +3 to Physical Armor, Wound Threshold and Knockdown test

Earth – Metal. This spell melds the target's body with a form of elemental metal, strengthening it. The magician grasps a piece of metal, crosses both fists and punches the target, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains +3 to Physical Armor, Wound Threshold and Knockdown tests. The effects of this spell are reflected in the target's appearance, which takes on a dark, metallic look. Also, the target's weight effectively doubles and he loses all buoyancy, including the ability to swim (the spell in no way bolster's the target's respiratory processes, so casting on an ally while afloat would be a remarkably bad idea).

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+1 to all bonuses), Additional Targets (+1)

Mantle of the Lightning Vanguard

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 12/17

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank x10 minutes

Effect: Target gains flight and increased speed

Air – Electric. Binding. This spell summons an air elemental and temporarily binds it to a willing target and requires cloud cover. The magician reaches to the sky with one hand and touches the target with his other hand, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, lighting will strike his upraised hand and travel to the target, lifting him from the ground as electricity courses through his body.The target gains a flying Movement Rate of 16 and can concentrate to surround himself with a 2-yard radius field of electricity which will levitate any willing targets

in the area, allowing them to travel with him. When doing this, the bound target may only move and perform Free Actions.

The bound target gains +2 to Initiative tests. The target's presence is always heralded and may not perform Blindside or Surprise attacks.

If the target touches the ground for any reason, the spell immediately ends.

If the spell ends prematurely for any reason, the target takes one Wound and this spell may not be cast again for a full day. This spell may only have one active casting at a time.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+10 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+10 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Movement Rate), Increase Effect (+2 Initiative)

Venomous Fury
Threads: 1
Weaving: 12/17
Casting: TMD
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: +3 to close combat Damage tests and poison

Wood. This spell enhances a melee weapon with elemental power. The magician shouts out a battle cry, then touches the melee weapon held by the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the melee weapon gleams bright green and appears oily and slick, adding +3 to Damage tests and poisoning the opponent if at least one point of damage is inflicted. The poison inflicts paralysis with an instant onset time, and a Mystic Defense and Step equal to the magician's Elementalist Circle+3. Effects of the poison wear off when the spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+1 Damage bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Vital Springs
Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: 1 round **Area of Effect:** 10-yard radius
Effect: Heals all allies within the area of effect

Water. This spell heals all of the magician's allies within the area of effect. The magician kneels and places his palm on the ground, closes his eyes, sheds a tear and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense in the area of effect. If successful, bright, sparkling effervescent water bubbles up from the ground in the area, disappearing into the sky as it refreshes everyone affected. All targets within the area may make a Recovery test. The magician may give his own Recovery tests to any targets (one per target) for use with this spell. Targets that do not have a Recovery Test available are unaffected.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Recovery test bonus)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Recovery test bonus), Increase Area (+2

yards)

Illusionist Spells

The Illusionist works with deception magic, casting spells that create things which are not what they seem. Sometimes he takes the unreal and gives it the appearance of reality. Other times he uses real effects to deceive or throw opponents off-guard.

First Circle

Assuring Touch
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: +3 to Mystic and Social Defense; +3 Willpower test bonus against fear

This spell increases resistance to fear. The magician thinks positive thoughts, then gently touches the target while murmuring something reassuring like "everything's going to be okay" and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target adds +3 to his Mystic and Social Defense against fear-causing attacks and gains a +3 bonus to any Willpower tests he makes to resist the effects of fear or Intimidation (see the Gamemaster's Guide).

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Addi-

tional Target (+Rank)

Best Face
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: +3 bonus to Charisma-based tests

Illusion. This spell disguises one's identity. The magician splashes water or cologne on the target's face then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's face changes to match a face envisaged by the magician—if he is copying a specific face, he must have seen that individual within the last month.

The target gains a +3 bonus to Disguise Self (and may use Disguise Self as a default skill if they do not possess it) or Charisma-based tests when trying to convince others of his false identity and attempting to persuade them to act according to that misperception. Any Interaction tests made against the target are considered Sensing tests (see Illusions, p.XX). The spell only affects the target's head and neck, including hair and ears. The maximum possible size difference between the target's face and that being mimicked is 100 percent in any dimension—the magician must find another way to disguise obvious differences. The target's voice is unchanged, so he must try to mimic the speech characteristics of the character whose face he has borrowed as best he can.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Additional Target (+1)

Cloak
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: +3 bonus to stealthy Action tests

Figment. This spell masks a character, making him less noticeable to others. The magician quietly touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target becomes semi-transparent and gains a +3 bonus to any Action tests he makes that are aimed at concealment or stealth, such as Stealthy Stride tests and may use Stealthy Stride as a default skill if they do not possess it.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Disaster
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards

Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Create a distraction

Figment. This spell creates the figment of a disaster happening just beyond normal sight. The magician glances around casually, then stops and stares hard at a fixed point on the horizon, saying out loud something like "Oh, Passions, look over there!" or "What in the world can that be?" and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the evidence of a disaster of the magician's choosing is created: a plume of smoke rising from the roofs of a village, the sounds of people screaming, or some other minor, but distracting, effect.

The target's attention is drawn to the supposed disaster and is sufficiently distracted to allow the equivalent of a Blindsided attack against him. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets. The spell cannot be cast inside small, enclosed environments, such as rooms with no windows. If used against a target engaged in combat, or another equally engaging activity, the magician must achieve an additional success for the spell to affect him. Anyone affected by the spell targeted by an Action test (such as an Attack test) which draws their attention is no longer affected by the spell. If this spell has previously affected a target and they were attacked as a result, it may not be used again on that target until the following day.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Range (+10 yards)

Encrypt
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: Makes text incomprehensible

Illusion. This spell makes a selected tract of text jumbled and unreadable. The magician runs his hands over the text and then makes a Spellcasting test against the Mystic Defense of the book or paper on which it is written (minimum 6). A grimoire's Mystic Defense is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the highest-Circle spell it contains (see Grimoires, p.XX). If successful, the text becomes incomprehensible to anyone other than the magician. Anyone attempting to read the encrypted text must make a successful Perception, Read and Write Language, or Patterncraft test as appropriate against the spell's Sensing Difficulty to read it.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Ephemeral Bolt
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: WIL+4/Mystic and -2 to Willpower tests

Illusion. This spell creates a wriggling, glowing green bolt that squirms its way through the air toward an opponent. The magician wriggles his finger and makes a

Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, his Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Additionally, the target suffers a -2 penalty to any Willpower tests until the end of the next round. This spell may be disbelieved (see Disbelieving Illusions, pg. XX).

This spell may be placed in the same spell matrix as True Ephemeral Bolt.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Fun With Doors

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: Creates/alters door appearances

Figment. This spell creates different visual effects, all based around the use of doors. The magician must be able to see the target door, trapdoor or archway. He gestures in the air as if painting the door with an imaginary brush, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense (minimum 6). If successful, the magician may create a variety of illusions involving the target. Any interaction with the door will reveal its true nature. False doors created with this spell may be no bigger than 3 square yards in size. New doors cannot be created further than 4 yards away from the original. And obviously, you can't run through a fake door…

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Monstrous Mantle

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: +2 close combat Attack and Damage tests, and +2 Physical Defense

Illusion. This spell improves a character's combat prowess by making onlookers believe they have transformed into a monster.

The magician makes snarling and growling sounds, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, twin helixes of light appear around the target, rotating and spinning into the form of a monstrous humanoid creature, typically increasing in size, and gaining unnatural characteristics such as axes, tentacles or giant pincers for hands.

The target gains a +2 bonus to his Attack and Damage tests for close combat and adds +2 to his Physical Defense. The illusion does not give the target any special attack forms or abilities. Any physical tests which interact with the target are considered Sensing tests; for example, Attack, Avoid Blow and Riposte tests.

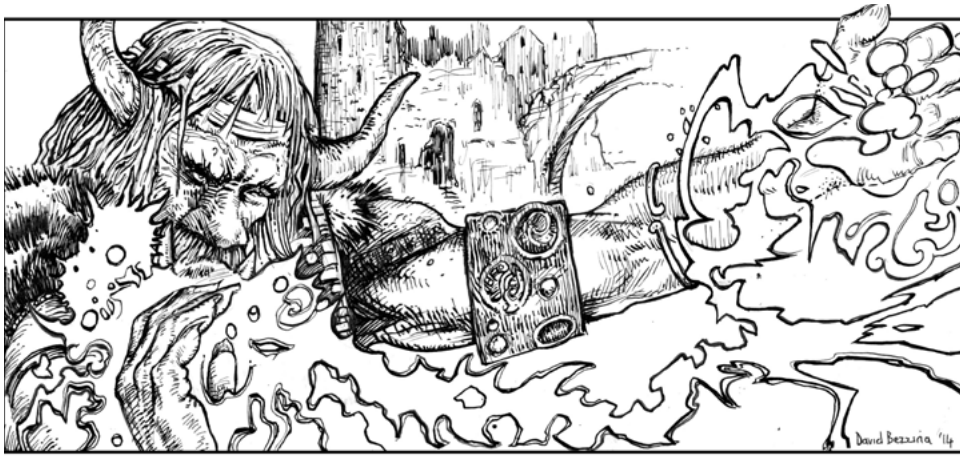
Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 to all bonuses), Additional Target (+Rank)

Send Message
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self (see text)
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Passes a paper message to a chosen target

This spell creates and transfers a message to a character within line of sight of the magician. The magician makes tiny, rapid gestures in the air to represent writing the note's text, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a temporary paper message is conjured in the target's hand, pocket, pouch, or elsewhere on his body (according to the magician's choice). The note may contain no more than a few short sentences, with a maximum number of words equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank×10.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)



Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+20 words), Additional Target (+1)

True Ephemeral Bolt
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+1/Mystic and -2 Penalty to next Sensing test

This spell looks and acts exactly like the Ephemeral Bolt spell, p.XX, but packs less punch than its illusory twin. The magician wriggles his finger and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a glowing green bolt squirms through the air and hits the target. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted and any target has a -2 penalty to their next Sensing test as their perceptions become skewed.

This spell may be placed in the same spell matrix as Ephemeral Bolt.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (-2 penalty), Increase Effect (Penalty applies to additional Sensing test), Additional Target (+1)

Trust
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Creates a friendly relationship between magician and target

This spell inspires a character to trust the magician. The magician smiles and nods toward the target, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target will not deceive or harm the magician and others obviously Friendly to him for the duration of the spell as long as the magician and his friends do not deceive or harm the target. When the spell ends, the target becomes aware of the manipulation and his Attitude towards the magician decreases by one degree.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Unseen Voices
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Creates unseen voices

Figment. This spell creates hidden voices to distract characters. The magician mutters quietly to himself and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense.

If successful, he creates a number of illusory voices equal to his Spellcasting Rank. Optionally, the magician may choose to have only one target, in which case only they will hear the voices. The spell provides a nearly limitless number of different voices that can be used. A magician need only use whatever voices are required to achieve the desired result. By concentrating, the magician controls what each voice says—if he loses concentration, the voices repeat what they said in the previous round. The magician does not gain any special ability to hear what is being said by the target, but he must able to hear what the target is saying if he wants to use the voices in a real conversation. The magician may use the Mimic Voice talent with this spell to replicate specific voices. In which case, use the Mimic Voice talent as usual if the spell is successful.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Second Circle

Blindness
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards

Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Obscures the target's vision

Illusion. This spell affects the target's visual perception. The magician closes one eye, points at the target, blinks twice, and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's vision is obscured with an inky blackness; the target is effectively "blinded" and suffers a Full Darkness penalty to sight-based Action tests. Any sight-based Action tests he makes are considered Sensing tests. Targets who don't require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Displace Image
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Projects image of the target

Illusion. This spell makes a character "invisible" by displacing the image that others see and shifting it a short distance. The magician quickly traces an outline of the target, then touches the "shoulder" of the outline, followed by the shoulder of the target, and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, an outlined figure shrouded in a shimmering blur appears drifting 4 yards away, quickly transforming into an identical image of the target. The target is no longer visible in his actual location, the illusion having displaced his image.

Attacks made against the image have no effect, and the magician must concentrate to maintain the facade. Each round that the magician does not concentrate gives all attackers a cumulative +5 to Sensing tests against the illusion. Attack tests made against the image count as Sensing tests (see Illusions, p.XX).

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Additional Target (+1)

Innocent Activity
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: Covers up true activity

Illusion. This spell masks a character's activity. The magician waves his hands about as if painting on a large canvas, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, everyone will only see an image of the target performing an apparently innocent activity appropriate to the setting. If the target moves from his current location, the illusion is broken. The target may otherwise perform any action, even attacking an opponent, during the spell's duration. Any obviously inexplicable phenomena as a result of action on the part of the target, such as voices, spells, or attacks, allows those viewing or listening to make a Perception test as a Sensing test (see Illusions, p.XX). If successful, the sensing character sees through the

illusion, and the spell ends. If failed, the sensing character concocts some other plausible explanation for what happened.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Additional Target (+1)

Mind Fog

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11

Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards

Duration: Rank+5 rounds

Effect: WIL+3

This spell clouds a characters perceptions and makes him forget what he was about to do. The magician scratches his temple as if trying to remember something, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target can only react to actions made against him, until he remembers what it is he wants to do. Appropriately defending yourself against hooligans is considered a reaction, though why they are under attack will remain a mystery. The target may make a Willpower test each round against the Effect Step if they have reason to suspect something is amiss. Each round in combat gives the target a cumulative +5 to the Willpower test.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Phantom Flame

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11

Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards

Duration: 2 rounds

Effect: WIL+6/Physical

Illusion. This spell appears like the Wizard spell Flame Flash (pg. XX), but is an illusion. The magician makes wild, fanning gestures and crackling, whooshing sounds, then extends his hands outward and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, flames flash from his fingertips, bathing the target in magical fire. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted each round. A successful Sensing test will negate the effects during subsequent rounds. This spell can be disbelieved (see Disbelieving Illusions, pg. XX).

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

See the Unseen

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: +5 bonus to sight-based Perception tests
This spell allows a character to better see hidden things. The magician lightly touches the target's eyes, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, he gains a +5 bonus to sight-based Perception tests made to detect hidden objects or characters. The spell does not enable the target to see things that cannot normally be seen, such as Horrors lurking in astral space, although it will help when combined with a talent or ability that allows such astral viewing.
Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+1 bonus), Additional Target (+Rank)

Third Circle

And Then I Woke Up
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: +5 bonus to Sensing tests
This spell enhances the ability to perceive the truth of things. The magician claps his hands together loudly and makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, he gains a +5 bonus to Sensing tests.
Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Blinding Glare
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Varies (see text)
Area of Effect: 4-yard radius
Effect: Inflicts the Full Darkness status on everyone in the area of effect
This spell creates a blinding flash of light. The magician opens his eyes as wide as possible, then covers them and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among all characters in the area of effect. If successful, the target is blinded and suffers a Full Darkness penalty to sight-based Action tests for 1 round per success. Targets who do not require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell.
Success Levels: See text
Extra Threads: Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Fog of Jeer
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards

Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: Enrages and humiliates all within area of effect

Illusion. This spell conjures a fog that causes those wrapped in its misty tendrils to become enraged and humiliated. The magician wraps his arms about him and shakes as if barely containing laughter, then points to where the fog will appear and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense in the area of effect. If successful, a luminous, sparkling white fog coalesces into a 4-yard radius sphere around the position.

Once conjured, the fog cannot move and all those within it are barraged by laughing, mocking voices and figments of those they know humiliating them. They are considered Harried and must declare the Aggressive Attack option (even if they receive no real benefit) for all actions while within the area of effects. All actions are considered Sensing tests.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Nobody Here
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank+5 minutes **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: Make onlookers ignore a group of characters

Illusion. This spell hides characters from others. The magician concentrates on the thought of "nobody here" and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among any targets (including himself) within the area of effect. If successful, those affected become invisible to anyone outside the area of effect able to view them. Once cast, the spell's effect does not move with the magician and only the original targets gain the benefit of the invisibility, not those who enter later. Targets who exit the area of effect become visible to others—they can regain their invisibility by moving back inside the circle.

A character who walks into the area of the illusion makes a Perception test as a Sensing test (see Illusions, p.XX). The viewing character adds a +3 bonus to his Perception test if a concealed target manipulates the environment in a way that requires explanation, such as moving books in plain sight, opening or shutting doors, and so on. The viewing character gains a +5 bonus to his Perception test if a concealed target makes physical contact with him. If successful, the illusion is revealed for that observer.

If failed, the viewing character's sensory feedback is magically suppressed—his senses detect any characters that would normally be visible, but the knowledge is suppressed by the spell. If a concealed target causes damage to another character, the attacked character is no longer affected by the illusion and any onlookers immediately make a Sensing test with a +5 bonus.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Range (+2 yards)

Phantom Warrior
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Creates three images of the target

Illusion. This spell forms three phantom images of a character, making him more difficult to hit in combat. The magician moves his hands in slow, abstract patterns, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, three identical images of the target appear, remaining within 1 yard of the target at all times, occasionally overlapping with him as they move around. The images do not move in complete sync with the target—one image may swing a sword high, another swing low, and the third thrust home, while the target adopts a defensive stance. The images confuse opponents—the target adds +1 per image (+3) to his Physical Defense during the spell's duration. Attacks made by the target are more difficult for opponents to avoid or defend against—a -1 per image (-3) penalty is applied to any Avoid Blow, Riposte, or other defensive Action test made in response to the target's attack. These tests are considered Sensing tests.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 Image) Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Fourth Circle

Clarion Call
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+4

Figment. This spell creates an imaginary voice that persuades others to do the magician's will. The magician talks quietly to himself and then makes a Spellcasting

test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target.

If successful, an illusory voice of considerable authority translates the magician's words into a language appropriate to each target. The target then acts according to the voice's suggestions, as long as the action is not obviously harmful to others. With three successes, the target is fooled into taking the suggested course of action, even if it is harmful to someone else.

If convinced to follow a course of action that would hurt another, or go against the target in some way, the target may make a Willpower test against the Effect step before he carries out the command. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets. The target will not harm himself and suggestions to do so immediately end the spell's effect on him.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Great Weapon

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Harries opponents

Illusion. This spell makes a Size 2 or larger melee weapon appear bigger and more dangerous than it actually is. The magician makes threatening overtures and then makes a Spellcasting test against the wielder's Mystic Defense. If successful, opponents facing the weapon become Harried for the spell's duration. Any defensive Action tests made in combat against the wielder or weapon are considered Sensing tests.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Additional Target (+1)

Notice Not

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Creates an illusion that the target is not there

Illusion. This spell masks a character, making others ignore him entirely. The magician quietly touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, anyone in the target's area will ignore them and subconsciously move out of the way to avoid his presence. If the target interacts with anything in the area, onlookers may make Sensing tests as appropriate. Anyone actively aware (such as guards) may make Perception tests as Sensing tests. Any intention to cause violence will result in the spell ending immediately. This spell explicitly does not protect against any form of astral sensing (e.g. Astral Sight).

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Additional Target (+1)

Phantom Lightning
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+7/Physical

Illusion. This spell appears like the Lightning Bolt spell (p. XX), but is an illusion. The magician raises his hands toward the sky, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, crackling bolts of electricity fly from the magician's fingers, striking the target. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. The initial Spellcasting test is used against any additional targets that may result. Additional targets from Successes cannot cause additional lightning bolts. This spell can be disbelieved (see Disbelieving Illusions, pg. XX).

Success Levels: Additional Target (+1)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Stop Right There
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL

This spell immobilizes a character. The magician holds up a hand and shouts "Stop!" as loudly as possible, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's feet freeze in place—his Movement Rate is 0 and it cannot be increased, but may otherwise act normally, though he is Harried. Each round, the target may make a Willpower test against the Effect Step, with a +5 bonus if he has taken any damage that round. If successful, he regains movement and the spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Suffocation
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: WIL+2/Mystic

This spell suffocates characters. The magician holds his breath, then exhales and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group in the area of effect. If successful, affected targets lose their breath and start suffocating—they are Harried for all actions except Willpower tests and their Movement Rate is halved until they move out of the area of effect or the spell ends. Each round,

the magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. Each round, the targets may make a Willpower test against the Effect Step to end the effect.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Unmask

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: +5 to Dispel Magic tests

This spell reveals a character's true physical appearance to anyone watching. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, he may make a Dispel Magic test with a +5 bonus as a free action against the highest Dispel Difficulty of any spell or talent concealing the target's appearance. If successful, the effects of those enchantments are suspended (not dispelled) and the target's true appearance is revealed for a number of minutes equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Fifth Circle

Bond of Silence

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+4

This spell prevents a character from speaking directly (though he can still make indirect hints) about a specific topic, event, or individual. The magician holds his breath and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, whenever the target attempts to speak about the forbidden topic, he makes a Willpower test against the Effect step. If successful, he can speak normally and freely and the spell ends. If failed, his voice falters and he cannot speak until he changes the subject to one he can discuss freely.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Additional Target (+1)

Eye of Truth

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: +5 bonus to Sensing tests

This spell allows seeing beyond the veil of illusion with near-absolute clarity. The magician rubs clean, clear water over the target's eyes and then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target gains a +5 bonus to any Sensing tests that he makes against illusions for the spell's duration.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Additional Targets (+Rank)

Illusion

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: 6 **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank minutes **Area of Effect:** 10-yard radius
Effect: Creates illusions

Illusion. This spell creates illusory effects. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, he creates an illusion, filling an area up to 10 yards in radius. The illusions created are simple and cannot include Namegivers or other complex images. For example, an illusory door could swing a few inches, but not open or close entirely. An illusory banner might wave in the breeze, but could not be removed. The magician can maintain the illusion beyond the initial duration by making additional Spellcasting (6) tests up to his Spellcasting Rank in number. If any Spellcasting test fails, the illusion disappears and the spell ends. Those who interact with the illusion make Sensing tests using abilities appropriate to the activity. For example, a character opening an illusory door would make a Dexterity test, which also serves as the Sensing test.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+10 yards)

Phantom Fireball

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: 2 rounds **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: WIL+5/Physical and Partial Blindness

Illusion. This spell creates an illusory ball of flame, similar to that produced by the Fireball spell (p.XX). The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense of any character in the area of effect. If successful, a small globe of fire erupts from his hand, moving quickly to the designated point of impact, expanding to the size of a beach ball then suddenly exploding in an intense gout of flame. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted on each target. Those affected are also Partially Blind (-2 penalty to Actions) until the end of the next round. This spell can be disbelieved (see Disbelieving Illusions, pg. XX).

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Presto!
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: 6 **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Links two small openings

Illusion. This spell connects the openings of two small containers just large enough for someone to put their hand through, such as a hat and a jar, no more than 10 yards apart. The magician must be holding one of the containers and the other must be visible to him. The magician waves his hand over one of the objects chanting magic words and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the magician can reach through the opening of the container he is holding and his hand emerges either from or into the distant container. The magician may pull back through the mini portal any object that could feasibly fit through the opening. The openings are linked by a poorly understood warping of astral space. The warping is real, but the spell takes a number of shortcuts which rely on the premises of illusions to bend magic in ways which can be broken to disrupt the link. A successful Sensing test destroys the links and ends the spell.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Switch
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Switches magician's appearance with target

Illusion. This spell switches the magician's appearance with another character. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the magician takes on the target's appearance, and vice-versa.

Action tests made against the target or magician are considered Sensing tests (see Illusions, p.XX).

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Sixth Circle

Astral Shadow
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Conceals target from astral space

Illusion. This spell makes living beings in the physical world more difficult to see in astral space. The magician waves a silk veil over the target's face and makes a

Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target is easily missed when viewed in astral space.

Locating the target using astral sensing abilities, such as the Astral Sight talent (p.XX), is considered a Sensing test. Apart from obscuring his presence in astral space, the target does not gain any protection against spells or Horror powers, such as Horror Mark.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Additional Target (+Rank)

Chosen Path

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank hours **Area of Effect:** 60 yards
Effect: WIL+8

This spell makes others follow a path of the magician's choosing when they are presented with a choice of directions. The magician considers a path (a set of doors, a branch in the road, and so on) visible to him, then indicates his choice and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, when others are faced with a choice of direction at the same location, the target group believes they have chosen, but in reality they select the path determined by the magician. The deception becomes apparent once they are out of range or the spell ends. Should the target group decide to backtrack and take the correct path from the same point, the target group makes a Willpower test against the Effect Step to see if they are diverted down the wrong path again.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Area (+10 yards)

Flying Carpet

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: 7 **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank hours
Effect: Creates the classical mode of transportation for magicians

This spell enchants a carpet or other piece of cloth, no bigger than four square yards in size, to become a flying platform. The magician vigorously shakes the carpet or cloth and then makes a Spellcasting (7) test. If successful, the material animates, floating several inches above the ground. The base carrying capacity of the carpet is 200 pounds. The carpet has Physical and Mystic Defenses equal to the caster and if the carpet takes damage equal to or in excess of its Death Rating (30), the spell ends.

The magician can verbally control the carpet, requiring his concentration. He may turn over command of the carpet to another character, who may verbally command it the same way. The magician may regain control of the carpet with a successful Spellcasting (7) test. The carpet is not intelligent and is easily confused, so commands issued to it must be simple, limited to a couple of words at best. The carpet normally flies a few inches above the ground at Movement Rate 16, but can fly as high as 100 yards if commanded to do so, rising 2 yards vertically for every 2 yards of horizontal movement. The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 2 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed until the carpet is destroyed or the spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+200 pounds), Increase Effect (+2 Movement Rate)

Illusory Missiles
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: 1 round **Area of Effect:** 6-yard radius
Effect: WIL+8/Physical

Illusion. This spell creates an illusory barrage of missiles. The magician throws his arm as if throwing a rock, then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense of any character in the area of effect. If successful, a hail of illusory missiles saturates the area. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted on each target. This spell can be disbelieved (see Disbelieving Illusions, p. XX).

This spell may be placed in the same spell matrix as True Missiles.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Memory Scribe
Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: WIL+6

This spell alters a character's memory, making him recall things differently from how they really occurred. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the magician may change one

fact that the target remembers about a particular topic or event per success. A successful Willpower test against the Effect Step ends the spell.

The target also makes a Willpower test each time he "recalls" the false memory. If successful, or when the spell ends, the target's memory returns to normal. The magician may extend the spell's duration to a year and a day by taking 3 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed until the spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Additional Target (+1)

True Missiles

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: 1 round **Area of Effect:** 6-yard radius
Effect: WIL+4/Physical and -2 to next Sensing test

This spell looks and acts exactly like the Illusory Missiles spell, p.XX, but packs less punch than its illusory twin. The magician throws his arm as if throwing a rock, and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense.

If successful, a hail of real missiles saturates the area. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted and any target has a -2 penalty to their next Sensing test as their perceptions become skewed.

This spell may be placed in the same spell matrix as Illusory Missiles.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

True Switch

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Switches magician location with target

This spell looks exactly like the Switch spell but results in actual physical transfer rather than simply looking like it does. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the magician magically swaps places with the target. The physical transfer is not possible across magical or living barriers.

Success Levels: None

Extra Threads: Increase Range (+10 yards)

Seventh Circle

Dancing Dragon

Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: 12 **Range:** 60 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Illusionist Circle+8/Physical

Illusion. This spell summons the illusion of a ferocious dragon composed of inky shadows.

The magician uses his hands to make a shadow image of a dragon's head on a wall or other surface and makes a Spellcasting (12) test. If successful, the 6 yards tall, 10 yards long and 4 yards wide dragon coalesces into existence from shadows cast in the area. Each round, the magician may concentrate to designate a target adjacent to the dragon that it will attack using the magician's Spellcasting Step. If successful, the magician may make a Damage test using the Effect Step. The dragon has a Movement Rate of 16 and may fly over obstacles if there is space. Any test that interacts with the dragon (e.g. Attack tests, Avoid Blow) is considered a Sensing test.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Silent Stampede

Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: Silences sound

This spell silences the sounds made by a group of characters or animals, including movement, talking, breathing, horse whinnying, and so on. The magician wanders around the group touching each person and animal affected by the spell, then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, any sounds made by the target group are suppressed—all members of the group gain a +4 bonus to their stealth-based Action tests. Targets may use Stealthy Stride as a default skill even if they do not possess it. The Detection Difficulty of hearing-based Perception tests made to detect any members of the target group is increased by +4. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets×3. The spell does not conceal the target group from sight, smell, or touch-based Perception Tests.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Stampede

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Causes targets to become Harried

Illusion. This spell creates the illusion of a stampede. The magician stamps and snorts, then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group within range, +1 for each additional target.

If successful, the targets believe a stampede is about to hit them and become Harried. Casting this spell in an area where a stampede would normally be impossible (indoors, on an airship, and so on) allows those affected to make a Sensing test (p. XX) at +5. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Twisted Tongues
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Jumbles targets' speech

Illusion. This spell jumbles speech. The magician mutters nonsense syllables, then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the targets' words are rendered nonsensical. For example, someone saying "Kill them all!" might translate to "Slig covo bebop buttery!" No one understands anything said by the affected targets. Any Speak Language tests made by affected targets are considered Sensing tests (see Illusions, p.XX). The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Vertigo
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 30 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect:–2 penalty to Action tests per success

This spell totally disorients a character. The magician spins quickly around in circles, making himself slightly dizzy in the process, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target can no longer tell which way is up or down and becomes severely disoriented, suffering a –2 penalty to his Action tests per success.

Success Levels: See text
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 Success), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Walk Through
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+15 rounds
Effect: Creates temporary pathway through an obstacle

This spell creates a temporary pathway through a wall, gate, or other obstacle no more than 2 yards thick. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the obstacle's Mystic Defense. If successful, an opening is created, although not a very stable one—it writhes, expands, and contracts randomly. The successes determine how large the opening is in comparison to humans.

With one success, one character can wriggle through each round, requiring a successful Dexterity (7) test to do so; two successes allows one character to move easily through the gap each round (no Dexterity test required); three successes allows a number of characters equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank to move easily

through the opening each round.

Success Levels: See text
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+1 success)

Eighth Circle

Face Lift
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Removes target's facial features
Illusion. This spell allows the magician to convince the target and all onlookers that the target's facial features have been removed, leaving him blind and unable to speak. The magician scrubs furiously at his face with his hands, then looks at the target and makes a Spellcasting test against their Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's face becomes completely featureless. The target may not speak or use any Talents or abilities that require speech and is effectively "blinded", suffering a Full Darkness penalty to sight-based Action tests. Any sight or vocal-based Action tests he makes are considered Sensing tests.
Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Form Exchange
Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Trade location and appearance with a target
Illusion. This spell swaps the location and appearance of the magician and another character. The magician looks intently at the target, noting his appearance and position and then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the magician exchanges form with the target—he now looks like the target and stands where the target originally stood, while the target now occupies the magician's position and looks like him. When the spell ends the illusory image disappears but the target and magician remain in their new locations.
Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Other Place
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 1 mile
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: Links two doorways
Illusion. This spell connects two entrances that are no more than a mile apart. The

spell must be cast twice within a two-hour period, first on the destination portal and then on the departure portal.

The magician makes a Spellcasting test against his own Mystic Defense for each portal. If both tests are successful, characters passing through the departure entrance instantly cross the distance to the destination. The portals are linked by a poorly understood warping of astral space. The warping is real, but the spell takes a number of shortcuts which rely on the premises of illusions to bend magic in ways which can be broken to disrupt the link. A successful Sensing test destroys the links and ends the spell.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Range (+1 mile)

Rebel Limb
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+4

This spell takes control of a limb. The magician shakes one of his own limbs loosely at the target, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, he takes over one of the target's limbs, controlling its movement as long as the target is within range. The limb acts with any applicable physical talents or skills possessed by the owner—an arm can attack, a leg can kick, and so on. Each round, the target may regain control by making a successful Willpower test against the Effect Step. If his limb is attacking him, the target gains a +3 Willpower test bonus.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Shadow Spell
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+4

This potent spell reduces the effectiveness of a magician's spells by diverting most of the power back into astral space. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target magician's Mystic Defense. If successful, the magician's Effect test is subtracted from any spell Effect tests made by the target. If the spell reduces a target's Effect test to zero, the spell becomes a harmless shadow of itself—appearance without substance. Each round, the target may make a Willpower test against the Effect Step. If successful, the spell ends. This spell does not affect talents, creature powers, or any form of magic other than spell magic.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Ad-

ditional Target (+1)

Stench
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: Prevent actions due to overpowering stench

Illusion. This spell creates the suggestion of a horrid smell, causing those subjected to it to retch and puke. The magician crushes several blossoms from a stinkweed or similarly pungent plant and then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among any characters in the area of effect.

If successful, a hideous odor arises that renders affected targets unable to do anything except try to hang on to their last meal. An affected target must make a successful Willpower test as a Sensing test to take any action, including movement. If successful, he can act normally and realizes the illusion, but is still affected by the smell while he remains within the area of effect. If failed, he can do nothing except double up and vomit and is considered Knocked Down.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards

Nethermancer Spells

Nethermancers deal with the netherworlds and their inhabitants. Nethermantic magic often involves spirits and other non-worldly entities. Their spells are also heavily involved with the workings of life and death and the nature of astral space.

First Circle

Astral Spear
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 40 yards

Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+4/Mystic

This spell weaves energy from astral space to form a phantom spear. The magician pulls his arm back, then hurls it forward as if throwing a spear and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, an ethereal spear forms that crosses the distance between the two adversaries and strikes the target. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Bone Circle

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text) **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank months **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius circle around center
Effect: Nethermancer Circle

This ritual spell "invites" a wandering spirit to live within a circle made of bones and transforms them into a bone spirit. The bones of at least one animal are used to construct a circle no bigger than the area of effect. The magician spends one hour per thread walking the circumference, scratching or tracing magical inscriptions and placing bones to form the circle's outline. After completing the circle, he touches the bones and makes a Spellcasting test against the spirit's Mystic Defense. If successful, a bone spirit is summoned to live within the circle.

The spirit is an ally spirit of Strength up to the magician's Nethermancer Circle. It is not very intelligent and has limitations on the powers it can possess. The bone spirit's powers are selected when the bone circle is created and may only have the following spirit powers: Aid Summoner, Confusion, Durability, Evil Eye, and Manifest. It cannot leave the bone circle, but will take physical action against anyone attempting to enter or already in the circle.

Some spells, such as Grave Message (p.XX) and Spirit Portal (p.XX), require the use of a bone circle. A magician may have a number of active bone circles equal to his Spellcasting Rank.

Kicking away the bones and erasing the inscriptions is not sufficient to destroy a bone circle—it just makes it more difficult to see the circle's outline and therefore avoid disturbing the spirit that dwells there. A bone circle can be dispelled, but the magician must touch the circle to do so, risking assault from the spirit. The bone spirit will not harm its summoner, but cannot otherwise be controlled.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 months)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 months)

Dark Messenger

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: Sends nightflyer to deliver a message

This spell commands a nocturnal flying creature to deliver a message. It must be cast after sunset and only on a nightflyer already under the magician's control, by being an animal companion or through use of the Command Nightflyer talent, p.XX. The message must be short—no more than twice his Spellcasting Rank words in length.

The magician strokes the nightflyer, whispers his message to it, names the recipient, and then makes a Spellcasting test against the creature's Mystic Defense.

If successful, the creature flies off, unerringly seeking out the designated recipient and delivering the message in a whispery version of the magician's own voice. If the nightflyer cannot reach the recipient before the spell ends or sunrise (whichever comes first), the message is lost.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+Rank words), Increase Effect (+2 movement rate),

Ethereal Darkness

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: Creates magical darkness

This spell draws a piece of darkness from another dimension. The magician cups his hands together, then touches the target character, object or location, commands the darkness to billow forth, and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the darkness summoned expands to fill a 4-yard radius sphere, centered on the target.

The darkness extinguishes all light, causing those within the area of effect to suffer a Full Darkness penalty to sight-based Action tests. Ordinary light does not penetrate Ethereal Darkness. Those with knowledge of Nethermancy are unaffected by Ethereal Darkness—they can see normally, as if the spell had never been cast.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Experience Death

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+5

This spell allows a magician to see and experience a character's dying moments. By doing this, the magician touches the spirit world to recreate the events of the character's death. The magician closes his eyes, then points his palms out toward the corpse and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense (as if he were still alive). If successful, the last few rounds of the target's life are played out to the magician, ending with the target's death.

The magician must enter into a trance, concentrating to maintain the spell. While in this state, he senses everything from the point of view of the deceased. Unfortunately, this also includes taking any damage the deceased suffered before he died.

The Effect test gives the magician temporary Damage Points.

Any damage inflicted on the magician first reduces his temporary Damage Points before being added to his Current Damage (Mystic Armor provides protection). The magician cannot take Wounds from the effects of this spell. If his Current Damage equals or exceeds his Unconsciousness or Death Rating, he still passes out or dies, however.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Life Circle of One

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: 6; TMD (see text) **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: WIL+2/Mystic

This spell creates a magical circle to repel undead, Horrors, or Horror constructs. The magician spits into his hand, then outlines a 4-yard radius circle with his fingers and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the circle resists any undead, Horror, or Horror construct attempting to enter. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the entity's Mystic Defense.

If successful, the circle repels and harms the entity. The Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted on the entity.

The spell can only repel a single entity each round. Multiple enemies can easily swamp the circle if they surround it. Should more than one entity enter, the circle will attempt to repel the being with the highest Mystic Defense. Given sufficient preparation time, a magician may cast multiple life circles inside each other, creating concentric circles to protect those standing in the innermost one and affording some protection from multiple entities for a few minutes.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Shadow Meld

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: +4 to Stealthy Stride tests

This spell allows a character to become virtually invisible in the shadows. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Mystic Defense.

If successful, the target gains a +4 bonus to all Stealthy Stride tests while near shadows for the duration of the spell and may use Stealthy Stride as a default skill if they do not possess it. Though the target can still be seen normally in light, the presence of light does not end the spell—the target becomes near-invisible again by simply stepping back into a shadow.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Soul Armor

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: +3 to Mystic Armor

This spell enhances a character's Mystic Armor. The magician draws jagged blue sigils of protection in the air and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a glimmering suit of blue chain mail appears, momentarily covering the target before it sinks into his body. The target adds +3 to his Mystic Armor.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Mystic Armor), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Soulless Eyes

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: +3 to Intimidation tests

This spell enhances the ability to intimidate others. Traditionally it gives the target's eyes a cruel cast that makes viewers have no doubt about what they are willing to do, though it manifests in different fashions for some magicians. The magician glares and smiles cruelly, then places his hand on the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target gains a +3 bonus to any Intimidation tests made for the duration of the spell.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes).
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Spirit Dart
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: WIL+2/Mystic and reduce Mystic Armor by 2

This spell attacks a character with a small dart shaped from astral energy. The magician pinches himself and flicks his wrist as if throwing a dart, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. After damage is inflicted, the target's Mystic Armor is reduced by 2 until the end of the next round.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (-2 Mystic Armor), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Spirit Grip
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: WIL+2/Mystic and reduce Defenses by 2.

This spell draws on the malevolent energy of the spirits of the dead to harm others. The magician touches his victim and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted and the target's Defenses (Mystic and Physical) are reduced by 2 until the end of the next round.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (-1 Defenses)

Second Circle

Aspect of the Fog Ghost
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: +3 to close combat Attack and Damage tests, +3 to Physical Defense

Binding. This spell coalesces fog from the surrounding air and the caster may bind a maleficent spirit to a willing target within this fog when the spell is cast. The magician blows openly into the air and makes a Spellcasting test against target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target gains +3 to close combat Attack and Damage tests, and Physical Defense for the duration of the spell. During this time, the spirit will urge them to attack the nearest target each round with the exception of spirits and undead.

If they wish to resist this urge, they can make a Willpower test against the spirit's Social Defense (12).

If they successfully resist the compulsion or if they attack any spirits or undead, the spell will end and the bound spirit will immediately depart (though possibly hold ing a grudge against the offender) and this spell and Summon Fog Ghost may not be cast for a full day. This spell may only have one active casting at a time (including Summon Fog Ghost).

This spell may be stored in the same spell matrix as Summon Fog Ghost.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Chilling Circle

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6/11

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank minutes **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius

Effect: Nethermancer Circle+4/Mystic

Water–Cold. This spell creates a circle of icy mist. The magician spins round in a circle, then suddenly stops to kneel, touches the ground and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense of all characters inside the area of effect. If successful, an eerie rune unique to the magician appears on the ground and a cloud of freezing mist rises from the glowing shape. All characters, except the caster, take Nethermancer Circle +4 damage each round and their Movement Rate is halved while they are in the circle.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Area (+2 yards), Remove Targets (-Rank)

Death's Head

Threads: 0

Weaving: 6/11

Casting: TMD

Range: Self

Duration: Rank+5 rounds

Effect: Use Frighten talent as Simple Action

This spell transforms the magician's head into a gore-spattered skull, terrifying those whom he sets his gaze on. The magician touches his face and makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, he may use the Frighten talent as a Simple action for the duration of the spell.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus to Frighten)

Night's Edge
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6 / 11
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Adds Step 3/D4 cold damage to weapon/Physical and reduces target's Mystic Defense by 2.

Water–Cold. This spell coats a weapon with a layer of inky frost pulled directly from astral space. The magician exhales into his clenched fist and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, shadowy tendrils of freezing fog swirl out of his fist and envelop the weapon. The wielder adds a D4 Bonus Die to the weapon's Damage test and any target that takes damage from the weapon suffers a -2 penalty to their Mystic Defense until the end of the next round. The spell can be cast on weapons made from any material—wood, metal, bone, and so on.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Damage Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Shadow's Whisper
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** 100 yards
Duration: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Eavesdrop through a shadow

This spell allows the magician to hear anything a target speaks near a shadow. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystical Defense. If successful, the magician hears any sound the target makes while he is within 2 yards of any shadow, including the target's own. The target may make a Perception test against the Spellcasting test.

If successful, he detects that he is somehow being observed.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Range (+2 yards from shadow), Increase Range (+50 yards)

Shield Mist
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank +5 rounds
Effect: +4 bonus to Avoid Blow tests

This spell creates a shield of mist that hardens and moves to deflect blows directed against the magician. The magician moves his hands over his body while wisps of mist pour from his fingertips and then makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, he gains a +4 bonus to Avoid Blow tests (p.XX) against close and ranged combat Attack tests directed at him. If the Avoid Blow test succeeds, the mist

deflects the blow and the magician suffers no harm. The magician is visible within the mist and can easily see out. The mist does not hinder his actions

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Summon Fog Ghost
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Nethermancer Circle+10/Mystic

Summoning. This spell coalesces fog from the surrounding air and coaxes a maleficent spirit to inhabit it. The magician blows openly into the air and makes a Spellcasting test against the spirit's Mystic Defense (see below); the magician may choose a lower effective Circle for the spell effect. If successful, the fog ghost appears where the magician wishes within the spell's range, whereupon it immediately attacks the nearest character (even the magician himself). Each round, the fog ghost indiscriminately attacks whoever is nearest to it using the Effect Step for Attack and Damage tests until it is destroyed or the spell ends.

The fog is nearly impervious to physical attacks but the astral pattern containing the spirit can be disrupted by any attack which targets the fog ghost's Mystic Defense (Nethermancer Circle+5) or Physical Defense (Nethermancer Circle+15). To successfully disrupt the pattern, a character must inflict damage in a single attack equal to or greater than the Effect Step. Destroying the fog does not harm the spirit, which simply returns to its netherworld and waits for another chance to harm the living.

A fog ghost will not attack undead or other spirits. The spell cannot be cast in desert or other very dry environments, nor can it be cast when the temperature is below freezing. This spell may only have one active casting at a time (including Aspect of the Fog Ghost).

This spell may be stored in the same spell matrix as Aspect of the Fog Ghost.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Third Circle

Arrow of Night
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: +6 bonus to a missile Damage test and a -2 penalty to Mystic Armor

This spell covers an arrow with a chilling sheath of darkness, forming a silhouette. The arrow must be fired within one round of the spell being cast or the enchantment is lost. The magician wraps his hand around the head of the arrow and makes

a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, darkness drawn from astral space wraps itself around the arrow and adds a +6 bonus to the missile's Damage test.

If the target suffers damage from the spell, they suffer a -2 penalty to their Mystic Armor until the end of the next round. Handling the shaft causes 1 Strain to the character who fires it. The arrow is consumed by the spell, crumbling to dust the round after it strikes. The spell also works on any missiles, including crossbow bolts, sling stones or bolts, and blowpipe darts.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Damage), Increase Effect (-2 Mystic Armor penalty), Additional Target (+Rank)

Aspect of the Bone Spirit

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Binds a bone spirit

Binding. This spell summons the bone spirit from one of the magician's Bone Circles within Spellcasting rank x10 miles, binding the bone spirit to a willing target. The magician takes two bones and throws one on the ground, stomping on it, touches the target with the other and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the bone spirit materializes and melds with the target. The target's appearance becomes pale and faded, their bones significantly more prominent. The target gains +4 to Mystic Defense and Mystic Armor.

For the duration of the spell, If the target fails to obey any of the caster's commands, the spell immediately ends. If the spell ends prematurely, that Bone Spirit may not be summoned or bound again for a full day.

This spell may be in the same spell matrix as Summon Bone Spirit.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Range (+10 miles)

Aspect of the Cowardly Skulk

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Grants a target superior scouting abilities at a cost

Binding. This spell summons a spirit of shadow and temporarily binds it to a willing target. The magician reaches into his own shadow and draws out handful of an inky black substance which he then proceeds to smear on the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the spirit materializes over the target and merges with him. The target immediately drops into a crouch and takes on a squirrel-like demeanor.

The target of the spell gains a +4 bonus to Perception-based tests to gain information from direct observation and Action tests to escape detection.

The target may also move at full speed while avoiding detection. Any active threats against the target cause him to immediately flee at his fastest movement to safety, after which this spell immediately ends and the target must flee from any threats for the next hour. This spell may only have one active casting at a time.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Fog of Fear

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: 6 **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: Allows Frighten use against multiple targets at range

This spell conjures a mist that causes fear in those wrapped in its misty tendrils. The magician wraps his arms about himself as if cold, points to where the fog will appear and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, a luminous, wispy-gray and cold fog coalesces into a 4-yard radius sphere around the position. Once conjured, the fog cannot move. The magician may use his Frighten talent against all targets within the affected area as a single action, causing his menacing visage to appear formed from the substance of the fog.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus to talent), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Grave Message

Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: 6 **Range:** 20 miles
Duration: Rank days
Effect: Sends message to a Namegiver

This spell magically sends a message to another Namegiver. The magician speaks a message no longer than fifty words inside a Bone Circle (p.XX), a cemetery, or a place where spirits are active, then makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the message is successfully sent to a specific bone circle, cemetery, or place in which spirits are active, and addressed to a Named character or "any <insert description> who happens by." The message is spoken to the target in a quavering spirit voice only once.

Success Levels: Increase Range (+20 miles)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 days), Increase Range (+20 miles)

Pain

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds

Effect: Cause the target 3 temporary Wounds and reduce movement

This spell inflicts excruciating agony on a character.

The magician makes stabbing motions with his hands and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target is racked with crippling waves of agony. The effect of this spell causes the target 3 Wounds and his Movement Rate is halved for the duration of the spell. The spell has no effect on creatures that don't feel pain or are used to or inured against it. This includes undead, most Horrors and Horror constructs, and blood elves. If used against cadaver men (see the Gamemaster's Guide) it immediately sends them into a frenzy.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 Wound), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Summon Bone Spirit

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12

Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 10 yards

Duration: Rank rounds

Effect: Summons a bone spirit

Summoning. This spell summons the bone spirit from one of the magician's bone circles (p.XX) within Spellcasting rank x10 miles, allowing the spirit to exist outside the circle for a brief period. The magician takes two bones and throws one on the ground, stomping on it, then brandishes the other and makes a Spellcasting test against the bone spirit's Mystic Defense. If successful, the bone spirit appears before him. The bone spirit cannot move more than 10 yards from the magician. If it is forced to do so, the spell ends and the spirit returns to its bone circle.

The bone spirit obeys any command the magician gives it—entering combat, reporting happenings within sight of its bone circle, and so on. Bone spirits do not enjoy leaving their circles, so they resist frequent summoning attempts. Each additional attempt to summon the same bone spirit within a day requires an additional success. The bone spirit returns to its circle when the spell ends. If the spirit is destroyed in combat, its bone circle is also destroyed.

This spell may be in the same spell matrix as Aspect of the Bone Spirit.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Range (+10 miles)

Fourth Circle

Aspect of the Menacing Tyrant

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank minutes

Effect: Grant target bonuses to social interaction at a cost

Binding. This spell summons a spirit of terror and temporarily binds it to a willing target. The magician touches and kneels before the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the spirit materializes over the target and merges with him. The target's posture immediately becomes rigid and all

movements forceful. His features sharpen, eyes gleam with otherworldly cruelty and shadows cling to him.

While this spell is active, all gamemaster characters are treated as having a Neutral attitude towards the target. The target gains a +6 bonus to tests made to resist intimidation and fear. When the duration ends, any attitude of any gamemaster character the target applied the benefit to decreases by one level.

Any actions by the target which directly aid anyone other than the bound character (such as healing them, or even opening a door) cause the spell to end immediately. If the target does not use the granted benefits, or the spell ends prematurely the spell cannot be cast again for a full day and the target suffers a -3 penalty to Willpower-based tests until they have a full nights rest. This spell may only have one active casting at a time.

This spell can be very addictive, as the feeling of power it grants is a heady rush. At the gamemaster's discretion, the spirit may attempt to remain bound to the target when the duration is over. To expel a reluctant spirit, the character must succeed at a Willpower test against the Dispel Difficulty of the spell. This test may be attempted at each duration interval (Rank minutes).

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 to Interaction (Intimidate) tests)

Dark Spy

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Sees through a nightflyer's eyes

This spell allows the magician to see and hear through a nightflyer's senses. It must be cast after sunset and only on a nightflyer already under the magician's control, by being an animal companion or through use of the Command Nightflyer talent, p.XX.

The magician closes one eye and makes a Spellcasting test against the creature's Mystic Defense. If successful, he takes control of the creature's senses, allowing him to make Perception tests as if he were the nightflyer.

The maximum distance to which the magician can use the nightflyer's senses equals his Spellcasting Rank in miles. The magician's own senses are numbed, leaving him unable to react properly to external stimuli—he is considered Harried for any Action tests other than Perception tests using the creature's senses.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Awareness tests), Increase Range (+1 mile), Increase Range (+10 yards),

Evil Eye

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank rounds

Effect: Improves the effect of Frighten

This spell causes the magician's pupils to shimmer with a flickering greenish flame. The magician stares, then closes one eye and makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, the magician's Frighten talent can now curse with the evil eye and gains an additional Success on all successful uses of the Frighten talent.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 additional Success to Frighten tests)

Last Chance

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: 1 round

Effect: Grants +4 bonus Recovery test to a dead character

This spell pulls a character back from the brink of death. The spell must be cast within one minute of the character's death. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target makes a Recovery test with a +4 bonus. If he has used all of the Recovery tests available to him that day, the spell grants him a Step 4/D6 Recovery test. If the target's Current Damage is reduced below his Death Rating then he survives, otherwise he remains dead. This spell may only be cast on a target once per day.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Nightflyer's Cloak

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 8/13

Casting: TMD **Range:** Self

Duration: Rank+10 minutes

Effect: Transforms caster into a nightflyer

This spell allows the magician to assume the form of any creature able to be affected by the Command Nightflyer talent (p.XX). The magician must know the Command Nightflyer talent as a prerequisite. The magician mimics pulling on a cape or cloak, then whispers the type of creature he is attempting to turn into and makes a Spellcasting test against his natural Mystic Defense. If successful, he transforms into the designated type of nightflyer. Clothing or equipment worn by the magician is transformed with him—it reappears when the spell ends.

While in nightflyer form, the magician can use all of that creature's normal abilities, including flight and enhanced senses. He cannot speak or cast spells, but he can use talents and abilities requiring only thought or eye contact. The magician becomes vulnerable to Command Nightflyer talent. The magician may dispel the transformation anytime he wishes by spending a Standard Action.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 to Aware-

ness tests)

Viewpoint
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: See through a physical barrier

This spell creates a one-way window through a wall or similar barrier no more than 2 yards thick by piercing astral space. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, a window up to one square yard in size is created on the wall, allowing the magician to see through it. The barrier's material is unaffected—a stone wall is still as tough as stone, a wooden fence still provides the same protection, and so on. There is a chance that someone on the other side notices the window. The magician's Spellcasting test result determines the Detection Difficulty for attempts to spot the window.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Fifth Circle

Aspect of the Cruel Physician
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Grants Recovery tests for a price

Binding. This spell summons a spirit of pain and temporarily binds it to a willing target. The magician rubs his hands against his clothes or a cloth as if to clean them then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the spirit materializes over the target and merges with him. The target's eyes start to emit a faint red glow and a menacing grin spreads across his face.

The target of the spell may perform elective surgery on an adjacent, willing character as a Standard Action. The target of the surgery suffers a Wound and makes a free Recovery test with a +6 bonus.

If the bound character suffers a Wound, the spell immediately ends. If the spell ends prematurely or the duration expires and elective surgery is never performed, this spell cannot be cast again for a full day. This spell may only have one active casting at a time.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Blind
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Target is rendered blind

This spell turns a character's eyes into empty unseeing pits.

The magician claws at his own eyes and mutters under his breath, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's eyeballs disappear, leaving dark empty holes. The "blind" target suffers a Full Darkness penalty to sight-based Action tests. Each round, the target may make a Willpower test against the caster's Willpower Step. If successful, his eyes are restored and the spell ends. Targets who don't require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 to effective Willpower Step)

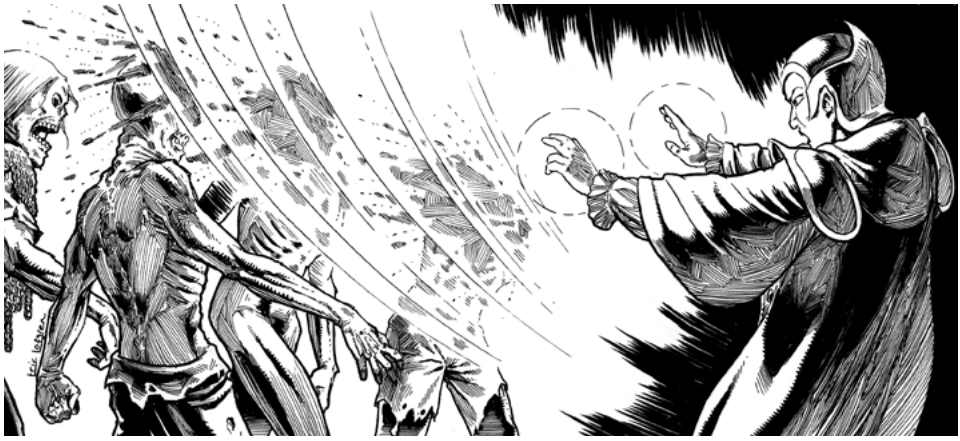
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 to effective Willpower Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Targets (+1)

Circle of Astral Protection

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 minutes **Area of Effect:** 8-yard radius
Effect: +4 to Mystic Armor

This spell creates a circle of magical protection. The magician walks the circumference of the circle and then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense of all characters inside the area of effect. The Mystic Armor of all characters within the circle is increased by +4.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)



Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Dust to Dust

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+8/Mystic

This spell destroys large groups of undead. The magician swallows hard and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group. If successful, he makes an Effect test to determine how much damage is inflicted on each target. Undead that take damage in excess of their Death Rating immediately crumble to dust. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets. This spell does not affect disembodied spirits, corrupt Namegivers, or Horrors, but it does affect undead Horror constructs, such as cadaver men. If there is any doubt, the gamemaster determines whether the creature is undead and therefore affected by this spell.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1 Target; additional target threads do not count toward the normal extra thread maximum)

Reverse Withering

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Restores withered limb

This spell reverses the effects of the Wither Limb spell, p.XX, restoring the injured limb. The magician touches the limb, infusing it with energy from another plane and then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the limb returns to its normal condition. The withered limb is not instantly restored to full health. The target still suffers a –3 penalty to Action tests made using the limb until the Wound associated with the withering is healed. After this Wound is healed, the limb returns to full strength.

Success Levels: N/A
Extra Threads: N/A

Wither Limb

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+6/Mystic

This feared spell atrophies legs, arms, wings, and tails. The magician points at one of the victim's limbs and whispers "wither," then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, his Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. If the target suffers a Wound, his limb shrivels and weakens as the muscle wastes away. The target is considered Harried in any round he uses that limb for any Action Tests.

If an arm is withered, the target cannot carry an object weighing more than 2 pounds in or on that arm, including weapons or shields. If a leg or wing is withered, the appropriate Movement Rate is halved. If both legs or wings are withered, the target cannot use the appropriate form of movement, which usually means he is Knocked Down (no Knockdown Test is made), and can only crawl at a Movement Rate of 2. The Wound remains until the limb is restored. Only powerful healing magic, such as the

Reverse Withering spell, will allow full use of the limb to be regained.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Sixth Circle

Astral Maw

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Nethermancer Circle+ 10/Physical

This spell summons a huge mouth from astral space. Rumors abound that it summons a real Horror, which does little to diminish the fearsome reputation of magicians, especially those who practice Nethermancy. The magician makes chewing noises and makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, a giant fanged mouth, large enough to swallow a troll and surrounded by writhing tentacles, is summoned from the depths of the netherworlds. Each round, the maw attacks a target designated by the magician within range using the Effect Step for the Attack test. It requires the caster's concentration to maintain and direct the maw—if broken, the maw disappears and the spell ends.

The following special rules apply to the astral maw:

Swallow: If the astral maw achieves three successes on its Attack test, any troll-sized or smaller target is swallowed whole. Once swallowed, the Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. Victims may escape from the maw by making a successful Strength (12) test. Those killed while inside the astral maw remain in astral space but can be retrieved by an appropriate spell or talent.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Bone Shatter

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+6/Mystic

This spell splinters and cracks bones, causing horrific damage. The magician makes cracking sounds and then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among any targets in range. If successful, he makes one Effect test per Success to determine how much damage is inflicted, directing no more than two Effect tests against an individual target. A target who takes a Wound adds +5 to the Knockdown Difficulty. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Success Levels: See text

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (+1 Success), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Debilitating Gloom
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 6 yard radius
Effect: Cloud of life-draining mist

This spell causes otherworldly mist to fill the specified area and sap the life from those within. The magician rhythmically stomps his feet on the ground while casting the spell and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense within the area of effect. If successful, a soul chilling mist seeps from cracks of green light that appear in the ground. Anyone within the area of effect has their Movement Rate halved and is incapable of running. Additionally, each round that they are within the area of effect they suffer a Wound. These Wounds are cumulative each round, but will heal after an hour of rest following their last exposure to the mist.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Friendly Darkness
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 6-yard radius
Effect: Creates magical darkness; +2 bonus to one type of Action test for friendly characters

This spell draws darkness from another dimension, extinguishing nearby light. The magician cups his hands together, touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense in the area of effect. If successful, the darkness conjured fills a 6-yard radius sphere centered on the target.

The darkness extinguishes all light, causing those within the area of effect to incur a Full Darkness penalty to their sight-based Action tests.

The magician may select up to Spellcasting Rank characters within the area of effect to be unaffected by the darkness and gain a +2 bonus on one type of Action test (chosen on casting) – Attack test, Spellcasting test, Recovery Test, etc. Ordinary light does not penetrate the darkness. Characters with knowledge of Nethermancy are unaffected by the darkness caused by this spell, but unless they are chosen by the caster, do not gain the +2 bonus.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Recovery
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: 1 round
Effect: Recovery test with a +5 bonus

This spell boosts a character's life force. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target makes a Recovery test with a +5 bonus (this may not be affected by healing aids). If he has no Recovery tests available, the spell has no effect.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 bonus)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Step Through Shadow
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self; 100 yards
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Creates astral passageway

This spell allows the magician to move from shadow to shadow through astral space. The magician, who must be standing next to a shadow—including his own—makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. The magician must be able to see the destination shadow, but can use means beyond his natural eyesight to do so.

If successful, the nearby shadows become temporary "gates" at the ends of a "tunnel" through the astral plane. The maximum distance that the magician can travel between shadows is 100 yards. He travels through astral space at his normal Movement Rate and is protected from the hazards therein. Once the magician exits astral space, the spell ends. If the magician does not exit the other end before the spell ends, he is trapped in astral space.

Trapped magicians can leave the astral plane via other means, if available to them. The shadow-gates also allow astral entities to pass into the physical world.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 to Movement Rate) Increase Range (+10 yards)

Seventh Circle

Aspect of the Casual Murderer
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: +5 to Attack and Damage tests

Binding. This spell summons a spirit of murder and temporarily binds it to a willing target. The magician slowly licks the edge of a bladed weapon and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the spirit materializes over the target and merges with him. The target's fingernails elongate and blood oozes from the nail bed. The target of the spell is overwhelmed with a desire for bloodshed and gains a +5 bonus to close combat Attack and Damage tests against opponents who are Blindsided, Knocked Down or Surprised.

If the target has the opportunity to attack a Blindsided, Knocked Down or Surprised target, but does not, this spell immediately ends. If the target does not cause any damage while affected by this spell or the spell ends prematurely for any reason, they take a Wound. If this spell ends prematurely, or the target suffers a Wound as a result, this spell cannot be cast again for a full day. This spell may only have one active casting at a time.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 bonus)

Astral Beacon
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Creates a beacon in astral space

This spell creates a bright flare of energy in astral space, exposing a character to being Horror-marked as if he had just cast raw magic (see p.XX). The magician crouches down, then leaps up and throws his arms into the air, making a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target makes all appropriate tests as though they had just cast a Seventh Circle spell with raw magic in that location, including Warping, Damage and Horror Mark tests.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+1 Circle)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 Circle), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Bone Pudding
Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Turns bones to sludge

This spell turns a character's bones into a pudding-like consistency. The magician eats something messy, like a pudding, and then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's leg and arm bones become a sludgy consistency, causing 3 Wounds (but no Damage Points). The usual penalties apply for sustaining multiple Wounds (see Wound Penalties, p.XX). Movement becomes nearly impossible for the target and he has an effective movement value of 0. The target may only perform defensive actions and actions which don't require his limbs to support any weight. The target's bones return to their original consistency and the Wounds may be healed after the spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+1 Wound)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+1 Wound), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Constrict Heart
Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL/NA

This spell constricts a character's heart with astral force. The magician extends his hand in a grasping motion and then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's heart is squeezed in a vice-like grip. Each round, the Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted.

The magician must concentrate to inflict damage each round or the spell ends. The target is immobilized and cannot take any actions which require movement unless he makes a Willpower test against the Effect Step. If successful, the spell ends. Some creatures are not affected by this spell, because they are undead and feel no pain or have no heart or similar organ to constrict.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Foul Vapors
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 10-yard radius
Effect: WIL+5/Mystic

This spell taps into the uglier regions of astral space, drawing vapors to the physical plane. The magician holds his breath and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among targets within 10 yards from the caster. If successful, vapors brought forth from astral space completely fill the area of effect. The vapors do not move once conjured. The magician is immune to the vapors' effect. Those affected by the fumes do not have to breathe them, only contact is necessary—the spell affects both living and undead creatures. Each round, the magician makes an Effect test to determine how much damage is inflicted on each character. Any characters that take damage from this are Harried until the magician's next round.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Area (+2 yards), Remove Targets (-Rank)

Restrain Entity
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL + Nethermancer Circle

This spell traps an undead creature, Horror, Horror construct, or physically man-

ifested spirit. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a brilliant circle of red light, limned with gold writing, encircles the target, preventing it from moving.

The target can still communicate, assuming the magician wishes to talk to such a creature. Each minute, the target may attempt to free itself by making a Willpower test against the Effect Step. If successful, the restraint is broken and the spell ends. Any hostile action against the entity immediately ends the spell.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Eighth Circle

Aspect of the Astral Savant

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Grants unfettered perception into astral space

Binding. This spell summons a spirit of insanity and temporarily binds it to a willing target. The magician closes the target's eyes, whispers sibilantly, and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the spirit materializes over the target and merges with him. The target's eyes become black spheres lit with an otherworldly flame. The target of this spell becomes partially subsumed in astral space and perceives it without any filtration offered by the Astral Sight talent. The target gains +4 to Physical Defense and Astral Sight tests and they do not cost Strain for the duration.

Additionally, the bound character may study any true pattern by making an Astral Sight test against the Mystic Defense to gain additional insight into how it functions. If successful, he gains a +2 bonus per success to any Spellcasting tests and Effect Steps against the target. Instead of bonuses, he may choose insight into the pattern, particularly what is not available by standard Astral Sight. This information is at gamemaster discretion – this is the insight of madness.

Each round, the effects of sensing raw astral space deal damage to the target equivalent to a magician casting a First Circle spell with raw magic. This spell may only have one active casting at a time.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 to Astral Sight tests)

Horror Call

Threads: 6 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank hours **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: Summons and binds a Horror

This dangerous spell summons a Horror from astral space. The magician must learn the Name of the Horror he wishes to call, then carefully inscribes a 4-yard radius

circle, painting it white and gold. Casting the spell is debilitating to the magician and requires the use of Blood Magic, causing him 1 Blood Magic Damage, +1 Blood Magic Damage for each failed Thread Weaving test during the casting.

This damage cannot be healed for a year and a day. Should the magician break off the spell before completing it, the magical backlash causes him Step 25 damage (Mystic Armor provides protection).

The magician touches the circle, calls aloud the Horror's Name, then makes a Spellcasting test against the Horror's Mystic Defense. If successful, the Horror is summoned from astral space into the protective circle. The Horror remains in the protective circle until it makes a successful Willpower or Dispel Magic test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty, is released by the magician, or the spell ends. The Horror may attempt a Willpower or Dispel Magic test once per hour—if successful, the spell ends.

Many Horrors will bargain with their summoner, offering great rewards in return for release into the physical plane. If their offer is accepted, the Horror will usually pay what is promised, but often returns to take back any treasure at a later date. Few magicians teach this spell—a character should wonder about the motives of one who does, because Horrors often make teaching the Horror Call spell to others part of any deal they make. When the spell ends, the Horror returns to astral space.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 Dispel Difficulty)

Netherblade

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 12/17

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank minutes

Effect: Allows a weapon to affect targets in astral space.

This spell magically enhances a melee weapon so it can be used against opponents in astral space. The magician touches the melee weapon and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the melee weapon takes on a dark, smoky luster. During the spell's duration the weapon cannot be used against targets in the physical world—it simply passes through them, leaving them slightly chilled but unharmed. The wielder must be able to see a target in astral space to hit it. Most often, this means the wielder must use the Astral Sight talent, or a similar ability or spell.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Damage), Additional Target (+Rank)

Shadow Tether

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17

Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards

Duration: Rank rounds

Effect: Prevents targets from moving and are Harried

This spell anchors characters to the ground by their shadows. The magician may

target a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting Rank. Both targets and their shadows must be visible to him. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target.

If successful, the targets' shadows are affixed to the ground, holding their owners in place. Each round, a target may make a Strength test against the Spellcasting test result to pull free of the spell's effect. If successful, he breaks free of his shadow. Targets tethered by their shadows are Harried.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Range (+10 yards)

Spirit Portal
Threads: 4 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: 10×Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+10 (see text)

This spell creates a doorway into astral space through which spirits may enter the physical plane or characters enter astral space. The spell must be cast within a Bone Circle (p.XX) built by the magician. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, he punctures a hole into astral space, continuing to widen the opening until he has created a doorway.

The magician has control over who uses the Spirit Portal, but must be within sight of the portal to contest entry. To prevent a being from crossing through the portal, the magician makes an Effect test against the being's Willpower test. If failed, the being can pass through the portal.

If successful, it is prevented from passing through.

Wither Away

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+10 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+10 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Wither Away
Threads: 5 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank months
Effect: WIL/Mystic

This spell causes a character to slowly wither away to the point of death. The magician utters a dire prophecy about the target, then touches him and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, his Effect test determines the number of pounds of weight the target loses each month (natural Mystic Armor reduces this). This continues until the spell ends or the character dies. If the target's weight sinks below 50 percent of his racial average, he becomes weak and dizzy and is considered Harried while in this condition. If the target's weight drops below 25 percent of his racial average, he takes Effect Step damage each month (which cannot be healed until the spell ends), in addition to the weight loss.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 months)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 months), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

WIZARD SPELLS

Wizards are the most scholarly of all magicians, primarily concerned with the workings of magic. Their spells usually deal with magic and its effects, but they do operate through the interaction of magic with a, usually living, target. Wizardry spells cover those areas that other magicians are not able to affect.

First Circle

Astral Sense
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank+10 minutes **Area of Effect:** 30 yards
Effect: Enhance astral sensing

This spell enhances the use of the Astral Sight talent. The magician rolls his eyes upward and makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, he is able to use the Astral Sight talent without taking Strain, and is able to sense magical presences that are not otherwise in his line of sight (for example, behind him, or otherwise hidden). The enhancements to Astral Sight only apply to targets within the area of effect. A magician will often take a few moments after casting the spell to sweep the area and verify that an astral presence is not coming from a comrade. A magician may attempt to cast spells on a target that he has astrally sensed, even if he cannot otherwise see the target.

Magicians use this spell for many different reasons. It is often cast to make extended astral examinations less taxing. As with normal uses of Astral Sight, a magician using Astral Sense to view a thread item can sense the item's true pattern and would

learn it was magical in nature. However, he would not gain any information about the item's history or learn any Key Knowledge.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Area (+10 yards)

Bedazzling Display of Logical Analysis

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10

Casting: TMD **Range:** Self

Duration: Rank minutes

Effect: +4 bonus to verbal Charisma-based tests

This spell reinforces the integrity of arguments or debates. The magician draws himself up to his full height and makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, he gains a +4 bonus to any Charisma-based tests involving conversation, debate, argument, or other verbal forms of oratory.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus)

Catseyes

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10

Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch

Duration: Rank minutes

Effect: Target gets Low-Light Vision

This spell grants the ability to see in near-darkness. The magician blinks several times, then touches the target lightly on his eyelids and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target gains the Low-Light Vision ability (p. XX)—his pupils become vertical slits, like those of a cat, reflecting incoming light and appearing to glow in the dark. The spell has no effect on targets with Low-Light Vision.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Additional Targets (+Rank)

Divine Aura

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10

Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards

Duration: 1 round

Effect: Glean information about a target's state of being.

This spell detects aspects of the aura of living beings. The magician peers intently at the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, he chooses what he wishes to divine from the target's aura—this could be anything from an emotional state, like anger or fear, to hurt or fatigue. The magician may determine one aspect for each success.

Success Levels: See text

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 Success), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Flame Flash
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: WIL+5/Physical

Fire. This spell fires a burst of blue arcane flame at an opponent. The magician makes wild, fanning gestures and crackling, whooshing sounds, then extends his hands outward and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, flames flash from his fingertips, bathing the target in magical fire. The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted each round.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Iron Hand
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: +3 bonus to close combat Damage tests

This spell enhances a character's ability to inflict damage. The magician mimics striking someone, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's skin turns matte grey and gains a +3 bonus to all close combat Damage tests he makes during the spell's duration.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Mage Armor
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: +3 bonus to Physical Armor

This spell creates a ghostly violet layer above the target. The magician punches at the target, uttering a soft "thudding" sound, as if an ineffectual blow had landed, and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, add +3 to the target's Physical Armor for the spell's duration. Targets that have been enchanted with this spell have a faint violet glow that is noticeable in the dark or with astral sight.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Physical Ar-

mor), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Mind Dagger
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: WIL+2/Mystic and a -2 penalty to Physical Defense

This spell attacks an opponent by sheer force of will, staggering them. The magician whips his arm forward as if throwing a dagger and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, his Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted once. Additionally, the target suffers a -2 penalty to Physical Defense until the end of the next round.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (-2 penalty to Physical Defense), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Quicken Pace
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: +2 to Movement Rate

This spell increases walking speed. The magician walks briskly in a circle around the target, then touches him and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target increases his Movement Rate by +2.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 Movement Rate), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Speed Reading
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: Gives the target a +4 bonus to all Research tests

This spell allows an adept to read at an incredible speed and provides perfect recall of that information. The magician closes his eyes and exhales slowly, and then makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense.

If successful, an intense concentration comes over him, such that he has a -5 to all Perception tests related to noticing anything outside of his focus. However, he also gains the ability to read one page a second and can recall all of that information without error for the duration of this spell. This grants the target a +4 bonus to any Research tests and can increase the frequency of Research tests (GM discretion).

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 to Research

tests)

Wall Walker
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 5/10
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: +4 bonus to Climbing tests.

This spell improves a character's climbing ability. The magician crouches down on all fours, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target gains a +4 Climbing test bonus.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Additional Target (+Rank), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Second Circle

Astral Shield
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: +2 to Mystic Defense

This spell enhances a character's resistance to magic. The magician makes a warding symbol with his hand, pointing at the target, and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. Characters that have been astrally sensed (see pg. XX) may be included as additional targets. Each target added in this way adds +1 to the Casting Difficulty. If successful, the target adds +2 to his Mystic Defense.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Mystic Defense), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Baseline Subtraction
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Eliminate the penalties of Astral Interference

This spell eliminates the penalties caused by the Astral Interference talent by isolating the "noise" and reducing it based on the rest of astral space in the area. The magician holds both hands at waist level and sweeps one up in a steep motion, bringing it back down to his other hand, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. Characters which have been astrally sensed (see pg. XX) may be included as additional targets, increasing the Difficulty by +1 each. If successful, the penalties caused by Astral Interference are eliminated.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Range (+10 yards)

Crushing Will
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** 50 yards
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: WIL+3/Mystic and a -2 penalty to target's Mystic Defense

This spell directly attacks a character's will. The magician furrows his brows and peers at the target, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted once. Additionally, the target suffers a -2 penalty to their Mystic Defense until the end of the next round.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (-2 to Mystic Defense), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Dodge Boost
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: +2 bonus to Avoid Blow tests

This spell improves a character's ability to dodge attacks in combat. The magician sways sideways, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target gains a +2 bonus to his Avoid Blow tests.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Rope Ladder
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes **Area of Effect:** 50-yard radius
Effect: Create ladder from rope

This spell creates a ladder out of a length of rope. The magician uncoils the rope, then makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, the rope moves at a Movement Rate of 10 to a location of the magician's choosing within the area of effect. The magician cannot control the rope with precision—it cannot tie itself off on the bars of a window, for example. The rope simply moves directly from point A to point B. Those climbing the rope gain a +4 bonus to their Climbing tests. The rope can hold a maximum weight of 600 pounds.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Area (+10 yards)

Seeking Sight
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 6/11
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: +3 bonus to ranged Attack tests

This spell heightens a target's vision and focus, optimizing them for ranged combat. The magician runs his fingers down the target's head, across his eyes and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target's eyes take on an unnatural appearance (unique to the caster). The target adds a +3 bonus to their ranged Attack tests.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Third Circle

Astral Targeting
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Gain a +2 bonus to Spellcasting and Effect tests

This spell allows the magician to improve their spells against a target he has astrally sensed (pg. XX). The magician opens his eyes wide and glowing red light emits from them, and then makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, glowing red runes float in front of his eyes and he gains a +2 to Spellcasting and Effect tests against any target he has astrally sensed.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes)

Aura Strike
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+3/Mystic

This spell channels destructive energies into weak portions of the pattern of a character who the magician has astrally sensed (p.XX). The magician furrows his brows, squints, and then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. Regardless of how much damage the target suffers, he suffers a Wound.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Combat Fury
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: +2 bonus to close combat Attack tests

This spell creates a state of battle fury in a willing target, energizing them into a frenzy in combat. The magician rants and gesticulates violently, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target gains a +2 bonus to close combat Attack tests. The target may only make close combat attacks during the spell's duration.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Targets (+Rank)

Identify Magic
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Identifies type of magic

This spell identifies the type of magic present on a person, place, or object. The magician peers intently at the target, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the number of Successes determines what he learns. One Success reveals whether the target is magical; two reveals the general type of magic the target possesses—adept abilities, innate magic, spell magic, and so on; three reveals the exact nature of the magic—the target's Discipline and Circle in the case of adepts, or the target's powers and abilities in the case of magical items. Use of this spell does not provide any information on key knowledges for thread items, only that it is a thread item and a general sense of its powers.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (see text)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+1 Success), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Levitate
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: Rank+10 minutes **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius
Effect: Levitate up to 1,000 pounds

This spell moves objects or characters vertically up or down on an invisible 2-yard radius platform of force. The magician raises and lowers his hands and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among all characters or objects in the area of effect.

If successful, a platform is created which lifts those on it up or down by the magician at 4 yards per round to a maximum height equal to the spell's range. A single spell supports 1,000 pounds of weight.

The magician may "bootstrap" Levitate spells for improved effect. He may cast another spell on an existing platform to increase the weight the spell can support. The magician may also rise to the maximum height of the first Levitate spell and cast another Levitate spell (or spells) to move even higher. Bootstrapped spells must be managed carefully—as soon as any lower-altitude Levitate spell ends, all higher-altitude Levitate spells also fail. Characters and objects on top of a platform when it fails suffer Falling damage (see the Gamemaster's Guide) based on the distance fallen.

Moving the platform up requires the magician's concentration, regardless of how many "bootstrapped" spells he is currently manipulating. If he loses concentration, the platform automatically descends to the ground at 4 yards per round.

The magician must make a Spellcasting test if the number of characters or objects on a platform increases, for example, if another character jumps onto it. If failed, the spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Wizard Mark
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 7/12
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: Places astral mark on target

This spell places a symbol or mark on the target's astral pattern. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a mark is placed on the target's astral imprint, visible to anyone using astral sight (such as the Astral Sight talent, p.XX) and which can serve to brand the target for a crime or other offense.

The mark also serves as a link between the magician and the target. As such, it allows the magician to cast spells on the target while he is within the magician's line of sight, as if the magician was touching the subject. The mark's design is personal to the magician. Rumors suggest that a Horror may have taught Namegivers this spell, so its use is often regarded with suspicion.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Fourth Circle

Ball of String
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: 6 **Range:** Varies (see text)
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: WIL+4

This spell conjures a ball made from strands of mystical energy. The magician ties an imaginary knot to an object, marking the point of origin, and makes a Spellcasting (6) test. If successful, a ball of magical string appears in his hand. The ball can be placed in a pouch or pocket—the string pays out automatically as the magician walks. The magician makes an Effect (10) test once per hour. If successful, the ball reels out more string and remains untangled. If failed, the string snaps and the spell ends.

When the magician wants to return to where he started, he winds the string back onto the ball. As he starts winding, the string glows with a white light. By following the glowing thread, the magician is unerringly led back to the point of origin.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Binding Threads
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+3

This spell conjures a web of magical threads to entangle an opponent. The magician points at the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a mass of brightly-colored magical threads form in the air and fly toward the target, entangling him in powerful magical bonds.

Each round, the target may make a Strength test against the Effect Step. If he fails, he is bound and cannot use his hands to attack or cast spells and is Harried. If successful, he is only Harried. Harried penalties do not apply to attempts to break free of their bonds each round.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Evolved Consciousness
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Grants a +4 bonus to Knowledge and Patterncraft tests

This spell improves the target's ability to recall and process information. The magician centers himself with a ritual unique to each caster, but does not appear to be casting a spell. When finished, the magician makes a Spellcasting test against his Mystic Defense. If successful, he gains clarity in his thoughts and often a brusque attitude with those who have not achieved this level of enlightenment. He gains a +4 to all Knowledge and Patterncraft tests made for the duration of the spell.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2)

Juggler's Touch
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

This spell causes small objects to whirl around madly. The magician mimes juggling, then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense of any character within the area of effect. If successful, any small objects within the area of effect start spinning wildly around, striking those standing in the same area. The Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted on each target.

The magician may shift the spell's area of effect up to 2 yards with a successful Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense of any character within the new area of effect (even if they were previously affected). Juggling the objects requires the magician's concentration each round—the only action he can take without ending the spell is a Spellcasting test to move the spell's effects. If there are no small movable objects in the area of effect, the spell has no effect.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Area (+2 yards), Increase Range (+10 yards), Remove Targets (-Rank), Additional Effect (requires 2 threads, Concentration for this spell as Simple Action.)

Lighten Load
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: Rank hours **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius
Effect: WIL+2

This spell temporarily reduces the weight of objects within the area of effect. The magician bends and grimaces as if lifting something heavy, then stands upright and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the objects in the

area of effect. If successful, the magician makes an Effect test, reducing the combined weight of all of the objects by test result x50 pounds, to a minimum of 10 pounds.

The target objects must be stationary when the spell is cast.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Wizard's Cloak

Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 8/13
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Increases Mystic Defense against attempts to detect target astrally

This spell creates a magical cloak that masks the target's presence. The magician pantomimes placing a cloak over his shoulders and drawing the hood over his head, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a faintly shimmering cloak of mystical energy momentarily appears and then vanishes into the target's body. The target adds +6 to his Mystic Defense against any spells or abilities intended to astrally detect his presence or gain information about him.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Fifth Circle

Flight

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank x10 minutes
Effect: Grants flight at Movement Rate 12

This spell grants the power of flight. The magician flaps his arms up and down and makes a Spellcasting test against his natural Mystic Defense. If successful, he gains the ability to fly at a Movement Rate of 12.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+10 minutes)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+10 minutes), Increase Effect (+2 Movement Rate)

Giant Size

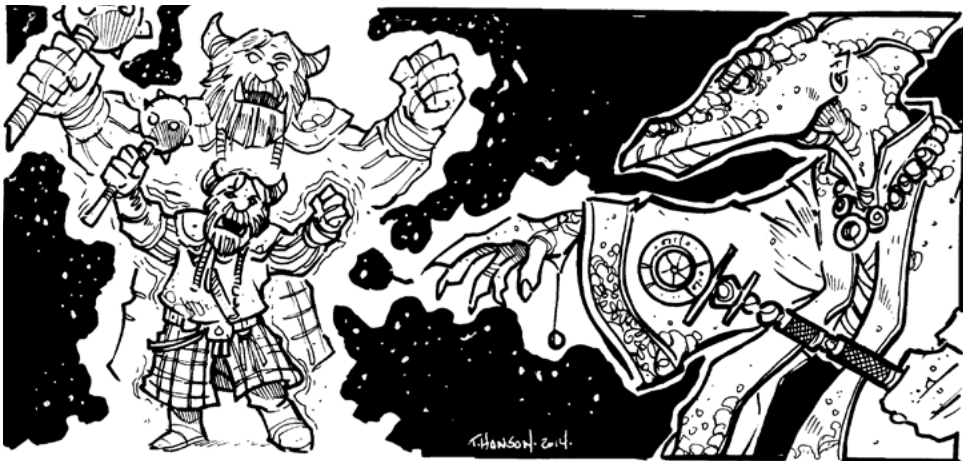
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: +4 bonus to Strength-only, Toughness-only, and Damage tests

This spell causes a character to grow larger. The magician stands on tip toes or puffs out his clothing, making himself look bigger, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target immediately grows 50

percent larger than his normal size, gaining a +4 bonus to Strength-only, Toughness-only, and Damage tests during the spell's duration.

The target's clothing and armor also change size, returning to normal when the spell ends. Weapons and other equipment do not change size, however. Care should be made when using this spell in confined spaces, such as kaers or tunnels.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)



Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Mystic Shock

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+4/Mystic

This spell damages a character by channeling astral energy through an object or surface. The spell does not require line of sight and can be cast through any object or surface, including floors and walls, which both magician and target are touching. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, his Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Sever Talent

Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: 2 rounds
Effect: Removes the ability to use a talent

This spell prevents an adept from using a talent. The magician mimes pulling a thread with one hand, then cutting it with the other, and then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense.

If successful, the adept loses access to the last talent he used until the end of the next round. If the target has been astrally sensed, the magician may choose the talent from any of the last three the target used.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Slow

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Halves movement; –5 penalty to Dexterity-based tests

This spell reduces movement. The magician pantomimes casting in slow motion, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense.

If successful, the target's Movement Rate is halved (round down) and he suffers a –5 penalty to his Dexterity-based tests, including Initiative tests.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (-2 penalty), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Weapon Back

Threads: 2 (ritual; see text) **Weaving:** 9/14
Casting: TMD (see text) **Range:** Touch; 100 yards
Duration: Rank weeks (see text)
Effect: WIL+6

This ritual spell creates a link between a weapon and a character, allowing the weapon to find its way back should it somehow be lost. At dawn each day for a week, the magician spends half an hour inscribing a small design on the weapon, using a drop of his own blood. He weaves the first spell thread at the end of the week. The magician then spends half an hour at dawn each day for another week, inscribing a scar of the same design on the character to be linked to the weapon. He weaves the last spell thread at the end of the second week.

Once the ritual is complete, the magician makes a Spellcasting test against the character's Mystic Defense. If successful, the designs glow brightly and then fade to their normal state. A sympathetic link is created between the character and the weapon. The death of a character or destruction of a weapon destroys the link between them, causing both scar-design and weapon-inscription to fade away without a trace.

Anytime the weapon is lost to the character, he may make an Effect test (using his own Willpower Step) against the weapon's Mystic Defense. If successful, and if the weapon is within the spell's area of effect, it moves toward the character at a Movement Rate of 6.

The character does not require line of sight to retrieve the weapon. Should the weapon need to make an Attribute test—for example, to break out of a cabinet (Strength) or slide along a narrow window-sill (Dexterity)—the character makes an Effect test in place of the Attribute test.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 weeks)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 weeks), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

Sixth Circle

Displace Self
Threads: 0 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: Enhances Avoid Blow tests

This spell moves the magician away from harm. The magician hops frantically up and down, and then makes a Spellcasting test against his own Mystic Defense. If successful, the magician is imbued with a magical "sixth sense" that detects attacks targeted directly or indirectly at him (including Blindside attacks) and automatically moves him out of harm's way. This includes physical attacks which Avoid Blow may not normally affect, such as spells that deal physical damage.

The spell only affects physical attacks which occur after the magician has acted that round. Each time he is attacked, the magician may make an Avoid Blow test against the Attack test. If successful, he moves 2 yards in a random direction (use the scatter table, p. XX). If there are any intervening obstacles, the magician moves as far as he can, then stops. If the distance moved is insufficient to evade the attack (for example, against an area attack spell like Fireball), he suffers the effects of the attack normally.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Energy Shield
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Creates a shield of energy to deflect incoming attacks

This spell creates a shield which can be used to parry physical attacks and spells that have a visible component (e.g. Earth Darts). The magician extends his hand and clenches it into a fist, and then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, their offhand is surrounded with glowing blue energy which can be extended into a shield just in front of their hand. When in use, this shield gives a +4 rank bonus to Avoid Blow and Steel Thought and may use either as a default skill. The bonus to Steel Thought only applies to spells which have a visible component. When this spell is active, the target cannot use a weapon with their offhand, but can still use their hand to hold a shield or cast spells freely.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)
Extra Threads: Increase Duration (minutes), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+Rank)

Loan Spell
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank +10 rounds
Effect: Loans spell to another

This spell gives a character temporary access to a spell matrix. The magician designates which of his current spell matrices is being loaned, then tosses the target a small object, such as a coin or token, and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target can cast the spell attuned to the "loaned" matrix.

The target uses his own Spellcasting and appropriate Thread Weaving talents to cast the loaned spell. He must be capable of weaving any necessary threads for the loaned spell or have them woven already, as in the case of a "loaned" Enhanced Matrix. If the target does not know the Spellcasting talent or skill, he makes a Perception test in place of a Spellcasting test. While the spell matrix is on loan, the magician cannot use it to cast or reattune the spell stored in it.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Effect (Matrix is shared between target and caster; 2 threads)

Rampage
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank+5 rounds **Area of Effect:** 10-yard radius.
Effect: Grants a +3 bonus to close combat Attack and Damage tests

This spell releases the repressed aggression of those standing near to the caster. The magician points at each target in turn then releases a bloodcurdling scream and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group. If successful, the affected targets gain a +3 bonus to close combat Attack and Damage tests. They must also adopt the Aggressive Attack stance each round (it still costs Strain). The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 bonus), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Razor Orb
Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+7/Physical and reduces Physical Armor by -4

This spell creates a gleaming, spinning, orb of green light and force that is directed to deliver a devastating strike against a tough opponent. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted. The target's Physical Armor is reduced by 4 until repairs can be made (or it repairs itself in the case of Thread items).

Success Levels: Increase Effect (-2 to Physical Armor)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (-2 to Physical Armor), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Sleep

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 10/15
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds **Area of Effect:** 8-yard radius.
Effect: Puts target to sleep

This spell causes one or more characters to fall into a deep sleep. The magician yawns widely and then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group. If successful, the targets immediately fall into a magical slumber, waking only if they take any damage or the spell ends. Each round, a sleeping target may make a Willpower test against the magician's Willpower Step. If successful, he wakes up. The spell only affects characters or creatures that need sleep—it does not work against most undead, for example. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Willpower Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Seventh Circle

Call

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 100 miles
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Delivers a message

This spell delivers a message over a great distance. The message must contain no more words than the magician's Spellcasting Rank and must be sent to someone the magician knows within range. The magician opens and closes his mouth as if talking, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the target sees and hears a magical image of the magician speaking the message. The target receives only the information that the magician chooses to send, whether a threat, a warning, a cry for help, or a simple greeting. The spell allows only one-way communication—the magician knows if the spell succeeded but cannot tell if the target understood the message, nor can he learn anything about the target's current location and condition.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+Rank words)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+Rank words), Increase Range (+20 miles)

Confusing Weave
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: 1 round **Area of Effect:** 4-yard radius
Effect: WIL

This spell confounds a magician's ability to weave spell threads.

The magician shakes his head from side to side and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among the target group, +1 for each target after the first (any targets the magician has astrally sensed do not increase the Difficulty Number). If successful, he compares his Effect test against each target's Thread Weaving Step. If successful, affected targets fail to weave threads into their own spells—they lose all of the spell threads they are weaving or have woven. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards),

Dislodge Spell
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL+5

This spell disrupts a random spell from a spell matrix. The target must have one or more spell matrices, including matrix objects. The magician squints his eyes and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the gamemaster randomly selects one of the target's spell matrices. If the target has been astrally sensed, the spell in the matrix is revealed and the magician may force a different spell matrix to be selected (the magician does not know the spell in this matrix).

The magician makes an Effect test against a Dispel Difficulty based on the chosen spell matrix's Rank (see Dispelling Magic, p. XX). If successful, the matrix is wiped clean of all spells it currently contains, leaving it empty. If a spell in the affected matrix is currently in the process of being cast, the target can choose to abort the spell or complete it using raw magic. This spell can target any type of spell matrix—Standard, Enhanced, Armor, or Shared—or matrix object. The spell matrix wiped by this spell may be reattuned to hold a new spell or the spell it previously contained.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Hypervelocity
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: One round
Effect: WIL+2/NA

This spell accelerates a small object about the size of a pebble to incredible speeds.

The magician extends their arm and points at the target, levitating the object just in front of their finger. When the spell is complete, he whispers "Boom" and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, the object crosses the span in an instant and perforates the target causing damage equal to the Effect test with no armor providing protection.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Mystic Net

Threads: 3 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank+5 rounds **Area of Effect:** 16-yard radius
Effect: WIL+3

This spell is an area-effect version of the Binding Threads spell (p.XX). The magician mimics tying several lengths of string together in a complex knot, then makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense among any character within the area of effect. If successful, a mass of glowing magical threads leaps from his hands, forming a net to entangle the targets. Each round, an affected target may make a Strength test against the Effect Step. If he fails, he is bound and cannot use his hands to attack or cast spells and is Harried. If successful, he is only Harried. Harried penalties do not apply to attempts to break free of their bonds each round. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Spellstore

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 11/16
Casting: 6 **Range:** Touch
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: Temporarily store a spell within an object

This spell places a spell pattern within an object, allowing the spell to be cast at a later time. The object can be anything and does not require any special enchanting. The magician touches the object and makes a Spellcasting test against the Dispel Difficulty of the spell to be stored. If successful, the spell is placed within the object. Anyone holding the object can cast the spell using his own Spellcasting talent as if from a spell matrix. If the spell requires threads, the caster must know the appropriate Thread Weaving talent. The object's wielder must be touching it to cast the spell stored within.

Once the stored spell has been cast, or the Spellstore spell ends, the spell pattern vanishes from the item.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 hours)

Eighth Circle

Astral Catastrophe
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 30 yards
Duration: One round **Area of Effect:** 6-yard radius
Effect: WIL+5/Mystic and -2 to all Action tests

This spell unleashes mystic energy across both astral and physical realities within the area of effect. The magician makes a dramatic tearing motion with both hands and makes a Spellcasting test against the highest Mystic Defense of all characters within the area. If successful, chaotic energy pours into the area in both astral and physical space. The Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted to anyone within the area of effect each round the spell is active. Additionally, any characters who have taken damage spell suffer a -2 penalty to all Action tests until the end of the round. The caster is not affected by the spell.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Effect (-2 penalties), Increase Range (+10 yards), Increase Area (+2 yards)

Catch Spell
Threads: 1 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** Self
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+2

This spell captures other spells. The magician mimics catching an object, then makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, he may make an Effect test against the Spellcasting test result of any spell the target casts directly at him. If successful, the magician catches the spell and may hold it until his Catch Spell ends or he makes a Spellcasting test to cast the caught spell at a legitimate target within the caught spell's range, including the original caster. When recast, the caught spell's effects use the original caster's statistics. If the magician is holding a caught spell when his Catch Spell ends, the spell affects him normally. The magician cannot cast any other spells until he recasts the caught spell or his Catch Spell ends.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)

Compression Bubble
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+3/Physical

This spell traps a character inside a bubble of magical energy. The magician cups his hands together as if holding a ball, then releases them and makes a Spellcasting

test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful a field of energy forms into a flexible, but resilient, bubble around the target.

The magician's Effect test determines how much damage is inflicted, as the bubble squeezes the target and constricts his actions.

Each round, the magician must concentrate on squeezing the bubble to inflict additional damage to the target, or he may choose to move away and leave the target trapped until the spell ends. The bubble may be torn open from the outside by reducing its Death Rating to zero. Treat the bubble as a barrier with 10 Physical and Mystic Armor and a Death Rating of 20. The target may break out of the bubble by making a successful Strength test against the Effect Step. Weapons or spells wielded by the target have no effect against the bubble's interior.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards), Additional Target (+1)

Karma Cancel

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 40 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Prevents use of Karma

This spell temporarily neutralizes a character's ability to use Karma. The magician snaps his fingers and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, he may cancel any attempt by the target to use Karma by spending one of his own Karma Points. Neither character rolls Karma Dice, but the Karma Points spent by both parties are lost. Each round, the target may attempt a Willpower test against the Spellcasting test result. If successful, the spell ends and the target regains his ability to use Karma.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)

Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Range (+10 yards)

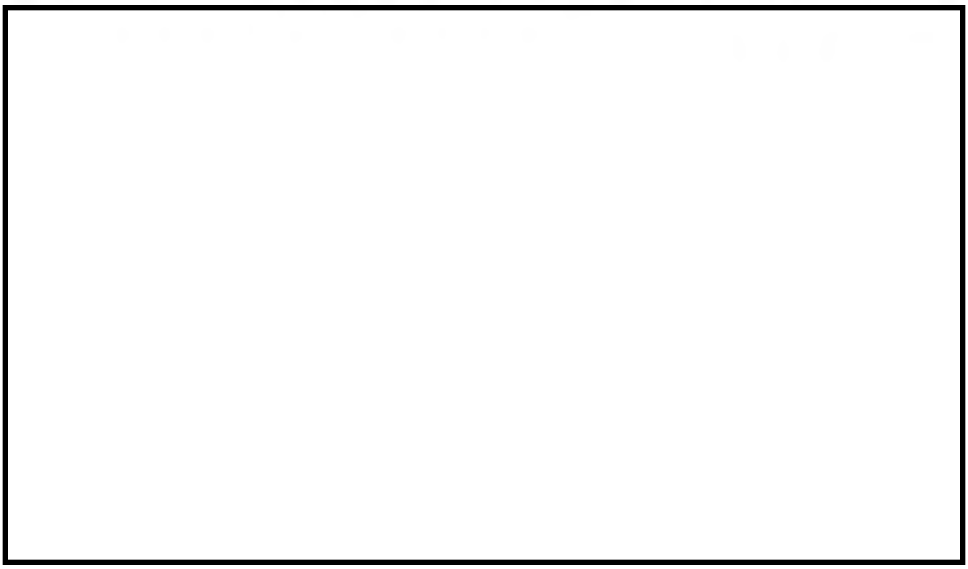
Spell Cage

Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 20 yards
Duration: Rank+5 rounds **Area of Effect:** 2-yard radius
Effect: –5 penalty to Spellcasting tests

This spell captures a character in a magical cage. The magician makes a descending whistling sound, followed by a "clang!" and makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Mystic Defense. If successful, a cage forms around the target—the target must fit within the cage or the spell automatically fails. Once conjured, the cage cannot be moved.

The target cannot move from the cage, as it has no door. While trapped, the target suffers a –5 penalty to Spellcasting and Thread Weaving tests, including attempts to cast spells against the cage itself. The cage may be broken by attacks; treat the cage as a barrier with 10 Physical and Mystic Armor and a Death Rating of 40.

Success Levels: Increase Duration (+2 rounds)



Extra Threads: Increase Duration (+2 rounds), Increase Effect (-1 penalty), Increase Effect (+10 Death Rating), Additional Target (+1)

Spell Snatcher
Threads: 2 **Weaving:** 12/17
Casting: TMD **Range:** 10 yards
Duration: 1 round (see text)
Effect: WIL+4

This spell seizes a spell from a magician's spell matrix and places it in one of the magician's own matrices. Magicians commonly replace their Spell Snatcher spell with the snatched spell, but may replace any of the spells in their matrices. The magician makes a Spellcasting test against the target magician's Mystic Defense. If successful, the gamemaster randomly selects one of the target's spell matrices. The magician makes an Effect test against a Dispel Difficulty based on the Spell Circle. If successful, the spell leaves the target's matrix and appears in one of the caster's matrices. The snatched spell remains in the magician's spell matrix until cast or replaced, depending on the spell.

If casting the snatched spell is beyond the magician's abilities (he does not have the proper Thread Weaving talent or is not a high enough Circle), he may still cast it from the matrix as if it were cast from a grimoire which he has attuned (p. XX). Either way, the snatched spell vanishes from his spell matrix as soon as it is cast. If the magician is capable of casting the snatched spell, he may use it normally, in which case the spell remains in his spell matrix until replaced by another spell or erased by a Reattuning failure. If the snatched spell is unknown to the magician, he can attempt a Patterncraft test to learn the spell (see Learning Spells, p.XX). If successful, he may add the spell to his grimoire.

Success Levels: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step)
Extra Threads: Increase Effect (+2 Effect Step), Increase Range (+10 yards)

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SUMMONING

We may have the power to command the spirits of the elements, but I find it better to ask politely.
•Sandelia, Elf Elementalist •

Summoning is the art of calling on spirits to perform some sort of service for the summoner. Though there are talents and spells used to summon specific types of spirits, this chapter provides general rules for summoning in Earthdawn.

There are several methods of summoning that adepts can use to call on spirits. The most versatile ability is the Summon talent (p.XX). It allows adepts to call spirits with a wide range of powers. Other talents and spells also summon spirits, and often more easily than using the Summon talent, but the spirits summoned are usually limited in power or called for a specific purpose. Regardless of the method used, the test made to summon a spirit is called the Summoning test.

Like the Thread Weaving talent, each Summon talent is unique and can only be used to summon spirits of a certain type. For example, Elementalists summon elemental spirits with this talent, while Nethermancers summon ally spirits.

The rules in this chapter provide an overview of summoning and banishing spirits by use of the Summon talent. Descriptions of spirits can be found in the Gamemaster's Guide.

ON SPIRITS

While spirits can be summoned by player characters, they still pose some mystery, no matter how powerful the summoner may be. Some general information on spirits is known to adepts who receive summoning abilities as part of their Discipline.

There are several categories and types of spirits:

Tasked Spirits are simple spirits with capabilities limited to a certain task. They are usually summoned by spells such as Summon Fog Ghost or talents such as Orbiting Spy, and their summoning and other related rules are governed by the rules for the spell or talent.

Elemental Spirits are spirits of the five elements and usually summoned by Elementalists.

Ally Spirits are more mysterious than elemental spirits. Usually living in strange planes in the Netherworlds, they either originate from the Netherworlds or are spirits of deceased Namegivers. They are the domain of Nethermancers.

Invae is the name given to a group of insect-like spirits from the Netherworlds. They are often mistaken for Horrors, as they try to break through to the physical world, but are very different in nature.

Named spirits are most often the spirits of deceased Namegivers (ally spirits), although any spirit can have a Name if given one. They follow the rules of the type of spirit they are, but require their Name to be known or one of their Pattern Items to be present during their summoning.

Spirits have a Strength Rating measuring their raw power. It is added to many of a spirit's base characteristics to determine a spirit's abilities and governs the number of powers a spirit can have. While adepts can learn talents to summon and communicate with spirits, it should be understood that spirits are still very alien to player characters. They have different mindsets, agendas, and concepts of time and space (even if they were once Namegivers).

SUMMONING

This section provides guidelines on how to summon spirits, including information on the forms of summoned spirits and the services they may perform, and a means of controlling spirits called the Contest of Wills.

Summoning follows a series of three steps:

1. Make Summoning Test
2. Negotiate with the Spirit
3. Spirit Service

1. Make Summoning Test

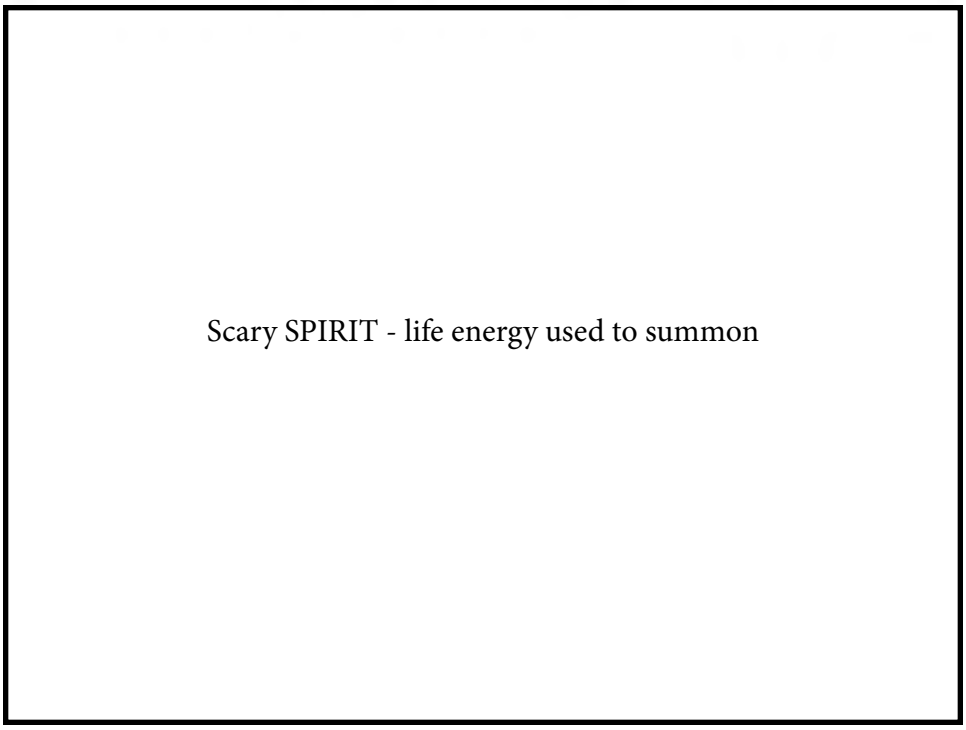
The summoner makes a Summoning test using his Summon talent. The Difficulty Number is the spirit's Mystic Defense. If the summoner wants a spirit to have one or more specific powers, the Difficulty Number for the Summoning test increases by +2 for each power specified by the summoner. For example, if a Nethermancer wants to summon a Strength 4 ally spirit with two specific powers, the Difficulty Number is 13 (9 for the spirit's Mystic Defense, and +2 for each of the two powers).

If successful, the spirit arrives in astral space. It remains in astral space near the summoner for the duration of the summoning, which is one hour per success on the Summoning test. The spirit will perform one service for the summoner during this time.

2. Negotiate with the Spirit

After calling the spirit, the summoner must negotiate with the spirit using the Spirit Talk or Elemental Tongues talent (as appropriate) against the spirit's Social Defense. For every success scored on the test, the spirit agrees to use one of its powers to perform the desired service.

The summoner may enhance their negotiation by offering to perform a favor for the spirit. This favor could take any number of forms, and the reason for the task may not be clear.



Some spirits may require a sacrifice of life energy from the summoner—represented by blood magic damage equal to the spirit's Strength Rating (which cannot be healed until the summoning ends).

The gamemaster is encouraged to add role-playing elements to this negotiation. Summoned spirits are not mindless slaves, they are sentient beings with their own desires and motivations—however unusual or alien those motives might be. Giving summoned spirits focused personality traits that relate to the type of spirit they are can bring additional flavor to the game. An earth spirit might reflect the slow, solid nature of its element, while a fire spirit might be more energetic and playful.

3. Spirit Service

Once an adept has summoned a spirit, he can call on it to perform a service. Spirit services may include anything from helping the summoner perform a task to enhancing the summoner's abilities. The spirit will perform the requested service using the power or powers the summoner negotiated during the summoning ritual.

A summoned spirit will perform services only for the duration of the summoning. If the summoner does not use the spirit's service before the duration expires, the service is lost. Spirits normally perform the service demanded by their summoners with little or no resistance. Some spirits may argue or debate the merits of a service, but rarely do they outright refuse. In these cases, summoners may attempt to persuade reluctant spirits to perform services.

In general, persuading a spirit to do the summoner's bidding is more difficult than defeating a spirit in a Contest of Wills, but a successful attempt at persuasion is less likely to anger the spirit in question.

Summoners can use social talents against spirits, but these talents were developed for use against Namegivers, and their effectiveness against spirits is limited. Any test with social talents meant to work on Namegivers (or, for that matter, animals) used to persuade a spirit requires an extra success against the spirit's Social Defense.

Limits on Summoning

A character's ability to summon and control spirits is limited. The total Strength Rating of a character's active spirits (those that are performing a service or have yet to complete one) cannot be greater than their Rank in the Summon talent. Tasked spirits—those summoned by a specific spell or talent—do not count against this limit. If a character tries to summon or control a spirit that causes him to go over this limit, the attempt fails and the character suffers the effects described under Dangers of Summoning, below.

Contest of Wills

In some instances, spirits may refuse to perform services that pose a threat to them or refuse to use particular powers on behalf of the summoner. In these cases, the adept may impose his will on the spirit by defeating the spirit in a Contest of Wills. For example, a fire elemental may refuse to manifest inside a boat on a lake. A wood elemental will almost always refuse to walk into a fire.

In a Contest of Wills, both the summoner and the spirit make a Willpower Test. Whoever achieves the highest test result wins the contest. Both spirit and summoner may spend a Karma Point on this test. If the summoner prevails, the spirit must comply with his wishes. If the spirit wins, it may refuse the summoner's request. If the test results in a tie, the summoner may choose to continue the Contest of Wills, in which case both parties make another Willpower test, or he may concede defeat to the spirit.

Any spirit that wins a Contest of Wills may attempt to break free of the summoner's control by winning another Contest of Wills. If the spirit wins the second contest, it breaks free of the summoner. It may simply return to its astral home, or it may exact revenge or cause mischief for the summoner. The gamemaster determines the response of a freed spirit, based on the spirit's personality, the summoner's treatment of it and any past dealings it has had with the summoner.

Named Spirits

Named spirits are powerful entities, and typically have high Strength Ratings, making them difficult to deal with under normal circumstances. This unusual status provides them with extra protections from summoning magic. Summoning Named spirits follows the same sequence as summoning regular spirits, but the Summoning test requires an additional success, and the negotiation is likewise more difficult.

In addition, the summoner also needs a connection to the Named spirit. This connection is established by knowing the spirit's Name (which might differ from what it is actually called by Namegivers, or might be an old and forgotten Name) or having possession of one of its pattern items. Since many Named ally spirits appear to be former Namegivers, this makes them easier to summon than Named elemental spirits.

Banishing

Spirits can be banished, whether by the adept that summoned them or another character trying to deprive the summoner of the spirit's service. To banish a spirit, the adept makes a Banish test against a Difficulty Number equal to the spirit's Mystic Defense. If the spirit is a tasked spirit summoned by a specific talent or spell, use a Difficulty Number based on the spell or talent's Dispel Difficulty (see Dispelling Magic, p. XX).

If successful, the spirit is forced back to its normal astral habitat. If the adept is trying to banish a spirit type they are not able to summon, the Banish test requires an extra success. For example, Elementalists need an extra success to banish ally spirits, and Nethermancers need an extra success to banish elemental spirits. Both types of magicians need an extra success to banish invae spirits.

Horrors cannot be banished in this way. While they are creatures native to the depths of astral space, they are not spirits in a way understood by those that study summoning magic. Sending these powerful entities back to their native realm requires equally powerful spells and talents designed to deal with their unique nature.

Dangers of Summoning

Any time an adept attempts to summon or banish a spirit, he exposes himself to the hazards of astral space. Generally, the processes used for summoning protect the adept from these hazards, but only when they work as designed. Any failed Summoning test or banishing attempt may damage the adept… or worse.

Failure can cause an astral backlash that injures the adept in a way similar to effects of casting raw magic. The astral region in which the failed summoning attempt took place determines the amount of damage the adept suffers. Refer to the Astral Backlash Table. The Damage Step is determined by the spirit's Strength Rating, resisted by the character's natural Mystic Armor.

Alternately, the summoning attempt may produce a spirit not bound to obey the summoner. These spirits usually have the same Strength Rating as the spirit the adept intended to summon, but don't perform services or obey the summoner at all—they may even attack the summoner and his companions.

Astral Backlash Table

Region Type	*Damage Step*
Safe	Strength Rating + 4
Open	Strength Rating + 8
Tainted	Strength Rating + 12
Corrupt	Strength Rating + 16

COMBAT

Our world is won back, inch by bloody inch, by the muscle and steel of its heroes driving back the Horrors and their minions.
• Karlon Sharpwhisper, troll Warrior •

In the world of Earthdawn, your characters can expect to confront any number of dangerous beings in the course of their adventures. Sometimes you'll be able to get what you need without combat. Sometimes you'll have to fight for what you want. This chapter explains the mechanics for handling those situations in which your characters must fight to survive, and those times when they join battle for the sheer pleasure of matching skills against an opponent.

Combat in Earthdawn happens fast and loose, allowing characters to perform a wide variety of actions. Swinging swords, casting spells, and intimidating your enemies are all just part of the action.

COMBAT SUMMARY

Combat is conducted in a series of turns called combat rounds, or simply, rounds. Each combat round equals roughly six seconds of game time. The exact length of each round is usually not important to the story—it is simply a convenient unit of measure.

During each round, your character can do a number of things: perform simple tasks (including movement), and use talents or skills that require different kinds of actions.

To learn whether your character can successfully perform his desired actions, you will make one or more tests. After making an Initiative test to determine the order in which actions are resolved, players make an Attack test which, if successful, is followed by a Damage test. These, and the other kinds of tests that players make during combat, are described in the Actions (p. XX), and Resolving Attacks (p. XX) sections.

The following summary outlines the general sequence that makes up a combat round. Each element is explained more fully later on in this chapter.

1. Declare Intentions
2. Determine Initiative
3. Declare and Resolve Actions
4. Begin a New Round

Most of the following rules apply equally to player and gamemaster characters. Whenever a rule applies solely to a gamemaster character or creature it is noted. References to the term character refer to any player or gamemaster characters or creatures participating in the combat.

Declare Intentions

All characters declare the general type of action they intend to perform during the round, along with any combat options (see p. XX) they intend to use. This doesn't need to be overly formal. Combat options need to be chosen before Initiative is rolled because many combat options have effects that last the entire round, such as raising or lowering defense ratings.

Determine Initiative

Each round, characters make an Initiative test to determine the order in which their actions are carried out. Talents, spells, armor, and shields can modify the Initiative Step, as listed in their descriptions. A character's Initiative Step cannot voluntarily be lowered below Step 1. A character whose Initiative Step is involuntarily reduced below Step 1—for example, through Wounds or magic—acts last in the round, with an effective Initiative of 1.

Players roll their characters' Initiative; the gamemaster rolls for other characters and creatures. The character with the highest result acts first, followed by the character with the next highest result, and so on. If two or more characters have the same Initiative, their actions occur at the same time and are resolved in whatever order the gamemaster prefers. One method of breaking ties is comparing the characters' Dexterity values; comparing Initiative Steps is another. If a player character ties with a gamemaster character or creature, the player character should get to take his actions first—Earthdawn is a game about heroes, after all!

Speeding Up Initiative

While players are usually responsible for a single character, the gamemaster is often required to keep track of multiple creatures or gamemaster characters. To simplify the Initiative process, it is recommended that the gamemaster make one Initiative test for groups of similar characters under his control. For example, it makes more sense to roll one test for a group of six identical ork scorchers than keep track of individual Initiative test results for each ork. On the other hand, if the group consists of five ork scorchers accompanied by a captain, the gamemaster may choose to make one test for the five ork scorchers and a separate test for their captain.

Take The Initiative

Optional Rule: In large combats, which can take a lot of real time to resolve (thus slowing game play), the gamemaster may speed up the combat round by choosing not to make Initiative tests for gamemaster creatures or characters; he simply uses the Initiative Step as the test result.

Resolve Actions

Once the Initiative order has been determined, the characters declare the specific talents, skills, or spells they intend to use and whether they plan to spend Karma on any actions. They resolve their actions by making the appropriate tests and evaluating the results. This includes making Damage tests, spell Effect tests, and so on.

Begin a New Round

After all characters have resolved their actions, the round ends. If some characters wish to continue fighting, the next combat round begins.

Battle Maps And Miniatures

While it is possible to handle combat abstractly, with the action occurring solely in everyone's imagination, the use of a hex-based battle map and miniatures can help visualize the fight.

When using a battle map, we recommend that a hex be 2 yards wide. Any distance specified can be easily halved to determine the distance on the hex grid. It is usually best to round up to cover a full hex; if an effect has a range of 1 yard, it should cover 1 hex.

ACTIONS

During each combat round, a character can take one Standard action and any number of Simple actions. He can use Sustained actions over the course of several turns, and he can use Free actions when the ability allows it. The different types of Actions are described in more detail in the Talents chapter, p.XX.

Movement

Each round, a character can freely move a distance up to his Movement Rate. If you want to move farther, you must use your Standard action.

Depending on the environment (and gamemaster discretion), a character's Movement Rate may be reduced. For example, characters fighting in knee-deep water may find their Movement Rate halved. See Impaired Movement, p.XX, for more information.

Standard Actions

A character can perform one Standard action per combat round. Many of the Simple and Free actions a character takes on his turn depend on the character taking a Standard action with another ability.

Many talents and skills require characters to use their Standard action. A character can use only a single talent or skill that requires a Standard action during a combat round. This is because the talent or skill requires a major part of the character's focus to execute. Talents and skills that require a Standard action usually require a test to determine their success (see Using Talents, p. XX, and Using Skills, p.XX). This includes most combat and Interaction talents and skills, and any use of magic, including weaving threads and casting spells.

A character may spend his Standard action to move, allowing him to move up to double his Movement Rate.

Sustained Actions

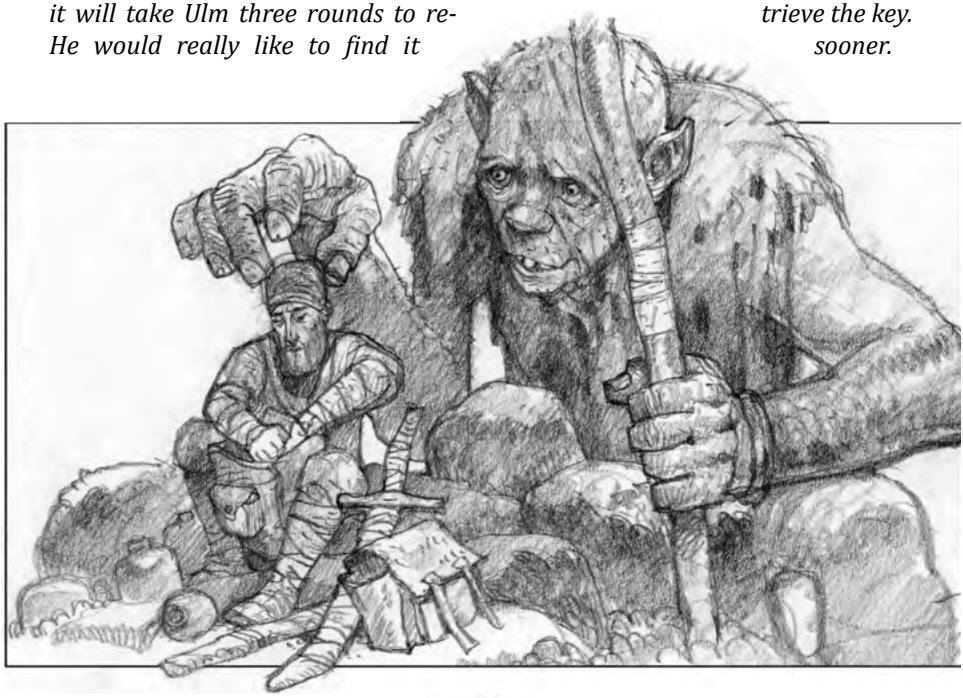
Not all tasks can be completed in a single round. Some talents use Sustained actions, identified by the "Action: Sustained" notation in talent or skill descriptions. A Sustained action for a talent or skill usually requires the character to spend more than one round before a test is made. Sometimes this represents days of work to craft an item or train an animal, sometimes it is an extra round or two for additional preparation or a short speech to one's allies. Unless specified, the gamemaster should determine a reasonable length of time for the completion of such actions.

Examples of actions that might require multiple rounds to complete include:

- Finding a specific object in a backpack (3–4 rounds)
- Searching an area of wall or a door (9–10 rounds)
- Removing or putting on a suit of leather armor (9–10 rounds)
- Spiking a door shut (2–3 rounds)

Some Sustained actions are not covered by the rules or not listed as possibilities, because they depend too much on the situation. If a character is under pressure to complete the action quickly, the gamemaster may allow him to speed up the process by making an Action test (often an Attribute test) at the end of each round to determine success. This usually prevents the character from taking any other actions during the round.

Ulm wants to retrieve a key he found to lock a door behind his group as they flee a nasty Horror construct. Unfortunately, he stowed the key in his backpack, along with his other adventuring gear. The gamemaster decides it will take Ulm three rounds to retrieve the key. He would really like to find it sooner.



The gamemaster allows Ulm to quickly search through his backpack, and the troll makes a Dexterity (6) test each round to see if he finds the key sooner.

Simple Actions

Apart from his Standard Action, a character can perform a variety of Simple actions during a combat round, which may or may not require him to make a test. Some talents and skills do not require a Standard action to use; these are often considered Simple Actions, and include talents or skills such as Anticipate Blow, Astral Sight, Battle Shout, or Second Attack.

Technically, there is no limit to the number of Simple actions a character can perform during a combat round. However, the gamemaster may choose to limit what a character can reasonably do during a (roughly) six-second time period, balanced against the fact that Earthdawn is a fantasy game, and limiting actions should serve the goal of telling an exciting story. Here are some examples of Simple Actions that could reasonably be carried out during a single combat round:

- Speak a short sentence (a dozen words or so)
- Draw or sheath a melee weapon
- Unsling a shield or take off a backpack
- Put an item into or take one out of a belt pouch
- Quickly search an area of wall or a door

Free Actions

Free actions are usually part of other actions a character takes, enhancing them. There are no activities that are Free actions on their own, and as such there is no list of example Free actions as there is for other action types. Most Free actions are either enhancing the outcome of another Simple or Standard action (such as increasing damage), or they are a reaction to another character's action, such as dodging an attack. As a rule of thumb, only one defensive talent or skill can be used against a single attack. For example, it isn't possible to use the Avoid Blow and Riposte talents against the same attack.

Resolving Actions

Starting with the highest Initiative test result, characters perform their declared actions, one at a time, until all characters' actions have been resolved.

The gamemaster counts down Initiative values, starting with the highest result. Each character takes his turn performing actions. Characters often make Attack tests when engaged in combat, but an action might also consist of casting a spell, running, or using a non-combat talent while the arrows and spells fly. The character makes the appropriate test, announcing the result after rolling the appropriate dice, including any Karma or bonus dice rolls.

Each character's actions are resolved before the next character acts, unless the description for the talent or skill being used specifically states otherwise.

Reserved Actions

Instead of acting on his Initiative, a character may choose to wait until later that round for a more appropriate moment to act. This is referred to as reserving an action.

Reserving an action allows a character to react to other events, perhaps even preventing them. When reserving an action, the character specifies an event and has the right to act at any later point during the round when that event occurs, interrupting the character whose turn it is.

When resolving his reserved action, the character who reserved his action goes first. The concentration required while waiting for the right moment increases the difficulty of the action performed. Characters taking a reserved action add +2 to the Difficulty Number of all actions performed on their turn.

Taking a Reserved Action is often the only way a character can attack opponents making Charging Attacks (see p.XX) or Swooping Attacks (see p.XX).

Herekar is looking out for his friend Tairin during a fight with five cadaver men. Herekar has the highest Initiative result with a 14, and declares a reserved action—saying he wants to intercept anyone who tries to attack Tairin.

One of the cadaver men, with an Initiative of 8, moves to attack Tairin. Herekar decides to jump in. He attacks the cadaver man, adding +2 to the undead's Physical Defense. His attack knocks the cadaver man down.

The cadaver man then takes his turn. He can try to attack Tairin from the ground, or do something else."

Delayed Actions

Instead of acting on his Initiative, a character may simply choose to act later in the round. This is referred to as delaying an action. When delaying an action, the character may act at any time later in the round, and does not suffer any penalties to his Initiative test result.

Talent and Ability Interactions with Delayed and Reserved Actions

Some talents and abilities require a character to have a higher Initiative than his opponent. These abilities may only be used if a character's Initiative test result is higher than his opponent's. If a character chooses to delay or reserve his action, it does not retroactively trigger other character's abilities that require a higher initiative.

Herekar the Warrior uses Cobra Strike to try and gain an advantage against a Swordmaster that he is attacking. The Swordmaster ends up with a higher Initiative test result, and so Herekar does not gain the Attack test bonus the talent grants.

If the Swordmaster decides to delay his action and act after Herekar, he does not gain a test bonus from Cobra Strike if he attacks the Swordmaster with his Melee Weapons talent.

If a character chooses to delay or reserve his action, it does not trigger other character's abilities that require a higher initiative—the Initiative test result does not actually change.

alties. However, the character cannot interrupt another character's action simply by delaying his own action.

If he does not act during the current round, a character may delay his action into the following round. His Initiative for the next round is automatically 1 higher than the highest Initiative rolled for the new round. If he chooses to roll his Initiative normally, he loses his delayed action.

Maloren is first to act during a round. He intends to cast the Flame Weapon spell on one of his companions, but wants to see which one will find himself on the front line. He decides to delay his action. Later on Initiative count 6, Maloren sees that his friend Herekar has moved in to fight off the cadaver men. Maloren decides Herekar will benefit the most from the Flame Weapon spell, so after Herekar has has resolved his action, Maloren steps in and casts the spell.

Resolving Attacks

Because the most common action that a character will take during a combat round is to attack an opponent, the procedure used to resolve attacks is summarized below, followed by a complete explanation of each step:

1. Make an Attack test
2. Determine Success
3. Make a Damage test
4. Adjust Damage for Armor
5. Check for Wounds
6. Make Knockdown test
7. Check for Unconsciousness or Death

1. Make An Attack Test

Whenever a character attempts to attack a target, whether with a weapon or a spell, he makes a test using the appropriate talent or skill. This type of test is usually referred to as an Attack test. For example, if a Swordmaster is attempting to hit a foe with his sword, he makes a Melee Weapons test. If an Archer is firing an arrow at a foe, he makes a Missile Weapons test. If a Wizard is casting a spell at a target, he makes a Spellcasting test.

The type of attack determines the test's Difficulty Number. For physical attacks, such as those involving melee or missile weapons, the Difficulty Number is usually the target's Physical Defense. For attacks made with spells, the Difficulty Number is usually the target's Mystic Defense. Some talents, skills and spells use the target's Social Defense or another Difficulty Number instead. The ability description usually gives the Difficulty Number for using it.

The Difficulty Number for an Attack test may be modified by the distance to the opponent (for ranged combat attacks), environmental conditions (daylight, darkness, cover, and so on), or other factors (see Situation Modifiers, p.XX). Several combat options also modify a character's Defense Rating (see Combat Options, p.XX).

2. Determine Success

The Attack test result is compared to the Difficulty Number. If the test succeeds, the attack hits and the attacker makes a Damage (or Effect) test to determine how effective the attack is. If the test fails, the attack misses. The character resolves any other actions he is taking that round, then finishes his turn.

Some attacks are good enough to overcome an opponent's armor or shield, or deal extra damage to a target. Exceptionally well-placed attacks, lucky shots, or attacks that sufficiently focus a character's magic—these can all result in more effective attacks. If a character achieves more than one success on an attack test against his opponent's Physical Defense, he gains +2 bonus damage for each extra success.

Silar shoots an arrow at an attacking griffin, with test result of 18. The griffin's Physical Defense is 7, so Silar scores three successes! The two extra successes each add +2 damage, so Silar's crossbow goes from Step 10 to Step 14 damage.

Spells intended to inflict damage on their target may also produce critical hits. If a magician achieves extra successes against his opponent's Mystic Defense, he gains the bonus noted in the spell description.

Maloren, a dwarf Elementalist, casts the Earth Darts spell at a charging thundra beast. His Spellcasting result of 21 achieves three successes against the thundra's Mystic Defense of 7. The duration of the armor reducing effect is increased by four rounds, and the damage makes the thundra even more upset—it suffers a Wound as well! Maloren hopes his friends can take it down before it tramples him underfoot.

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3. Make a Damage Test

After making a successful Attack test, the character makes a Damage test. The dice rolled for this test depend on the weapon used. Unless otherwise noted in its description, all weapons add their Damage Step to the character's Strength Step to determine the total Damage Step of the attack.

A battle-axe has a Damage Step of 7, adding +7 to a character's Strength Step when inflicting damage. Thrak has a Strength Step of 7. When he hits an opponent with his axe, he makes a Step 14 Damage test (7+7=14) to determine the damage inflicted on his opponent.

Some talents or abilities allow the character to add a Karma die to the damage test. Remember that Bonus Dice apply to all tests the character makes, including Damage tests.

When attacking an opponent with a spell, the spell will usually direct the magician to make an Effect test to determine how much damage he inflicts. The magician uses the Effect Step given in the spell's description, which is usually based on his Will-

power, not Strength, and may be modified by talents such as Willforce, p.XX.

Regardless of whether the attack is made with a weapon or a spell, the Damage test result determines the number of damage points inflicted on the target.

4. Adjust Damage for Armor

Armor reduces the damage a character suffers, adding to the character's Physical (and sometimes Mystic) Armor. Generally, Physical Armor protects against sources of physical damage, while Mystic Armor protects against astral or psychic damage. If there is any uncertainty, the gamemaster decides which type applies. Some attacks, for example certain spells or creature powers, are never reduced by armor. This is noted in the spell or power description where applicable.

The character subtracts the appropriate Armor rating from the result of the Damage test. The modified result is the number of points added to the character's current damage.

5. Check For Wounds

If the damage from a single attack equals or exceeds a character's Wound Threshold, he takes a Wound. Wounds represent major trauma and slow the character's ability to recover damage (see Effects of Injury, p.XX). Wounds can also have a negative effect on the character's tests (see Wound Penalties, p.XX).

If the damage that causes a Wound renders the character unconscious or dead, the player should still record the Wound. Some talents, spells and magic items have the ability to bring a character back from the brink of death, but any Wounds the character has will penalize such healing.

6. Make A Knockdown Test

If the damage dealt exceeds a character's Wound Threshold by five or more, he could be knocked down. The player makes a Strength test against a Difficulty Number

equal to the difference between his Wound Threshold and the damage dealt. If successful, the character remains standing, otherwise he is knocked down (see Situation Modifiers, p. XX).

Tomas the Wizard has a Wound Threshold of 8. He is hit with a wicked axe stroke for 15 damage, after accounting for his armor. Because the damage inflicted is more than 5 points over his Wound Threshold, Tomas not only suffers a Wound, but he must make a Knockdown (7) test (15-8=7) to keep his feet. Tomas doesn't have any talents that help, so he makes the test using his Strength Step, and rolls a 5. The next thing Tomas knows, he is on the ground and in pain.

Other causes of knockdown, such as the attacking to knockdown combat option (p.XX) or being dismounted (p.XX), may require a character to make a Knockdown test.

7. Check for Unconsciousness or Death

After a character takes damage from an attack, the player checks the character's Current Damage to see if he is unconscious or dead.

Unconsciousness

A character with Current Damage at least equal to his Unconsciousness Rating, but less than his Death Rating, falls to the ground unconscious. Unconscious characters may take no actions other than making Recovery tests, and are considered both Blindsided and Knocked Down. They can regain their senses by recovering enough Damage Points to reduce their Current Damage below their Unconsciousness Rating (see Recovering From Damage, p.XX).

Death

A character whose Current Damage equals or exceeds his Death Rating immediately falls to the ground. Unless the character has a talent such as Life Check, or is quickly tended to by another character with a healing aid, such as a Last Chance Salve, the character is dead. In Earthdawn, character death is usually permanent. Some methods of resurrection exist, but they require powerful and dangerous magic, and attempts are rare. Characters who wish to pursue these methods should be warned that they are very expensive—and the price is rarely just financial.

Recovering From Injury

Characters should expect to suffer harm at some point during their adventures. This section provides information on how characters return to full health after taking damage.

Recovering From Damage

A character makes a Recovery test to heal damage he has taken. The test result is typically subtracted from his current damage. A character who has not taken any damage does not need to make a Recovery test. The Step for this test is based on the

character's Toughness Step. Each character has a limited number of Recovery tests available to him, also determined by his Toughness. Some talents and spells give the character additional Recovery tests, which must be used within a short time (usually one day). Unused Recovery tests cannot be saved from one day to the next.

Characters may spend Recovery tests as they wish, but must meet the following conditions:

- Upon waking from a full night's rest, an injured character (with 1 or more Current Damage) must make a Recovery test.
- At least one hour must pass between Recovery tests.
- The character must spend one minute without engaging in physical activity or taking damage.

Characters must also wait at least one hour after engaging in combat before they can make a Recovery test. This time must be spent in a state of relative rest; the character cannot undergo any strenuous physical activity during this time. Apart from certain talents and spells, or the use of healing aids, the only exception to this rule regards unconscious characters.

Regaining Consciousness

If he has one available, an unconscious character may make a Recovery test one minute after he falls unconscious. Another character can use a Standard action to try and revive him, allowing the unconscious character to make the test immediately. If the unconscious character does not recover enough Damage points to regain consciousness, he must wait another hour before he can make another Recovery test.

Wounds

Characters suffer no direct ill effects from the number of Damage Points they receive. Damage only affects a character's ability to function when it results in a Wound. Wounds limit the character's ability to heal damage. When a character makes a Recovery test, the test result is reduced by the number of Wounds he has. Regardless of modifiers, the minimum damage a character recovers from a Recovery test is 1.

Herekar the Warrior has been through the wringer. He is suffering from 3 Wounds and 41 Damage Points. Herekar makes a Recovery test with a result of 12. Because of his 3 Wounds, he only recovers 9 Damage Points (12–3=9), bringing his Current Damage down to 32.

Wound Penalties

While not an optional rule, Wound Penalties are best used after the players and gamemaster become familiar with the basic game rules. For each Wound, a character suffers a cumulative –1 penalty to all tests. For example, if a character has 2 Wounds, he suffers a –2 penalty; if he has 4 Wounds, he suffers a –4 penalty. This penalty does not apply to Recovery tests—those are already affected as described above.

Healing Wounds

Wounds are difficult to heal. A character heals one Wound per day under the following conditions:

- The character is not suffering from any damage. Even 1 point of Current Damage—including Strain, but not including Blood Magic damage—prevents a Wound from healing.
- The character uses a Recovery test after a full night's rest.

Curses or magical effects that prevent a character from making a Recovery test in the morning will keep Wounds from healing. Wounds can also be healed by some healing aids, spells, or abilities.

Recovering From Poison Or Disease

Recovering from the effects of poison or disease is handled differently from normal damage. See the Challenges and Obstacles chapter of the Gamemaster's Guide for more information on how poisons and diseases work.

COMBAT OPTIONS

The Earthdawn game provides characters with several options allowing them to exercise different tactics, such as fiercely attacking an opponent, or hanging back and acting more defensively. These options provide flexibility to a character's fighting style: sometimes the character may want to simply slug it out with an opponent, but other times he may want to modify his approach.

If a player wants to use a combat option he must declare it before he makes his Initiative test. A character who is knocked down cannot use a combat option until he is standing.

Many combat options have disadvantages as well as advantages. Some are limited to use only in close or ranged combat (see Types of Combat, p.XX). Because they can complicate things, it is recommended that the players and gamemaster become familiar with the basic combat rules before using these different options.

The Combat Options Table summarizes the different combat options and their effects.

Aggressive Attack

The character assaults his opponent with a ferocious flurry of blows. Aggressive Attack increases his ability to strike his opponent and inflict damage, but allows him to be struck more easily in return. Each close combat Attack test made by the character causes him 1 Strain. The character always takes at least 1 Strain, even if he doesn't end up making any Attack tests during the round.

The character gains a +3 bonus to his close combat Attack and Damage tests. Because of the force of his attack the character is somewhat uncontrolled—he pays less attention to attacks directed against him and suffers a –3 penalty to his Physical and Mystic Defense that round.

A character cannot use the Aggressive Attack and Defensive Stance options in the same round.

Combat Options Table

*Combat Option**	*Effect/Modifier*
Aggressive Attack (1 per attack)	+3 bonus to Attack and Damage tests; –3 penalty to Physical and Mystic Defense
Attacking to Knockdown	Possibly knocks opponent down; inflicts no real damage to opponent
Attacking to Stun	Damage test inflicts Stun damage
Called Shot (1)	–3 penalty to Attack test; if successful, attack hits designated area
Defensive Stance	+3 to Physical and Mystic Defense; –3 penalty to all tests (except Knockdown Tests)
Jump Up (2)	Allows a character to stand up and use a Standard action. No other movement allowed.
Setting Against a Charge	Allows the character to unhorse a charging opponent
Shattering a Shield (1)	Breaks opponent's shield
Splitting Movement (1)	Allows a move/action/move combination; character is considered Harried
Tail Attack[t'skrang only]	Allows an additional Unarmed Combat attack (–2 to all tests)

* The number shown in parentheses after the combat option is the Strain cost for using that option.

Attacking To Knockdown

Instead of attacking an opponent in close combat with the intent to cause harm, the character attempts to knock him down.

The character makes his close combat Attack test as normal. If the attack hits, the opponent must make a Knockdown test, even if the damage dealt would not normally trigger the test. The attacker rolls a Damage test to set the Difficulty Number for the Knockdown test, modified for armor. Regardless of the outcome, the character's opponent takes no damage.

In his fight with a rampaging dyre, Thrak decides he wants to try to knock the beast down. Thrak's attack succeeds and his Damage test is 21. The dyre has 8 points of Physical Armor. The gamemaster makes a Knockdown test for the animal against a Difficulty Number of 13 (21–8=13).

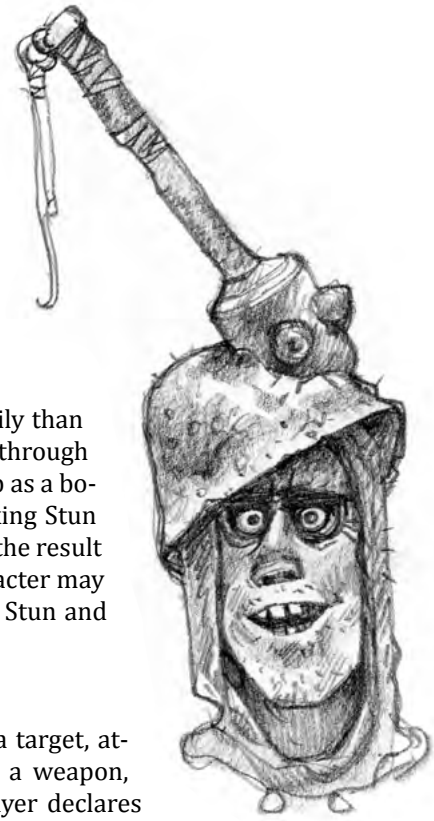
Attacking To Stun

The character makes a non-lethal attack against his opponent. He makes a close combat Attack test as normal, but any damage inflicted to his opponent is recorded as Stun damage. Although it is added to the character's Current Damage total, Stun damage cannot kill him. If the Stun damage sends a character's Current Damage high-

er than his Unconsciousness or Death Rating, the character falls to the ground unconscious. The character comes around when his Current Damage falls below his Unconsciousness Rating.

Creatures who have an Unconsciousness Rating of "NA" are immune to Stun damage.

Stun damage does not cause Wounds. If a character would normally take a Wound from the damage inflicted, he is considered Harried for the rest of the round, and he may still be knocked down based on the Damage test result.



A character recovers Stun damage more easily than he does normal damage, sometimes shaking it off through sheer will. The character adds his Willpower Step as a bonus to the first Recovery test he makes after taking Stun damage. This bonus applies only to that test and the result can only be used to recover Stun damage. A character may forego adding a Willpower bonus and heal both Stun and normal damage with a single Recovery test.

Called Shot

A character makes a precise attack against a target, attempting to strike a specific body part, hitting a weapon, striking a designated object, and so on. The player declares what object or part of his opponent his character is attempting to hit with the called shot. The character suffers a –3 penalty to his close or ranged combat Attack test. At the gamemaster's discretion, more difficult shots may incur a higher penalty. The concentration required causes the character 1 Strain per Attack test. If the test succeeds, the character strikes the chosen object or the intended area on his opponent.

A Called Shot cannot be used to increase the damage of an attack (see p. XX). If attempting to hit a weapon or other object, the target must make a successful Strength test against the Damage Step of the attack to hold on to the item. If an opponent is holding the item with two hands, he gains a +3 bonus to his Strength test. Other uses must be adjudicated by the gamemaster on a case-by-case basis (with a lesser or greater penalty, if required).

Defensive Stance

Sometimes it is more important that a character survives a fight. With this option a character adopts a defensive posture that reduces his chance of being hit. The character adds +3 to his Physical and Mystic Defense for all attacks directed against him that round, but the character only receives this bonus against attacks he is aware of. The character suffers a –3 penalty to his tests that round, except for Knockdown tests. At the gamemaster's discretion, this penalty may also be waived for defensive actions,

like Avoid Blow tests.

A character cannot use the Defensive Stance and Aggressive Attack combat options in the same round.

Jump Up

This combat option may only be used by characters that are knocked down. Instead of taking a Standard action to stand up, the character attempts to get back on his feet as a Simple action.

The character takes 2 Strain and makes a Dexterity (6) test. The test is modified by the Initiative Penalty of any armor he is wearing, but does not suffer the -3 penalty for being knocked down. If successful, the character leaps to his feet and may use a Standard action, but he may not perform any other movement that round. If the test fails, the character may still get to his feet using a Standard action.

Any penalties for being knocked down apply to the character until he is on his feet.

Setting Against A Charge

Characters fighting mounted opponents are often at a disadvantage, and they sometimes cannot attack a mounted fighter on their Initiative. The defender often has to use Delayed or Reserved Actions to attack at all. Against a Charging Attack (see p.XX), the defender on foot can employ the Setting Against a Charge combat option to turn the rider's high momentum to his advantage.

The defender must use a weapon long enough to reach his attacker beyond the mount's fore section. This usually means a spear or similar weapon. The defender takes a Reserved Action, and strikes the moment the attacker rides into range. The defender makes an Attack test as normal, but replaces his Strength Step with that of the mount to determine the Damage. If he scores any extra successes on the Attack test, the defender may knock the rider off the mount; the rider makes a Knockdown test with the Damage test result as the Difficulty Number (modified for armor as normal). If this test fails, the rider is knocked off his mount. This Knockdown test is made in addition to any the rider might make for suffering a Wound.

Setting Against a Charge can be used in combination with the Defensive Stance and Attack to Knockdown combat options.

Shattering A Shield

A character facing a shielded opponent may want to soften their defenses by smashing his shield. Only weapons of Size 3 or greater can shatter a shield. The character takes 1 Strain and makes a close combat Attack test against his opponent. If the test succeeds, the character makes a Damage test against the shield's Shatter Threshold (see Shields, p.XX), adding his weapon's size as a bonus to the test.

If the test succeeds, the shield shivers and breaks—it is now useless, and confers no further protective benefits. Magical shields are considerably harder to destroy than their mundane counterparts. The character must beat the Shatter Threshold by at least 10 to smash a magical shield.

Regardless of the Attack test result, the bearer takes no damage from the attack.

Herekar is still facing the opponent with a body shield. Herekar decides to remove the protection and declares that he wants to shatter the shield. He makes a successful Attack test, with a single success. Herekar makes a Damage test and rolls a 23—more than the shield's Shatter Threshold of 21! Herekar's sword comes down on his opponent's shield, rips through the metal rim, and splits the shield down the middle. Herekar's opponent drops the fragments and gets ready for a harder contest.

Splitting Movement

This combat option allows characters to split their movement during a combat round. A character uses part of his movement to approach a target, make an attack, then uses the rest of his movement to move away. Use of the Splitting Movement combat option causes the character 1 Strain. A character who uses this option is Harried (see p.XX) during the round.

Tail Attack

This combat option is only available to t'skrang. The character makes an additional attack in close combat using his tail. The character makes an Unarmed Combat test, and suffers a –2 penalty to all tests that round. The character makes a Damage test using his Strength Step.

Situation Modifers

A character relies on his wits, skills, and talents to make his way successfully through his adventures, but even the best-prepared adventurer can find himself at the mercy of circumstances beyond his control. Many of these situations can occur during combat and affect a character's performance. Called situation modifiers, these conditions can affect both tests and Defense ratings. The effects of different situations are described below, with specific modifiers summarized in the Situation Modifiers Table.

Blindsided

When a character cannot see his attacker in order to react effectively to an attack, he is considered Blindsided. The character subtracts –2 from his Physical and Mystic Defense against the attack. In certain situations the gamemaster may apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense. Examples of Blindsided attacks include attacks from the rear, attacks made against a blinded character, or attacks made from an ambush (although a character who is completely surprised suffers that penalty instead; see Surprised, p. XX). The attacker must be able to see his target in order to take advantage of the Blindsided modifier.

Cover

Characters can take advantage of nearby objects, such as trees or boulders, or even items of furniture, as protection. Cover modifiers are applied against any attacks made against the character.

Situation Modifiers Table

Situation	*Action Test Modifier*	*Defense Modifier**
Blindsided	–	–2
Cover - Partial	–	+2
Cover - Full	–	NA
Darkness (Blindness; Dazzled) - Partial	–2	–
Darkness (Blindness; Dazzled) - Full	–4	–
Harried	–2	–
Impaired Movement - Light	–2	–
Impaired Movement - Heavy	–4	–
Knocked Down	–3	–3
Range - Short	–	–
Range - Long	–2	–
Surprised	No tests allowed	–3

* Also applies to Social Defense, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Partial: The cover obscures part of a character's body, but the attacker can still see enough of his target to attack. Partial cover gives a +2 bonus to Physical and Mystic Defense.

Full: Full cover completely obscures a character's body, and they cannot be attacked without the use of special abilities or talents.

Tomas is being shot at by an ork scorcher with a crossbow. To reduce the chance of being skewered while he prepares a spell, the Wizard decides to take cover behind a nearby tree. The gamemaster decides that Tomas has partial cover, and adds +2 to his Physical Defense. The ork takes a shot, but misses, his arrow sinking into the bark near the Wizard's face. Tomas smiles and starts weaving threads for his spell.

Darkness

Characters sometimes find themselves fighting in the dark. If a character does not possess Heat Sight (p.XX), Low-Light Vision (p.XX), or a similar sense, then his actions will be impaired. Darkness modifiers are based on the amount of ambient light present.

Partial: Partial darkness is equivalent to a character being in a shuttered room on a cloudy day, or outside on a moonlit night. There is some ambient light, but the environment is dark, with a lot of shadow. A character in partial darkness suffers a –2

penalty to any sight-based tests.

Full: Full darkness is equivalent to a character being in a shuttered room at night, allowing some moonlight to filter in through the cracks, or outside on an overcast or moonless night. A kaer or cave with some form of luminescence would provide a similar environment; there is almost no ambient light, and a lot of deep shadows. A character in full darkness suffers a –4 penalty to any sight-based tests.

Characters with Low-Light Vision are not affected by partial darkness, and treat full darkness as if it were only partial darkness. Characters with Heat Sight are not affected by partial or full darkness.

Some spells or powers cause magical darkness, and can affect characters with Low-Light Vision or Heat Sight. The spell or power description normally includes information relating to the application of any darkness modifiers for that effect. At the gamemaster's discretion, darkness may affect a character's Movement Rate (see Impaired Movement, p.XX).

Blindness

A character who is blinded, whether from natural or magical causes, will suffer a darkness penalty for the duration of the effect. Blindness penalties tend to be equivalent to full darkness unless the character still possesses some ability to see, albeit in a very hazy and indistinct manner.

Dazzled

Intense light will sometimes dazzle a character. Dazzled penalties tend to be equivalent to partial darkness; only rarely will a light blind a character to the level of full darkness.

Harried

A character who is being attacked in close combat by four or more opponents is considered harried. The effects of some talents or spells may also cause the character to become harried.

A harried character suffers a -2 penalty to his tests as well as his Physical and Mystic Defense ratings. Opponents that are attacking from behind also gain the benefit of the Blindside modifier (see p.XX)

Mica is surrounded by five ghouls. Because of the number of opponents, the Swordmaster is harried—at least until he can dispatch a couple of them. The undead cause the dwarf to suffer a -2 penalty to his Attack tests and his Physical Defense is lowered from 10 to 8. The ghouls behind him make their attacks against a Physical Defense of 6 because of the blindside status.

Overwhelmed

Multiple sources of distraction could further disorient an already harried character. A harried character suffers a further –1 penalty to his tests for each additional harried effect he incurs after the first.

Impaired Movement

Movement in the Earthdawn game assumes the character is relatively unimpeded. At the gamemaster's discretion, characters could suffer movement or test penalties depending on the environment.

Light: Light brush, narrow alleyways, cramped rooms, partial darkness, and similar environments could reduce a character's Movement Rate by 5, or cause a -2 penalty to movement-based tests.

Heavy: Dense underbrush, a packed marketplace, complete darkness, waist-deep water, and similar environments could reduce a character's Movement Rate by 10, or cause a -4 penalty to movement-based tests. In addition, characters might need to pass Dexterity tests to avoid tripping or having their movement halted (this test should not suffer the -4 penalty).

None of these modifiers will reduce a character's Movement Rate below 1.

Knocked Down

A character who is knocked down can still act but he is severely impaired while he is prone. The character suffers a –3 penalty to his tests, and subtracts –3 from his Physical and Mystic Defense (in certain situations the gamemaster may apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense). These penalties remain in effect until the character stands up.

Standing is a simple matter, but uses the character's Standard action to get back on his feet (see Standard Actions, p.XX).

A character cannot move until he stands up. If he chooses to remain on the ground, a character may crawl at a Movement Rate of 2.

Things were looking up for Mica. He has dispatched two ghouls, and is no longer harried. Unfortunately, one of the undead lands a nasty blow, inflicting a Wound and knocking the Swordmaster down. Until he stands up, he not only suffers a –3 penalty to his tests—including his next Initiative test—but his Physical and Mystic Defense are also reduced. Mica hopes his companions arrive soon to help him out!

Since most combat options require freedom of movement, a character who is Knocked Down is unable to use any until he is standing (see Combat Options, p.XX).

Range

When making a ranged attack, the character may suffer a penalty to his Attack and Damage tests due to the distances involved (see Ranged Combat, p. XX).

Short: There are no modifiers at short range; the character makes his tests as normal.

Long: The character suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack and Damage tests.

Silar, a t'skrang Archer, is doing his part by firing his crossbow at a group of bandits. The bandits are currently about 60 yards away—long range for the crossbow. Silar has a Missile Weapons Step of 13. When firing at this distance,

his Missile Weapons Step is 11, due to the –2 penalty. Firing at a particularly ugly dwarf, Silar hits his target. His crossbow normally inflicts Step 10 damage. However, at long range he suffers a –2 penalty and rolls Step 8.

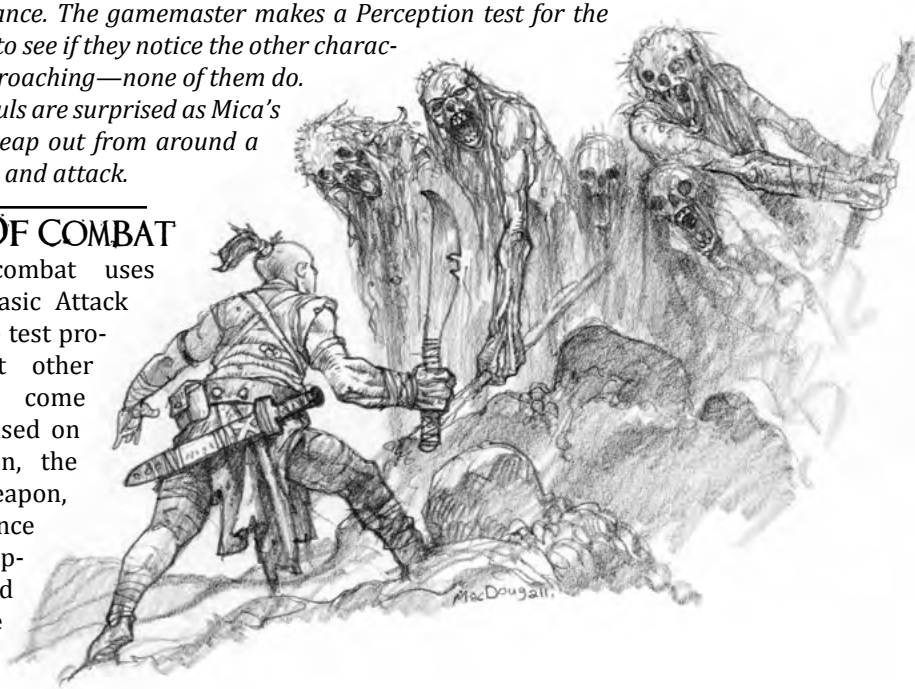
Surprised

From time to time, characters and creatures appear in unexpected places. This may be an intentional tactic, as when a group plans an ambush, or an accidental encounter, as when a creature suddenly appears from behind a tree in the forest. In either case, those caught off guard may be surprised.

Surprised characters cannot take any actions during the combat round in which they are surprised. They also suffer a –3 penalty to their Physical and Mystic Defense during the same round (in certain situations the gamemaster may apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense). The effects of surprise last until the end of the combat round.

To determine whether a character is surprised, he makes a Perception test against a Difficulty Number based on the situation. This is usually equal to the lowest Dexterity Step among the characters or creatures encountered, but is otherwise determined by the gamemaster. If the test fails, the character is surprised. If the test succeeds, the character can act or react as normal.

Mica is having a rough day. He is facing three ghouls, and has suffered a Wound. However, Mica's companions have returned, sneaking to within striking distance. The gamemaster makes a Perception test for the undead to see if they notice the other characters approaching—none of them do. The ghouls are surprised as Mica's friends leap out from around a building and attack.



Types Of Combat

Most combat uses the same basic Attack and Damage test procedure, but other factors can come into play based on the situation, the type of weapon, the distance between opponents, and so on. There are three primary

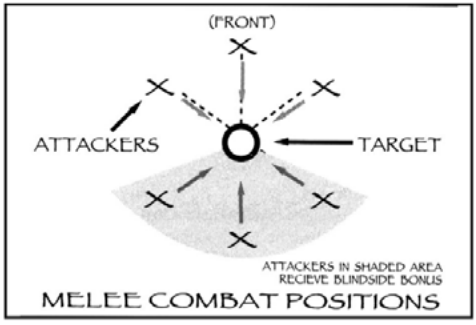
types of combat: close, ranged, and spell combat. Within each combat type there may be one or more types of attack.

Close combat: Melee and unarmed attacks.
Ranged combat: Missile and thrown attacks.
Spell combat: Spell and magical power attacks.

The following sections describe each type of combat in more detail, including mounted, aerial, and creature combat.

Close Combat

Close combat is any type of physical combat that occurs within reach of the combatants. This is usually a 2 yard distance between opponents, but some longer weapons allow for greater reach. The two types of close combat are:



MELEE COMBAT POSITIONS

Melee attacks: Made by hitting an opponent with a hand-held melee weapon, such as a broadsword or a battle-axe. Melee attacks are most commonly made using the Melee Weapons talent or skill.

Unarmed attacks: Made by an attacker punching, biting, kicking or generally employing his limbs against his opponent. Unarmed attacks are most commonly made using the Unarmed Combat talent or skill.

Maximum Number Of Attackers

A maximum of six human-sized opponents can attack a character in close combat. Any time four or more attackers set upon a character at the same time, he is considered harried (p. XX). The character remains harried until fewer than four attackers surround him. Note that some small creatures or pack animals can swarm an opponent, allowing more attacks against their opponent than normal. Regardless of the number of combatants, the relative positions of the attackers appears on the Melee Combat Positions diagram.

Entangling Weapons

Some weapons, such as whips, not only cause damage to those struck, but also wrap around the victim, preventing him from acting. These weapons are noted in their description as entangling weapons (see the Goods and Services chapter, p.XX).

If the attacker achieves an extra success on his Attack test with an entangling weapon, he entangles his opponent. The entangled character is considered harried for any actions other than breaking free.

To free himself, the target must make a successful Strength or Dexterity test against a Difficulty Number indicated in the weapon's description. If he was holding a one-handed bladed weapon when struck, he may add the weapon's Damage Step as a bonus to this test (this will help to cut him free, which ruins the entangling weapon).

Improvised Melee Weapons

Sometimes a character will want to hit another character with an object not normally used as a melee weapon, such as a chair, tankard, or rock. The gamemaster determines the statistics for this improvised weapon, including any Strength minimum and the item's Damage Step. Because of the unbalanced nature of the weapon, the character suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack tests when wielding the item.

Grappling

A character can attempt to wrestle or grapple an opponent instead of making a normal unarmed attack. When attempting a grappling attack, the character makes an Unarmed Combat test against the target's Physical Defense. To successfully grapple, he must score an extra success on the test. Grappling attacks do not cause damage, so the attacker does not make a Damage test.

A grappled character cannot move, and the only action he can take is to try and break free of the attacker's hold. The grappled target makes an Unarmed Combat or Strength test against the Unarmed Combat Step of the grappling attack. If the test succeeds, the target breaks free.

At the gamemaster's discretion a grappled character can take other actions, but must beat the Unarmed Combat Step of the grappling attack to succeed.

Silar, the t'skrang Archer, has been grappled by a bandit with a Physical Defense of 8 and an Unarmed Combat Step of 10. Silar attacks the bandit with his tail using his own Unarmed Combat skill. To hit he must succeed against a Difficulty Number of 10.

Once a character makes a successful grappling attack against an opponent, he can maintain the hold by declaring that he is doing so as his standard action during consecutive rounds. The character may choose to let go of his opponent at any time.

Ranged Combat

Ranged combat is any type of physical combat that occurs beyond the reach of the combatants. Normally, this is reserved for weapons that project a missile, or are thrown, toward a target more than 2 yards away.

The two types of ranged combat are:

Missile attacks: Made by firing a missile weapon, such as a bow or a sling (see Missile Weapon Descriptions, p.XX). Missile attacks are most commonly made using the Missile Weapons talent or skill.

Thrown attacks: Made by hurling a throwing weapon, such as a flight dagger or a throwing axe (see Throwing Weapon Descriptions, p.XX). Thrown attacks are most commonly made using the Throwing Weapons talent or skill.

Weapon Range

Ranged combat attacks are only effective up to a certain distance; missile and

thrown weapons cannot be used to attack a target beyond their maximum range. A character making a ranged combat attack may incur a penalty based on whether his target is at short or long range (see Distance, p.XX). The range statistics for missile and throwing weapons appear in the Goods and Services chapter, p. XX. If an attacker is within the minimum range given for his ranged weapon, he cannot attack with ranged combat.

Firing Into A Melee

Characters will sometimes want to make a ranged combat attack against an opponent engaged in close combat. This can result in the attacker inadvertently hitting an ally or a companion instead of the desired target.

The number of characters or creatures between the attacker and his target is added to the target's Physical Defense. The attacker makes his ranged Attack test against this modified Physical Defense. If successful, the attack hits the target and inflicts damage as normal.

If the test fails, the attacker compares the test result to the Physical Defense of each character between himself and the original target, starting with the closest character. If the test succeeds, that character is struck instead of the target.

The attacker continues on to the next target until he strikes a character, or all possible intervening targets have been tested for a hit.

Silar, a t'skrang Archer, fires his crossbow at what he hopes is an opponent in the mass of bodies and weapons before him. The target has a Physical Defense of 9, but there are four other characters shifting back and forth in the way, increasing the Difficulty Number of the Attack test to 13. Silar makes a Missile Weapons test, with a result of 8; he misses his intended target.

The gamemaster compares the test result against the Physical Defense of each of the four intervening characters, starting with the one closest to Silar. The closest character is an enemy character with a Physical Defense of 9, so the bolt does not hit him. The next character is Silar's companion Ulm, with a Physical Defense of 8. Silar's bolt strikes Ulm, and the Archer starts readying an apology for his friend.

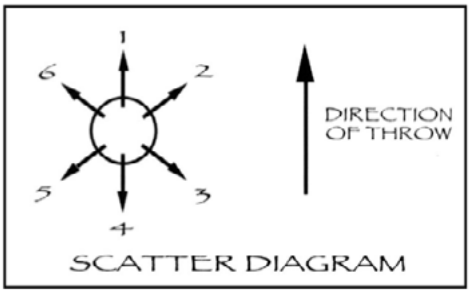
Entangling Weapons

Some thrown weapons, like bolas and nets, are entangling weapons. Refer to the section on entangling weapons under Close Combat, p.XX, for details on entangling attacks and how they work.

Throwing Objects

As in life, characters will sometimes want to hurl objects that are not designed to be thrown, such as rocks, flasks of oil, or even furniture. The gamemaster must determine the range and Damage step of objects not shown on the Throwing Weapons Table. The character makes his Attack test with a –2 penalty, due to the unbalanced nature of the object being thrown.

To throw an item at a target, the character makes an Attack test. The Difficulty Number depends on the intent. If throwing the object at another character, he uses the target's Physical Defense. If throwing an object at a specific target area, the Difficulty Number is 7. If the test succeeds, the character hits the target and makes a Damage test, as normal. If the object misses the target, it (or its parts) may scatter.



Determining Scatter

If a character throws an object at a target and misses, the gamemaster rolls a D6 and consults the Scatter Diagram to determine the direction in which the object actually travels. To determine how far away from the target the object lands, the gamemaster subtracts the Attack test result from the Difficulty Number; the difference becomes a Step used by the gamemaster to make a test, the result of which is the distance in feet that the object scattered from the target.

Brighton, a human Troubadour, throws a flask of oil with a burning rag at an enemy. Brighton rolls a 6 on his Throwing Weapons test against his target's Physical Defense of 9. The gamemaster rolls a D6 to determine where the flask goes and gets a scatter direction of 5. He makes a Step 3 test (9–6=3) to determine the distance in which the flask scatters from the target, with a result of 5. The flask shatters five feet beyond the target. The flask shatters, spreading flaming oil across the floor, but not otherwise having any effect.

Spell Combat

Spell combat involves attacks made against an opponent using spell magic, or a similar magical power. They usually require the magician to make a Spellcasting test against his opponent's Mystic Defense. Spells targeted against an opponent's Mystic Defense allow the possibility of achieving extra successes with the magician's Attack test (his Spellcasting test). Most combat spells are easily differentiated by the fact that they often involve making an Effect test as a Damage test, as noted in the spell description. This is not always the case, but is a good rule-of-thumb for the gamemaster to apply when determining what constitutes a combat spell.

See the Spells chapter, p.XX, for more information about casting spells and descriptions of the many different spells available to magicians in the Earthdawn game.

Mounted Combat

Mounted combat is common in the world of Earthdawn. Tribes of nomads and ork scorchers roam the plains of Barsaive, and magic has forged a whole Discipline dedicated to fighting while mounted, the Cavalryman. This section explains special

rules that apply to mounted combat. There are abilities that alleviate the disadvantages or improve the advantages of fighting from a mount, most of them found in the Cavalryman Discipline.

In this section a mounted character is referred to as a rider, and the animal that has a rider as a mount.

Mount Training

The amount of training a mount has determines how easy it is for the rider to handle it during combat or daily travels. Untrained mounts are not used to carrying Namegivers on their backs, and are often wild. They can hardly be ridden and spook away from combat, but some abilities such as Dominate Beast or Tame Mount allow a rider to control them quickly. Trained mounts are the type usually sold and allow riders. Their main purpose is for travel, as combat will frequently spook them.

Combat mounts are accustomed to the sounds of the battlefield, trained to ride into or straight at other creatures on the rider's command, and may even attack them. They are usually more expensive than trained mounts.

Getting And Staying Mounted

Mounting an animal takes a Standard action and requires the animal to be a trained mount. An untrained mount requires the character to make a Trick Riding test against the mount's Social Defense. Dismounting is a Simple action.

A rider may jump off his mount to attack in close combat; or he may throw himself off his mount to grapple (see p.XX) a target. If grappling a target this way, the rider suffers Step 5/D8 damage from the impact of the fall. If the grappling attempt is successful, the target also suffers Step 5/d8 damage.

Mounted Knockdown Tests

If the mount fails a Knockdown test, the rider is automatically knocked down as he falls off his mount. This fall and any other event that knocks a rider off his mount cause Step 5/D8 damage (an exception applies when using flying mounts, see Aerial Combat, p.XX). If only the rider fails a Knockdown test, he falls off his mount, but the mount is unaffected.

The gamemaster may disallow a rider the use of some abilities that enhance Knockdown tests, such as those that bind the character to solid earth or another object. Other abilities like the Sure Mount talent provide enhanced knockdown tests specifically for the purpose of staying mounted.

Mounted Combat Sequence

The combat sequence for mounted characters is the same as the normal combat sequence (see p.XX), but some special rules apply.

The rider and his mount each have their own actions.

If trained, the mount acts on the rider's Initiative. Untrained mounts act on their own Initiative, which makes combat difficult at best, impossible at worst, as the mount moves and acts independently from the rider.

A mount that did not have a rider at the beginning of the round changes its Initia-

tive to that of the rider once mounted, but cannot take actions it has already used (in most cases, its standard action and movement).

Mounted Movement

For the purpose of movement, a rider and his mount are treated as one character as long as the rider controls the mount. While mounted, a mount's Movement Rate is used instead of the rider's. A character cannot use his own movement in a round in which he uses the mount's movement, even if he dismounts; it is assumed he has already moved—investing the effort normally put into his own movement into directing the mount.

Additionally, characters not familiar with their mounts must succeed at a Trick Riding test against the mount's Social Defense to take their mounts into (but not away from) combat; Cavalrymen and Beastmasters are assumed to be familiar with their mounts at all times.

Running and Splitting Movement

A rider can instruct his mount to use its Standard action to move (see p. XX). Doing this does not use the character's Standard action. When using the Splitting Movement combat option (see p.XX), the rider takes the Strain and is affected by the Harried modifier, not the mount.

In many instances of mounted combat (see Charging Attacks below), both of these combat options will be used. Some abilities of the Cavalryman Discipline (see p.XX) serve to alleviate these conditions.

Charging Attacks

Charging attacks allow a mounted character to use the momentum of the mount's movement to deliver devastating blows. A charging attack requires a combat-trained mount or a successful Trick Riding test against the mount's Social Defense.

To make a charging attack, the rider must move towards the target in a relatively straight line at a rate higher than the mount's Movement Rate (using the mount's standard action to move). If the rider plans to move after the attack, by using the splitting movement combat option, it also has to be in a relatively straight line.

A successful attack during a charging attack adds the mount's Strength Step to the Damage Step due to the high momentum of the impact. If two riders make Charging Attacks against each other, they add the Strength Steps of both their mounts to the Damage Step, not just the Strength Step of their own mount.

The high momentum can cause the rider to be thrown off his mount or lose his weapon. After a successful charging attack, the rider makes a Strength test against the target's Toughness Step. If the test fails, a rider using a spear or lance-type weapon is thrown from his mount, suffering Step 5/D8 of damage and becoming knocked down. A rider using a shorter melee weapon like a sword or mace loses his weapon. Unarmed riders suffer no ill effect.

Some weapons are not suited for Charging Attacks and may shatter on impact (refer to the weapon descriptions, p.XX). If a weapon shatters, the rider is not knocked off his mount and retains only a fractured piece of his weapon.

Handling Mounted Combat

Mounted Combat can seem difficult to handle during the game because of the requirements for a charging attack and the many combat options involved. This guide presents the typical procedures for different types of mounted attacks and suggests some terms for identifying them during a game in which mounted combat frequently occurs.

Stationary attacks do not involve movement. The rider simply attacks from his mount's back, and the mount can also make attacks. Some talents, such as Down Strike or Wheeling Defense, enhance stationary Mounted Combat. There are no extra combat options or modifiers to consider.

Mobile attacks are those where the mount moves before or after the attack. They share a lot of traits with stationary attacks. There are no modifiers for the attacker, but the defender may have to delay or reserve his action to attack in close combat (if his Initiative is higher and he cannot move far enough on his turn to reach the mount, which often has a higher Movement Rate). If the defender's Initiative is lower than the attacker's and the attacker moves away after attacking, the defender often cannot attack in close combat.

Charging attacks require the mount to use its Standard action to move. It cannot attack and must move more than its Movement Rate towards the target. The rider's damage is enhanced by the mount's Strength Step (and possibly the Charge talent). The mount's movement ends next to the target. A defender can Set Against a Charge to strike the attacker before being hit and may profit from the momentum if successful.

Ride-by attacks use the splitting movement combat option. The mount moves before and after the attack so the mount's movement does not end next to the target. The mount may attack. Splitting movement causes the adept to be harried and take 1 Strain, although Cavalryman abilities can circumvent this. Damage is not increased as with a charging attack. The defender can delay or reserve actions as with a mobile attack.

All-out charging attacks use both splitting movement and the mount's Standard action to allow for a charging attack that does not end next to the target. The mount moves more than its Movement Rate towards the target, and up to what remains of its doubled Movement Rate away. The mount cannot attack. Damage is enhanced as per charging attacks, and the rider takes 1 Strain and is harried, except where abilities circumvent this. The defender may set against the charge. The Wheeling Attack talent allows a character to circumvent the requirement to move before the attack, but the mount has to move the full distance during the round, usually after the attack.

When splitting movement on a charging attack, the rider may not use additional attack abilities, such as the Second Attack, Second Weapon, or Momentum Attack talents or skills, as rider and mount move past the target too fast. Only when ending their movement next to a target can these abilities be used. There are several specialized talents that allow for additional attacks during a charge, however.

Davon rides a mount with Movement Rate 15. He looks around for enemies he can target with a charging attack. His opponents are at distances of 14, 21, and 27 yards away. To make a charging attack, his mount must move at least 17 yards (more than its normal Movement Rate of 15), so two opponents are eligible for a charge, the ones 21 and 27 yards away. He chooses to attack the closer opponent, moves 21 yards to be adjacent to him, and his attack is successful. After the attack, he is directly adjacent to that opponent.

He could have used the splitting movement combat option to move another 9 yards away from that opponent, which might have set him up for a charging attack against another enemy.

Mounted Weapon Use

Mounted characters can use long weaponry like lances or spears differently from other characters due to their special posture and the ability to hook them to their armor, saddle, or brace them under their arms, allowing them to wield these weapons with one hand. This situation is only beneficial when there is enough room to maneuver or while charging. If the mount would not be able to move at least 2 yards (regardless of if it actually does), the rider receives the difference between the weapon's size and his one-handed size limit as a penalty to all Attack and Damage tests with the weapon, as it becomes unwieldy in a close-quarters fight.

Mount Attacks

Combat-trained mounts may be directed by their rider to use their Standard action to make their own attacks, employing the Steps and abilities found in the creature's description. Mounts not trained for combat may also make attacks, but these are not controlled by the rider, and the mount usually only attacks if threatened.

Aerial Combat

Some creatures and characters, including windlings, are capable of flight. The rules governing combat between characters and flying creatures requires additional explanation, as flight introduces additional complications to the Earthdawn game.

Flying Movement

The Flying Movement rate of creatures appears with their statistics in the Creatures chapter of the Gamemaster's Guide. For simplicity, flying creatures are not limited in their ability to move—they can freely move vertically or horizontally as part of their normal movement. Flying creatures or characters can use combat options as normal. Unless stated otherwise, flying creatures do not need to use their Movement Rate to stay airborne and can hover in place.

Swooping Attacks

Some flying creatures and characters prefer to make close combat swooping attacks against their opponents. The creature or character must use the splitting movement combat option (see p. XX). The attacker flies into close combat using a portion

of his Movement Rate, makes his attacks, and flies off using the remainder of his Movement Rate. Characters who wish to attack swooping creatures or characters in close combat must have a higher Initiative than their opponent that round and use a reserved action (see p.XX) to intercept the attacker.

Mounted Aerial Combat

Mounted combat involving flying mounts is handled the same as other mounted combat. The rider may make swooping attacks just as any other flying creature or character, and may make flying charging attacks per the same rules. The mechanics for handling attack and defense are the same for mounted combat involving split movement and swooping attacks. The major difference is the result of failed Knockdown tests by characters riding flying creatures, as described below.

Knockdown

Flying creatures and characters can be knocked out of the sky. A flying character or creature who fails a Knockdown test is knocked to the ground and may take falling damage based on the distance fallen (see Falling Damage in the Gamemaster's Guide). Once the character or creature stands back up it can again take to the air.

If a character riding a flying mount fails a Knockdown test and is knocked off his mount, he receives falling damage based on the distance fallen instead of the normal Step 5/D8 damage for a land-based mount. Many riders of flying mounts strap themselves into the saddle to limit this danger.

Long Falls

Optional Rule: The gamemaster may decide that a creature or character flying at a considerable height or with special physical properties or features does not hit the ground after failing a Knockdown test. Instead, they plummet towards the ground over several rounds. There are no simple rules to determine how fast a creature falls each round; variables include body weight, wind, wings that might slow the descent, and so on. Flying creatures and characters that have been knocked down, but haven't yet hit the ground, can spend their Standard action to make a Dexterity (6) test to "stand up". If the test succeeds, the creature or character stops falling.

A creature or character that is unconscious and falling makes a Recovery test after one round of uncontrolled descent, as if he were being roused by another character (see Effects of Injury, p.XX). If the creature or character manages to regain consciousness, he can attempt to make the Dexterity (6) Test to "stand up" as noted earlier, otherwise he continues to fall until he hits the ground or is somehow rescued.

knockdown - flying creature crashing

Goods and Services

Feel free to take your time. You'll not find a better selection outside the Grand Bazaar! I may even have an item or two of special interest in the back... if you know what I mean.
•Kaelis T'laryn, Obsidiman merchant •

As a character survives and prospers from adventuring, he will likely need better equipment. In addition to gear such as weapons, armor, and clothing, characters will need to obtain food, lodging, and transport during their travels. This chapter provides descriptions of a range of commonly available goods and services, their prices, any restrictions on their use, and directions for purchasing them.

Item Characteristics

Each and every item in Earthdawn is handcrafted and unique. Availability, Weight, Size, and Cost vary greatly from item to item and from region to region. Bartering and haggling is the norm in Barsaive, as is the customization of every item available. The following rules cater for this variation and offer gamemasters and players an easy way to deal with this topic and haggle over the price.

Availability

An item's Availability Rating determines how hard the item is to find. The different Availability Ratings for goods and services are:

Everyday goods can be found virtually everywhere in Barsaive—just head to the nearest village! They are what even simple farmers in Barsaive's hinterlands use to do their fieldwork every day, enjoy in their pastime, or consume to live on a day-to-day basis.

Average-rated goods are still readily available, but might only be found in town markets on a regular basis. They are not bought by everyone on a daily basis, but it usually is not hard to find them if you need them, although purchase in rural areas might have to be planned ahead.

Unusual items are often found only in the markets of Barsaive's larger towns and cities or specialist craftsmen's workshops. Regular folks do not need them, or only buy them once in a lifetime. A few common magic items fall into this category.

Rare items are harder to find, even in places like the Grand Bazaar. Consumers are usually rich or in need of very special items—and adventurers are often in need of very special items. Most common magic items fall into this category.

Very Rare goods often require research to find a willing supplier. They are either very exotic and from far away lands or have powerful magic abilities.

An item's Availability Rating is shown along with its other characteristics in the tables found throughout this chapter. Availability Ratings usually assume a typical example of merchandise, bought in Barsaive; that is, an item not limited to a certain home region or possessing any special properties. Under certain circumstances or for specific items, the Availability Rating may be adjusted for better or worse. For example, the Theran Uyglar is a Rare food, but when in the Theran-occupied areas south of Vivane it might be of Average availability. And while a broadsword is of Average Availability, one explicitly of t'skrang design might be Rare in Jerris, and one bearing Jerrisian ornamentation is Rare in the t'skrang villages along the Serpent River.

Cost

An item's Cost is usually expressed in silver pieces, the most common form of currency in the Province of Barsaive (see Currency, p.XX). Some very cheap items have their Cost listed in copper pieces ("cp"). The cost listed with each item is what a standard item of its type costs in a place appropriate to its Availability Rating. The gamemaster should adjust the price if a character wants to buy an item in a place it is not normally available. For example, a pole-axe is an Unusual weapon with a Cost of 150 silver pieces, and is available at this price in most larger cities. If a character wanted to buy it in a village and the gamemaster decided it was indeed available there, because the headman had a single such weapon to defend against dangerous beasts, the cost could be double or even triple the normal price, because the headman could not re-acquire such a weapon easily.

Cost and Availability usually go hand-in-hand; everyday items are cheap, rare items are expensive.

Races and Cost

Some races modify the Cost of an item due to their unique physique. Usually, this means that such an item needs to be specially fitted for that race, except where made in an area where that race is predominant, or if commissioned ahead of time to a craftsman familiar with that race's needs.

Trolls and Obsidimen require more material to cover their bodies in armor, and so pay 25 percent more for armor (multiply the Cost by 1.25). Windlings require less material to cover their bodies in clothing or armor and so pay 25 percent less (multiply the Cost by 0.75).

Windlings also sometimes want weapons normally intended for larger races balanced for their special needs. This does not impact a weapon's characteristics, it simply makes it more comfortable to use and "looks right" on a windling. This increases the cost of the item by 25 percent.

For magic items, most of the item's cost is often a result of the enchantment. Do not modify the cost of a magic item made for other races. Windlings usually pay half for a meal in an inn.

T'skrang pay a fitting fee when buying armor or clothing to accommodate their tail, increasing the cost by 10 percent (multiply the Cost by 1.1). If the armor or clothing covers the tail instead of just providing a hole for it, increase the cost by 25 percent (multiply the Cost by 1.25).

Size

Item Size is most commonly found in weaponry. The physical make-up of different races allows them to wield weapons of different dimensions. For example, windlings require smaller weaponry, while trolls and obsidiman can use larger weapons. The Weapon Size Restriction Table lists the weapon-wielding capabilities of each race. The first column gives the weapon Size range that members of a particular race can wield with one hand; the second gives the Size range they can wield with two hands. Size is sometimes used as a factor in using magical and non-magical abilities on weapons.

Weapon Size Restriction Table

Race	*1-Hand Limit*	*2-Hand Limit*
Dwarf	1-3	4-5
Elf	1-3	4-6
Human	1-3	4-6
Obsidiman	2-4	5-7
Ork	1-3	4-6
Troll	2-4	5-7
T'skrang*	1-3	4-6
Windling	1	2

* T'skrang can only attach Size 1-2 weapons to their tail

Weight

The Weight of items found in the tables within this chapter is expressed in pounds. Some items are measured in ounces ("oz."), some are so light their Weight is negligible ("Neg."). Weights given are for typical items of their type, which usually assumes they are made for a human-sized Namegiver. Some items are expressly made for or by other races and are larger or smaller, and therefore more or less heavy.

Races and Weight

Items assuming a human physique sometimes need to be modified to generate the appropriate item for trolls, windlings, obsidiman, and sometimes t'skrang. While these races can use many items assuming a human physique, they typically require more material for clothing and armor. If made by a member of that race for that race, the item would be more appropriately sized. For example, a troll can sit on a bench made by a human craftsman, but if a troll craftsman would make it to use in his home, the bench would simply be bigger. Some items, such as troll swords or windling bows—items that call out a race by name—are already suited for that race and need not be modified. Items for trolls are usually also suitable to be used by obsidimen.

Trolls and obsidimen increase the weight of clothing and armor by 25 percent (multiply Weight by 1.25). Windlings reduce the weight of clothing and armor by 80 percent (multiply Weight by 0.2). If a T'skrang wants to cover his tail, the weight for clothing and armor increases by 10 percent (multiply Weight by 1.1). At gamemaster's discretion, this increase may be applied to other appropriate items.

Encumbrance

As noted in the Creating Characters chapter, your character's Strength determines how much weight he can carry without overburdening himself. But what happens when your character wants (or needs) to move more?

If a character is burdened with more than his carrying capacity, but less than 150 percent of his carrying capacity, they can still move but their Movement Rate is halved, and they are considered Harried until they drop the excess weight. If the character is carrying more than 150 percent up to double their carrying capacity, their Movement Rate is reduced to 2, have their Physical and Mystic Defense reduced to 2, and must drop the excess weight if they want to do anything but move.

If a character is trying to lift more than double his carrying capacity, he must succeed at a Strength test. The Difficulty Number for this test is determined by subtracting the character's Strength value from the minimum Strength value needed to lift the desired weight, then adding 6. The character can lift the weight for 1 round per success, and takes 1 Strain per round. The character cannot move while lifting this weight, nor make any tests that require any kind of physical activity.

Currency

Though people still barter in the remote areas of the province, most Barsaivians use coins minted by the Kingdom of Throal (and less commonly the Theran Empire). Given Throal's history as administrators for the Empire prior to the Scourge, their coins have the same weight as Theran coins, giving them the same value.

Adventurers may find stashes of old coins in lost or abandoned kaers. Moneychangers in most cities will usually pay anywhere from 60 to 80 percent of the value of old coins based on their weight. Legends of cursed gold and silver make most merchants reluctant to take coins not minted by Thera or Throal.

Denominations

Throal and Thera use a decimal currency system, with each coin worth ten times that of the previous denomination. Throalic coins are hexagonal, while Theran currency is circular.

Copper is the most basic monetary unit, and is used by common folk and craftsmen across Barsaive. Copper coins from Throal bear a stylized pick and hammer on both sides, and weigh one third of an ounce. They are commonly called 'hammers'. Thera does not mint copper coins.

Silver coins are the most common currency used by merchants and adventur-

ers, and weigh one quarter of an ounce. Throalic silver bears the likeness of Tav Korelsed, one of the Kingdom's founders, and are typically called 'tavs'. Theran coins show the profile of a Theran guardsman.

Gold is usually reserved for wealthy merchants, rich travelers, and governments, and weighs one fifth of an ounce. It is rarely used in trade, usually reserved for transactions in excess of 1,000 silver. Throalic gold coins show the Merchant King Braza overlooking the Throal Mountains, are called 'merchants'. Theran gold shows the profile of Kearos Navarim, one of the founders of the Theran Empire.

Gems

In some cities, gems are occasionally used to limit the volume of coin in large transactions. Unlike coins, which have a standard value, gems can be of virtually any size, quality and value. In most Earthdawn products, gems will be described with their approximate value in silver. Characters can usually exchange recovered gemstones for about 70 to 80 percent of their value in coin, allowing the buyer to make a profit when reselling the stones.

Special Coins

In addition to the commonly used metal coins, currency in Barsaive also includes the so-called elemental coins. These coins contain bits of True Elements, or are crafted from orichalcum, a combination of True Elements. These coins are usually reserved for special occasions like finalizing long-term trade agreements, swearing blood oaths, or sealing peace treaties.

A single earth or water coin is worth 100 silver, and ten earth or water coins equal one air or fire piece. Ten air or fire coins are worth one orichalcum coin. All elemental coins weigh one tenth of an ounce

Air Coins resemble finely crafted crystal. Sharply striking an air coin causes it to ring and levitate few inches. As it descends, the ringing fades. **Earth Coins** are plain brown coins that gleam under bright light. **Fire Coins** resemble discs of slowly twisting flame. These coins are cool to the touch, but when struck they produce sparks hot enough to light a lantern or set tinder ablaze. **Water Coins** are semi-transparent blue-green coins that feel damp to the touch.

Orichalcum is a magical metal made up of all elements, usually created through a time consuming alchemical or Elementalist ritual. Coins made of this material are gold in color, but seem to capture and amplify light. These coins remain rare, even among kings and merchant princes. Because of orichalcum's magical properties, these coins are most frequently used in rituals, or for the sealing of magical oaths and the like. Legends tell of ancient lands that used orichalcum as their primary currency, but most scholars question the basis of these tales.

Weapons

There are a wide variety of different weapons available, grouped into three general categories—melee, missile, and throwing—corresponding to the different talent and skill categories needed to properly wield them.

Strength Minimum

Most weapons require a minimum Strength value to wield them effectively in combat. Characters who do not meet this requirement can still use the weapon, but at a penalty. A character who does not meet the Minimum Strength Value for using a weapon receives a –1 penalty to all Attack tests with that weapon for every point of Strength he lacks.

Wielding a mace requires a minimum Strength of 13. Rensil, who has a Strength of 10, picks up a mace and tries to use it in combat. Because he is 3 points shy of the Strength minimum, he makes all Attack tests with it at a –3 penalty.

Dexterity Minimum

Some weapons have a minimum Dexterity value—this is noted on the appropriate weapons table. As with a weapon's Strength minimum, above, characters who don't meet this requirement can still use the weapon, but are penalized. A character who does not meet the minimum Dexterity value required for using the weapon suffers a –1 penalty to Attack tests made with that weapon for every point of Dexterity he lacks.

Attached Weapons

Unless otherwise noted, weapons attached to a character's body in one way or the other—whether a gauntlet, a boot with a nasty spike, or a weapon attached to a t'skrang's tail—are used with the Unarmed Combat talent or skill. They are still considered weapons and can be targeted as such by talents such as Disarm or Riposte, or by spells or abilities that target or enhance weapons.

Melee Weapon Descriptions

Battle Axe: The traditional weapon of dwarf armies, the battle axe has a two- to four-foot-long haft with a single bell-shaped blade.

Broadsword: A broadsword has a blade approximately three feet long. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

Club: Any short piece of hard wood or stone, usually thinner at the handle end and thicker at the business end, qualifies as a club. In some cases clubs are merely rough-hewn tree limbs. Most, however, are a bit more finished and feature leather-wrapped handles. Obsidimen, trolls, and some dwarfs prefer clubs carved out of rock. Wooden and stone clubs inflict the same amount of damage.

Dagger: A dagger is a small, sharp-bladed weapon with a maximum length of twelve inches. A dagger with a blade longer than this is considered to be a sword.

Dwarf Sword: A dwarf sword has a curved, single-edged blade about two feet long that is wider than the blade of a typical short sword. Dwarf merchants prefer this weapon above most others, weaker Namegivers find it uncomfortable to swing.

Flail: A flail consists of a wooden, leather-covered handle, two to four feet long, with a hinge or a chain connected to one end. The other end of the chain connects to either a spiked metal ball, a metal-spiked wooden rod, or a plain metal rod.

Hand Axe: Small and easy to use, this basic chopping instrument consists of a one to two-foot-long handle with a single, flat, square- or bell-shaped blade at one end.

Knife: A knife is a small, sharp-bladed cutting tool with a blade of up to six inches in length.

Lance: An eight- to twelve-foot-long tapered wooden shaft, fitted with a metal or hardwood handle. It is designed for mounted combat. A brace at the end of the handle attaches the lance to the user's armor or saddle. If the character is mounted, he effectively wields the lance as if it were a Size 3 weapon (see Mounted Weapon Use, p.XX), usually freeing up one hand to carry a shield for protection. A lance can be used on foot, but due to the nature of its design and the length of the weapon, it uses the properties of the long-spear.

Long Spear: A two handed spear five to eight feet in length. Like other spears, long-spears are treated as Size 3 weapons while mounted.

Mace: A mace is a club reinforced with a shaped-metal head.

Pole Arm: This catch-all term applies to any weapon with a haft more than four feet long. Theran slave traders use a simple, deadly five-foot-long pole arm with a sharp metal tip on the end. Guards at the Elven Court wield longer pole arms tipped with various blades, hooks and points. All types of pole arms do the same amount of damage, and require two hands to wield. The price for pole arms varies according to the blade configuration—the more elaborate the blade, the greater the cost. Pole arms can be used in the same fashion as long spears during Charging Attacks if the blade is formed appropriately.

Pole Axe: The pole axe is one of the deadliest weapons available. The haft, usually at least six feet long, holds a large single or double bell-shaped or rectangular blade. This huge, heavy weapon requires two hands to use. Pole axes cannot be used to deliver Charging Attacks with the same efficiency lances do, they are always used two-handed.

Quarterstaff: Any weapon shaped like a pole and made from hardened wood qualifies as a quarterstaff. Anywhere from three to six feet long, most quarterstaffs are usually plainly finished. However, characters with an appropriate Artisan skill may decorate them with elaborate carvings and even gems and precious metals. A quarterstaff makes an excellent defensive weapon—the wielder adds +1 to his Physical Defense when using the Defensive Stance (p.XX) combat option.

Sap: A sap is a leather pouch filled with stones or metal pellets. A character can improvise a sap by filling a leather glove with pebbles. A sap is designed to help a character knock out his opponent. If the character using the sap is employing the Attacking to Stun combat option (p.XX), he gains a +1 bonus to his Damage test.

If the character makes a successful Called Shot (p.XX) with a sap while Attacking to Stun, and strikes his opponent on an exposed area, such as the back of the neck or the temple, he gains a +2 bonus to his Damage test.

Short Sword: A short sword is a bladed weapon, two to three feet in length. Usually wielded one-handed, some short swords feature hilts designed to allow windlings to wield them with two hands. The blade can be curved or straight, with a single or double edge.

Scythan Axe: In contrast to Throalic dwarfs, who grew fond of swords a long time ago, many dwarfs outside of Throal preserved the Scythan axe called the mareka. The mareka is a one-handed weapon featuring a single axe-head. On the side opposite to the blade, the weapon is either flat or has a small spike or hook. The mareka shows the true pragmatism of the dwarfs of ancient Scytha, as the flat side can be used as a hammer, or the hook for climbing (the latter providing a +1 bonus to any Climbing test where the hook or spike proves useable). The weapon is also referred to as "knee-crusher," as it saw frequent use in the early wars that the Scythan dwarfs fought against larger foes such as trolls and ogres. The ancient dwarf blessing "May a shield be above your head, and may you strike straight" is more literal than it might first appear when it is applied to the mareka.

Spear: Often used as a throwing weapon, the spear may also serve as a short three- to five-foot-long pole arm in melee combat. Sometimes referred to as a short-spear, spears are often used in conjunction with a shield. Spears are often used during Charging Attacks where a lance is not available.

Spiked Mace: The spiked mace is a large club, like a mace, but with a spiked metal head.

Trispear: This specialized weapon evolved from a pole arm. Trispears range from four to six feet long, the longer version used almost exclusively by t'skrang fishermen. Unlike a conventional pole arm, the trispear ends in three points instead of the typical single point. The configuration of the points varies; sometimes they form triangles, others are flat. The length and thickness of the points also vary. As with other pole arms, the trispear normally requires two hands to wield.

Troll Axe: A troll-sized version of the typical battle-axe, the best examples of these weapons are found with the highland troll clans.

Troll Sword: Created specifically for trolls, the troll sword has a blade more than four feet long and is balanced for one-handed use by those with exceptional strength. Obsidimen occasionally carry troll swords, and other races sometimes adapt the hilt design to make the sword a two-handed weapon. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

Two-handed Sword: The largest bladed weapon available, a two-handed sword is just over four feet long and balanced specifically for two-handed use. The double-edged blade can be curved, but is most often straight.

Warhammer: The warhammer has an oblong, metal head with a long spike protruding from it. Any character using this weapon should keep in mind that changing the direction of the swing once he has begun is nearly impossible.

Whip: *Entangling weapon.* A whip is a bundle of braided leather strips, thick at the handle end and tapering at the tip. The whip handle is usually made of wood or bone. Theran slave traders favor this weapon. Whips allow a wielder to entangle an opponent within 3 yards, as well as damaging him. The weapon's Entangling Difficulty is 9 (see Entangling Weapons, p.XX).

Windling Pole Arm: This spear used by windlings is unusually long in comparison to a winding's height to allow a flying windling to attack targets far below his feet or reach vulnerable areas of larger Namegivers when on foot. This weapon works as a lance for mounted windlings.

Windling Spear: Usually used as a throwing weapon, the windling spear can be used in melee combat.

Windling Sword: This sword made specifically for use by windlings resembles a dagger, but has a much smaller grip. Namegivers larger than windlings cannot properly wield it and receive a –3 penalty to Attack tests made with it.

Missile Weapon Descriptions

Blowgun: A blowgun is a one- to three-foot-long hollow tube of wood or metal used to fire two-inch-long needles. The needles are usually made of metal, though wood, stone, and precious gem needles also exist. The needles sometimes include fletching, and can be tipped with poison.

Elven Warbow: The elven warbow is similar to a longbow, but is made with three different woods. The differing tensile strength of each type of wood gives the warbow more power than a conventional longbow. Warbow arrows are two to four feet long, fletched with feathers, and thicker and heavier than conventional longbow arrows.

Light Crossbow: This weapon consists of a bow mounted horizontally on a shaft of wood or metal. A hook-and-trigger device built into the shaft holds the bowstring taut and releases it. The shaft is twelve inches long, making the weapon small enough to conceal in a heavy cloak or coat. The arrow, called a bolt, is shorter and thicker than a regular arrow. Usually made from wood with a stone or metal tip, bolts range from six to eight inches in length and have feather fletching.

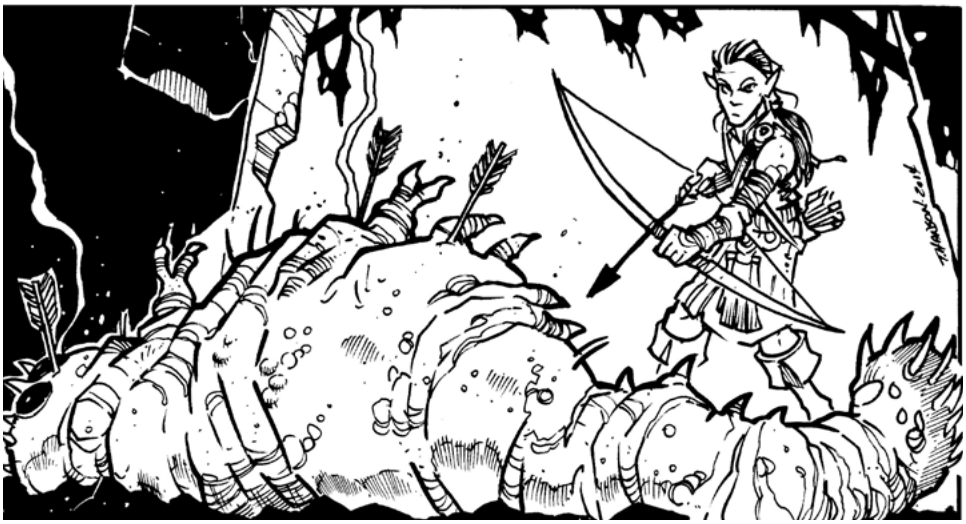
Longbow: Larger than the shortbow, the longbow ranges from four to eight feet long. Longbow arrows are similar to shortbow arrows, but are two to four feet long.

Medium Crossbow: The medium crossbow is a larger version of the light crossbow, with a two-foot-long shaft and twelve-inch-long bolts.

Quiver: A typical quiver holds 40 arrows or 30 bolts. Most quivers are hard leather cylinders or rectangles strapped over the bowman's back like a backpack. Individuals from the taller Namegiver races often prefer to hook their quivers to their belts. Some quivers come equipped with a cover to discourage others from stealing arrows.

Shortbow: The term shortbow generally applies to bows less than four feet long. A single piece of flexible wood forms the bow, which is fitted with a string of braided sinew or similar material connected to each end and pulled taut. Shortbow arrows average two feet long, made of wood and fletched with feathers.

Both stone and metal arrowheads are used, but the finest shots almost exclusively use metal-tipped arrows.



Sling: This describes any weapon that flings small objects at speeds and distances greater than the unaided arm can manage. Most slings consist of a strap of leather connected to a pouch that holds the projectile. Rocks are most commonly used as ammunition, though a sling can throw any small object. Some merchants sell metal balls to use with a sling, but most customers simply find them a waste of good silver.

Troll Sling: The troll sling is a large sling attached to the end of a staff. Trolls and obsidimen can use a troll sling one-handed; all other races must use it with two hands.

Windling Bow: This specialized bow was created especially for windlings, who lack the stature to use standard bows. A windling bow is eighteen inches long and fires nine- to twelve-inch-long arrows.

Throwing Weapon Descriptions

Bola: *Entangling weapon.* A bola is a leather strap fitted with two metal or stone weights on either end. Some bolas have multiple straps, each tipped with weights and tied together in the center. The straps range from one to three feet in length. The weights can be of any shape, and many artisans carve them to look like animals. A bola can both entangle and damage a target; after inflicting damage to the target, the bola may also entangle it. The weapon's Entangling Difficulty is 9 (see Entangling Weapons, p.XX).

Dagger: Technically a melee weapon, a dagger can also function as a throwing weapon.

Dart: Darts are any small, balanced throwing weapons less than six inches long. Some are simply pointed metal rods, others are elaborate constructions of wood, stone, and precious gems tipped with needle-sharp metal that can be dipped in poison. Many darts also have feathered fletching.

Flight Dagger: The blade of the flight dagger is alloyed with a tiny amount of True Air, which gives the dagger lift and greater range than a throwing dagger.

Hawk Hatchet: The hawk hatchet is a Z-shaped weapon. Blades shaped like hawk's wings form the top and bottom of the "Z" and a wooden handle forms the diagonal. The wielder throws the hatchet with an overhand snap to send it whirling toward its target, its "wings" providing lift for the flight.

Knife: A knife can also be used as a throwing weapon.

Net: *Entangling weapon.* Nets are used to entangle an opponent, and can be as simple as a large piece of cloth or as complex as a series of ropes tied together in elaborate patterns. A net can be square or circular, and its size depends on what your character wants to capture. A net designed to catch windlings can fit in a pocket, while the nets used by Theran slave traders can hold up to ten human-sized Namegivers. A standard net can capture creatures larger than a windling in size. The weapon's Entangling Difficulty is 12 (see Entangling Weapons, p.XX).

Spear: Often used as a throwing weapon, most spears are three to five feet long and tipped with a stone or metal head. A spear can be thrown with one hand.

Throwing Axe: A throwing axe is the same size as a hand-axe, but is specifically designed for throwing. It has either a single or double blade, which is usually smaller than the blade of a hand-axe.

Throwing Dagger: The throwing dagger is a flatter, thinner version of a conventional dagger, specially balanced for throwing.

Windling Net: Like a normal net, but designed to capture creatures windling-size and smaller.

Windling Spear: The windling spear is a windling-sized version of its larger counterpart. This 2 foot long spear is balanced to enable a windling to throw it even while flying. Windling spears are usually tipped with metal, because stone spearheads often throw off the delicate balance of these weapons.

Repairing Damaged Weapons

Damage to a weapon is measured by reducing its Damage Step. If a weapon's Damage is reduced to 0 it is destroyed. Repairing a damaged weapon requires one day for each Damage Step lost. Repair costs are approximately 10 percent of the price for a new weapon of the same type per Step repaired (see Services, p.XX). Repairs can be performed by anyone using the Craft Weapon skill or by a Weaponsmith's Craftsman ability.

Threaded weapons do not need to be repaired. As long as the weapon's Damage Step is 1 or more, the item repairs itself. Though the physical form of the item may be dented or marked (possibly altering its True Pattern), the magic of the item restores 1 Damage Step per week, until it reaches its original value.

Armor & Shields

Characters use armor and shields to protect themselves from injury while engaged in combat.

Living Armor

Obsidimen only wear "living" armor—fernweave, blood pebbles, crystal, and similar armors. This is noted in the armor's description.

Some shields are also described as being living armor, but the restriction for obsidimen wearing only living armor does not apply to shields. This notation is included to differentiate these shields from normal shields for the purpose of creating them.

Initiative Penalties

Some armor and shields are particularly encumbering and reduce the wearer's Initiative. The item's Initiative Penalty is subtracted from the wearer's base Initiative Step. Initiative penalties are cumulative. A character wearing armor and using a shield suffers an Initiative penalty equal to the combined penalty for his armor and shield.

A character cannot wear a set of armor or carry a shield if doing so would reduce his base Initiative Step below 1.

Mica wears blood pebble armor and carries a footman's shield; the armor and shield each have an Initiative Penalty of 1. Adding these together, Mica suffers a –2 penalty to his Initiative while employing this armor combination.

Using Shields

Many characters employ shields when engaged in combat, foregoing the use of both hands in order to give them additional protection. A character using a shield is restricted to using one-handed weapons only.

Most shields add a bonus to a character's Physical or Mystic Defense when the shield is used in any form of combat. The character must be actively using the shield to gain the bonus, not just carrying it on his arm or slung over his back. The character gains this bonus only for attacks made against him. A character who has been Blindsided by an attacker loses the benefit of his shield against that opponent until he is able to turn and face him.

Armor Descriptions

Blood Pebble: *Living armor.* Blood pebbles are a form of living elemental armor. Hundreds of small elemental stones are embedded in the character's skin, drawing power from the magic in his blood. The character wearing this type of armor takes 4 Blood Magic Damage that cannot be healed while the armor is worn. Implanting or removing blood pebbles requires one day of work by a trained Weaponsmith.

Chain Mail: Made from interlocking metal rings, chain mail is flexible but slow to bend, which impedes the character's movement. Chain mail protects the character's entire body, except the legs below the knees.

Crystal Plate: *Living armor.* This form of plate mail is made from living crystal rather than metal. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the armor is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year at a cost of 2,000 silver pieces. Without the enchantment the armor loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically renews the living crystal, even on centuries-old armor. Crystal plate is extremely heavy, and joints sometimes grind against one another, causing an annoying noise while moving.

Crystal Ringlet: *Living armor.* Made from carved, interlocking rings of living crystal, this armor protects the character's entire body except for the legs below the knee. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the armor is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year at a cost of 100 silver pieces.

Without the enchantment the armor loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant.

Espagra-Scale Cloak: Espagra-scale cloaks, fashionable among dwarfs, are made from the hide of the espagra—a bright blue, scaled, flying reptile—and provide similar protection to leather armor. Espagra-scale cloaks are perfectly suited to those social occasions when an individual desires some physical protection, yet does not wish to look awkward by wearing a suit of full armor. The cloak is fastened around the neck and does not include a hood which could be used as a helmet.

Fernweave: *Living armor.* Woven from deep-forest vines and herbs, fernweave is living armor that must be watered once every three days. If the armor is not watered, the magical properties of the herbs disappear, along with the Mystic Armor bonus this armor provides. Dormant fernweave armor will revive if watered, even after a considerable lapse of time (centuries in some cases). Watering fernweave consumes one day's water ration.

Hardened Leather: Hardened leather armor has been boiled and coated in wax to be made harder than normal leather. This armor protects the character's entire body except for the forearms and legs below the knee.

Hide Armor: This armor is commonly made by sewing tanned animal hides to a normal suit of leather armor. Hide armor retains the shape of the animal the hide came from, including its paws and head, the latter which is often worn as a helmet. The paws cannot be used as weapons. Animal hides commonly used to make hide armor include: bear, jaguar, lion, and gorilla skins.

Leather: This armor is made from one to three layers of soft leather. The thinner parts of the armor provide freedom of movement for joints and limbs. Leather armor protects the character's entire body except for the forearms, and legs below the knee.

Living Crystal: *Living armor.* Living crystal armor is made up of small columns of crystal that are embedded inside the character's body. The magic in the character's blood causes the crystals to grow until the armor covers the character's skin. Implanting the crystal inflicts 5 Blood Magic Damage to the character, that cannot be healed while the armor is worn. Because the crystal is alive, the character can feel through the armor and move within it as if it was his skin. Portions of the armor, particularly the crystal columns, retain their hardness. Living crystal armor protects the character's entire body except for the head; attempting to grow crystal on the head causes fatal brain damage. Implanting or removing living crystal armor requires 3 days of work by a trained Weaponsmith.

Obsidiman Skin: This armor is made from the skin of a slain obsidiman. The negative reaction it elicits in most Namegivers usually outweighs its protective value. Obsidimen will attack anyone wearing this armor on sight. Dwarfs and trolls consider the wearing of obsidiman skin armor an ugly and distasteful practice, and react to the character with loathing; worsen the Attitude toward the character (and his obvious companions) for Interaction Tests by two degrees.

Padded Cloth: Padded cloth armor comprises two layers of quilted raw cotton. It protects the character's entire body except for the forearms and legs below the knee.

Padded Leather: Padded leather armor combines padded cloth with a covering of leather armor. It protects the character's entire body except for the forearms and legs below the knee.

Plate Armor: Plate armor is composed of fitted and jointed pieces of steel plate, with chain mail to protect vulnerable gaps. Though the armor moves smoothly for such a massive and ungainly-looking construct, the heaviness of the plate metal makes quick reaction almost impossible. Plate armor protects the character's entire body.

Ring Mail: Ring mail is leather armor reinforced with metal rings to deflect blows. It protects the character's entire body except for the legs below the knee.

Wyvern Skin: Made from the hide of a wyvern, this armor retains most of the creature's natural resiliency and is fortified with True Water to preserve that resiliency. This armor covers the torso, arms, and legs. Wyverns will attack anyone wearing this armor on sight. Dragons consider the wearing of wyvern-skin armor distasteful and will react accordingly; worsen the Attitude toward the character (and his obvious companions) for Interaction Tests by one degree. True Water is a key ingredient when enchanting this type of armor, to ensure its flexibility.

Shield Descriptions

Body: A wooden frame completely sheathed with metal, these tall shields protect the character from the neck to the shins.

Buckler: This small shield straps to the character's forearm. The character may fire a bow while wearing a buckler, but cannot use a melee or throwing weapon with the shielded hand.

Crystal Buckler: *Living armor.* A crystal buckler is a small shield made from living crystal usually strapped to the character's forearm. The enchantments that sustain the crystal must be renewed annually at a cost of 10 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the shield loses its Mystic Defense bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically revives the living crystal, even on a centuries-old shield.

Crystal bucklers are usually wielded by crystal raiders, although this type of shield is found in all parts of Barsaive. The crystal buckler is the shield of choice for those crystal raiders that prefer greater mobility over protection.

Crystal Raider: *Living armor.* A crystal raider shield is made from living crystal embedded in a wood or metal frame. The enchantments that sustain the crystal must be renewed annually at a cost of 30 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the shield loses its Mystic Defense bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically revives the living crystal, even on a centuries-old shield.

Ferndask: *Living armor.* A ferndask is a buckler made from vines and herbs, similar to fernweave armor. The ferndask is living and must be watered once every three days or its magical properties will disappear along with the shield's Mystic Defense bonus. The magical herbs of a ferndask become dormant when unwatered but can be revived. Watering the ferndask consumes half a day's water ration.

A ferndask shield is denser and heavier than fernweave armor, and correspondingly heavier than a conventional buckler. Because of the shield's size, a bow can be employed while using a ferndask in the same way as a buckler.

Footman's: A footman's shield is made of wood and rimmed and reinforced with metal. Properly used, a footman's shield protects most of the character's upper body and can also be used to block some low blows.

Rider's: A rider's shield resembles a footman's shield, but is specifically designed to protect a mounted rider. Cavalrymen almost exclusively use this kind of shield. Although it protects the rider, it does not protect his mount.

Repairing Damaged Armor

Damage to armor and shields is measured by reducing their Armor or Defense ratings. If all of the ratings are reduced to 0, the item is destroyed. Repairing damaged armor and shields requires one day for each point of Armor or Defense rating lost. Repair costs are approximately 10 percent of the price for a new item of the same type for each point repaired (see Services, p.XX). Repairs can be performed by anyone using the Craft Armor skill or by a Weaponsmith's Craftsman ability.

Threaded armor and shields do not need to be repaired. As long as the item has 1 or more rating points remaining, the item repairs itself. Though the physical form of the item may be dented or marked (possibly altering its True Pattern), the magic of the item restores 1 rating point per week, until it reaches its original value.

Magical Equipment

Many magical items are available for purchase and used by adventurers, from blood charms to healing aids.

Blood Charms

Blood charms are magical items that draw on the magical power within a character's blood. Frequently used in the days before the Scourge, blood charms remain in use in Barsaive's burgeoning age of exploration, despite the very real cost they exact from those who wear them. All blood charms cause the wearer damage that cannot be healed until the charm is used or destroyed.

Characters must attach blood charms directly to their skin; the charm breaks through the skin to reach the blood it needs to activate. Blood charm magic builds slowly. A character must wear a charm for at least one day before he can use it.

Charms that may be recharged after use require the character to first heal the Blood Magic Damage taken when implanting the charm. Then the character takes Blood Magic Damage again to recharge the charm. Because the blood charm is already attuned to the character, he does not need to wait another one day before again using it.

Blood Charm Descriptions

Absorb Blow: Absorb blow charms are usually made from quartz, veined red from the character's blood. Implanting the charm causes the character 2 Blood Magic Damage. When activated, it absorbs the first 12 Damage Points inflicted on the character. A character cannot use the charm if he is Surprised or Blindsided. After absorbing 12 Damage Points, the charm is destroyed, leaving only a cracked, blackened piece of stone.

Astral-Sensitive Eye: Astral-sensitive eyes are magically treated lumps of amber, hollowed out and filled with nourishing fluid and a gel worm, then attached to an eye patch. When first worn, the worm burrows into the character's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes it relatively painless, this process causes the character 2 permanent damage. Once implanted, the charm can never be removed, and the damage can never be healed. Though the character's normal vision through the gem is slightly cloudy, the eye allows him to see into astral space as if he possessed the Astral Sight talent, p.XX. The character gains a +1 bonus to Astral Sensing tests, using his Perception Step. If the character knows the Astral Sight talent, he gains a +1 bonus to his Astral Sight test. The character takes 1 Strain each time he uses the eye.

Bone Charm: Many ork tribes make magical charms from the bones of dead enemies who fought with valor, hoping to take the dead opponent's strength and courage for themselves. They are available in two versions:

Common bone charms are left unshaped as small chunks of knuckle-sized bone set into the wearer's skin with a metal pin. Implanting the charm causes the character 1 Blood Magic Damage and grants a +1 bonus to his Recovery tests.

Shaped bone charms are worn only by tribal chieftains or magicians and are carved into shapes meaningful to the wearer, often crude or intricate representations of one of the Passions. These may be up to four inches long, are attached along the character's forearm, and are otherwise identical to absorb blow charms.

Darksight Eye: A darksight eye is a magically treated piece of living crystal, hollowed out and filled with nourishing fluid and a gel worm, then attached to an eye patch. When first worn, the worm burrows into the character's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes it relatively painless, this process causes the character 2 permanent damage. Once implanted, the charm can never be removed, and the damage can never be healed.

Though the character's normal vision through the gem is slightly cloudy, the eye allows him to see in the dark as if he possessed Low Light Vision, p.XX. A character who already has this ability gains no benefit from wearing a darksight eye.

Death Cheat: Usually made of turquoise or tourmaline, this charm bears a characteristic red spot drawn from the wearer's blood. Implanting a death cheat charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. Upon the character's death, the death cheat charm allows the character to make a Recovery test with a +6 bonus. Should the character have no Recovery tests available, it grants a bonus Step 6/D10 Recovery test. If the result is enough to bring the character's Current Damage total below his Death Rating then he lives, otherwise he remains dead. Once the charm has been used, it becomes inert, appearing as a translucent stone drained of most of its color. Though the charm has no intrinsic value thereafter, nobles or would-be heroes sometimes offer up to 100 silver pieces for a used death cheat charm, openly wearing them as an unearned badge of honor.

Desperate Blow: Charm makers usually fashion desperate blow charms from steel and quartz. Implanting the charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic damage. The character's blood infuses the quartz with red, and one drop of blood is perpetually suspended from the steel. When activated, a desperate blow charm grants a +6 bonus to an Attack or Damage test, chosen by the character. The charm may be recharged after use, which first requires the character to heal the damage caused by using the charm.

Desperate Spell: Implanting a desperate spell charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. Made of silver and a small pearl, the character's blood leaves brilliant red speckles on the pearl. When activated, a desperate blow charm grants a +6 bonus to a Spellcasting or spell Effect test, chosen by the character. The charm may be recharged after use, which first requires the character to heal the damage caused by the charm.

Garlen Stone: Garlen stones are small pebbles covered in golden caterpillar-like hairs. When swallowed, the hairs lengthen into spines and the stone attaches itself to the character's stomach or intestinal wall. Swallowing a Garlen stone causes the character 4 permanent damage. Once ingested, a stone cannot be removed without killing its owner. For this reason, the damage caused by swallowing a Garlen stone can never be healed. For 2 Strain, the character may use one of his available Recovery tests to heal a Wound instead of healing Damage Points. The Garlen stone cannot be used again until the character has healed all Wounds and Damage Points he has taken, and never twice within the same day. Garlen stones can only be created by questors of Garlen.

Horn Needle: These charms are small pieces of ivory or other animal horn painstakingly carved into thin needles. When implanted under the user's skin, the needle darkens from yellowish-gray to red with black streaks, and remains visible through the skin. This causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. The charm increases the wearer's resistance to poisons and diseases. For 2 Strain, the character gains a +3 bonus to Toughness-based tests or adds +3 to his Mystic Defense when resisting the effects of poison or disease.

Horror Fend: Charm makers construct Horror fend charms from gold and silver designed around a piece of True Earth. Two drops of the wearer's blood travel along the gold, soak into the earth, emerge in the silver, then soak into the earth to start the pattern again. Implanting the charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage.

Horror fend charms offer protection against the Horrors or their constructs. For 1 Strain per round, the character adds +3 to his Physical and Mystic Defense against Horrors and Horror constructs. When the character stops using it, the charm falls inert from his body. The charm may be reattached, but requires the character to heal the damage caused by the charm before recharging.

Initiative Booster: Made from ruby-colored crystal, Initiative booster charms turn as dark as obsidian when they absorb the wearer's blood. Implanting the charm causes the character 4 Blood Magic Damage. These charms grant their wearer a bonus to Initiative tests; for each point of Strain the character takes, he gains a +1 bonus to his Initiative test. The character must declare he is using the charm, and how much Strain he is taking, before he makes the test.

Strength Booster: Strength boosters are most often made of clear crystal that turns deep red when activated by the wearer's blood. These charms grant their wearer a bonus to Strength tests; for every 2 Strain the character takes, he gains a +1 bonus to Strength tests. A strength booster charm cannot be used to augment Damage tests. Attaching a strength booster charm causes the character 2 Blood Magic Damage.

Targeting Eye: A targeting eye is a magically treated piece of quartz, hollowed out and filled with a gel worm and nourishing fluid, then attached to an eye patch. When first worn, the worm burrows into the wearer's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes it relatively painless, the process causes the character 2 permanent damage. Once implanted, the charm can never be removed, and the damage can never be healed. The character sees through the quartz normally, though his vision through that eye is a little cloudy. For 1 Strain, the character gains a +2 bonus to ranged combat Attack tests.

Wound Balance: Wound Balance charms are made of amber-colored crystal and turn a deep orange when activated by the wearer's blood. Embedding the charm causes 3 Blood Magic Damage. For 1 Strain, the wearer gains a +3 bonus to a Knockdown test.

Common Magic Items

Common magic items are those that do not require a woven thread to use. Many of these items have been created with one of the five True Elements woven into their structure, which is what gives them their varied magical properties. These properties can usually be activated or deactivated by a command word or gesture, though some are designed to react to other stimuli.

Common Magic Item Descriptions

Bedroll of Comfort: Bedrolls of comfort are magically enchanted to change temperature as needed to keep their users comfortable. The bedrolls are made of *glinsthin* and *frasth* fibers—*glinsthin* grows on the highest and coldest mountain peaks, while *frasth* grows by the shores of Death's Sea. This combination of cold and warm plant fibers, plus a tiny infusion of True Air, enables the bedroll to magically adjust to the user's body temperature and keep him comfortable.

Boots, Dry: Dry boots are leather boots able to repel water to keep the wearer's feet dry. Kernels of True Water are woven into the boots, essentially sealing the boots

against outside moisture. This ability is constantly working, but has an unfortunate side-effect. Because of its nature, the True Water will keep moisture inside the boots as effectively as keeping it from entering. Therefore, this also means that the boots will take a very long time to dry out should water or liquid get inside them.

Boots, Huntsman's: Huntsman's boots are an improved version of the dry boots. These leather boots are designed for the huntsman who spends extended periods of time in the forest. Woven with kernels of True Air and True Water, these boots keep the wearer's feet both warm and dry, and add a spring to his stride that makes a long day of hunting less tiring. A character wearing a pair of huntsman's boots can walk an additional five miles each day.

Cleaning Broom: Kernels of True Wood and True Earth are woven together in these magical whisk brooms, which capture all loose dust and dirt with which they come in contact. A simple command word allows the user to dump all the dust that the broom picks up, so that the broom can be used over and over again.

Cloak, Dwarf Winternight: Dwarf winternight cloaks are made with magically treated cloth. These waterproof garments have a lining with a special ribbed design that produces enough heat when rubbed to keep a traveler warm on the coldest night. These cloaks add +2 to the character's Physical and Mystic Armor against cold damage from spells, ice weapons, or other cold sources.

Cloak, Everclean: Everclean cloaks repel dirt and stains to stay clean for extended periods. The kernels of True Water and True Air woven into the cloak repels dirt and oils that might cause stains. Eventually, after many months of use, these cloaks become stained and must be cleaned like other clothes. As with warm cloaks, all kinds of garments are made in the manner of everclean cloaks.

Cloak, Warm: A warm cloak is a woolen cloak that keeps its wearer warm when temperatures outdoors drop below a certain point. The magic of these cloaks comes from the kernels of True Air and True Fire woven into them. The True Air reacts to changes in temperature, and the True Fire serves to warm the wearer. Though many types of garments are made in this fashion, the warm cloak is the most common.

Divining Rod: Some adventurers use magical divining rods to locate water sources. These items resemble forked branches and are enchanted with True Water. A character with a magical divining rod gains a +3 bonus to Wilderness Survival tests to locate water.

Elfweave Robe: These beautiful garments display a fine, delicate craftsmanship that human and dwarf weavers envy, but cannot yet copy. Elves most commonly wear elfweave robes, though some humans also wear them. Though the elves disclaim the rumors attributing magical properties to the robes, courtiers have long noted that the robes never sit quite right on an ork or dwarf.

Fire Starter: A fire starter is a short wand that will produce a small flame at one end. This flame can be used to start larger fires. Fire starters have a kernel of True Fire woven into them. The flame is activated by a spoken command word.

Firefly Chalk: Firefly chalk is made by enchanting a special type of soft clay, then forming the clay into sticks about four inches long and a quarter of an inch in diameter. The sticks remain the dull color of the original clay but produce a dimly glowing script that may be read under all lighting conditions. If more than five words are writ-

ten with the chalk, the glow provides enough light to qualify as low-light conditions. Most people use the chalk to leave messages in naturally dark places, such as kaers or mines, though Troubadours and Illusionists sometimes paint their faces and bodies with it prior to night-time performances. Firefly chalk washes off most surfaces if rubbed or doused with water.

Heat Stone: Heat stones contain nuggets of True Earth and True Fire that make the stone glow deep red and become as hot as a burning coal. The True Earth and True Fire are slowly consumed over a period of about a year, depending on the quality of the stone's enchantment. Heat stones are generally kept in metal or ceramic containers. The steady heat they give off makes them ideal as bed-warmers, room heaters and for starting fires.

Hot Pot: A hot pot is a ceramic cooking pot that has been woven with kernels of True Fire. The True Fire heats the ceramic, allowing the user to cook food in the pot without actually using fire. A spoken command word can heat up the pot, but the temperature cannot be regulated. The hot pot simply heats to a given temperature, and no higher.

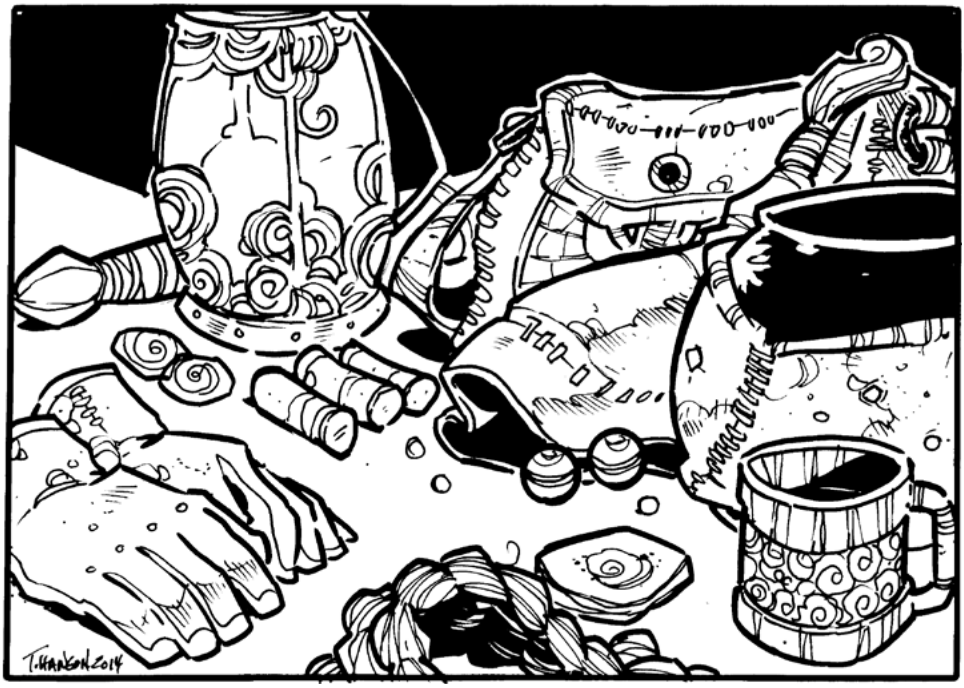
Light Quartz: Enchanted with magical light, light quartz comes in a wide variety of sizes and colors.

The most common pieces, roughly 3 inches in diameter, are used in lanterns. Light quartz was used extensively inside kaers (large quartzes) during the Scourge, and these gems can still be found in use in most towns and cities. Most light quartzes can be dimmed and turned on or off on command. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the light quartz is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year at a cost of 10 silver pieces. Without the enchantment the crystal loses its ability to glow and the living crystal becomes dormant.

Light Quartz Weapon: Though rarely found in Barsaive, weapons with small light quartz crystals embedded in their hilts permit their wielders to use the weapons as light sources. Such weapons are favored by adventurers who explore underground regions, especially kaers. The light quartzes used are smaller than standard light quartzes and roughly half as effective. Also, light quartz crystals can be installed in a weapon's hilt only when a weapon is being made. The cost of the weapon is additional to the cost of the quartz. Like small light quartzes, the enchantment must be renewed each year at a cost of 10 silver pieces.

Message Stone: Message stones are living crystals woven with True Earth and True Air that enable them to capture sounds within their crystalline structure. A spoken command is used to release the message. Government couriers and wealthy merchants often use these stones to deliver important messages in the sender's own voice. More expensive message stones have wards cast on them to safeguard their messages against tampering.

One-Size Hat: This high-quality headgear is made with minor magics that makes the hat fit perfectly to any head. Any one-size hat of the correct basic size tailors itself to fit the individual customer's skull shape. Any race, including obsidimen and t'skrang, can wear a one-size hat.



Orichalcum Container: A small container sufficient to hold up to twenty kernels of a True Element. These containers usually are fashioned in the form of small boxes with hinged lids and engraved with protective runes and symbols.

Pot of Grumbah: Pots of grumbah are heavy-lidded pots made of black iron and the hides of ice flyers, with kernels of True Air woven into them. They are most often used to carry food, and occasionally used to transport the remains of creatures. The pots are airtight once sealed and keep their contents cold, tripling the amount of time the contents remain fresh before decaying. The pots come in a variety of sizes ranging from one foot to one yard in diameter and weigh anywhere from two to five pounds.

Pure Water Pot: For the most part, water from running brooks, streams, or rivers is clean enough for drinking, though characters may wish to purify it just to be safe. Some adventurers carry magically enchanted pure water pots that cast the Purify Water spell, p.190, with a Spellcasting and Effect Step of 8/2D6 on any liquid placed in them.

Quiet Fingers Gloves: These gloves muffle the sound of the character's hands bouncing or bumping against someone else's property. If another person tries to detect the character wearing these gloves while he is attempting to pick a lock or a pocket, add +1 to the Difficulty Number for the required Perception test. Quiet-fingers gloves only work when the character is actively using his hands.

Quiet Pouch: Minor silencing illusions, such as those used in quiet-fingers gloves, are woven into the fabric of these pouches and prevent noise from emerging. Wealthy travelers often use quiet pouches to keep thieves and beggars from hearing the jingling of coins as they walk.

Season Lamp: These elaborate hanging lamps are made from brass or iron woven with True Air and fire. The two elements alternately warm or cool the room where the lamp hangs, keeping it at a constant temperature regardless of the weather outside. Season lamps are most commonly used in the homes of the well-to-do to create a comfortable environment.

Traveler's Mug: Traveler's mugs are large steel mugs decorated with symbols of healing and endurance executed in precious metals. These pint mugs are enchanted with orichalcum and True Water and fill up once per day with cool fresh water upon a spoken command.

Upandal's Blessings: These wooden-handled tools, which combine a file with a chisel and hand drill, have won much praise from artisans and enchanters. The central shafts of each tool are made of rune-encrusted metals woven with generous amounts of True Earth and True Wood. The tools enable an artist to correct mistakes when crafting items from any substance, so long as he does so within five minutes of making the error. The tools are especially useful to artists working with precious metals or similar substances, as they can correct errors without whittling their carvings down to a smaller size. Often used by craftsmen to decorate shields and weapons, Upandal's blessings were also used to etch runes into kaer doors during the Scourge. Should the user of these tools fail a Craftsman or Artisan test he may immediately erase his mistake and make a second test. Using Upandal's blessings when crafting magical items requires a Craftsman or Artisan test against the item's Mystic Defense.

Wind Instrument: Wind instruments, such as flutes or trumpets, often have True Air woven into them to give the instrument a clearer, purer sound that carries much better than usual. The True Air also allows the musician to play the instrument with less effort and for longer periods of time than he could play a non-magical instrument. The musician gains a +1 bonus to his Emotion Song tests, if he possesses the talent or skill, and to any other Action tests made to determine how well he plays the instrument.

Healing Aids

Since the end of the Scourge, healing aids have boomed in popularity. Occasional shortages temporarily drive up prices. The bulk of the weight of a Healing Aid is usually its packaging, typically a clay or ceramic vial. The weight of the potion inside does not have any effect on how well it works or how much is needed: A character always requires a full dose; windlings do not need to drink less of a potion because they are smaller, trolls do not require several doses because they are larger. Unless noted in the description, healing aids that grant a Recovery test bonus do so using the rules for recovering from damage described in Effects of Injury, p.XX. Using a Healing Aid is a Standard Action for most items, and exceptions are noted with the item.

Healing Aid Descriptions

Booster Potion: A booster potion improves the effectiveness of the character's healing processes, granting a +8 bonus to the next Recovery test the character makes within 24 hours.

Cure Disease Potion: This potion helps a character resist the effects of a disease they have caught. It grants the character a new Resistance test against the disease, and boosts the character's immune system. For 24 hours, the potion grants a +5 bonus to any tests made to resist the effects of a disease.

Halt Illness Potion: This potion slows the progress of diseases and illnesses. Once ingested, it stops a disease's progression for 8 hours. Any effects caused before the potion was taken remain in effect. The illness runs its normal course once the potion's effects end. It is commonly used to stabilize a patient while a cure is sought.

Healing Potion: A healing potion automatically heals one Wound and grants a +8 bonus to the character's next Recovery test within 24 hours. If the character has no Recovery tests left when ingesting the potion, he may choose to make an immediate Recovery test with a Step 8/2D6.

Kelia's Antidote: Kelia's antidote neutralizes the effects of poison for 8 hours. After being used, the character does not suffer new ill effects from being poisoned, but any effects caused before the antidote was taken remain. If poisoned after taking the potion, the character makes tests to resist the poison as normal, but does not suffer from any negative effects until the Antidote's duration ends.

Kelix's Poultice: Kelix's poultice helps a character shake off the effects of a poison. It grants the character a new Resistance test and adds a +5 bonus to any tests the character makes to resist the effects of a poison. The poultice must be applied to the injury where the poison entered the character's system. If no injury exists or if it cannot be identified, an injury must be caused. This reduces the poultice's effectiveness to a +3 bonus.

Last Chance Salve: A last chance salve can be applied to a character who has been dead for a number of hours no greater than the higher of his Toughness or Willpower Steps. After it is smeared over the character's body, a process usually taking 5 minutes, the salve glows a gentle blue over the next ten minutes as it works its magic. The character may take all of his remaining Recovery tests. If he has no Recovery tests available, the last chance salve grants him a bonus Recovery test. If the character's Current Damage total is brought below his Death Rating, then he returns to life, otherwise he remains dead. Multiple last chance salves may be applied to a character, but only one salve will be effective during any one hour period.

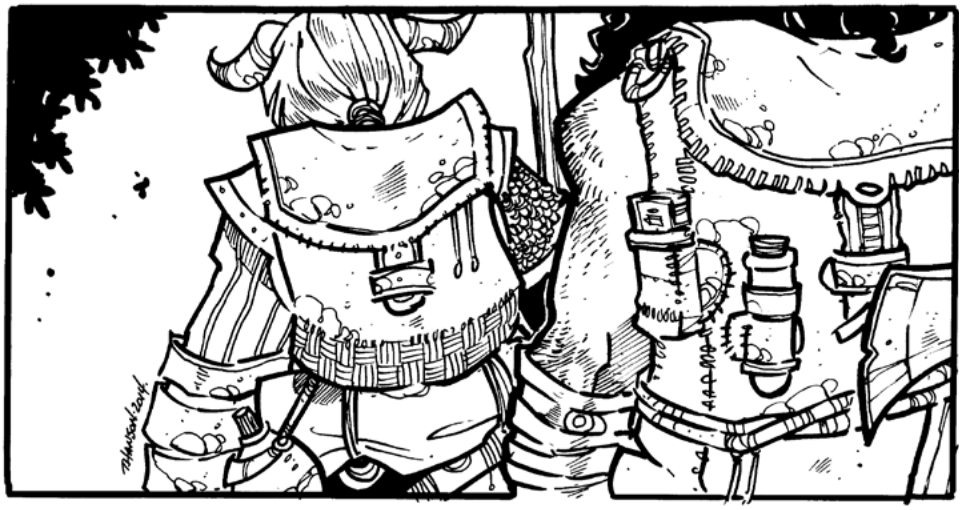
Salve of Closure: A salve of closure automatically heals any Wound to which it is applied. Activating the salve costs the character one of his Recovery tests. If he has no Recovery tests available, then the salve has no effect.

Adventuring Equipment

Adventuring equipment includes items such as backpacks, bedrolls, tents, rope, and other equipment commonly used by characters during their adventures. Much of the equipment listed is basic gear that requires no explanation. Items with specific game functions are described following the relevant sections.

Equipment Descriptions

Adventuring Kit: The adventuring equipment package deal includes basic equipment most adventurers can reasonably expect to need and use, and offers players a



simple method of buying adventuring equipment for their characters. All characters begin game play with an adventurer's kit (see Equip Your Character, p.XX).

Alchemist's Kit: This portable alchemy lab is used by traveling alchemists and fits into a case the size of a backpack. It contains the absolute minimum of equipment required to perform alchemical tasks. Characters using an alchemist's kit suffers a –3 penalty to his Alchemy tests (p.XX).

Alchemist's Shop: A complete alchemy lab containing glassware, mortars, jars, elemental burners, crucibles and the like, for use with the Alchemy skill. An alchemist's shop is not portable because of all of the bulky and delicate apparatus involved.

Artisan Tools: The tools required for the characters to perform his Artisan skill. These are adequate to carry out simple work related to the character's Artisan skill—for more intricate tasks, the character will usually require a more complete set of tools, costing five or more times that given. The cost of these tools does not include any materials that may be required. All characters begin game play with tools appropriate to their Artisan skill (see Equip Your Character, p.XX).

Backpack: Usually made from leather or burlap, a standard backpack can hold approximately 50 pounds of goods.

Bedroll: Bedding and a blanket slim enough to be rolled up and tied for carrying. Adventurers use them to sleep in an impromptu fashion on the road. Each bedroll accommodates one person.

Belt Pouch: A small leather or cloth bag either tied to or threaded onto one's belt, the belt pouch typically holds approximately 5 pounds of goods.

Blanket: A thick, wool blanket. Standard gear for travel in cold, mountainous terrain.

Candle: A wax cylinder with a wick in its center and a clay or metal plate to hold the melting wax. The standard light source for home use, a candle illuminates a 3-yard radius. A favorite of troubadours and magicians when writing late at night.

Chain: A 10-foot length of chain that can be used for binding and capturing as well as climbing. Obsidimen and trolls require the heavy version to assist them when climbing. If used to bind someone, light chain can be broken with a successful Strength (11) test; heavy chain with a successful Strength (14) test. A bound character is usually considered Harried for this test.

Climbing Kit: Comes with all the tools necessary for climbing.

Craftsman Tools: Different craftsman tools are necessary to use the Craftsman skill, p.XX.

Disguise Kit: A metal box filled with makeup, hair dye, cheap accessories, and clothing outfits useful for creating disguises. Essential for using the Disguise skill, p.XX.

Fishing Kit: Comes with all the tools necessary for fishing. Used in conjunction with the Wilderness Survival skill, p. XX.

Flint and Steel: A piece of flint and steel that, when struck forcefully together, creates sparks for starting fires. Used to light tinder to create campfires and to ignite torches.

Grappling Hook: A hook with an eye for attachment to a length of chain or rope. The grappling hook is used to secure a rope or chain for climbing. Grappling hooks can be thrown by making a Throwing Weapons test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster (usually 7). The character must use the Called Shot combat option to hit the intended location.

Healing Kit: A healing kit comes in a small shoulder bag and contains bandages, salves, and herbal potions that can speed recovery from injury. A character treated for at least ten minutes with a healing kit gains a +1 bonus to his next Recovery test. Each healing kit contains enough supplies for three applications. A three-application refill can be purchased separately but requires the basic components of a healing kit to be useful.

Iron Pot: An iron pot is common in households throughout Barsaive as the standard form of cookware, but is sometimes used by adventurers to prepare meals on the road. Adventurers who hunt commonly carry this item to create stews from smaller game.

Lantern: Lanterns are used for light by the ordinary inhabitants of cities and towns as well as by adventurers. A hooded lantern illuminates a 10-yard-radius area. A bull's-eye lantern focuses the light into a 2-yard-wide beam that extends to 20 yards. Most lanterns burn oil, but some use light quartz to provide illumination equivalent to a hooded lantern.

Map and Scroll Case: A capped tube used for storing rolled pieces of paper or parchment. When capped, the case is water resistant, but not necessarily watertight.

Musical Instrument: Musical instruments for use with the Entertainer skill, p.XX.

Navigation Charts: A map and scroll case with a basic chart of the stars. Required to use the Navigation talent, p.XX.

Oil Flask: Used as fuel, each flask holds enough oil to fuel a lantern for eight hours.

Paper/Parchment: A prepared piece of cloth or vellum suitable for writing on.

Physician's Kit: A metal box filled with tools for diagnosing illness, as well as unguents, salves, and specialized components to treat more serious injuries. A basic physician's kit can be used three times before its consumable supplies are exhausted. A three-application refill can be purchased, but requires the tools from the basic kit to be useful. A physician's kit is required to use the Physician skill, p.XX.

Quill Pen: A feather with a specially shaped tip. When dipped in a vial of ink, it draws the liquid in, and leaves a trail when drawn across a piece of paper or parchment. A common tool for Troubadours and magicians.

Rope: Rope of various lengths, usually made of hemp, and useful for binding and capturing, as well as climbing. If used to bind someone, the rope can be broken with a successful Strength (8) test. A bound character is usually considered Harried for this test.

Sack: Made of burlap or heavy cloth, a sack holds approximately 30 pounds of goods.

Tent: A simple canvas shelter large enough to accommodate two human-sized characters.

Thieves' Picks and Tools: A set of these specialist tools is required for a character to make use of the Lock Picking skill, p.XX.

Torch: A wooden rod with its tip wrapped with an oil soaked rag. It can be lit by the spark from a flint and steel and typically burns for around an hour. The standard light source for adventurers, a torch illuminates a 10 yard radius. Unlit, it can be used as a club in melee combat, but is treated as an improvised weapon (see Improvised Melee Weapons, p.XX). A lit torch may also set flammable targets such as dry straw or cloth alight.

Water or Wine Skin: A leather pouch with a constricted bottleneck useful for holding liquids. A typical waterskin holds enough water for one day. The weight shown on the Adventuring Equipment Table is for a full skin.

Whetstone: A tool for sharpening and maintaining weapons.

Writing Ink: Black ink for writing. Each vial contains enough ink to write eight to ten pages of information. Dyed inks of other colors are harder to find—increase the Availability Rating by one level—and cost two or more times the price of black ink.

Writing Kit: Comes with all the tools necessary for writing.

Services

Accommodation and Provender

Nearly all towns and cities in Barsaive offer food and lodgings of varying quality. The most typical types of lodging are described below.

Accommodation Descriptions

Flophouses: Flophouses are the most inexpensive lodging available. These facilities are basically large, common rooms where characters roll up in their own blankets and sleep on the floor. Flophouses offer no services of any kind.

Cheap Inns: Cheap inns offer both public and private rooms. Public rooms have one large bed which can accommodate several people. A private room contains a sin-

gle-occupancy bed. Cheap inns usually offer simple and average meals, and average ale and wine.

Guild Inns: Guild inns are run by merchant guilds, who originally built these facilities to house journeyman guild members. Over the years, many have begun to serve travelers, who generally have more ready coin than the average journeyman or apprentice. Most rooms at these inns have locks.

Luxury Inns: Luxury inns exist only in larger towns and cities. The staff at these establishments pay particular attention to details and try to fulfill any reasonable customer requests. Typical amenities include magical lamps and fireplaces that ignite and douse on command, wine buckets that automatically chill wine to the right temperature, and baths that sense which muscles ache and massage them. For nervous travelers carrying valuables, luxury inns feature safes and in-room safety deposit boxes.

Merchant Inns: These inns offer higher quality accommodations than cheap inns, but also cost more. They offer only private rooms, some of which come with private baths. Merchant inns offer all types of food and drink, from simple meals to sumptuous feasts.

Provender Descriptions

Drinks: Ale and wine are the most common drinks available, ranging in quality from average to fine. Prices also vary, ranging from a few copper pieces for a mug to a king's ransom for the best vintages.

Dwarf Mine Rations: Dwarf mine rations consist of nuts and vegetables grown exclusively underground. Hearty and lightweight, dwarf mine rations unfortunately have the consistency of gravel, and some claim they have a taste to match. Those who eat only dwarf mine rations for an entire day add a +1 bonus to their first Recovery test the following day. Though undeniably healthier than other rations, dwarf mine rations often cause strife within mining groups and adventuring parties. After a week of eating such rations, each character must make a Willpower test each morning to see if he can face eating more: obsidimen and dwarfs must make a successful Willpower (2) test; humans, trolls, and orks a Willpower (3) test; elves, t'skrang, and windlings must make a successful Willpower (4) test. The Difficulty Number increases by +1 each week.

Food: Daily food and lodging is available at the numerous inns and taverns of Barsaive's cities, towns, and villages. The costs listed are fairly standard from city to city. All of the meals described below are full meals capable of sustaining a character for a full day.

Average Meal: The average meal includes fatty meat, bread, cheese, seasonal fruit, and a mug or two of average ale to wash it down.

Good Meal: A good meal includes fine fish or lean meat, vegetables, three or more types of bread, a bowl of soup, and a few mugs of good ale. Dessert may or may not be included, depending on the establishment.

Simple Meal: A simple meal consists of cheese, bread, and seasonal fruit. This type of meal emphasizes quantity over quality.

Sumptuous Feast: A sumptuous feast includes several courses, including appetiz-

ers, soup, salad, entree and dessert. Fine ales or wine are served throughout the meal, a different variety for each course.

Theran Uyglar: This rare dessert is a light, custardy parfait traditionally served without a glass. Instead, magic keeps it afloat. The taste changes into a variety of flavors as the dessert is eaten, caramel and sweetmeg being the most common.

Trail Rations: Most adventurers and travelers use rations, generally dried food prepared to last long periods of time without spoiling. Trail rations consist of dried fruit, dried meat, and nuts.

Trade Services

For a price, characters can contract the services of messengers, sages, scribes, weaponsmiths, armorers and others.

Service Descriptions

Armorer: Armorers forge new and repair armor and shields. Most also sell armor. Armorers will also decorate armor, for instance, etching a group symbol on a breastplate or shield.

Farrier: Farriers are paid to look after animals, providing services such as horse shoeing and basic veterinary care.

Library Access: Many cities in Barsaive have libraries that characters can use to research legends and history. Library access usually includes aid from library assistants, and sometimes the services of a scribe. The most famous library in Barsaive is the Great Library of Throal.

Messenger: Messengers carry messages between clients. Most messengers work only within city limits or a certain defined area, though some will carry messages to other cities or regions. Windlings and obsidimen specialize in providing messenger services, though individuals of any race can be messengers. While many city residents use windlings to ensure quick delivery, Obsidimen have a greater reputation for reliability.

Sage: Sages possess specialized knowledge in scholarly areas, especially magic. They can provide characters with information on history and legends that may help them in their adventures.

Scribe: Skilled in writing, scribes pen letters and formal documents for a fee. A talented scribe can also translate a group's adventure log from a pile of disjointed notes into a stirring epic of heroic adventure.

Weaponsmiths: Weaponsmiths forge and repair all types of weapons, from swords and staffs to maces. They can also add decorative markings to weapons.

Transport

There are many modes of transport which can be secured. Characters can arrange for passage aboard a t'skrang riverboat, or in a caravan traveling between cities, or even book passage on an airship (though this is often difficult to arrange and costs a great deal). Though not commonly available, vehicles are sold in larger towns and cities.

The costs shown do not include the price of any animals required to draw the

vehicle.

Transport Descriptions

Canoes: Canoes are small boats capable of carrying one to three human-sized passengers safely. Propelled by oar, most canoes are eight to twelve feet long and three feet wide at the center. The ends of the canoe taper to a width of a few inches. Canoes are most often used for travel along smaller rivers and lakes.

Carts: Carts are wheeled vehicles used by merchants to transport goods. Large carts usually measure six to eight feet long by three feet wide. Pack mules usually pull carts, but some merchants also use horses for the task. Smaller carts can be pushed by hand.

Rowboats: Rowboats are propelled by oars fixed onto side brackets. Usually eight to twelve feet long by three to five feet wide, these boats can safely carry four to six human-sized passengers. At least one passenger must work the oars. These craft are often used as fishing boats on smaller rivers and lakes.

Wagons: Wagons are capable of carrying two to five human-sized passengers. Usually a team of horses pulls a wagon, but mule teams are used with some smaller and slower wagons.

Mounts

Animals are used in many regions. When they aren't used for labor, they are often used for food or entertainment. Game statistics can be found in the Creatures chapter of the Gamemaster's Guide.

For long journeys, most characters prefer riding. A mount can carry them faster and farther in a single day than their own feet. Not every mount can carry a character of any race; some folk are too large or too small for certain mounts. Humans, elves and orks can ride nearly any type of mount except for the tiny kue and zoaks, which are used primarily by windlings. T'skrang can also ride just about any mount, though most prefer not to do so. Dwarfs can ride ponies, huttawas, troajin and pack mules, but their legs are too short to reach the stirrups on most horses. Trolls are too big and heavy for riding horses and smaller mounts, but war horses are strong enough to carry them. More often, trolls ride sturdy granlains or thundra beasts.

Only thundra beasts and elephants are strong enough to carry obsidimen. Obsidiman characters don't typically ride mounts—instead, they ride in wagons or carts pulled by a pair of pack mules or large draft horses. Griffins are the most exotic mounts used in Barsaive, and only high-Circle Cavalrymen or Beastmasters have the necessary skills to ride them.

A Cavalryman's starting mount, and any mounts bought from a typical dealer, come trained for riding and will generally not get spooked in combat, although temperament may vary among individuals. Untrained mounts may be purchased for 75 percent of the standard list price. Except where already noted, combat-trained mounts cost at least ten times the prices shown. Training can be accomplished with the Animal Bond (p. XX) and Animal Training (p.XX) talents. Both talents are also available as skills.

Tack and Harness

To properly ride a mount, a character needs stirrups, saddle, blankets, bridles, and the like. Not having these items may cause penalties to tests made while riding at the gamemaster's discretion. The typical price of a full set of equipment is one third the price of the mount's list price, to a maximum of 150 silver pieces. For example, an untrained war horse normally costs 150 silver, so its saddle and other equipment cost 50 silver pieces. An elephant costs 3,000 silver, but as the maximum price for the equipment is 150 silver pieces, a character does not have to pay 1,000 silver (one third of 3,000) to equip his elephant. Availability for tack and harness is the same as for the mount.

Care and Feeding

A rider must ensure that his mount gets adequate rest, warmth and food if he wants the mount to perform well. Ideally, a mount should be rubbed down after a long day's ride or a long gallop, given a clean stable to sleep in every night, and fed and watered each day. Characters must spend the time and money needed to care for their mounts. If they don't, their mounts become irritable and sluggish, slow down the pace of travel and force the characters to stop frequently.

Most mounts are herbivores—they eat mostly grass and hay, occasionally supplemented by high-energy grains such as oats. A few mounts, such as troajins and griffins, are carnivores. Meat usually costs more than grain, so feeding a carnivorous mount costs more than feeding a horse or a mule. Characters can allow carnivorous mounts to hunt, but a mount cannot hunt while being ridden, and most riders are understandably reluctant to let their valued mounts wander into the wilderness in search of prey.

Riders usually allow their mounts to graze whenever they stop to rest, and they frequently carry an additional supply of feed to supplement the mount's diet. Carnivorous mounts can consume preserved meat, but they prefer it fresh. When hunting or using survival skills to provide food for a band of adventurers, player characters should treat a carnivorous mount as another member of their party. For example, troajin generally eat as much meat per day as a Namegiver, while griffins require at least three times that amount.

Healing Mounts

Mounts injured in combat can be healed by the same methods used on Namegivers. However, most booster and healing potions are designed for Namegivers and may not be as effective on mounts. Characters can mix potions and herbal remedies with a mount's feed, but this reduces the effectiveness of such medicines by half. For example, a booster potion mixed with feed works at half its normal efficacy, granting only a +4 bonus to the mount's Recovery test.

The most effective means of healing certain mounts is the Blood Share talent, which allows a mount to recover damage quickly. However, keep in mind that a character can only use these talents to heal Loyal mounts or animal servants.

If a mount goes lame, its rider has a serious problem on his hands. A mount that suffers more than 3 Wounds in combat or hit by a combat spell like Bone Shatter (p.XX), may suffer a crippling injury to one of its limbs or wings. A lame mount cannot

walk or fly until the injury heals, and even then its Movement Rate will be reduced by as much as half. Most riders simply put down lame mounts rather than spend the effort needed to heal them. Cavalrymen whose mounts go lame often perform the Rite of the Hero for their suffering mounts rather than condemn them to life as a cripple.

Mount Descriptions

Dyre: Ork cavalrymen prize the dyre as a mount because of its huge size, quick brain, and irritable temper. Most ork cavalries have at least one or two in their Ranks, if not several. Standing twelve feet tall at the shoulder, the dyre is covered in long, matted brown fur. Its back rises sharply in the middle as if humped, and it resembles a cross between a bear and bull. Like a bear, the dyre has squat, stubby legs and a short tail. Its head looks like a bull's, only wider, with sharply curving horns. The beast has hardly any neck, holding its head so low to the ground that only its back shows over the top of the high plains grass.

Elephant: In some regions elephants are used to haul heavy carts and wagons overland along the trade routes that link the coastal cities.

Goat, Riding: Windlings who cannot afford a more specialized creature often ride goats because they're easy to train, can carry a proportionally huge amount of weight, and eat nearly anything.

Granlain: Granlains are unusually large, strong horses that often serve as draft animals, standing at least seven feet tall at the shoulder. Granlains are stubborn, and trolls are often the only Namegivers strong enough to deal with these massive, willful beasts. Granlains are not common. Wild granlains live only in the plains and foothills near mountainous regions.

Griffin: These creatures combine a lion's body with the head, front legs, and wings of a large eagle. Like an eagle, a griffin's front legs are covered in feathers and end in sharp talons; its hind legs resemble those of a lion, covered in soft fur and ending in paws. Typically, griffins stand 4 feet tall at the shoulder, and are five to six feet long with an average wingspan of seven to nine feet. Its wings are covered with bright feathers, usually yellow and white, but sometimes red and orange. Humanoids of average human size and smaller, except for windlings, can use griffins as aerial mounts. Before a griffin can be used in this way, however, it must undergo extensive training, which keeps the cost of these animals high. Though difficult to train, tame griffins make excellent and loyal steeds.

Horse, Draft: Draft horses are used as pack animals and to pull carts and wagons. They are generally stronger than riding horses, but are also slower.

Horse, Pony: A smaller breed of horse used mainly by dwarfs for transportation and war. Many ork, elf, and human children train their horse riding skills on ponies as they grow up.

Horse, Riding: The most common type of horses used, riding horses make strong mounts, but cannot wear barding or armor.

Horse, War: Larger and stronger than riding horses, war horses are bred to carry heavy loads while remaining able to canter and gallop. War horses can wear barding, and are often used by armies and cavalry units, particularly ork scorcher tribes.

Huttawa: The huttawa's body resembles that of a lion or tiger, but it has an ea-

gle-like head with a large beak and bird-like eyes. Standing four feet tall at the shoulder and six feet long, huttawa are a favored mount for dwarf cavalrymen, and often help pull caravan wagons belonging to dwarf trading companies. Though not overly bright, huttawa are easy to train.

Kue: The kue resembles a cross between a lizard and a cat, with a reptilian body and feline mannerisms. Like cats, kue possess excellent night vision, and sometimes serve windling communities as watch animals. A kue has long, slender legs rather than the short squat legs typical of most lizards. They are about two feet tall at the shoulder, three to four feet long, and have ridges on their heads and tails. Kues are native to jungles and forests, and make ideal mounts for the windling Cavalrymen and Warriors who protect their communities and villages. Kues are generally sold only in larger cities and those towns located near jungles.

Mule, Pack: Pack mules pull carts and wagons. Slow but strong, these animals can travel through terrain that horses and other larger pack animals cannot.

Stajian: Stajian are large, bison-like animals often used as mounts by ork cavalry. They stand six feet tall at the shoulder and are less massive than a thundra beast, but stronger than a horse. Their broad hooves make them good navigators in both swamp and mountains.

Thundra Beast: This large, four-legged animal looks like a cross between a rhinoceros and a dinosaur, with a tough, rock-like skin covering its entire body. Thundra beasts stand at least seven feet tall at the shoulder, are ten to twelve feet long, and weigh about five thousand pounds. Each thundra beast has a large horn in the center of its forehead, which it uses to attack opponents. Ork scorcher groups frequently ride thundra beasts.

Troajin: Troajin are tiger-like animals native to jungle and mountain country. The average troajin stands approximately four feet tall at the shoulder and is eight feet long—a combination of a five foot body and a three foot tail. Wild troajin are fiercely territorial and defend themselves with sharp claws and teeth. Troajin often become animal companions for Beastmasters.

Zoak: The zoak looks like a cross between a large bird and a bat, with feathers on its body and head and a leathery neck, wings, and tail. The creature's feathered legs each end in four eagle-like talons. Zoaks measure roughly four feet from beak to tail-tip. The zoak's neck is long and flexible. These jungle and forest animals are favored by windling Cavalrymen, and also often serve as companions for Beastmasters. Because they are difficult to train, zoaks are rarely offered for sale. Merchants in cities are known to trade and sell zoaks.

Clothing

Each Namegiver wears its own style of clothing, and individual clothing choices can vary greatly. The Clothing Table lists the most common types of clothing available in Barsaive, including package deals for entire outfits.

The weights listed on the Clothing Table are used for encumbrance purposes and do not reflect the true weight of the item. If the gamemaster wants to reflect the encumbrance of clothing being carried instead of worn, double the listed weight.

Melee Weapons Table

Weapon	*Damage Step*	*STR Min*	*Size*	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Battle Axe	7	13	5	35	6	Average
Broadsword	5	12	3	25	4	Average
Club	3	7	2	2	3	Average
Dagger	2	4	1	8cp	1	Average
Dwarf Sword	4	12	2	6	2	Average
Flail	5	10**	3	35	5	Average
Hand Axe	4	8	2	15	3	Average
Knife	1	3	1	3cp	10oz	Everyday
Lance	6	14	6	150	10	Unusual
Long Spear	5	13	5	15	7	Average
Mace	4	13	3	20	5	Average
Pole Arm	7	14	5	100-175	8-10	Average
Pole Axe	8	16	6	150	10	Unusual
Quarterstaff	4	6**	5	5	4	Average
Sap	1	3**	1	3	2	Average
Short Sword	4	8	2	16	3	Average
Scythan Axe	5	12	3	20	4	Unusual
Spear	4	9	3	9	3	Average
Spiked Mace	6	13	4	40	7	Average
Trispear	5	11	4	25	4	Average
Troll Axe	8	17	6	45	8	Unusual
Troll Sword	6	13	4	50	6	Average
Two-Handed Sword	8	15	6	125	7	Unusual
Warhammer	7	15	5	95	8	Unusual
Whip	3*	7**	3	10	2	Average
Windling Pole Arm	4	7	2	55	2	Unusual
Windling Spear	2	4	1	25	8oz	Unusual
Windling Sword	3	6	1	45	1	Unusual

* May be used to entangle an opponent up to 3 yards away

** A minimum Dexterity value of 7 is required to use a flail, quarterstaff, sap, or whip

Missile Weapons Table

Weapon	*Dmg Step*	*STR Min*	*Size*	*SR*	*LR*	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Blowgun	1	3	1	2-8	9-16	2	10oz	Unusual
Box of 10 needles						1	8oz	Unusual
Elven Warbow	5	12*	5	2-48	49-96	200	4	Rare
20 Warbow Arrows						25	4	Rare
Light Crossbow	4	9	3	2-32	33-64	50	5	Average
15 Light Bolts						15	3	Average
Longbow	4	11*	5	2-40	41-80	60	4	Average
20 Longbow Arrows						10	3	Average
Medium Crossbow	5	12	4	2-40	41-80	100	7	Unusual
15 Medium Bolts						20	4	Unusual
Quiver	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	Average
Shortbow	3	8	3	2-30	31-60	15	3	Average
20 Shortbow Arrows						5	2	Average
Sling	2	5	2	2-20	21-40	3	1	Average
Troll Sling	4	10	4	2-30	31-60	15	4	Average
Windling Bows	3	5	2	2-24	25-48	25	14oz	Average
20 Windling Arrows						5	8oz	Average

*A minimum Dexterity value of 15 is required to use an Elven Warbow. A minimum Dexterity value of 13 is required to use a longbow.

Throwing Weapons Table

Weapon	*Dmg Step*	*STR Min*	*Size*	*Short Rng*	*Long Rng*	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Bola	3	6*	2	2-12	13-24	10	2	Average
Dagger	2	4	1	2-10	11-20	8cp	1	Average
Dart	1	4	1	2-18	19-36	3cp	8oz	Average
Flight Dagger	2	4	1	2-20	21-40	25	12oz	Unusual
Hawk Hatchet	4	8	3	2-24	25-48	75	2	Unusual
Knife	1	3	1	2-8	9-16	3cp	10oz	Everyday
Net	-	4-8*	3-6	2-6	7-12	15	5	Average
Spear	4	9	3	2-10	11-20	9	3	Average
Throwing Axe	3	7	3	2-12	13-24	25	2	Average
Throwing Dagger	2	4	1	2-16	17-32	2	12oz	Average
Windling Net	-	3*	2	2-6	7-12	15	12oz	Average
Windling Spear	2	4	1	2-8	9-16	25	8oz	Unusual

* A minimum Dexterity value of 9 is required to use a bola or net.

Armor Table

Armor	*Physical Armor*	*Mystic Armor*	*Initiative Penalty*	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Blood Pebble	5	3	1	300	NA	Rare
Chain Mail	7	0	3	180	40	Average
Crystal Plate	7	7	5	12,000	90	Rare
Crystal Ringlet	4	4	2	500	45	Rare
Espagra Cloak	3	1	0	200	10	Rare
Fernweave	2	3	0	125	15	Unusual
Hardened Leather	5	0	1	40	20	Average
Hide Armor	5	1	1	50	25	Average
Leather	3	0	0	10	15	Average
Living Crystal	6	3	2	1,100	NA	Rare
Obsidiman Skin	3	1	0	100	20	Rare
Padded Cloth	2	0	0	2	5	Average
Padded Leather	4	0	0	20	20	Average
Plate Armor	9	0	4	3,000	60	Unusual
Ring Mail	6	0	2	110	30	Average
Wyvern Skin	8	1	3	2,000	50	Rare

Shield Table

Shield	*Physical Defense*	*Mystic Defense*	*Initiative Penalty*	*Shatter Threshold*	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Body	+3	+0	2	21	50	15	Unusual
Buckler	+1	+0	0	17	5	3	Average
Crystal Buckler	+1	+1	0	17	50	5	Rare
Crystal Raider	+2	+2	2	18	150	15	Rare
Ferndask	+1	+2	2	16	22	5	Unusual
Footman's	+2	0	1	19	15	10	Average
Rider's	+2	0	1	19	20	8	Average

Common Magic Item Table

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Bedroll of Comfort	340	2	Rare
Boots, Dry	250	2	Rare
Boots, Huntsman	700	2	Rare
Cleaning Broom	25	2	Rare
Cloak, Dwarf Winternight	275	2	Unusual
Cloak, Everclean	275	1	Rare
Cloak, Warm	300	2	Rare
Divining Rod	75	1	Rare
Elfweave Robe	80	2	Unusual
Fire Starter	100	2	Rare
Firefly Chalk (per stick)	12	Neg.	Unusual
Heat Stone	100	3	Rare
Hot Pot	100	8	Rare
Light Quartz, Small	75	2	Unusual
Light Quartz, Medium	125	6	Unusual
Light Quartz, Large	200	20	Rare
Light Quartz Weapon	100	1	Rare
Message Stone	300	2	Unusual
Message Stone (warded)	600	2	Rare
One-Size Hat	35	1	Unusual
Orichalcum Container	5,000	1	Rare
Pot of Grumbah, Small	75	2	Rare
Pot of Grumbah, Large	200	5	Rare
Pure Water Pot	150	2	Rare
Quiet Fingers Gloves	140	1	Unusual
Quiet Pouch	65	2	Rare
Season Lamp	350	NA	Rare
Traveler's Mug	350	1	Rare
Upandal's Blessings	275	3	Rare
Wind Instrument	250	2+	Rare

Picture: one or more blood charms?

Blood Charm Table

Charm	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Absorb Blow	100	1	Unusual
Astral-Sensitive Eye	325	1	Unusual
Bone Charm	175	1	Rare
Darksight Eye	200	1	Unusual
Death Cheat	450	1	Unusual
Desperate Blow	275	1	Unusual
Desperate Spell	300	1	Unusual
Garlen Stone	250	1	Rare
Horn Needle	450	1	Rare
Horror Fend	500	1	Unusual
Initiative Booster	600	1	Rare
Strength Booster	300	1	Rare
Targeting Eye	450	1	Unusual
Wound Balance	200	1	Unusual

Healing Aid Table

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Booster Potion	50	2	Unusual
Cure Disease Potion	500	2	Rare
Halt Illness Potion	100	1	Unusual
Healing Potion	300	2	Rare
Kelia's Antidote	125	2	Rare
Kelix's Poultice	50	1	Unusual
Last Chance Salve	600	1	Very Rare
Salve of Closure	200	1	Rare

Picture: one or more potion bottles?

Adventuring Equipment Table

Item	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Adventuring Kit: Backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, torch, waterskin, large sack	15	14	Average
As above, with tent	40	34	Average
Alchemist's Kit	500	15	Unusual
Alchemist's Shop	2,000	NA	Unusual
Artisan Tools:			
Carving	15	3	Average
Embroidery/Sewing	25	1	Average
Forge	100	20	Unusual
Painting	45	2	Average
Sculpting	30	3	Average
Backpack	5	3	Average
Bedroll	5	4	Average
Belt Pouch	8cp	1	Everyday
Blanket	15cp	2	Everyday
Candle	3cp	4oz	Everyday
Chain:			
Heavy (10ft)	50	9	Average
Light (10ft)	10	6	Average
Chalk (5 pieces)	3cp	4oz	Everyday
Climbing Kit: Rope (20ft), Light Chain (10ft), 2 Pitons, Grappling Hook	36	19	Average
Craftsman Tools	25	5	Average
Disguise Kit	50	6	Average
Fishing Kit: 10 Fish Hooks, Fishing Net, Fishing Rod, Bait Jar	20	14	Average
Fishing Net (30 sq ft)	15	10	Average
Flint and Steel	1	8oz	Everyday
Grappling Hook	10	5	Average
Healing Kit:			
Basic (3 applications)	75	5	Unusual
Refill (3 applications)	50	Neg.	Unusual
Iron Pot	20	8	Average
Lantern:			
Hooded	9	3	Average
Bullseye	27	3	Average
Light Quartz	85	5	Unusual
Map or Scroll Case	8cp	1	Average

Musical Instrument:			
Drum	7	5	Average
Flute	2	2	Average
Horn	70	7	Average
Lute	25	6	Unusual
Whistle	2cp	1	Everyday
Navigation Charts	15	2	Average
Oil Flask	6	1	Everyday
Paper/Parchment (sheet)	1	Neg.	Unusual
Physician's Kit:			
Basic (3 applications)	50	3	Average
Refill (3 applications)	25	1	Average
Quill Pen	1	Neg.	Average
Rope, per yard	3	1	Average
Sack	2	2	Everyday
Tent	30	20	Average
Thieves' Picks and Tools	100	1	Unusual
Torch	5cp	1	Everyday
Whetstone	2cp	1	Everyday
Water or Wine Skin	2	4	Everyday
Writing Ink (per vial)	10	8oz	Unusual
Writing Kit: Quill Pen, Writing Ink, 10 sheets Parchment or Paper, 2 Candles, 10 Pieces of Chalk	23	2	Unusual

Transport Table

Item	*Cost*	*Availability*
Canoe	20	Average
Cart, Large	40	Average
Cart, Small	15	Average
Rowboat	50	Average
Transport (person/mount* per day):		
Airship	20-30	Rare
Caravan	3-5	Average
Ferry	1-2	Average
Riverboat	5-6	Unusual
Wagon, Large	50	Average
Wagon, Small	30	Average

* Large mounts (thundra beasts, elephants, etc) count as two mounts for transportation purposes.

Mounts Table

Mount	*Feed Cost*	*Stable Cost*	*Carrying Capacity*	*Speed*	*Weight*	*Lifespan*	*Cost*	*Availability*
Dyre	5	2	2,740	16	2tons	25	4,500!	Rare
Elephant	30	NA	1,760	16	3.5tons	70	3,000	Very Rare
Goat, Riding	1cp	NA	250	16	150	15	10	Average
Granlain	1	3cp	1,020	8	1.5tons	20	115	Rare
Griffin	10	5	360**	18/18*	600	45	7,500!	Very Rare
Horse, Draft	5cp	3cp	520	16	1,800	30	150	Average
Horse, Pony	5cp	3cp	250	16	700	25	110	Average
Horse, Riding	5cp	3cp	360	20	1,000	25	125	Average
Horse, War	5cp	3cp	740	16	1,800	25	1,500!	Unusual
Huttawa	8cp	3cp	520	16	600	15	95	Unusual
Kue	2cp	1cp	100	16	25	10	100	Unusual
Mule, Pack	2cp	2cp	360	16	900	20	100	Average
Staijan	3	1	1,020	20	1ton	25	3,500!	Rare
Thundra Beast	5	2	1,360	8	2.5tons	45	4,000!	Rare
Troajin	2	3cp	250	16	400	20	100	Unusual
Zoak	1cp	NA	80**	4/18*	25	15	115	Rare

* The second value is the mount's flying movement rate.

** These mounts are used to carrying burdens while flying. Their carrying capacity is the same on land and in flight.

! These mounts are sold combat trained. The price reflects the training the mount has received to allow them to act in combat situations.

Carrying Capacity: The animal's unencumbered carrying capacity in pounds.

Lifespan: The animals' natural lifespan, in years.

Accommodation Table

Item	*Cost (per night)*	*Availability*
Flophouse	1cp	Everyday
Cheap Inn, Public Room	5cp	Everyday
Cheap Inn, Private Room	1	Average
Guild Inn	8	Average
Luxury Inn	25	Average
Luxury Inn, with amenities	40	Unusual
Luxury Inn, with valet	55+tips	Rare
Merchant Inn	3	Average
Merchant Inn, with bath	5	Unusual

Provender Table

Item	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Ale, Average	5cp	NA	Everyday
Ale, Dwarf Stout	2	NA	Average
Ale, Good	1	NA	Average
Wine, Average (bottle)	5cp	1	Average
Wine, Fine (bottle)	5	1	Unusual
Meal, Average	1	NA	Average
Meal, Good	3	NA	Average
Meal, Simple	3cp	NA	Everyday
Meal, Sumptuous	50	NA	Unusual
Rations, Mine (1 week)	25	6	Unusual
Rations, Trail (1 week)	10	8	Average
Theran Uyglar	25	NA	Rare

Trade Services Table

Service	*Cost*	*Availability*
Armorer, Basic Decoration	35	Average
Armorer, Ornate Decoration	140+	Unusual
Farrier	5	Average
Library Access, Major City	25	Average
Library Access, Throal	20	Average
Messenger, City to City	30-75	Unusual
Messenger, Local	5	Average
Sage	15-100	Unusual
Scribe	50-75	Average
Weaponsmith, Basic Decoration	45	Average
Weaponsmith, Ornate Decoration	180+	Unusual

Clothing Table

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Belt	5cp	Neg.	Everyday
Boots:			
Soft	1	1	Everyday
Riding	4	2	Average
Mountain	8	2	Average
Breeches:			
Peasant	4cp	1	Everyday
Merchant	1	1	Average
Guild Member	7	1	Unusual
Brooch:			
Plain	2	1	Everyday
Ornamental	12	1	Average
Silver	15	1	Average
Gold	120	2	Average
Cloak:			
Wool	5	1	Average
Satin-lined	14	1	Average
Traveler's	8	1	Average
Fur-trimmed	50	1	Average
Theran	380	2	Unusual
Dress:			
Plain	2	1	Everyday
Patterned	7	1	Average
Embroidered	22	2	Average
Satin	100	2	Unusual
Ballroom Gown	250	4	Unusual
Theran	560	6	Unusual
Gloves	2	Neg.	Average
Hat:			
Felt	4cp	Neg.	Everyday
Woolen	12cp	Neg.	Average
Fine	9	Neg.	Average
Courtier's	18	1	Unusual
Hooded Mask	3	Neg.	Average
Hose:			
Plain	5cp	Neg.	Everyday
Silk	20	Neg.	Average

Jacket:			
Wool	12	1	Average
Silk	90	1	Average
Courtier's	170	2	Unusual
Peasant's Garb:			
Shirt, belt, sandals, breeches	12cp	1	Everyday
With robe or dress instead of breeches	3	1	Everyday
Pin or Clasp	1	Neg.	Average
Robe:			
Linen	15cp	1	Average
Embroidered	15	1	Average
Sandals	2cp	Neg.	Everyday
Shirt:			
Plain	2cp	1	Everyday
Patterned	1	1	Average
Silk	45	1	Average
Shoes:			
Merchant's	2	1	Average
Courtier's	40	1	Unusual
Scabbard	5	1	Average
Scarf	5	Neg.	Average
Toga	6cp	1	Average
Traveler's Garb:			
Soft Boots, Belt, Shirt, Breeches, Cloak	8	3	Average
With robe or dress instead of breeches	9	3	Average
Tunic	4cp	1	Everyday
Wealthy Traveler's Garb:			
Riding Boots, Belt, Shoes, 3 patterned shirts and guild breeches or patterned dress, fine hat, satin-lined cloak, ornamental brooch	40	5	Unusual
With embroidered robe instead of breeches	50	5	Unusual

BUILDING YOUR LEGEND

Just as the tallest oak starts from the lowly acorn, the legends of the past had their own humble beginnings. Time, experience, and luck are what made them the mighty figures we know today.
• Tarok Sharr, Elementalist of the Heirs of Landis •

Every adventure your character completes adds to his experience and abilities, allowing him to undertake ever more dangerous and potentially rewarding adventures. His exploits build and expand his reputation. Legends are born through such great deeds; increasing your character's Legendary Status gives your character an edge in each Earthdawn game you play. This chapter describes how to build your character's legend in Earthdawn.

Earning Legend Points

As a character survives encounters and accomplishes goals, he gains experience. As in real life, this experience generally makes him more capable, and allows him to learn new abilities and survive more dangerous encounters. Character experience in Earthdawn is measured using Legend Points. The gamemaster awards Legend Points based on a character's accomplishments and other factors during an adventure. Accumulated Legend Points allow characters to improve their talents, skills, attributes, and so on.

Characters earn Legend Points for performing specific types of actions, including:

Achieving Goals: If, for example, the group's goal is to uncover treachery against the Throalic throne, characters in the group earn Legend Points as they expose the traitors. A character also earns Legend Points for achieving goals set during a single game session, because most session goals are stepping stones toward achieving a larger objective.

Overcoming Obstacles: In Earthdawn, the characters encounter dangerous situations on a regular basis, facing deadly creatures and other opponents. Overcoming these obstacles earns Legend Points. Defeating an opponent does not necessarily mean killing him—if a group removes an opponent as an obstacle without resorting to violence, characters in the group should earn the same Legend Points as if they had defeated their opponent through combat. Not all problems can be solved at the point of a sword!

Individual Deeds: These can be clever ideas or deeds of valor. If a character takes or suggests an extraordinary action which helps achieve the group's goals, the character may receive Legend Points for that individual deed.

Roleplaying: Much as an actor takes on a role, a player may adopt the mannerisms, speaking habits, and attitudes of his character. Roleplaying a character well can earn your character Legend Points, but only if your roleplaying makes the game more enjoyable for others at the table, not just yourself. If a player's roleplaying disrupts, rather than enhances, the game, his character may not receive Legend Points for roleplaying.

Player Versus Character Experience

Players should not confuse "character experience" with "player experience." Player experience is not measured in game terms; it simply refers to what a player learns about the game by playing it.

For example, a player may learn how his character should behave in Throal to avoid getting into trouble, or may develop more effective combat tactics against specific monsters. However, his character may not be privy to this information, and during the game the player should avoid having his character take actions based on information the character would not actually know.

Lessons such as these may benefit a character by allowing him to survive longer or accomplish more, but this playing experience does not directly affect the attributes, talents, skills, or characteristics the character uses in the Earthdawn game.

Tallying Legend Points

Each time the gamemaster awards a character Legend Points they are added to the character's Current and Total Legend Points tallies. Each time a character spends Legend Points, they are only deducted from his Current Legend Points tally.

Current Legend Points

As a character earns Legend Points, a running total is kept of how many points he has available to use for improvements. This total is the character's Current Legend Points. Each time a character spends Legend Points, his Current Legend Points are updated by subtracting the points spent from the total.

The updated total after each change in the character's Legend Point tally is recorded on his Character Record Sheet.

Total Legend Points

In addition to keeping a Current Legend Points total, which rises and falls as the character earns and spends Legend Points, a player should also keep a grand total of all the Legend Points his character has earned. This is the character's Total Legend Points, and is recorded separately on his Character Record Sheet. The character never reduces his Total Legend Points; they are mainly used to determine his Legendary Status—how notable his legend is as it develops, and how it affects others as a result (see Legendary Status, p.XX).

Tomas Runecarver has returned from his most recent adventure. He earned 1,500 Legend Points for his exploration of an abandoned kaer. Before this trip, Tomas had a total of 400 Current Legend Points and 3,200 Total Legend Points. Adding the 1,500 points he just earned, Tomas now has 1,900 Current Legend Points and 4,700 Total Legend Points. If he spends 800 Legend Points to increase one of his Talent Ranks, his Current Legend Points would be reduced to 1,100, but his Total Legend Points would remain unaltered at 4,700.

Spending Legend Points

Characters may spend Legend Points to improve their Attribute values, Talent and Skill Ranks, weave threads to magical items, and to improve other abilities as explained below.

Improving Attribute Values

Characters may spend Legend Points to improve their Attribute values. The Legend Point cost for improving an Attribute increases for each additional point that it is increased. For example, improving a character's Strength by one point costs 800 Legend Points; improving it again by another point (for a total of +2) costs 1,300 Legend Points; and so on. The Attribute Increase Table lists the Legend Point cost of improving Attributes.

Attribute Increase Table

Legend Point Cost	Attribute Increase
800	+1
1,300	+2
2,100	+3

While improving Attribute values may seem expensive, they are worth considering. Improving an Attribute value improves any characteristics associated with that Attribute, as well as potentially increasing the Attribute Step. For example, increasing a character's Strength value increases the character's Carrying Capacity and if the character's Strength Step increases, so does the effectiveness of the character's Strength-based talents and skills.

The following conditions apply to improving Attribute values:

- No Attribute value may be increased by more than +3.
- Only one Attribute can be improved at a time.
- The character must complete a number of days of dedicated training equal to his current Attribute Step, during which time he must be rested and in good health (not suffering from any Current Damage or Wounds, except Blood Magic Damage).
- Attribute training costs money. Each day of training costs a character an average fee equal to his current Attribute Step × 10 silver pieces.
- The character must have sufficient Current Legend Points to pay the cost of the Attribute Value increase.
- The character must wait for a number of weeks equal to his new Attribute Step before he can improve another Attribute. During this time the character may adventure, raise Talent Ranks, train for a new Circle, or perform other tasks.

Kira wants to increase her Dexterity value. Her current Dexterity Step is 7. She needs seven days of dedicated training, which costs 70 silver pieces per day. This totals 490 silver pieces.

This is the second time Kira has improved her Dexterity (a total of +2), so it will cost her 1,300 Legend Points. She alters her Current Legend Points total and adds one to her Dexterity value. This also increases her Dexterity Step to 8, so she updates the final Step for anytalents that are based on Dexterity.

After improving her Dexterity, Kira now wants to improve her Toughness. Before she can do this she must first wait for eight weeks in game (her new Dexterity Step).

To avoid any confusion that might arise from changing an Attribute value, the character's original value should be noted on his Character Record Sheet, with the improved Attribute value recorded nearby (for example, in brackets beside the original value).

Circle-Based Attribute Improvement

Optional Rule: Instead of improving Attributes through training and spending Legend Points at any point during the game, gamemasters may wish to employ a method requiring less bookkeeping by tying Attribute increases to Circle Advancement. There are two options for Circle-based Attribute improvement:

Free Increases allow a character to increase one of his Attributes by one each time he reaches a new Circle in his first Discipline, without spending any Legend Points.

Paid Increases were the standard rule in previous editions of Earthdawn. With this rule, a character may spend Legend Points to increase one of his Attributes by one once per Circle. Opportunities to increase an Attribute cannot be carried over from one Circle to the next—if a player chooses not to increase an Attribute during a given Circle, it is lost.

With either of these options, Attributes are still limited to a maximum increase of +3.

Improving Talent Ranks

Characters can spend Legend Points to add Ranks to existing talents or learn new talents (by purchasing Rank 1). Because Talent Ranks usually add to an Attribute Step to determine the final Step Number used for tests with that Talent, a higher Rank translates into a higher level of ability with that talent. See Using Talents, p.XX, for more information on talents and how they work.

The following conditions apply to increasing Talent Ranks:

- The character must be rested and in good health (not suffering any Current Damage or Wounds, except Blood Magic Damage).
- The character must meditate uninterrupted for eight hours. This time is needed for the character to remember his Discipline training, imagining how improving his Talent Rank would alter those lessons and exercises. Through meditation, he magically extends his initial training to incorporate the new experiences and knowledge within himself. The character can only meditate on one talent at a time.
- The character must not have increased the talent already that day. A talent can only be increased by one Rank per day. As he also requires sufficient rest, an adept can only increase up to two different talents by one Rank each per day under normal circumstances (up to two consecutive eight-hour meditation sessions, followed by eight hours of sleep).
- The character has sufficient Current Legend Points to pay the full cost of the new Talent Rank.
- The Talent and Skill Cost Table shows the Legend Point cost to increase a character's Talent Ranks in his first Discipline (see Learning New Disciplines, p.XX, for information on Legend Point costs for characters with multiple Disciplines). The character must pay the Legend Point cost for each Rank increase, in order. For example, a character with a Rank 3 talent must pay the Legend Point cost and advance to Rank 3 before he can increase to Rank 4.
- To find the Legend Point cost of increasing a talent to the next Rank, first determine at which Circle the talent was learned, then find the column on the Talent Cost Table that includes the Circle of the talent for your Discipline. In the Talent Rank column, find the new Rank you wish to purchase, then read across the row until you reach the appropriate Circle column. The number where the column and row intersect is the Legend Point cost for that Talent Rank.

Silar, a t'skrang Archer, wants to improve Avoid Blow from Rank 2 to Rank 3. Avoid Blow is a First Circle talent, so Silar's player reads down the Circle 1–4 column until he gets to the Rank 3 row. The Legend Point cost listed for a Circle 1–4 talent at Rank 3 is 300. Silar meditates for 8 hours and spends 300 Legend Points to gain the new talent rank. He subtracts the Legend Points from his Current Legend Point total, and changes the rank of his Avoid Blow talent from 2 to 3.

Girr, a windling Beastmaster, wants to improve Animal Talk from Rank 3 to Rank 4. Animal Talk is a Sixth Circle talent for Beastmasters. Cross-referencing the new Rank 4 with the Circle 5–8 column shows that it costs 800 Legend Points. Girr's player notices that her Beastmaster has only 700 Current Legend Points, not enough to improve the talent rank. Girr must earn a few more Legend Points before she can afford to improve her Animal Talk talent.

Ulm, a troll Weaponsmith, wants to improve Suppress Curse from Rank 6 to Rank 7. His player checks the table and finds this will cost Ulm 2,100 Legend Points. However, after his last adventure, Ulm took quite a bit of damage, including a couple of Wounds. While he has sufficient Current Legend Points to pay for the new talent rank, he must heal the damage before he will be able to meditate effectively.

Maximum Talent Rank

Rank 15 is the highest talent rank available to adepts. Some magical treasures, spells, or rituals can provide bonus ranks, bringing the effective rank above 15. Regardless of whether bonus ranks are temporary or permanent, the character improves his talent ranks without including bonuses from magical items or similar sources.

Talent Cost Table

Talent Rank	Novice Circle 1–4	Journeyman Circle 5–8	Warden Circle 9–12	Master Circle 13–15
1	100	200	300	500
2	200	300	500	800
3	300	500	800	1,300
4	500	800	1,300	2,100
5	800	1,300	2,100	3,400
6	1,300	2,100	3,400	5,500
7	2,100	3,400	5,500	8,900
8	3,400	5,500	8,900	14,400
9	5,500	8,900	14,400	23,300
10	8,900	14,400	23,300	37,700
11	14,400	23,300	37,700	61,000
12	23,300	37,700	61,000	98,700
13	37,700	61,000	98,700	159,700
14	61,000	98,700	159,700	258,400
15	98,700	159,700	258,400	418,100

Improving Skill Ranks

Characters can spend Legend Points to add Ranks to existing skills, or to learn new skills (by purchasing Rank 1). Though similar to gaining Talent Ranks, improving skills differs in the following ways:

- Characters cannot improve a skill beyond Rank 10.
- Improving a Skill Rank requires the character to complete a number of weeks of dedicated training equal to the new Rank, during which time he must be rested and in good health (not suffering any Current Damage or Wounds, except Blood Magic Damage). For example, improving a skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4 requires four weeks of training.
- The character has sufficient Current Legend Points to pay the full cost of the new Skill Rank (see the Skill Training and Cost Table). The cost is determined based on the tier (Novice, Journeyman, etc) listed with the skill description.
- Training a skill costs money. An average week of training costs a character a fee equal to the new Rank×10 silver pieces.
- Before the character can raise the skill again, he must wait. This time represents the character becoming comfortable with the skill at its current level—sometimes referred to as "practice". During this time the character may adventure, raise talent ranks, train for a new Circle, improve other skills, and so forth. The time the character must wait is shown on the Skill Training Table. For example, before improving a skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4, the character must first wait for five weeks.

Skill Training Table

Skill Rank	*Train Time (Weeks)*	*Wait Time (Weeks)*	*Novice*	*Journeyman*
1	1	2	200	300
2	2	3	300	500
3	3	5	500	800
4	4	8	800	1,300
5	5	13	1,300	2,100
6	6	21	2,100	3,400
7	7	34	3,400	5,500
8	8	55	5,500	8,900
9	9	89	8,900	14,400
10	10	—	14,400	23,300

Learning New Spells

Magicians may spend Legend Points to learn spells from other magicians. The Legend Points are spent by the character after making a successful Patterncraft test to learn the spell. The cost is the same as a Novice talent, with the spell Circle used in place of the talent rank.

See Learning Spells, p.XX, for more information about how magicians learn new spells.

Weaving Threads

Characters can also use Legend Points to weave magical threads. Characters who have put the necessary time and effort, represented by the Legend Point cost, into weaving these threads can then attach them to the True Patterns of people, places, or items.

For an in-depth explanation of how to use Legend Points to weave magical threads, see the Workings of Magic chapter, p.XX.

Advancing Discipline Circles

There is only one way for a character to advance to the next Circle in a Discipline: he must reach a minimum level of ability at his current Circle, then seek out a tutor to initiate him to the next Circle. This allows characters to learn new talents and abilities, and may also improve one or more of the character's characteristics.

Mica, a dwarf Swordmaster, reaches Second Circle. He can still spend Legend Points to increase his First Circle talents, but can now learn and improve his Second Circle talents: First Impression or one of his Novice Talent Options. He also adds +1 to his Social Defense.

A character must meet two conditions to be eligible for the next Circle of a Discipline:

- The character must have raised his Discipline Talents to a minimum Rank.
- The character must train with a higher-Circle member of his Discipline.

Minimum Talent Requirements

Before he can train for a new Circle, an adept must have made sufficient progress with his current abilities. He must raise all of his Discipline Talents to a rank equal to the Circle he wants to attain. For example, to train for Fifth Circle, an adept must know all of his First, Second, Third, and Fourth Circle Discipline Talents (eight in total) at a minimum of Rank 5. Talent Options are not used to determine Minimum Rank Requirements and play no role in Circle advancement.

Using All Talents To Advance

Optional Rule: Instead of being required to know all his Discipline Talents at a rank equal to the next Circle, a character can know a certain number of talents available to his Discipline at a minimum rank (either Discipline Talents or Talent Options), and one of those talents must be from his current Circle. The requirements are summarized on the Optional Advancement Table.

Mica's player checks on the requirements for his character to advance to Third Circle. He looks at the table and learns that his Swordmaster must know 6 talents at Rank 3, and that one of those 6 talents must be one of the talents he learned at Second Circle. He looks at his character sheet, and sees that while he has raised all of his First Circle talents to Rank 3, both of his Second Circle talents are only at Rank 2. He needs to raise his rank in either Second Circle talent to Rank 3 to be eligible to advance to Third Circle.

When using this optional rule, the recommended Legend Awards on the Legend Award Table in the Earthdawn Gamemaster's Guide are too high to produce a stable Circle advancement from Circle 11 on. Only award half of what is recommended in Circles 11 and 12, and only award a third of what is recommended in Circles 13 through 15.

Optional Advancement Table

New Circle	*Min. # of Talents*	*Min. Talent Rank*	*Single Talent from Circle*
2	5	2	1
3	6	3	2
4	7	4	3
5	8	5	4
6	9	6	5
7	10	7	6
8	11	8	7
9	12	9	8
10	13	10	9
11	14	11	10
12	15	11	11
13	16	12	12
14	17	12	13
15	18	13	14

Training Requirements

Once he meets the minimum Talent rank requirements, a character must complete training to advance to a new Circle.

The character must seek out a higher Circle member of the same Discipline, negotiate payment, and learn the abilities of the next Circle. Once he has found a teacher, the character must train for 40 hours within a three-week period.

If the character does not complete their training within that time, he loses the training benefits and must start all over again. In addition to the time lost, he may need to pay for additional training or find a new teacher.

The Circle Training Cost Table offers players a guideline for typical Circle training costs. Instructors may be willing to negotiate their fees, depending on their relationship with the character.

A character who performs a substantial favor for an instructor might have his fee reduced; conversely, an instructor who dislikes the trainee might raise his fee. Other arrangements are possible, and left up to the Gamemaster.

Circle Training Cost Table

Instructor Circle	*Average Cost (silver pieces)*
2	200
3	300
4	500
5	800
6	1,000
7	1,500
8	2,000
9	2,500
10	3,500
11	5,000
12	7,500
13	10,000
14	15,000
15	20,000

Reaching The Next Circle

Once a character meets the Talent Rank requirements and completes the necessary training, he advances to the next Circle of his Discipline. This entitles him to purchase the Discipline Talent and one of the Talent Options available at the new Circle, and also gains any improvements to his characteristics or Discipline Abilities learned at the new Circle.

Specific Training for Talent Options

Optional Rule: For groups that want a bit more complexity in their Discipline training, characters may only learn their desired Talent Option from an adept who knows the desired talent. If the adept's tutor does not know the talent himself, he will need to find an instructor that does know the talent to learn from. Learning a Talent Option at a later point requires the same time and effort as learning a talent via Versatility (p.XX).

Learning New Disciplines

Characters can learn additional Disciplines, sometimes referred to as "multi-Disciplining." Remember that becoming an adept in the world of Earthdawn is not easy or automatic. A character who decides to learn an additional Discipline must master the new training methods in addition to retaining those of his original Discipline, and the new methods are often based on different philosophies.

As a character advances through the Circles of his Discipline, he gains insight and his confidence grows. The stronger a character's grasp of his Discipline, his understanding of magic makes it easier to learn a new one. At the same time, advancing in his Discipline requires a character to more closely adhere to its philosophies and traditions, making it harder to adopt to the style of thinking required by a new Discipline. This creates a bit of a paradox—as a character advances, it becomes easier and more difficult to learn an additional Discipline.

To learn a new Discipline, a character must study with an adept of the desired Discipline. The character's training in the new Discipline can only be imparted to him from a Fifth or higher Circle adept. Regardless of his prowess in any other Disciplines he may know, the character is being trained as an initiate into the new Discipline.

Finding a master willing to perform an initiation into the new Discipline can present some difficulties. Many masters are reluctant to initiate characters who are already adepts of another Discipline because such students tend to be more independent, self-assured, and harder to teach than green recruits. Also, masters are frequently reluctant to initiate characters who practice Disciplines they consider unsympathetic or opposed to their own. They may require them to embark on a risky venture to prove their worthiness, or flat out refuse to teach applicants they do not like. Individual masters will have their own preferences and prejudices when it comes to other Disciplines.

Another hurdle adepts may face when trying to learn a new Discipline is the fee charged by the master. The standard fee is 100 silver pieces for each Circle the student has achieved in other Disciplines, charged for each talent the adept needs to learn (see below). Some masters may charge more or less, based on their relationship with the student. Many masters will also ask for favors, deeds, or even blood oaths in addition to coin.

Learning a new Discipline should not be a matter of simply coming up with the money; the gamemaster is encouraged to role-play the negotiation, and use favors and service to the master as adventure hooks.

Learning a new Discipline is ultimately at the discretion of the gamemaster. If the gamemaster does not want to allow a character to learn a particular combination of Disciplines, there are ways he can make it difficult. A character who embarks on training in a new Discipline must devote considerable time to the effort. Experienced characters, who have accumulated obligations and enemies, may find it hard to find enough time to train. However, rather than simply deny the player the opportunity to develop his character the way he wants, the gamemaster should work with the player to find a solution.

To learn a new Discipline the character must learn all of the First Circle Discipline Talents he does not yet know at Rank 1. The character must have enough Current Legend Points to pay for these new talents simultaneously. The Legend Point cost of purchasing a Rank 1 talent in a new Discipline is listed on the New Discipline Talent Cost Table. The character uses the lowest Circle among his current Disciplines to determine the Legend Point cost for a Rank 1 talent in the new Discipline.

The Talent Option for First Circle can be learned at a later time, but all Talent Option slots for the new Discipline must be chosen from the Talent Options of that Discipline. The Legend Point cost for Talent Options are based on the Discipline they are being purchased for—even if they are available to multiple Disciplines as Talent Options.

For each new talent the character wishes to learn, he must study with the tutor for 40 hours during the course of a week. A character learning two or more talents may spend considerable time training, but must study at least 80 hours per month to continue making progress. If a character fails to study his new Discipline for at least 80 hours a month, the training fails and the character must start over.

Mica, a Third Circle Swordmaster, wants to become an Air Sailor. Mica already knows two of the Air Sailor Discipline's First Circle talents: Avoid Blow and Melee Weapons. Mica needs to learn the three remaining First Circle Air Sailor talents. First, he must find a Fifth or higher Circle Air Sailor willing to train him, then he must spend 40 hours in training for each talent he needs to learn (a total of 120 hours of training). Because the Swordmaster must study for a minimum of 80 hours per month, Mica must complete his training within two months.

The New Discipline Talent Cost Table shows that Mica must spend 500 Legend Points per talent to learn this second Discipline—his lowest (actually, his only) Discipline Circle is 3, and he is learning his second Discipline. After spending 1,500 Legend Points to learn the three new talents at Rank 1, and paying 900 silver pieces to his master (300 silver per talent he needs to learn), the dwarf is now a First Circle Air Sailor as well as a Third Circle Swordmaster!

Later in his adventuring career, Mica is now a Sixth Circle Swordmaster and Fourth Circle Air Sailor. He wants to expand his options by learning a third Discipline, and chooses to become an Elementalist. Again, after first finding a Fifth or higher Circle Elementalist willing to train him, Mica learns the four First Circle talents he does not already know: Elementalism (Thread Weaving), Patterncraft, Spellcasting, and Wood Skin. He already knows the Awareness talent, so does not need to relearn it. Four weeks and 2,400 silver pieces of training later (at 40 hours for each talent learned), Mica spends 2,000 Legend Points (500 Legend Points per talent, based on his lowest Discipline Circle and the fact that this is his third Discipline) to learn the four new talents at Rank 1. Mica joins the Elementalist Discipline as a First Circle magician.

Advancing In A New Discipline

The talents from the character's first Discipline are improved normally (see Improving Talent Ranks, p.XX). The Legend Point cost for talents from additional Disciplines is determined by the number of Disciplines the character knows. The Equivalent Talent Circle Table shows the equivalent Circle range used to determine the Legend Point cost of talents from each of the character's additional Disciplines.

New Discipline Talent Cost Table

	—Rank 1 Talent Legend Point Cost—		
Lowest Circle Attained	*Second Discipline*	*Third Discipline*	*Fourth+ Disciplines*
1	1,300	2,100	3,400
2	800	1,300	2,100
3	500	800	1,300
4	300	500	800
5+	200	300	500

Mica, a Sixth Circle Swordmaster, has also learned the Air Sailor Discipline to Fourth Circle, and most recently has taken on the Elementalist Discipline at First Circle. When advancing talents from the Swordmaster Discipline, Mica spends Legend Points as normal.

Circle 1–4 talents from his Air Sailor Discipline are bought as if they were Circle 5–8 talents, and when he reaches Fifth Circle, those talents will be bought as if they were Circle 9-12.

When improving the First Circle talents that he knows from his Elementalist Discipline, Mica pays for those talents as if they were Circle 9–12. When he becomes a Fifth Circle Elementalist, all of the talents for that Discipline from that Circle onward are bought as if they were Circle 13–15.

Discipline Talents the character can learn through multiple Disciplines are learned at the lowest Legend Point cost, provided the character qualifies to learn them under that Discipline by being of high enough Circle. They count as Discipline Talents for all applicable Disciplines and are used to qualify for advancement in all applicable Disciplines. Talents that have a variation for each Discipline, such as Thread Weaving, count as different talents for this purpose, and must be learned separately.

Talent Options available through multiple Disciplines are handled separately. If a character has learned a Talent Option for a Discipline, he uses the appropriate Legend Point cost for that Discipline to raise the talent based on its Circle—even if it is available as a Talent Option at a lower tier for a new Discipline.

If a character has learned a Talent Option that is a Discipline Talent for a new Discipline, that talent becomes a Discipline Talent as soon as the character qualifies to learn it from the new Discipline. From then on they use the Legend Point cost for the new Discipline. Until then it is treated as a Talent Option for the old Discipline. Once it becomes a Discipline Talent, the Talent Option slot is freed up, and the character may learn a new Talent Option from the old Discipline.

Equivalent Talent Circle Table

	—Discipline Circle Range—		
Equivalent Circle Range	*Second Discipline*	*Third Discipline*	*Fourth+ Disciplines*
1-4	–	–	–
5-8	1-4	–	–
9-12	5-8	1-4	–
13-15	9-15	5-15	1-15

Mica knows the Avoid Blow talent from his first Discipline: Swordmaster. Even though the Air Sailor Discipline also teaches this talent at First Circle, Mica purchases ranks for Avoid Blow as a Swordmaster—the Discipline with the lowest talent cost.

While Mica knows Thread Weaving from his Swordmaster Discipline, as well as from Air Sailor and Elementalist, these are three different talents, and the Legend Point cost for each is determined by the order in which the dwarf learned his Disciplines.

If Mica had learned Wound Balance as a Talent Option as a Second Circle Swordmaster, it would become a Discipline Talent for his Air Sailor Discipline once he reached Fourth Circle.

He would treat it as an Air Sailor talent from that point on, and could choose a new Second Circle Talent Option as a Swordmaster. The talent would have been treated as a Swordmaster Talent Option until he reached Fourth Circle Air Sailor.

Durability

A character learning new Disciplines benefits from the highest Durability rating at each Circle. For example, a Fifth Circle Wizard who later becomes a Sky Raider has gained a +3 bonus to his Unconsciousness and Death Ratings at First Circle. When he completes his initiation into the Sky Raider Discipline, he gains the benefit of the Sky Raider Durability Rating of +7 (effectively gaining an additional +4 to each Health Rating). When he advances to Second Circle Sky Raider, he once again uses the highest Durability rating, gaining another +4 to his Unconsciousness and Death Ratings.

Characteristics Bonuses

Bonuses to Defense Ratings do not stack across multiple Disciplines. He only uses the highest bonus from each Discipline. For example, when a Sixth Circle Archer advances to Second Circle as a Scout, he does not receive the +1 bonus to his Physical Defense granted by the Scout Discipline; he already has a +2 Physical Defense bonus as an Archer. If, instead, that character were a Second Circle Swordmaster, he would receive the +1 bonus to his Social Defense as he does not have any Social Defense bonus as a Sixth Circle Archer.

Karma

Characters who follow multiple Disciplines may spend only one Karma Point on a test, even if multiple Disciplines grant the ability to spend Karma on the test. For example, a Fifth Circle Air Sailor who is also a Third Circle Swordmaster can still spend only one Karma Point on Interaction tests. Unless the talent description specifically says otherwise, this applies to talents as well as other karma related Discipline abilities.

Versatility

The Versatility racial ability allows human adepts to learn talents from outside their Disciplines, but it does not make it easier for human characters to learn additional Disciplines. When a human character learns a new Discipline for which he already knows one or more talents through Versatility, he must relearn those talents and purchase Rank 1 in each—he is considered to not know these talents for the purpose of learning a new Discipline. The Legend Point cost is determined as normal, based on his current Disciplines.

Over time, the character will repurchase all Talent Ranks up to the Rank he acquired through Versatility. Once he has done so, he may learn a new talent through Versatility; effectively that Versatility "slot" is freed up for re-use. Until that point, the character essentially knows the same talent at two different Ranks, and players should differentiate between them on their Character Sheet. A character who knows the same talent at two different Ranks may use either the Versatility or the Discipline talent.

Legendary Status

Each adventure contributes a small part to a character's overall legend—tales of his exploits spread across the land and Troubadours sing songs of his adventures. A character's Legendary Status is represented by two factors: Renown is a measure of how easy or hard it is to recognize a character by Name; Reputation reflects the general nature of a character's legend—for good or ill. A character's Legendary Status is the same as his highest Discipline Status Level, as shown on the Legendary Status Table.

Renown

Use the Renown Rating as base Difficulty Number for Knowledge Skill tests (such as Legends and Heroes or other appropriate fields). On a successful test, the character making the test recognizes the name and some general information about the adept in question. More successes can provide intricate or even obscure information of the adept's legend (see Using Knowledge Skills on p.XX).

Legendary Status Table

Status Level	*Renown*	*Reputation*	*Notes and Benefits*
Novice	16	NA	Outside of those he has directly interacted with (including his master, family, and close friends), the general population remains oblivious to the character's exploits and have not yet heard his Name.
Journeyman	12	+2	A few Troubadours tell tales of these characters' exploits, and there's a good chance he is recognized in Barsaive's larger towns and cities. Characters can use this to their advantage, as they can receive reduced prices on goods and services just for asking, and may be able to request important favors more easily than lesser characters.
Warden	9	+4	Nearly everyone has heard the Name of the character, as tales of his adventures are told throughout the province. Many Warden characters maintain strongholds in or near their favorite cities. The rulers of kingdoms often court these characters in the hope of convincing them to perform dangerous tasks for them. When traveling, they often receive offers of free lodging or other services from individuals eager to boast that the famous character stayed at his inn, ate at his table, bought boots from him, and so on.
Master	7	+6	The character is a living legend. Virtually everyone knows of him and his deeds, and more people claim to have known, seen or adventured with these characters than is possible by any race's standards. Examples are Nioku, the famed troll Archer, and Naaman Y'ross, a hero who fought the Horrors before the Scourge (and who some believe still lives).

Reputation

A character's Reputation is a bonus an adept can use in Interaction tests where the adept's reputation is a factor. Apply the bonus given on the Legendary Status Table when making Interaction tests of this kind. At the gamemaster's discretion, another character disguising and acting like the adept in question may be able to gain the same bonus.

Bad Reputation

A character's legend may not always be as heroic as these rules suggest, many adepts have a skeleton in a closet or a dark spot in their history. On certain occasions, this might backfire and put the character into trouble. For example, a known scoundrel is less likely to receive an advance on any payment, because people won't really trust him. In those cases, the gamemaster may reduce the Reputation bonus or even turn it into a penalty.

The Price of Fame

Although a high Legendary Status can benefit a character, it often carries a price. People expect heroic characters to act for the common good despite the personal risks. Consciously or unconsciously, they believe that heroes should put their own interests and needs aside and work to help them. Most villages and small towns will ask recognized adepts for help in time of trouble. Communities of this size may even seek them out to solve their problems. Though adepts often do act heroically, sometimes a character needs to act for himself. The conflict between personal interests and the interests of others can pose a dilemma for a character who has achieved a certain level of recognition.

Adventuring Groups

The world of Earthdawn encourages groups of player characters to work together to solve problems. The player characters may be brought together by an outside force at first, formed into a group for a specific purpose. Once that purpose is accomplished, they may decide to continue traveling together for other reasons.

Traveling with a group offers many advantages over solo exploring. The most obvious is survival. By working together, the characters have a better chance of living longer, healthier lives. Forming adventuring groups also gives the characters access to a powerful and unique magic; by Naming their group, the characters can use thread magic to improve their abilities, become more powerful, and take on more dangerous challenges (see the Workings of Magic chapter for more information on Naming groups).

As adventuring groups travel the land, tales of their exploits precede and follow them, told by members of the group and by those who see and hear of the group's deeds. As the characters seek out new adventures, stories of the group spread throughout the land, and given time the members of the group will take their place among the legends of Earthdawn. But the legends of adventuring groups do not simply filter into the people's collective unconscious. The characters in the group must build their legend by seeking adventure and keeping a record of their travels, battles, victories, defeats, discoveries, and so on.

People look to heroes for inspiration, protection, and, most importantly, for the hope that their world shall endure. Fortunately for those characters who seek to become heroes of the people, Earthdawn offers opportunities galore. From battling the remaining Horrors left on this world, to fighting against the Theran Empire, to exploring the land; countless adventures await those courageous enough to face danger in search of glory.

Characters can add to the legends created by their adventures by keeping a journal of their group's exploits.

Group Journals

Group journals serve several purposes. A journal provides a record of the history of the group, its members and events. It also records any discoveries made, and can serve as a source of stories and legends. A journal might provide a rudimentary sketch of an unmapped region, confirm or disprove popularly held beliefs about people or places, or record the fate of a missing person.

While this type of information may be invaluable to interested parties, journals serve a more important function for the ordinary citizen. The stories in a group's journal are tales of heroism and tragedy, the types of stories that people need to hear. By sharing their adventures with other people, adventuring groups bring hope to the world and so are hailed as heroes.

Aside from these loftier reasons to record their tales of heroism, an adventuring log can also earn the characters money and Legend Points.

The Great Library of Throal

The Great Library of Throal is tasked with recording the history of Barsaive, including the tales of its heroes. One of the ways it does this is by collecting the stories of adventuring groups. Once a year, the Library invites adventuring groups to bring their journals and share their stories with historians. The Kingdom of Throal pays well for these stories, because adventurers' tales contain the history and describe the present of Barsaive. How much a group receives for the stories in their journal depends on the Legendary Status of the adventuring group. Fledgling adventurers earn a modest sum, while great heroes of legend can earn a king's ransom.

The Players' Role

Though the group's journal is something the characters create, the players must actually write it. Two considerations should encourage players to physically record their adventures. The first consideration helps both the players and the gamemaster. The adventuring journal provides a record of the group's adventures, so the players will not have to ask the gamemaster to repeat the events of a particular encounter, adventure, or campaign. The journal also gives the gamemaster a quick reference guide to events in the game, and what information the characters would or would not possess.

Second, if you want to reap the rewards of money and Legend Points, you need to earn it. Even if the players state at the end of every session, "We're keeping a journal," if they don't write it out, it doesn't count, and their characters will not earn payment from the Library of Throal or earn Legend Points.

The players can record their adventures any way they choose. The players may decide to purchase a blank or lined journal, use a three-ring binder and notepaper, or even create a shared blog or website.

Players should take turns recording the group's adventures so that no one gets the job every session. The type of information that should be included in the journal are: the names of the members of the group, the name of the group, a sketch of the group's symbol, and an outline of the events of an adventure. The players can decide how much detail to include in their account.

Log Payment

When an adventuring group shares its journal with the Great Library of Throal, the payment is based on the group's Average Total Legend Points. This is determined by adding together the individual characters' Total Legend Points and dividing it by the number of characters in the group. The Great Library of Throal pays 10 percent of the difference between the group's current Average Total Legend Points and its previous Average Total Legend Points in silver pieces. For example, if a group last submitted its journal when it had an Average Legend Point Total of 10,000, and has an Average Legend Point Total of 30,000 when they next submit their journal, the difference is 20,000, so the group earns 2,000 silver pieces.

Log Legend Points

Adventuring groups who share tales of their exploits with the historians and scholars of Throal also earn a Legend Point bonus. Each time a group shares its adventure log with the Great Library of Throal, each member of the group earns a number of Legend Points equal to half of the amount of silver pieces received for the log. In the previous example, each character in the group would receive 1,000 Legend Points. These bonus Legend Points can be used to increase abilities, raise talent and skill ranks, and so on.

Group Legendary Status

Much like individual characters, adventuring groups can earn Legendary Status. The Group Legendary Status is the same as the Discipline Status Level achieved by the majority of the members of the group. Legendary groups receive the same benefits as legendary characters, but can also suffer the same drawbacks.

PASSIONS

Adepts claim their power comes from within. They forget their ability to shape and wield magic was taught to them by the Passions.
•Kenza Boh, Questor of Astendar •

The spiritual beliefs and customs of Barsaive are shaped by the Passions. These powerful beings are a mystery, but most scholars believe that the Passions are given shape by the collective emotions and ideals of Namegivers. Debate continues over whether the Passions brought these concepts to the people of Barsaive, or whether the Passions were brought into being by the collective power of cultural ideals such as Love, Wealth, Growth and more. This debate has only grown in the wake of the Scourge. Most common folk find the debate pointless, as whatever their origins, the Passions are real beings that have the potential to affect daily life.

Those who channel the power of the Passions are called questors. Unlike adepts, these men and women draw their extraordinary powers from the Passions. The magical forces of the universe flow through the Passions to their questors. The questors then bring the Passions to the common folk across the world. Following a Passion gives a questor the same kind of focus an adept receives by following the tenets of his Discipline. The questor's life becomes a living metaphor for the ideals embodied by his chosen Passion; throughout his life, he strives to express those ideals in word and action. Most questors fervently and vividly live out this commitment, adding as much color and energy to the world as magicians and adepts.

Most people assume that what is known about the Passions holds true for lands beyond Barsaive. It would be strange if magic interacted with the world in different ways from place to place. Yet the world is often strange, and perhaps magic does change. If the Passions are shaped and brought into being by Namegivers, then Passions known in Barsaive may not exist on the other side of the globe, and other Passions may take their place. It is also possible that men and women in distant lands know the same Passions but call them by different names. Whatever the truth, the Passions are an important part of daily life in Barsaive, and their influence is felt in many ways.

The Nature of Passions

The Passions are potent beings with powers that dwarf the magical talents and spells of adepts. While they exist on the physical plane, the Passions seem to travel at incredible speeds; some travel as the wind, some take the forms of eagles or hawks, and some transport themselves by simple thought.

A Passion can appear to one of their questors in Travar one moment, and appear to another Namegiver in Parlainth the next.

The Passions frequently act through their questors, but can also appear in person. Some adventurers tell stories of meeting the Passion Thystonius while traveling. A group of explorers wandering through a forest may stumble across a humble hut that houses a member of Barsaive's pantheon. The Passions move these homes as they wish, setting up residence for a day, or for years. The Passion might welcome a polite knock at his door, or visitors had best keep away.

Legends claim that the Passions do not care about Barsaive's political alliances and rivalries, and most of their documented behavior supports this. Questors claim the conflicts between kingdoms and cities generates the passions and adventures of life that the universe craves. While they do not typically intercede in worldly conflicts on their own, they will eagerly support any side that calls to them for help—sometimes helping both sides in the same conflict. This influence is shown through their questors. If a questor sides with you, his Passion supports your cause, and the power the questor brings can make the difference between victory and defeat. If the situation demands it, the Passions have been known to send more powerful servants. These servants aren't Namegivers, despite their appearance. No one is sure what they are, but they are generally referred to as the Passions' avatars.

The Passions do not have a fixed appearance. For example, the Passion Thystonius is described in a variety of ways. Humans describe a tall man with a flowing black beard and piercing blue eyes. Trolls tell of a troll carrying a warhammer as heavy as a boulder. Dwarfs speak of a dwarf, standing 50 feet tall, who makes his home in the Throal mountains. These differences in appearance are not confined to race, but encompass gender and other aspects of physical appearance. For example, many people think of the Passion Garlen as a woman, because she is depicted as female in the many statues gracing kaers and villages across Barsaive. But if Garlen comes to them in dreams, often during the deepest crises of their lives, they may see the Passion as a man.

Most believe these varied appearances occur because a Passion tailors its physical appearance so the individual can easily recognize the ideals and forces embodied by the Passion. However, all the manifestations of a Passion contain certain identifiable, common elements, described later in this chapter.

Scholars continue to debate whether or not the Passions have a "true" appearance. So far no one has found a definitive answer, and many believe the mystery may never be solved. Most people do not care to know, believing that the true forms of the Passions remain hidden for good reason.

Harbingers

Many legends tell of the Passions visiting Namegivers in times of great need or rewarding individuals who live with a particular Passion's ideals in their hearts. However, legends rarely speak of the dire consequences that befall those who anger the Passions. Few people have seen what happens; the angered Passions deal with such miscreants by sending a special kind of avatar: a fearsome creature known as a harbinger.

One of the best-known tales of a Namegiver who angered the Passions is the legend of Naka. Long before the Scourge, Naka farmed a plot of land in the ancient Kingdom of Landis. He never enjoyed the profits that some of his neighbors earned, but neither did he ever go hungry. Naka largely kept to himself and never spoke ill of others. However, Naka eventually grew resentful of his neighbors' successes. His resentment grew like a black tumor in his heart.

One day a terrible storm darkened the skies over Landis. Naka went out into the fields of his neighbors, and invoking Garlen, Passion of the Hearth, he offered his fellow farmers shelter in his large house. He fed them food and wine, and after they fell asleep, Naka massacred them and stole their valuables. Days later, Naka met his end at the feet of an unknown giant; an ethereal-looking, armored knight. Nothing is known about this knight, but people whisper that he was sent by Garlen herself.

The Passions in Con lict

Before the Scourge, the Passions wasted little energy fighting among themselves. They did not compete for followers, nor did they exhibit jealousy of each other. Instead, they focused their vast power on bringing their particular ideals to the people of the world. The variety of human nature ensured that none lacked followers, and the Passions seem to have existed in harmony.

The Scourge changed this, as with so many other good and beautiful things. Those dark times apparently drove three of the twelve Passions mad. No longer content with inspiring fervor and embodying ideals for mortals, the Mad Passions now appear to desire power and influence as mortals might. Fortunately for the world, the Mad Passions also share the mortal characteristic of distrust. Though the Mad Passions occasionally work together to accomplish goals, they usually work alone or against each other.

The remaining Passions have only now begun to respond to the threat posed by the Mad Passions. As far as anyone knows, these beings seldom fight their crazed counterparts directly. Instead, they send their questors and followers against those who follow the Mad Passions. The conflict among the Passions has sown strife among their mortal followers; while they have seldom fought over their differences in the past, the presence of the Mad Passions has triggered ideological skirmishes that may yet lead to full-scale war. F

The danger the Mad Passions pose remains uncertain. Some believe the Passions will meet in a final battle and wreak destruction that will dwarf the devastation of the Scourge. Others claim the insanity that possesses the Mad Passions will render them impotent, and expect them to fade away like the many arrogant, mortal dictators before them. Only time will tell whether the Mad Passions will destroy the world, or simply vanish.

Worship of the Passions

The people of Barsaive hold spiritual beliefs based on their faith in the Passions, but no Barsaivian race or community has established a formal religious institution. The Passions propagate their ideals through their questors rather than through formal institutions or laws. As a result, none of the Passions has any large scale following,

though questors of a particular Passion often meet to discuss their experiences or even form small groups to achieve a common purpose.

Though the people of Barsaive do not form organized religions centered on the Passions, they do worship the Passions. Most appeal to whatever Passion best meets their current needs. For example, a family hiding in their shuttered home while a pack of hungry wolves howls outside might seek the protection of Garlen, the Passion of the Hearth and Healing. If a family member ventures outside with sword in hand to slay the predators, the family might invoke Thystonius, the Passion of Physical Conflict and Valor.

Some people—especially questors—worship one Passion over the others. Though they recognize the existence of other Passions, they believe the ideals of their chosen Passion are superior. These worshippers often express their beliefs by stating that they follow the ideals of a particular Passion. For example, a farmer who worships Jaspree might say, "I follow the ideals of Jaspree."

Given the nature of the Passions as a documented reality of life in Barsaive, even if their nature isn't well understood, the people of Barsaive do not deny the existence of any Passions. Even if they prefer not to acknowledge the Mad Passions, most people would fear losing a Passion's protection by proclaiming that they did not believe in it. There are rare individuals who do not believe the Passions should be worshipped, but most common folk find these philosophies unusual at best.

QUESTORS

The term questor refers to someone who has devoted himself or herself to a spiritual quest, in this case devotion to a particular Passion. They dedicate their lives to fostering its ideals in the lives of all people. The characteristics of questors vary from Passion to Passion. Some general traits exist among most or all questors.

With the exception of those who follow the Mad Passions, questors with different patron Passions do not bear each other ill will. Each Passion embodies different ideals and emotions, and their questors understand that they are all equally significant parts of a whole that comprises the life of Namegivers.

Though the Passions do not directly support political factions or causes, questors can and often do. For example, many dwarf questors in Throal call Thystonius their patron Passion. Their questor order has a military nature, and they use gifts from Thystonius to give the Kingdom of Throal military protection. If other questors of Thystonius chose to attack Throal, such an act would bring questors of the same Passion into direct conflict with each other. Such a development would gladden Thystonius. Though he would mourn those killed in the conflict, the bravery of his questors on both sides would bring him great joy.

Patron Passions bestow abilities on their questors. Questors cultivate these abilities by focusing their lives around a certain behavior—in this case, spreading their Passion's ideals across Barsaive. Some abilities are common to the questors of several Passions. Others are unique to a single Passion.

The abilities given are usually tied in some way to the ideals, goals, and powers of a particular Passion. For example, questors of Garlen frequently have the ability to magically seal a home from outside attack, while a questor of Floranuus might have

the ability to increase the speed of a ship.

The life of a questor does not typically earn him a living. Questors sometimes form small, loosely organized groups to discuss the creed of their chosen Passion, but no formal institution exists to support their day-to-day needs. Questors sometimes live off the generosity of communities willing to support a strong questor in their midst, but most questors continue to practice the trade they learned in the early years of their lives.

In contrast to adepts, questors are generally respected and trusted throughout the land. Because adepts draw magical power to themselves directly, most common folk are suspicious of them. Many view adepts, especially magicians, as presumptuous and arrogant. Questors, on the other hand, receive their power through the Passions. The people's warm regard for the Passions includes their questors, and they therefore enjoy the trust of most people. An old Barsaivian saying perfectly expresses these sentiments: "Hide from magicians, hire adepts, and say 'hello' to questors."

Adepts who become questors must try to reconcile the lifestyle and mindset of their Discipline and the actions required of a faithful questor. For some, this is easy. Many Swordmaster adepts have assumed a quest to be like Thystonius. If the two ways of thinking conflict, however, the adept questor must choose which to follow. For example, this conflict could arise for a Thief who is also a questor of Thystonius. The Thief mindset typically demands that he avoid open confrontation, while the ideals of Thystonius drive him to seek it out. The more he relies on the Thief Discipline, the less he behaves like Thystonius, and so receives fewer rewards from the Passion. However, the more he tries to be like Thystonius, the less successful he will be as a Thief.

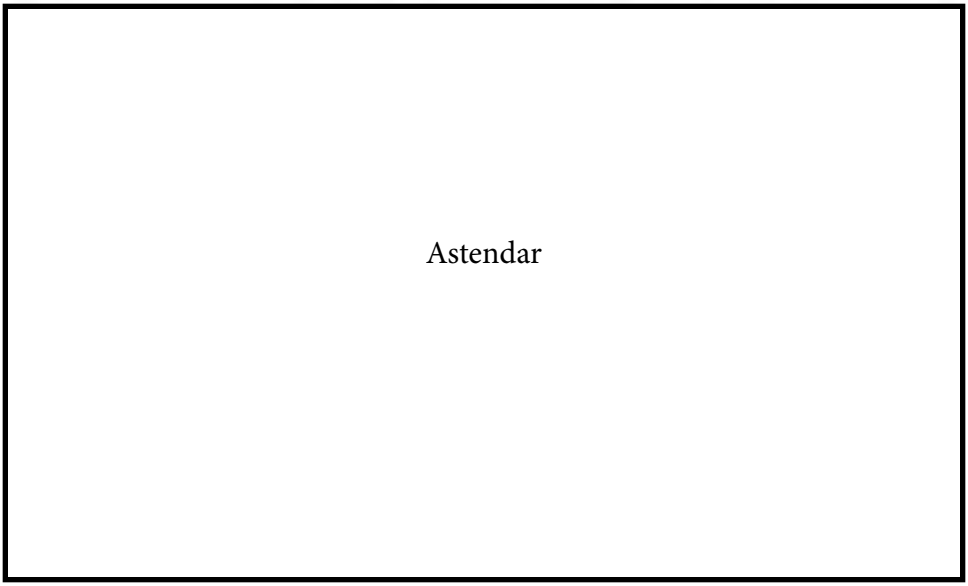
It might seem odd for adepts to devote their lives to a Passion so different in nature from their Discipline. However, because the Discipline of an adept in many ways limits how the adept sees the world and how he interacts with it, becoming a questor of a Passion of a different nature allows the adept to interact with the world in a way previously unknown.

The game rules for playing a questor, and the powers granted them by their patron, will be detailed in future Earthdawn products.

Passion Descriptions

The following descriptions reflect the common understanding of the Passions. However, the understanding of these mysterious and powerful beings is neither complete nor entirely correct.

Each entry offers a brief description of each Passion's nature and personality, followed by additional details associated with each Passion. **Ideals** represent the universal concepts and emotions the Passion embodies. **Typical Appearance** describes the Passion's most common manifestation. **Common Elements** include sights, sounds, textures, and other phenomena that usually accompany any manifestation of the Passion. These elements often appear in the dreams of an individual thinking about the Passion or the ideals it embodies, and the presence of such common elements may also indicate that the Passion is nearby or easily summoned. **Powers** refers to the unique, personal abilities each Passion possesses. **Questors** describes the typical appearance and behavior of each Passion's questors.



Astendar

Astendar is the living muse of romance and the arts. Tales abound of artists visited by Astendar spending a feverish night alternately working at the easel and making love with the Passion. Such inspirational gifts are not lightly given; visits from Astendar usually mark an individual for artistic greatness.

Astendar also takes an interest in lovers young and old. One well-known tale involves a widow and widower who wanted to marry. Their children, however, believed them too old for romance and discouraged the courtship. Kept locked in their houses by their children, the couple appealed to Astendar for help. The Passion agreed to aid them if they created a painting together. At first, the couple had no idea how they might do this, for they could not meet or see each other, but driven by their longing to marry, they came up with a plan.

The couple hired a Thief adept they knew to carry a canvas back and forth between their houses. Every night for weeks, one of them would add to the painting, and the thief would carry it to the other house just before dawn. As the painting neared completion, the lovers found themselves waiting more and more anxiously every night to see the other's handiwork. Slowly but surely, Astendar's painting turned friendship and gentle affection into excitement, anticipation, and deepening love.

When the couple finished the picture, they were astounded by the beauty of their work. The painting so pleased Astendar that she made the couple young once more. Bolstered by their renewed strength, the couple escaped and ran away together. As for the Thief, he was rewarded with the painting, which he sold for a handsome price.

Ideals: Love, Art, Music

Typical Appearance: Astendar commonly manifests as a powerfully built male or female of any race, wearing few garments and carrying a musical instrument.

Common Elements: Light rain, music, beautiful clothing of intricate textures

Powers: Astendar can entrance listeners with music, instill lust or love, restore youth, and transform into the sound of a song and float through the air, leaving the melody in her wake.

Questors: Artists make up the largest percentage of questors of Astendar. These questors find sensual pleasures such as gourmet food, luxurious clothing, or a lingering kiss fascinating. Their determination to imitate Astendar by indulging their desires often leads them into trouble. Because they know their actions are inspired by their Passion, they naively believe everyone else will see their actions in the same light. Sadly, others usually view the indulgences of questors of Astendar as decadence unchecked by self-control or common sense.

Chorrolis

Chorrolis

Chorrolis wanders the world, aiding those who want to strike a clever bargain or long for more wealth than they have. He inspires people to rise at dawn and work to improve their lot, and leaves them despairing if they go to bed at night without having succeeded.

Despite his status as a Passion and the extraordinary powers he possesses, Chorrolis is often overcome with jealousy and avarice. He covets anything of value or beauty that someone else owns, and his desire to possess such items often drives him to distraction.

Because he scorns simple stealing as the act of a coward, Chorrolis must resort to other methods of acquisition. He has been known to hound the owner of a desired piece of merchandise for weeks at a time, turning up and offering a deal when the owner least expects it. Because he subtly disguises his appearance, most people do not recognize Chorrolis and eventually take the price he offers, desperate to be rid of the obsessive merchant following them around.

Those who do recognize Chorrolis bide their time before selling, knowing that he will drive up his price to ridiculous heights. The patient trader can make a staggering profit by playing on Chorrolis' desperate desire.

Ideals: Wealth, Trade, Envy, Desire

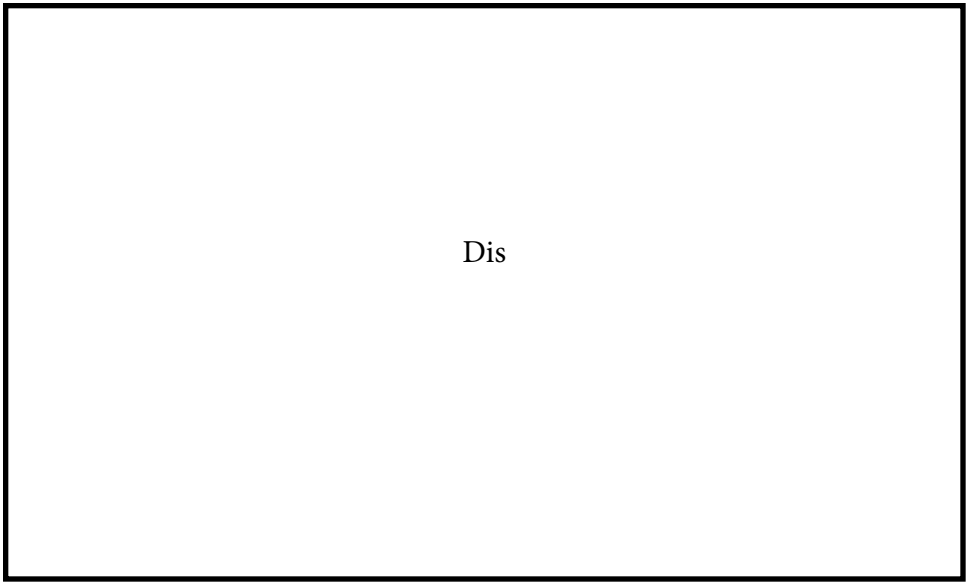
Typical Appearance: Chorrolis often appears as a corpulent male of any race, sometimes jovial, at other times bitter and depressed. He wears fine clothes, and often carries silver and gold or beautiful and expensive objects around with him.

Common Elements: Bags of treasure, caravans, goods for sale, food

Powers: Chorrolis can incite greed, encourage cooperation in matters of trade, and travel instantaneously along any road or waterway used as a trade route.

Questors: Questors of Chorrolis rise from the ranks of capable, often greedy merchants. Some ply their trade from market stalls in Bartertown, while others satisfy their desire to imitate Chorrolis by traveling across Barsaive in trade caravans.

Chorrolis frequently inspires his questors to acquire specific objects that he treasures. Widely known for their unbeatable bargaining skills, the questors of Chorrolis usually conceal their devotion to the Passion in order to negotiate favorable deals with the unwary.



Dis (Mad Passion)

Known as Erendis before the Scourge, this Passion once stood for the ideals of Order, Bureaucracy and Work. Now, even with her warped ideals, Dis is a popular Passion among those who make their living from the Theran slave trade. Unlike the other Passions, Dis takes her greatest pleasure in destroying people's passion for life, rather than inspiring it. She bleeds away her worshippers' zest for living and they in turn demoralize those they subjugate. Eventually, the slaves and bureaucrats influenced by this Mad Passion become empty husks, devoid of dreams and feelings.

Dis wants to extend this death of the soul throughout the world.

Dis also inspires bureaucrats who create paperwork merely to look busy, rather than out of a need for the records or fondness for their work. Few activities spread boredom more effectively than generating useless records and information, and Dis spends a great deal of her time encouraging people to do just that.

Ideals: Confusion, Unnecessary Work, Complex Bureaucratic Hierarchies, Slavery and Mastery

Typical Appearance: Dis manifests as a thin, sickly male or female of any race, who seems to have been deprived of sunlight and exercise for far too long.

Common Elements: Papers, papers and more papers, contracts, tomes of ritual, slaves, chains

Powers: Dis can remove fervor from those around her and cause confusion in their minds, make people obey her will, and teleport instantaneously to any place she has visited before.

Questors: Questors of Dis imitate their Passion's desire for unimaginative uniformity by dressing in gray and making themselves look pale.

Some seize or otherwise control mercantile bureaucracies or slaver operations in order to embody their Passion's ideals, living comfortably off the fruits of others' labors. Others seek nothing less than complete detachment from their fellow man and the human condition, thus exemplifying the disdain with which Dis views all living beings.

Floranuus

Floranuus

Floranuus is the perpetual optimist and the motivator of all Namegivers. He burns in the hearts of all who rise eagerly from their beds each morn to meet the new day. He inspires all people toward victory, and stands at the center of all celebrations. As the embodiment of joy, mirth, and excitement, he lacks understanding of despair. He

sends his questors to help the deeply depressed, knowing that they may empathize with such feelings in a way that he cannot.

Ideals: Revelry, Energy, Victory, Motion

Typical Appearance: Floranuus usually manifests as a humanoid shape composed of fire. However, the manifestation neither gives off heat nor burns any objects it touches.

Common Elements: Fire, parties, cheers, swift ships of both air and sea, wine, roads

Powers: Floranuus increases stamina, alters moods from depression to exhilaration, and can travel at breathtaking speed anywhere in the world as a ball of fire.

Questors: Because of their optimism at the beginning of each new day, questors of Floranuus actively encourage everyone around them to share their enthusiasm for living. These men and women find a silver lining in every cloud and look for the positive aspects of even the most dire or depressing situations. They provide an instantly recognizable emblem of their Passion's ideals by wearing bold, bright colors that invariably cheer people up and inspire them to action of some sort.

These questors frequently travel Barsaive seeking those who have lost hope, then doing all they can to revive a spark of joy in those souls. They often go to extreme lengths to light up the world around them as brightly as the flames of their Passion. Though many people grumble that questors of Floranuus are nothing but glorified busy-bodies, none question their benevolent motives or absolutely sincere desire to change people's lives for the better.

Garlen

As patron of the hearth and home, all the kaers and citadels called on Garlen for protection during the Scourge. To this day she remains one of the most widely revered

Garlen

Passions in Barsaive. She is called the mother who cares for all, and Garlen considers all of Barsaive's Namegivers her children. Garlen and her questors offer healing to the sick and injured, and comfort to the dying. Garlen watches over those who shun adventuring for the comfort and safety of home, particularly families and children. But she is also known to aid and inspire those who defend common people that get unwillingly caught up in violence and danger.

Ideals: Hearth and Healing

Typical Appearance: Garlen usually manifests as a voluptuous woman, her arms spread wide in acceptance and invitation. On occasion, Garlen appears as a kindly, comfortable-looking man.

Common Elements: Homes, children, kaers, enclosed spaces, water

Powers: Garlen can heal the wounded, comfort the frightened, and travel instantly to any home.

Questors: Many people mistakenly believe that Garlen's questors seek the refuge of the hearth and embrace healing because they fear conflict. Anyone who has watched someone they love die while doing everything in their power to prevent it knows that this act of caring requires a far greater courage and strength than that required to defeat any enemy.

Most questors of Garlen are female. Some believe that Garlen attracts women questors because she so often appears as one. Others speculate that because they carry new lives within their bodies, women possess a greater understanding and appreciation for life and greater compassion for other living beings.

Garlen's questors can be stern, but show unfailing generosity and understanding. Those who mistake Garlen's compassion for weakness sometimes do not live to regret their misunderstanding. For example, a famous story tells of five questors of Garlen who were visiting a village near Sky Point when Theran slavers raided the village. Garlen's questors cut down the Therans to the last man, staining their white robes with the slavers' blood.

Jaspree

Countless Namegivers have invoked Jaspree's name as they revived farmlands and forests in the wake of the Scourge. Moved by his deep love of all growing things, Jaspree has answered the call. He dwells in the shadows cast by towering trees and stops to smell the smallest wildflowers that line Barsaive's well-traveled roads.

Thanks to his aid, the world has grown green and rich with life in the years since the end of the Scourge.

Ideals: Growth, Care of the Land, Love of the Wilderness

Typical Appearance: Jaspree usually manifests as a male or female creature, half animal and half Namegiver.

Common Elements: Trees, farms, forests, seeds

Powers: Jaspree encourages growth in plants, animals and Namegivers; animates plants; speaks with animals; and travels through dirt as if swimming through water.

Questors: Most of Jaspree's questors devote their time to nurturing small patches of Barsaive where plant life survived the Scourge, and coaxing seemingly barren areas back to life. Questors of Jaspree recognize the intrinsic value of plant life as

Jaspree

the foundation of all other life. They make a point of teaching this lesson to careless travelers and those who deliberately destroy their work, sometimes going so far as to trade a life for a life.

Other questors of Jaspree seek to protect the lives of animals and Namegivers as well as plant life. These questors defend the communities in which they live against marauders who would destroy any living thing, but understand that Namegivers need to sow fields in order to eat, and that life is an endless cycle of death and rebirth, accepting both as having equal worth.

Questors of Jaspree also embrace opportunities to travel to the far reaches of Barsaive and beyond to learn more about the plant life of the world, sow life in barren lands, and to protect endangered species of plant life.

Lochost

Lochost is the patron of slaves and rebels. Scholars also revere this Passion, as the truly educated mind seeks to break free from the beliefs of the past and make new discoveries.

With the spread of Theran slavery, it was thought the Mad Passion Dis wielded greater influence, but with Throal's recent victory the balance of power between them appears to have shifted. Despite the Theran retreat, slavery is not eradicated from the land, and Lochost still sends his questors to free slaves and strike against those who would chain or enslave others.

Lochost and Dis frequently find themselves in conflict. The two last fought at a slave camp near the citadel of Tirthon, killing every slave and slaver present with their savage combat. As a result, Lochost prefers to distract Dis rather than engage him openly.

Ideals: Rebellion, Change, Freedom

Typical Appearance: Lochost usually manifests as a male or female child of any

Lochost

race, whose body and features constantly change.

Common Elements: Strong wind, uprooted trees, open gates

Powers: Lochost inspires rebellion, comforts the imprisoned, unlocks doors and prisons, and can fly through the air by transforming into wind.

Questors: Lochost's questors can be found anywhere in Barsaive that oppression or inequity rules. Some questors agitate for change in pursuit of equality and Namegiver dignity, proposing political reforms in established communities and within the Kingdom of Throal. Some act as devil's advocates in an effort to ensure that those in power continue to govern responsibly. Still others foment rebellion for the sake of change, imitating their Passion by constantly challenging the status quo.

As long as Thera practices slavery, questors of Lochost will actively oppose Theran rule, sowing and nurturing rebellion in slave camps and mining operations throughout Barsaive and elsewhere in the world. Most Therans accept the edict that questors of Lochost must be exposed and eradicated in order to preserve their lifestyle, and the Mad Passion Dis hunts Lochost relentlessly, determined to extinguish the light of his inspiration.

Mynbruje

Mynbruje stands by the unjustly accused, those the law has passed over, and those misunderstood by their society. He is a busy Passion, for while Namegivers occupy a special place in the universe, mere mortals are often blind to truth and understanding.

Ideals: Justice, Compassion, Empathy, Truth

Typical Appearance: Mynbruje usually appears as an old man or woman of any race.

Common Elements: Balanced scales, executioner's axe, stars, a comfortable place to rest

Mynbruji

Powers: Mynbruje can read minds, ease the suffering of others, perceive obscure clues, and travel through the thoughts of Namegivers, leaping from the mind of one to any other within fifty miles.

Questors: The questors of Mynbruje wear simple garments, often peasant garb, to show that they care little for status or prestige. They imitate their Passion by devoting their lives to seeking truth and justice. They dedicate their efforts to restoring balance to lives and communities, laboring to show criminals the error of their ways, helping society administer justice compassionately, and clearing the names of those wrongly accused.

Mynbruje's questors serve their Passion in many ways. Some act as judges in citadels, towns, and villages. Others travel throughout Barsaive adjudicating disputes and righting injustices. Everyone accepts the word of a questor of Mynbruje as law, though such questors often travel with other adepts and magicians as protection against those who would seek to evade judgment.

Raggok (Mad Passion)

Raggok was known as Rashomon before the Scourge, and his ideals were Leadership, Endurance, Tolerance, and Perseverance. Today, Raggok is arguably the most terrible of the Mad Passions, embodying all that is corrupted in the world.

He causes the dead to walk the earth, sows baseless hatreds that erupt between once-loving husbands and wives, and tortures the insane with disembodied voices. People say Raggok has made countless pacts with Horrors, aiding them in their evil endeavors and receiving their assistance in kind. Like the Horrors he allegedly serves, Raggok loves to inflict pain and strives to satisfy this perverse desire.

Ideals: Vengeance, Bitterness, Jealousy

Typical Appearance: Raggok usually manifests as a large man with the head of a ram. Scores of open wounds continuously appear, heal, and reappear on the incarnation's bloody flesh.

Common Elements: Skeletons, the undead, swords, wounds, insects, snow and ice

Powers: Raggok can call forth painful memories, raise undead, inspire hatred, and travel through the thoughts of Namegivers, leaping from the mind of one Namegiver to any other within fifty miles. As he travels, he evokes painful memories in the minds of those he passes through.

Questors: Because Raggok personifies ideals that can be found in the hearts of members of every race, this Mad Passion never lacks questors. People who enjoy inflicting mental and physical pain gladly imitate Raggok and accept his gifts in return.

Questors of Raggok divide themselves into two main groups based on their interpretation of how best to embody their Passion's ideals. One group believes that ostentatious displays of wealth cause mental pain in others less fortunate and so wallows in all the pleasures of the flesh that money can buy. Their constant search for even more money and treasure provides the resources needed to pay others to glorify Raggok, consciously or unconsciously, through their actions.

The second group lives ascetic lives. These questors feel compelled to imitate Raggok personally to the best of their abilities, and believe that bringing pain to the world should take precedence over their own comfort. Any wealth they accumulate is used to buy poisons, hire mercenaries to raze villages, and accomplish other acts that cause pain and suffering.

Raggok

Thystonius

Thystonius is the Passion of physical conflict and valor. Most soldiers mistakenly believe him a Passion of war and try to claim him for their own, but Thystonius cares little for killing. He resides in living bones and muscles, not in the corpses of the fallen. He loves the flexing and exertion of bodies competing against the odds—a foot race, an arm wrestle, or a man swimming for his life against the impossible currents of the Serpent River give him infinitely more pleasure than the carnage of battle.

In addition to those who embrace him, Thystonius rushes to aid those who feel daunted by a physical challenge. The epic poem "The War of Tears," recounts two camps of opposing warriors, both fearful of taking the battlefield the next day. Thystonius entered both camps during the night and spoke to each army, extolling the glories of war and promising the warriors they would all emerge heroes. Inspired by the Passion's words, both sides joined in vigorous combat the following morning. The Passion kept his promise—the warriors' heroic deeds were immortalized in "The War of Tears." Nevertheless, Thystonius' habit of encouraging people to throw themselves at each other makes many people uncomfortable.

Thystonius

Ideals: Physical Competition, Valor

Typical Appearance: Thystonius usually appears as a tall, muscular man or woman of any race.

Common Elements: Weapons, banners and pennants, armor, battlefields

Powers: Thystonius can increase martial abilities and strength, overcome pain, and travel instantaneously within a mile of any physical conflict.

Questors: Many questors of Thystonius believe that diving headfirst into physical danger is the only way to fully experience life. Their primary motivation each day is to seek challenges and opponents to test their skills and valor. According to their

vision of their Passion's ideals, they must encourage others to do the same and so engage willing opponents as often as unwilling ones.

Questors of Thystonius make valiant, tireless warriors, leaping to defend entire communities single-handedly, if necessary. While this quality makes these men and women valuable allies, they cannot be counted on to consider the effects of their actions before they join battle, and so rarely learn to lead troops.

Certain people, who are willing to do almost anything to avoid conflict, accuse questors of Thystonius of using their superior strength to force people to fight against their will, thus acting like overgrown bullies.

Upandal

Upandal is the Passion of construction. He reinforces the need to build shared by all the Namegiver races of Barsaive, helping them to create order and beauty by building structures and communities. Upandal gives aid where he can, inspiring architects and craftsmen and protecting beautiful cities and towers. On occasion, he presents enchanted tools to craftsmen he deems particularly worthy of his patronage.

Ideals: Building, Construction, Planning

Typical Appearance: Upandal generally manifests as a craftsman of any race, clad in dirty work clothes.

Common Elements: Hammer, building plans, compass, smith's forge

Powers: Upandal can make tools quickly; fortify buildings, fortresses and city walls; create temporary bridges and towers; and travel instantaneously between cities or any other large, ornate constructions.

Questors: Questors of Upandal find their greatest joy in building, or collecting money for a construction project. They offer everything they build to the glory of Upandal, eagerly embracing each new structure as a way to enrich the world and win more questors for their Passion.

Not all their devotion is expressed on such a grand scale. Questors of Upandal find equal satisfaction in tinkering with, repairing, and reproducing small objects. They use every opportunity to express their devotion to their Passion and encourage others to join them in their quest.

Whether helping a farmer repair a fence or fixing a child's toy, Upandal's questors do their best to imitate their patron Passion. Their analytical minds give Upandal's questors a penchant for devising war plans and other such designs. Unfortunately, their love of the complex and ornate tends to produce aesthetically pleasing but impractical strategies.

Vestrial (Mad Passion)

Before the Scourge, Vestrial was the trickster and prankster, blending good humor with trickery to puncture the overblown egos of the arrogant. Unfortunately, insanity took hold of him during the Scourge, making him as arrogant as the former victims of his jokes.

Vestrial now sees himself as the sole inheritor of all the world's Passion worshipers. He creates elaborate plans for world conquest that his questors enthusiastically carry out. He uses his vast intelligence to spin webs of intrigue that no one save him-

Upandal

self can understand. Some believe that Vestrial has woven so many plots and deceits that even he has lost track of the ends he originally desired.

Ideals: Manipulation, Deceit

Typical Appearance: Vestrial usually manifests as a humanoid form, wearing a dark hood and cloak.

Common Elements: An assassin's dagger, blood, ambush

Powers: Vestrial can confuse listeners, beguile people with lies, discover a person's true desire, and travel instantaneously within a mile of any place where someone has just uttered a lie.

Questors: The questors of Vestrial scurry about the world, carrying out the Mad Passion's schemes. Though questors of Vestrial apparently regularly sacrifice their real goals to the goal of fostering deceit in the name of their Passion's ideals, they should not be underestimated. For every ten questors that devote all their efforts to manipulating fellow Namegivers and events, one questor can be found guiding his fellows through brilliant, effective, diabolical plans.

The precision, subtlety, and effectiveness of some Vestrial-inspired plots suggests that the apparent incompetence of the most visible questors provides a cover for countless unrecognized questors of Vestrial hidden within all levels of society.

BARSAIVE

The Therans may have Named Barsaive, but it is not their land. It is not their home. Their scholars crafted the Rites of Protection and Passage, for which we are grateful. But does that gratitude give them ownership of the mountains and forests? Rule of the rivers and lakes? Dominion over the bodies and souls of its people?
• King Neden I, The Harwood Declaration •

Barsaive is a large and varied land. It covers thousands of square miles of terrain, and much of it remains uncharted to this day. While the merchant caravans of Throal and other cities have done much to connect the far-flung corners of the province, those who stray from the known trade routes may find themselves facing bandits, wild animals, or worse in the wilderness. It is a land of danger, but those who choose to face the danger can find lost treasures, learn forgotten secrets, and build their legend from the ruins of the Scourge.

While Barsaive does not have clearly defined borders, most people agree that certain landmarks indicate the boundaries of the province. To the north is Blood Wood, home of Queen Alachia and the Elven Court. To the west lie the Wastes, a once fertile land that is now a blasted and ashen home to Horrors and their monstrous creations. Death's Sea, a massive ocean of lava, marks the southern boundary. Legends claim the Passions imprisoned Death below its surface, and its searing waves are a rich source of True Fire. The eastern edge of Barsaive is the Aras Sea, a saltwater ocean that connects to lands beyond.

CLIMATE

The climate of Barsaive is largely temperate, with little significant seasonal change. There is some debate about the cause of this; some believe that the massive heat given off by Death's Sea helps moderate the temperatures, while others suggest that the Passions are influencing the weather to help the land recover from the Scourge. A few more radical scholars have suggested that neither of these is sufficient explanation, and there is some greater magic at work.

The first half of the year is the rainy season, when temperatures are cooler in general. The southern parts of Barsaive receive more rainfall on average, but outside of the area around Death's Sea and the Badlands, most areas get more than enough rainfall. The second half of the year is warmer with less rain, and the weather can get into the more uncomfortable and humid range. The highlands tend to be drier and cooler, with snow possible on the highest mountain slopes.

POPULATION

The Namegiver races are scattered across Barsaive. There are some settlements and enclaves that are home to a single race, but most villages and towns have residents of different races. This is a legacy of the Scourge, when different groups pooled their resources to construct their kaers. While this has resulted in a rather cosmopolitan culture in the larger towns and cities, smaller villages are still liable to distrust strangers, regardless of their race.

No true census of the province exists. Dwarfs are the most populous Namegiver race, making up roughly one-third of the population. Orks and humans make up another third, split roughly equally between them. The remaining third is mostly divided between the elves, trolls, and t'skrang. Windlings and obsidimen have a very small representation, with only about one percent of the population made up of each.

Most scholars divide the population into three main areas. The Kingdom of Throal is home to about one-third of the province's total population. The lowlands, Barsaive's plains and forests, as well as the Serpent River valley, are home to about half of the population, with half of those living in the major cities of Kratas, Jerris, Travar, and Iopos. The remaining population—about one sixth—lives in the highlands, Barsaive's mountains and plateaus. The largest population in this area are the legendary Crystal Raiders of the Twilight Peaks, troll clans that sail the skies and raid caravans and villages.

GOVERNMENT

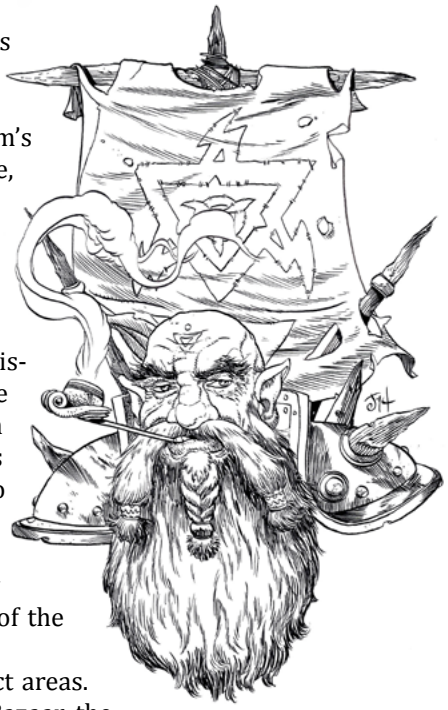
There is no unified government in Barsaive; each town and city is self-governing. The Kingdom of Throal wields considerable influence, largely as a result of their position as the largest power in Barsaive. Given the historical stance Throal has taken against slavery and Theran oppression, they are generally considered to be a benevolent power, especially with the lead role taken during the recent war.

There are those that question whether Throal had deeper motives behind their stance against the Therans. The dwarfs were administrators for the Empire before the Scourge, and those who are less inclined to trust the dwarfs contend they wanted control, and the resulting wealth, for themselves rather than share it with their former masters.

Despite the influence of Throal, a wide variety of different political structures can be found. Most smaller villages and towns don't have a formal government, handling things through public meetings led by a respected elder, who frequently helps resolve disputes between residents. Larger towns will typically have a council of some sort, whether of older residents, influential merchants, individuals by lot or election, or any number of other organizing principles.

Other places still have hereditary rule, with a title passing through a family line. This was more common in the days before the Scourge—the places where such practices were in effect were larger and more populated, and thus a bigger target for the Horrors, and those that survived the Scourge typically had enough mingling of bloodlines to dilute the old noble claims.

Kingdom of Throal



In many ways, the Kingdom of Throal is the economic and political heart of Barsaive. Located beneath the Throal Mountains in central Barsaive, The dwarf kingdom's influence extends back to before the Scourge, when the dwarfs acted as provincial administrators for the Theran Empire. As the Scourge approached, and the Therans retreated to their island homeland, it fell to the dwarfs of Throal to do what they could to prepare Barsaive for the Scourge. The distribution of the Book of Tomorrow made the dwarf language the de facto common tongue of Barsaive. Dwarven philosophers and scholars developed the ideas that led to the rejection of slavery, and set the province on the path of throwing off the Theran yoke. Many adventurers are sponsored by the Kingdom, and the reach and influence of the Throalic merchant houses is unparalleled.

The Kingdom is made of several distinct areas. Just inside the massive gates is the Grand Bazaar, the largest market in Barsaive. Goods and services from the everyday to the exotic can be found here, from smiths and soothsayers to tailors and troubadours. Mundane or magical, the odds are good if you can't find what you're looking for in the Grand Bazaar you aren't looking hard enough.

Beyond the Bazaar are the Halls of Throal, the tunnels that made up the original kaer for the dwarf kingdom. Twisting and turning into the depths of the mountains, the poorer sections are closest to the Grand Bazaar while the wealthier estates are found deeper in.

At the far end of the Halls is the Inner Kingdom, where the Great Library, the Grand Auditorium, and Royal Chambers are located.

After the Scourge, King Varulus III commissioned the construction of the Inner Cities, built into deep mountain caverns. While the Halls of Throal are largely inhabited by dwarfs, the inner cities are home to the majority of the other Namegiver races in Throal. Nine cities were planned, and seven of them completed construction before the death of Varulus III and the Second Theran War. The two incomplete cities (Raithabal and Thurdane) have started to become a concern, as they have become a hangout and hideaway for gangs, smugglers, and those looking to evade or escape notice.

Throal's current ruler is Kovar I. At the tail end of the Second Theran War King Neden, the prior ruler, was killed without an heir. The tensions between the different noble houses grew considerably more strained, and it was only through the dedicated efforts to keep the peace that civil war was averted. Kovar was the compromise candidate, hailing from a minor—but still noble—house, his rule so far has been unremarkable. Some observers feel that he is clearly struggling to get comfortable on the throne, and that his inexperience is helping the more conservative "old guard" houses to gain more influence in Throal's policies and practices.

The end result is that in many ways, Throal has withdrawn from wider involvement in Barsaive's affairs. While merchant caravans and trade envoys still travel the land, the war cost the lives of many Throalic soldiers, and patrols are less frequent and closer to home. At a time when the people of Barsaive could most use a guiding vision and clear direction, the dwarfs of Throal are not providing it.

Other Cities and Powers

There are many other powers in Barsaive, some of them were allies in the war, some were neutral, and a few were enemies or opportunists.

Bartertown

A ramshackle and wild place located just outside the entrance to the Kingdom of Throal, Bartertown was founded by those who wanted to avoid dwarf taxes and oversight. During the early days of the war, a fire leveled almost a quarter of the city, and many lives were lost. The damaged buildings were torn down and their materials used to construct new ones. Given the generally patchwork nature of construction in the city, it is hard to tell at this point what parts of Bartertown are the newer ones.

Despite multiple attempts on his life, Magistrate Clystone still sits at the top of Bartertown's heap, keeping a semblance of order with the aid of his 'guardians'—a troop of heavily armed guards and tax collectors. While named to the position by Bartertown's Council of Merchants, Clystone has held the position through willpower and ruthlessness.

Iopos

Found in the northwestern corner of Barsaive, Iopos is ruled by Uhl Denairastas, a powerful and ancient human magician. The Denairastas clan have been revealed as an enemy of Throal; they were responsible for the death of King Varulus III, and no doubt have had their hand in even more plots and plans. They have agents in every city, many of them related to Uhl, all of them highly skilled adepts and magicians. The clan patriarch enjoys pitting them against each other, and they often have their own internal struggles to prove themselves worthy heirs.

The city is a clean, orderly place, but it is not very welcoming to visitors—informants are everywhere, and there is little that happens in the city that does not quickly find its way into Uhl's information network. With the Therans currently out of the picture, the Denairastas are arguably the greatest threat to the freedom of Barsaive's people.

Jerris

Jerris is located on the western edge of Barsaive, between the Poison Forest and the Liaj Jungle. This city is almost continually beset by rains of ash blown in from the Wastes, and as a result the city has a dirty, depressing feel. Even when the sun manages to break through the clouds, it does little to warm the hearts and souls of those who make their living here. Despite the eerie environment, Jerris is a significant merchant power, and home to one of the largest airship construction facilities in Barsaive.

The city sent a token force in support of Throal's attack on Sky Point, but otherwise did their best to remain neutral in the war. There are many that believe this was because of the Denairastas, and that Iopos has been gradually increasing their influence over the city.

Kratas

The City of Thieves fell to Horrors during the Scourge. The Theran rulers of the city planned to spend the Scourge in either Parlainth or Great Thera, and did little to prepare the city for the Horror's onslaught. A hastily constructed dome of enchanted earth provided shelter to those left behind, but when the first envoys traveled to Kratas after the Scourge, they found the dome broken and the city abandoned. The ruins became a haven for bandits, rogues, and treasure hunters.

Kratas is the home of Garlthik One-Eye, a legendary Thief and seemingly immortal ork. Garlthik has been an on-again, off-again ally of Throal, but contributed some assistance to the war effort, as he is well-known to have no love for the Therans. His long career has resulted in a large number of allies and contacts, and he probably has one of the most extensive intelligence networks in Barsaive. Garlthik's chief rival in Kratas is Vistrosh, an exiled blood elf that leads his own band of thieves, miscreants, and ne'er-do-wells.

Travar

Located in southern Barsaive, Travar is one of the province's most ancient and mysterious cities. Its white stone walls and soaring towers provide a beacon of hope to an area that was sorely affected by the Scourge. Travar prospers under the leadership of the Magistrate's Council, a triumvirate of powerful merchants. Seats on the council are determined in the annual Founding Tournament, and potential magistrates hire teams of adepts to compete on their behalf.

Travar is Chorrolis' city, and its people are merchants before anything else. Travar was neutral in the conflict between Thera and Throal, and profited from both sides of the conflict. In the aftermath of the war the city unwillingly finds itself in a more prominent position, with foreign agents infiltrating the city in an attempt to influence the next Founding.

Urupa

Urupa is a city at the mouth of the Coil River, on the coast of the Aras Sea. Founded after the Scourge by the survivors of several nearby kaers, it serves as a gateway to lands beyond Barsaive, and many of the larger merchant houses from Throal and elsewhere in Barsaive have a presence there to get access to goods from Indrisia, Cathay, and other foreign lands.

Urupa is one of Barsaive's fastest growing cities. It is led by a citizen's council, one from each of the city's seven districts, supported by a staff of scores of clerks and magistrates. They provided some assistance to Throal in the war, though their location in the southeastern corner of the province kept them from any direct attacks or damage to the city.

Vivane and Sky Point

Vivane was a Theran stronghold before the war, and the nearby fortress of Sky Point was the base of operations for Theran troops in the area. After the Triumph was captured by Barsaivian forces, the allies turned their attention to Vivane and Sky Point. During the battle, Stormhead, a Horror-created magical storm, was drawn to the city and rained down destruction. After the destruction and the Theran retreat, the Barsaivian Resistance has put themselves in charge of the city, and turned the tables on those Therans who were unable to escape.

Why the Horror Cloud moved is a source of much speculation; it had been in the same place since it was first discovered in the early days after the Scourge. One theory is that the combined suffering of the city's slaves and Barsaivian underclass represented a meal too good to pass up. Most serious scholars discount this idea, pointing out that the timing of Stormhead's move to the city was surprisingly convenient, and it was more likely the result of some deliberate action. Of course, this means somebody on the side of the Barsaivian alliance had the power to affect the Horror Cloud, and the will to use a Horror's power against the city's civilian population.

Blood Wood

While technically not a part of Barsiave, the influence of Blood Wood is keenly felt. The ancient seat of the Elven Court was known as Wyrm Wood before the Scourge. When their wooden kaer failed and the Court was threatened with destruction, the elves performed a massive magical ritual that resulted in thorns piercing their skin, putting them in constant pain and dripping blood. The more powerful Horrors—who prefer to cause pain themselves—left in search of better prey.

The Wood is ruled by Queen Alachia, who claims sovereignty over all elves. Despite this claim, Blood Wood is strongly isolationist, and rarely allows visitors to enter. Any elves that wish to live in the wood must undergo the ritual and become Blood Elves. The fate of Blood Wood and the Elven Court remains a painful reminder of how deeply the Scourge has affected the world.

Cara Fahd

Cara Fahd is the reborn ork nation. Lost before the Scourge, it was restored not long after the Theran Empire landed the Triumph. It's founder and leader, Krathis

Gron, is doing her best to unite the different ork tribes and suppress their old rivalries, but is finding the task difficult at best.

The ork nation was heavily involved in the attacks on Sky Point and Vivane in the war, fielding impressive cavalry forces. While Cara Fahd was allied with the late King Neden against the Therans, Krathis wants to develop the ork nation into an independent power in its own right, and her relationship with the dwarf kingdom has cooled in the wake of Kovar's ascension.

Great Dragons

The Great Dragons of Barsaive are not a unified power, but some claim they have been manipulating affairs behind the scenes for centuries. Most discount the idea as conspiratorial nonsense; while the power and influence a dragon can bring to bear is considerable, there is nothing to indicate that the dragons take a serious interest in the brief lives of the 'lesser races'.

There were reports of dragons in the area during the assault on Sky Point, but they did not visibly take part on either side. There are rumors that they contributed to the war effort, either with the material support of their extensive hoards, or by sending agents out on covert missions, but nothing is confirmed.

The Great Dragons in Barsaive most noted to entertain visitors are Mountainshadow, who makes his lair in the Dragon Mountains of southern Barsaive; Icewing, who lairs in the highest peaks of the Throal Mountains; and Vasdenjas, who has contributed several tomes of knowledge to the Great Library. Two other Great Dragons, Usun and Aban, claim the Liaj Jungle and Mist Swamps, respectively, and do not welcome intruders into their domain.

T'skrang Aropagoi

The Serpent River network is dominated by the t'skrang trade covenants, or aropagoi. House Ishkarat controls the north reach of the river, from its headwaters down to Lake Vors, and they are closely allied with the Denairastas of Iopos. The middle reach of the river from where the Mothingale River flows out of Blood Wood to join the Serpent down to where the Serpent flows out of the foothills of the Throal Mountains is held by House Syrtis, who contributed some assistance during the war, but have been more focused on their conflict with the Ishkarat.

House V'strimon, one of Throal's staunchest allies, controls the Coil River, a major tributary of the Serpent that flows from central Barsaive down to the Aras Sea. The support of their warships was key in the attack on the Triumph, the former Theran fortress on the shore of Lake Ban.

The south reach—from Lake Ban to where the Serpent flows into the Mist Swamps—was dominated by House K'tenshin, who were allies of the Theran Empire. Their fortunes have fallen in the aftermath of the war, and they have been forced to concede some of their territory to House T'kambras, a new foundation that is based in the river systems of the Servos Jungle.

Untamed Places

The Badlands

The Badlands are one of the most corrupt areas in Barsaive. The area was one of the most fertile lands in Barsaive before the Scourge, and suffered horribly as a result. It is now a barren wasteland with little water, and much of the life that can be found there is tainted and twisted by the influence of the Horrors. Many ruined kaers and citadels can be found, their inhabitants dead—or worse.

The Badlands have been slowly growing over the decades since the Scourge, threatening the city of Travar and the plains beyond. A group of questors of Jaspree have been trying to halt or reverse the spread, and they sometimes hire groups of experienced adepts to try and find the source of the growing corruption. Thus far their efforts have yielded little success.

Death's Sea

Located in southwestern Barsaive, Death's Sea is an ocean of volcanic rock. Legends claim that the Passions trapped Death itself beneath the surface, and that it will be freed when enough Namegiver blood has been spilled. A cult of assassins known as the Keys of Death is rumored to worship Death as a Passion, and work to secure its release.

Whatever the truth of the legends, Death's Sea is inhospitable to Namegivers, and home to a variety of elemental spirits and other creatures that find the intense heat and volcanic rock comfortable. Despite the danger, many seek their fortune by flying magically protected airships over the lava to mine the abundant True Fire that can be found there.

Mist Swamps

At its mouth, the Serpent River slows and spreads, and as it gets closer to the volcanic heat of Death's Sea, the air grows humid and filled with steam. The waters become too shallow to handle larger riverboats, and only shallow-draft canoes and sailboats can navigate the delta. Filled with vegetation, and home to dangerous animals and swarms of insects, the Mist Swamps are an uncomfortable and difficult place to visit and explore.

Despite the danger, there have been many adepts and explorers who have attempted to uncover the secrets of the Mist Swamps. It is rumored to house a ruin that long predates the Theran Empire. Attempts to uncover the truth of these rumors is made more difficult by the presence of the Great Dragon Aban, who claims the area as her territory and does not tolerate intrusion.

Parlainth

Located in northeastern Barsaive, Parlainth was the Theran provincial capital before the Scourge. To protect it from the Scourge, Theran magicians moved the city to a hidden pocket of astral space, and removed all knowledge of the city from those left behind. Unfortunately, Horrors had infiltrated the city before its departure, and the residents of the city found themselves trapped with the very things they had been

trying to escape.

After the Scourge, the city was returned to Barsaive, its people dead or twisted by the Horrors into a wide variety of undead creatures. Adventurers and treasure hunters travel there and brave the ruins to find magical and mundane treasures the Therans left behind.

The town of Haven has sprung up in one corner of the city, providing a relatively safe place for adventurers and those who hope to profit off of them.

Poison Forest

The Poison Forest is a land that is perpetually on the edge of death. The water is tainted, plants are stunted and poisonous, and the animals are sick and appear to be in a state of perpetual decay. Most believe the land is tainted by the ash that blows in from the Wastes, which lie a few miles to the west, but nobody has uncovered the truth of the matter.

The forest is a source of True Wood, and a few brave and desperate souls eke out a living on the edges of the region. These settlements are frequently plagued with the same gray depression as the nearby city of Jerris, and those who live in the area keep an eye out for signs that whatever taints the Poison Forest does not infect their own lives.

Servos Jungle

The Servos Jungle is a massive, verdant region in central Barsaive. Home to an incredible variety of plant and animal life, many Namegivers make a living harvesting lumber and other natural resources from the jungle's edge. The Servos also hides a number of ruins from before the Scourge, and those who venture in search of these places face dangerous creatures, as well as primitive tribes of humans, elves, and t'skrang.

The Wastes

The Wastes are the source of the clouds of grey ash that blow over the Poison Forest and the area around the city of Jerris. Another fertile area that was devastated by the Scourge, it is currently home to Horrors, their twisted creations, and stunted plant and animal life. A large number of kaers and citadels are hidden in the region, attracting explorers from across Barsaive.

Many scholars and magicians have studied the ash, and while it clearly has some kind of corrupting influence, they do not know the source, or found any way to fight its taint.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

These example characters are created using the rules in the Creating Characters chapter, (p. XX). The only things missing are weapons and other adventuring equipment. This makes it easy for players to get up and running if they don't want to go through the process of creating a character from scratch.

Human Air Sailor

DEX (16):	7	STR (13):	6	TOU (13):	6
PER (14):	6	WIL (10):	5	CHA (14):	6

Initiative:	7	Physical Defense:	9
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	8
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	8
Uncon. Rating:	31	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	38	Knockdown:	6
Wound Threshold:	9	Movement:	12 yards
Karma Points:	5		

Talents: Acrobatic Defense (1): 8, Air Sailing (1): 6, Air Weaving: 0, Avoid Blow (2): 9, Climbing (1): 8, Melee Weapons (3): 10, Wind Catcher (1): 6, Versatility: 0

Skills: Animal Bond (2): 8, Animal Training (2): 8, Barsaive Lore (2): 8, Read/Write Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Human], Speak Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Human], Trade Routes (2): 8, Wood Carving (2): 8

Notes: May spend Karma once per round on any Action test made while on board an airship. Has the racial ability of Versatility.

Elf Archer

DEX (18):	7	STR (12):	5	TOU (11):	5
PER (16):	7	WIL (15):	6	CHA (10):	5

Initiative:	7	Physical Defense:	10
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	9
Mystic Armor:	3	Social Defense:	6
Uncon. Rating:	27	Recovery:	2
Death Rating:	33	Knockdown:	5
Wound Threshold:	8	Movement:	14 yards
Karma Points:	4		

Talents: Arrow Weaving: 0, Awareness (1): 8, Avoid Blow (2): 9, Call Missile (1): 8, Missile Weapons (3): 10, Mystic Aim (1): 8, True Shot (1): 8

Skills: Arrow Fletching (2): 7, Climbing (2): 9, Craft Weapon (2): 9, Creature Lore (2): 9, Elf Lore (2): 9, Read/Write Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Elf], Speak Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Elf]

Notes: May spend Karma on Perception-based tests which rely on sight. Has the racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Ork Beastmaster

DEX (16):	7	STR (17):	7	TOU (16):	7
PER (10):	5	WIL (10):	5	CHA (11):	5

Initiative:	7	Physical Defense:	9
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	6
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	7
Uncon. Rating:	39	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	47	Knockdown:	7
Wound Threshold:	10	Movement:	12 yards
Karma Points:	5		

Talents: Avoid Blow (1): 8, Beast Weaving (0), Claw Shape (2): 12, Stealthy Stride (1): 8, Unarmed Combat (3): 10, Wilderness Survival (1): 6

Skills: Body Painting (2): 7, Climbing (2): 9, Creature Lore (2): 7, Read/Write Language (2): 7 [Dwarf, Ork], Speak Language (2): 7 [Dwarf, Ork], Swimming (2): 9, Wild Animals (2): 7

Notes: Has the racial abilities of Gahad and Low-Light Vision.

Windling Cavalryman

DEX (17):	7	STR (7):	4	TOU (11):	5
PER (14):	6	WIL (10):	5	CHA (17):	7

Initiative:	7	Physical Defense:	12
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	8
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	10
Uncon. Rating:	29	Recovery:	2
Death Rating:	35	Knockdown:	4
Wound Threshold:	8	Movement:	6 yards/16 yards*
Karma Points:	6	* Flying movement rate	

Talents: Animal Bond (1): 8, Astral Sight (0), Charge (2): 6, First Impression (1): 8, Melee Weapons (3): 10, Rider Weaving (0), Trick Riding (1): 8

Skills: Awareness (2): 8, Body Painting (2): 9, Legends and Heroes (2): 8, Military Organizations (2): 8, Navigation (2): 8, Read/Write Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Windling], Speak Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Windling]

Notes: Has the racial abilities of Astral Sight, Flight, and Increased Physical Defense. Begins play with a Kue or Zoak.

Dwarf Elementalist

DEX (11):	5	STR (10):	5	TOU (16):	7
PER (17):	7	WIL (17):	7	CHA (10):	5

Initiative:	5	Physical Defense:	7
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	10
Mystic Armor:	3	Social Defense:	6
Uncon. Rating:	35	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	43	Knockdown:	5
Wound Threshold:	10	Movement:	10 yards
Karma Points:	4		

Talents: Awareness (1): 8, Elementalism (2): 9, Patterncraft (1): 8, Spellcasting (2): 9, Standard Matrix A: (1), Standard Matrix B: (1), Standard Matrix C: (1), Wood Skin (1): 8

Skills: Botany (2): 9, Climbing (2): 7, Dwarf Lore (2): 9, Read/Write Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Obsidiman], Robe Embroidery (2): 7, Speak Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Obsidiman], Wilderness Survival (2): 9

Spells: Air Armor, Crunch Climb, Earth Darts, Flame Weapon, Heat Food, Shelter, Waterproof

Notes: Has the racial abilities of Heat Sight and Strong Back

Windling Illusionist

DEX (13):	6	STR (3):	2	TOU (9):	4
PER (17):	7	WIL (16):	7	CHA (16):	7

Initiative:	6	Physical Defense:	10
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	10
Mystic Armor:	3	Social Defense:	9
Uncon. Rating:	21	Recovery:	2
Death Rating:	26	Knockdown:	2
Wound Threshold:	7	Movement:	6 yards/16 yards*
Karma Points:	6	* Flying movement rate	

Talents: Astral Sight (1): 8, False Sight (1): 8, First Impression (1): 8, Illusionism (1): 8, Patterncraft (1): 8, Spellcasting (2): 9, Standard Matrix A (1), Standard Matrix B (1), Standard Matrix C: (1)

Skills: Acting (2): 9, Legends and Heroes (2): 9, Read/Write Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Windling], Robe Embroidery (2): 9, Speak Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Windling], Streetwise (2): 9, Windling Lore (2): 9

Spells: Disaster, Ephemeral Bolt, Fun With Doors, Monstrous Mantle, True Ephemeral Bolt, Trust, Unseen Voices

Notes: Has the racial abilities of Astral Sight, Flight, and Increased Physical Defense

T'skrang Nethermancer

DEX (14):	6	STR (8):	4	TOU (12):	5
PER (17):	7	WIL (16):	7	CHA (13):	6

Initiative:	6	Physical Defense:	8
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	10
Mystic Armor:	3	Social Defense:	8
Uncon. Rating:	27	Recovery:	2
Death Rating:	33	Knockdown:	4
Wound Threshold:	8	Movement:	12 yards
Karma Points:	4		

Talents: Astral Sight (1): 8, Frighten (1): 8, Nethermancy (2): 9, Patterncraft (1): 8, Spellcasting (2): 9, Spell Matrix A (1), Spell Matrix B (1), Standard Matrix C: (1)

Skills: Alchemy (2): 9, Awareness (2): 9, Horror Lore (2): 9, Read/Write Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, T'skrang], Robe Embroidery (2): 8, Scourge History (2): 9, Speak Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, T'skrang]

Spells: Experience Death, Life Circle of One, Shadow Meld, Soul Armor, Soulless Eyes, Spirit Dart, Spirit Grip

Notes: Has the racial ability of Tail Combat.

Ork Scout

DEX (16):	7	STR (16):	7	TOU (14):	6
PER (14):	6	WIL (10):	5	CHA (12):	5

Initiative:	7	Physical Defense:	9
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	8
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	7
Uncon. Rating:	33	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	40	Knockdown:	7
Wound Threshold:	9	Movement:	12 yards
Karma Points:	5		

Talents: Awareness (2): 8, Climbing (1): 8, Missile Weapons (2): 9, Navigation (1): 7, Scout Weaving (0), Tracking (2): 8, Wilderness Survival (1): 7

Skills: Barsaive History (2): 8, Creature Lore (2): 8, Map Making (2): 8, Read/Write Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Ork], Speak Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Ork], Swimming (2): 9, Wood Carving (2): 7

Notes: Has the racial abilities of Gahad and Low-Light Vision.

Troll Sky Raider

DEX (16):	7	STR (18):	7	TOU (15):	6
PER (11):	5	WIL (10):	5	CHA (15):	6

Initiative:	7	Physical Defense:	9
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	7
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	9
Uncon. Rating:	37	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	44	Knockdown:	7
Wound Threshold:	10	Movement:	14 yards
Karma Points:	3		

Talents: Avoid Blow (1): 8, Battle Shout (2): 8, Climbing (1): 8, Fireblood (2): 8, Melee Weapons (2): 9, Sky Weaving (0)

Skills: Awareness (2): 7, Navigation (2): 7, Read/Write Language (2): 7 [Dwarf, Troll], Speak Language (2): 7 [Dwarf, Troll], Trade Routes (2): 7, Troll Lore (2): 7, Wood Carving (2): 8

Notes: Has the racial ability of Heat Sight.

T'skrang Swordmaster

DEX (17):	7	STR (13):	6	TOU (14):	6
PER (13):	6	WIL (10):	5	CHA (16):	7

Initiative:	7	Physical Defense:	10
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	8
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	9
Uncon. Rating:	35	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	42	Knockdown:	6
Wound Threshold:	9	Movement:	12 yards
Karma Points:	4		

Talents: Avoid Blow (2): 9, Maneuver (1): 8, Melee Weapons (3): 10, Taunt (1): 8, Unarmed Combat (1): 8, Weapon Weaving (0)

Skills: Ancient Weapons (2): 8, Conversation (2): 9, Dancing (2): 9, Legends and Heroes (2): 8, Read/Write Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, T'skrang], Speak Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, T'skrang], Swimming (2): 8

Notes: Has the racial ability of Tail Combat.

Elf Thief

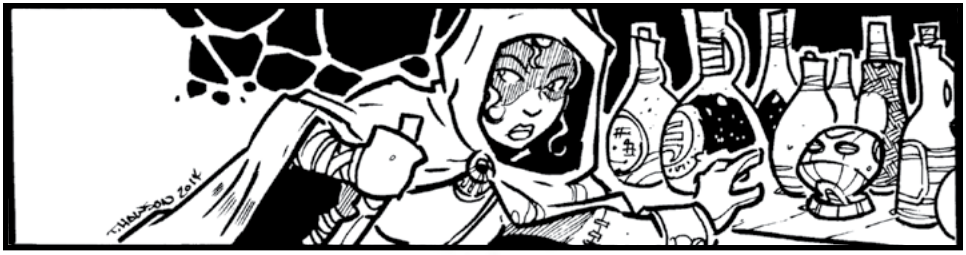
DEX (18):	7	STR (13):	6	TOU (11):	5
PER (14):	6	WIL (11):	5	CHA (16):	7

Initiative:	7	Physical Defense:	10
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	8
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	9
Uncon. Rating:	27	Recovery:	2
Death Rating:	33	Knockdown:	6
Wound Threshold:	8	Movement:	14 yards
Karma Points:	4		

Talents: Awareness (2): 8, Danger Sense (1): 7, Lock Picking (1): 8, Melee Weapons (2): 9, Picking Pockets (1): 8, Stealthy Stride (2): 9, Thief Weaving (0)

Skills: Acting (2): 9, Barsaive Lore (2): 8, Climbing (2): 9, Read/Write Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Elf], Speak Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Elf], Streetwise (2): 9, Thief Lore (2): 8

Notes: May spend Karma on Charisma-based deception tests. Has the racial ability of Low-Light Vision.



Human Troubadour

DEX (14):	6	STR (13):	6	TOU (13):	6
PER (14):	6	WIL (10):	5	CHA (16):	7

Initiative:	6	Physical Defense:	8
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	8
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	9
Uncon. Rating:	31	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	38	Knockdown:	6
Wound Threshold:	9	Movement:	12 yards
Karma Points:	5		

Talents: Emotion Song (1): 8, Entertainer (1): 8, First Impression (2): 9, Heartening Laugh (2): 9, Item History (1): 7, Melee Weapons (2): 8, Story Weaving (0), Versatility (0)

Skills: Awareness (2): 8, Barsaive History (2): 8, Body Painting (2): 9, Flirting (2): 9, Legends and Heroes (2): 8, Read/Write Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Human], Speak Language (2): 8 [Dwarf, Human]

Notes: Has the racial ability of Versatility. The adept may spend Karma on Interaction tests.

Obsidiman Warrior

DEX (14):	6	STR (23):	9	TOU (18):	7
PER (12):	5	WIL (10):	5	CHA (8):	4

Initiative:	6	Physical Defense:	8
Physical Armor:	3	Mystic Defense:	7
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	5
Uncon. Rating:	43	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	51	Knockdown:	9
Wound Threshold:	14	Movement:	10 yards
Karma Points:	3		

Talents: Avoid Blow (2): 8, Fireblood (1): 8, Melee Weapons (3): 9, Tiger Spring (1), War Weaving (0), Wood Skin (1): 8

Skills: Ancient Weapons (2): 7, Awareness (2): 7, Climbing (2): 8, Military History (2): 7, Read/Write Language (2): 7 [Dwarf, Obsidiman], Rune Carving (2): 6, Speak Language (2): 7 [Dwarf, Obsidiman]

Notes: Has the racial abilities of Increased Wound Threshold and Natural Armor.

Dwarf Weaponsmith

DEX (13):	6	STR (12):	5	TOU (15):	6
PER (16):	7	WIL (14):	6	CHA (14):	6

Initiative:	6	Physical Defense:	8
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	9
Mystic Armor:	2	Social Defense:	8
Uncon. Rating:	35	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	42	Knockdown:	5
Wound Threshold:	10	Movement:	10 yards
Karma Points:	4		

Talents: Craftsman (1): 7, First Impression (1): 7, Forge Weapon (2): 9, Item History (1): 8, Melee Weapons (3): 9, Steel Thought (1): 7, Thread Smithing (0)

Skills: Ancient Weapons (2): 9, Awareness (2): 9, Barsaive History (2): 9, Physician (2): 9, Read/Write Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Ork], Rune Carving (2): 8, Speak Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Ork]

Notes: Has the racial abilities of Heat Sight and Strong Back. May spend Karma on tests to craft or repair items

Troll Wizard

DEX (10):	5	STR (12):	5	TOU (15):	6
PER (16):	7	WIL (18):	7	CHA (10):	5

Initiative:	5	Physical Defense:	6
Physical Armor:	0	Mystic Defense:	9
Mystic Armor:	3	Social Defense:	6
Uncon. Rating:	33	Recovery:	3
Death Rating:	40	Knockdown:	5
Wound Threshold:	10	Movement:	14 yards
Karma Points:	3		

Talents: Dispel Magic (1): 8, Patterncraft (1): 8, Research (1): 8, Spellcasting (2): 9, Standard Matrix A (1), Standard Matrix B (1), Standard Matrix C (1), Wizardry (2): 9

Skills: Alchemy (2): 9, Awareness (2): 9, Potions and Poisons (2): 9, Read/Write Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Troll], Robe Embroidery (2): 7, Scourge History (2): 9, Speak Language (2): 9 [Dwarf, Troll]

Spells: Bedazzling Display of Logical Analysis, Divine Aura, Iron Hand, Mage Armor, Mind Dagger, Quicken Pace, Speed Reading

Notes: Has the racial ability of Heat Sight.

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